

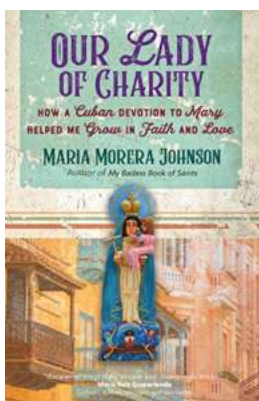
How Cuban Devotion To Mary Helped Me Grow In Faith And Love

When I first visited Cuba, I was captivated by the deep devotion and love the Cuban people showed towards the Virgin Mary. Growing up in a different culture, I didn't fully understand the significance of this devotion, but my time in Cuba transformed my perception and helped me grow in my faith and love for the Blessed Mother.

One of the most striking aspects of Cuban devotion to Mary is the abundance of beautiful and ornate Marian shrines scattered throughout the country. These shrines serve as sacred spaces where Cubans gather to honor and pray to the Virgin Mary. Each shrine is unique in its design and decorations, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Cuban people.

Discovering the Power of Marian Pilgrimages

During my stay in Cuba, I had the opportunity to participate in a Marian pilgrimage, a powerful religious tradition deeply ingrained in Cuban culture. Thousands of devout Catholics from all over the country embark on these pilgrimages, walking long distances to reach their destination. Witnessing this immense display of faith and devotion was awe-inspiring.



Our Lady of Charity: How a Cuban Devotion to Mary Helped Me Grow in Faith and Love

by Maria Morera Johnson (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 5784 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 129 pages



As we journeyed towards the sacred site, the atmosphere was filled with joy, singing, and prayers. I experienced a sense of unity and community among the pilgrims, as we all sought solace and strength in our shared devotion to Mary. The physical journey mirrored the spiritual journey within, allowing me to reflect on my own faith and deepen my relationship with the Virgin Mary.

A Symbol of Hope and Protection

In Cuban culture, Mary is seen as a symbol of hope and protection. Her presence brings comfort, especially during times of hardship and uncertainty. I witnessed firsthand the fervent prayers of Cubans seeking the intercession of the Blessed Mother in their daily struggles. Whether it was praying for health, safety, or healing, the Cuban people turned to Mary as a source of solace and guidance.

Through their unwavering trust in Mary, the Cuban people taught me the importance of surrendering my worries and fears to her. I learned that Mary, as the Mother of God, is always ready to listen and intercede on our behalf. This realization infused me with a newfound sense of peace and strengthened my relationship with her.

Celebrating the Vibrant Marian Feasts

Another aspect of Cuban devotion to Mary that deeply impacted me was the vibrant celebration of Marian feast days. Each feast brought with it a sense of joy,

thanksgiving, and celebration. The streets would come alive with processions, music, dance, and colorful decorations honoring the Blessed Mother.

These festivities not only showcased the rich cultural heritage of Cuba but also created an environment of pure bliss and devotion. The enthusiasm and love displayed by the Cuban people during these celebrations touched my heart and further deepened my own devotion to Mary.

The Power of Personal Encounters with the Divine

One of the most transformative experiences I had in Cuba was witnessing the personal encounters between individuals and the divine during religious ceremonies. Whether it was during the recitation of the Rosary or the Holy Mass, I observed the profound connection Cubans had with Mary.

These encounters were marked by tears, genuine emotions, and a sense of deep communion with the divine. Witnessing these intimate and heartfelt moments ignited a desire within me to cultivate a stronger relationship with Mary and seek her guidance in my own life.

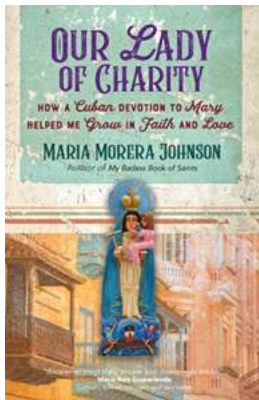
A Lasting Impact

Returning from Cuba, my faith and love for the Virgin Mary had grown exponentially. The Cuban devotion to Mary had left an indelible mark on my spiritual journey. Through witnessing the profound faith and love of the Cuban people towards the Blessed Mother, my understanding and appreciation for Mary as a source of strength, comfort, and intercession expanded.

The Cuban devotion to Mary served as a constant reminder that no matter our cultural backgrounds or circumstances, the love and grace of the Blessed Mother

transcend all borders. It reminded me of the universal nature of faith and the importance of embracing diverse expressions of devotion.

