




# Devotion to Our Lady



**I**n my home I have a handsome, carved wood statue of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, and every time I pass by it, particularly during Mary's month of May, I'm reminded of the wonderful history associated with this particular Marian statue, and my own devotion to Our Lady of Einsiedeln.

As a student at the St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad, Ind., I was often struck by the history of the school's affiliation to the Abbey of Our Lady of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. And so I decided to make a pilgrimage to this place of prayer, which predates Lourdes and Fatima as a Marian shrine.

The abbey dates back to 934, when a monastic community was founded on the site of the saint's martyrdom in 861. The abbey is renowned for its famous black Madonna statue in the Lady Chapel that was consecrated by Christ himself, a miracle that was later confirmed by Pope Leo VIII. The famous statue of Mary and her son Jesus was carved in the 15th century and is venerated by the nearly one million pilgrims who visit the abbey and monastery each year.

Because of the great effect that the seminary had on my life, I felt I needed to make my own pilgrimage to Einsiedeln. On my first visit, I'd go for 5 a.m. prayers, speak to the monks, and visit the Lady Chapel. Any and every intention I had I would bring, with tremendous gratitude. And I've been back several times since. I even once was fortunate enough to stay in the same room that Pope Saint John Paul II stayed in during his 1984 visit.

There are miracles attributed to Our Lady of Einsiedeln, and I've personally been blessed to have her

intercede on the behalf of my prayers over the years. Once, I happened to be praying with a family whose baby daughter was very ill in the hospital. She was not expected to recover. I brought my Einsiedeln statue to the father, and the very next day, the daughter was better. The doctors couldn't believe it. On another occasion, I worked with a parish that was in terrible turmoil. I prayed to Our Lady of Einsiedeln that she would move her scepter and bring peace to this parish, and within a few months, this parish became a model for others. And so the miracles continue in her name.

It's always wonderful to pray to Mary, the Mother of Christ, no matter if you choose Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Carmel or any of the other numerous Marian titles. Our Mother hears all, and I hope you find peace and calm in your devotions to her during May, the month of Mary, and every day. You may visit the website of the Abbey of Our Lady of Einsiedeln at [kloster-einsiedeln.ch](http://kloster-einsiedeln.ch). ■



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