In , my time in Cuba and my immersion in the Cuban devotion to Mary deeply influenced my faith and love for the Blessed Mother. Through the power of Marian pilgrimages, the symbolism of hope and protection, the vibrant celebrations of Marian feasts, and witnessing personal encounters with the divine, I grew in my relationship with Mary and found solace, strength, and inspiration in her loving embrace.



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Maria Morera Johnson grew up knowing the virgencita—the Virgin Mary—and had a special love for Our Lady of Charity, the patroness of Cuba.

Even after Johnson moved to the United States, Our Lady of Charity continued to influence her life. In her new book, the bestselling and award-winning author shares her childhood recollections of the devotion to the patroness of her native country and stories of how Mary helped her deepen her faith and led her to

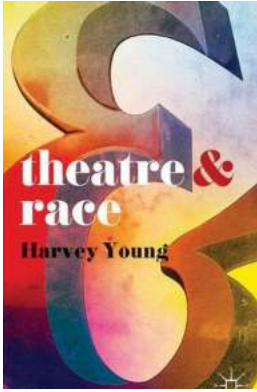
Jesus. Johnson also invites you to know Mary in a new way and to allow devotion to the Blessed Mother to help you open your heart to others and to grow in faith and love.

The origin of the devotion to Our Lady of Charity in Cuba comes from a seventeenth-century story of three men who were tossed about at sea during a violent storm. They prayed to Mary for her protection and the storm suddenly disappeared. They found a statue of the Blessed Mother holding Jesus and a gold cross floating in the water. The statue included the inscription: “I am the Virgin of Charity.” The statue was completely dry as it floated in the water.

Our Lady of Charity is not a Church-approved apparition; nevertheless, several popes—including St. John Paul II and Pope Francis, who celebrated Mass at her shrine during his visit to Cuba in 2015—have supported devotion to Mary under this title.

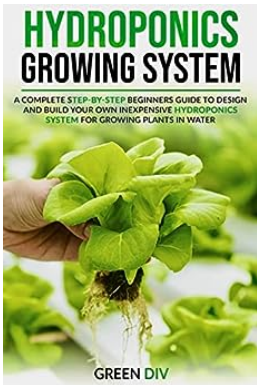
Johnson, author of the bestselling *My Badass Book of Saints*, traces the history of Our Lady of Charity in Cuba and how the devotion was spread by emigrants as they left their country behind. Johnson weaves the story of the devotion with Cuba’s history, memories of her homeland, and tales of her journey back to Cuba for the first time since her childhood during Pope Francis’s 2015 Apostolic Visit.

Throughout *Our Lady of Charity*, Johnson shares her devotion to Mary and passion for her Catholic faith. This evocative spiritual memoir is part history and part memory, part modern-day travelogue and part meditation on the role faith, family, and devotion have on how we live and love.



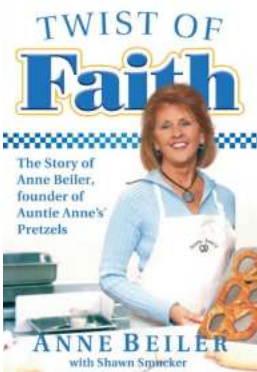
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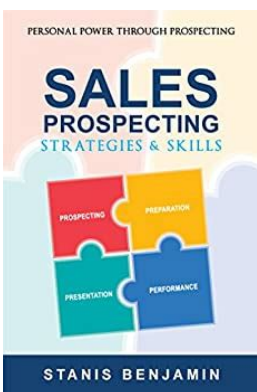
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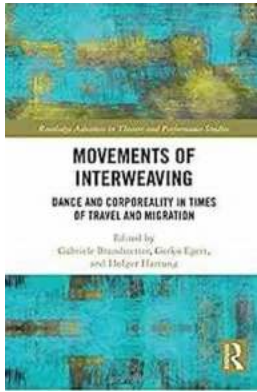
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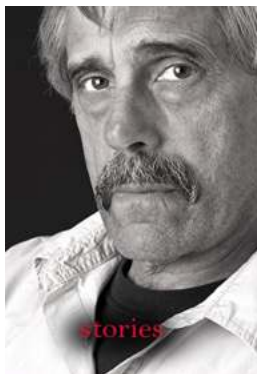
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