



## *Our Lady of the Taper Cardigan, Wales Feast Day: June 15*

Sometime during the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a statue of the Blessed Mother holding the Christ Child was discovered in Cardigan, Wales. At first, it was believed to have washed up on the bank of the River Teifi which leads to the St. George Channel that connects the Irish Sea to the Celtic Sea. The statue was standing upright and in the hand of the Virgin Mary was a lit candle, burning brightly. The statue was taken to Holy Trinity Church in Cardigan. However, the next day, it mysteriously reappeared at the edge of the River Teifi. Further attempts were made to move the statue to the church however, it would always miraculously return to the bank of the river. The taper burned nine years without extinguishing. Many pilgrims came to venerate the Holy Mother and Christ Child. In 1158, the church of St. Mary was built to house the statue at the very place it first appeared. The original statue was destroyed in 1538 under the order of King Henry the VIII. Attempts were made to revive devotion to Our Lady of the Taper, but the Reformation and two world wars prevented it. St. Mary’s church became an Anglican church and remains so today. In 1952, Sister Concordia from Scotland carved a new statue based on the description of the original. A new church was built and named Our Lady of the Taper. In 1986, the statue was recast in bronze. A candle blessed by Pope John Paul II was placed in the hand of the statue of the Blessed Mother. At this time the Holy Father designated the church of Our Lady of the Taper as the National Shrine of Wales. When Pope Benedict XVI traveled to Westminster Abby in September of 2010, the bishop of the Diocese of Menevia, Wales brought the statue of Our Lady of the Taper to London. There, the Holy Father blessed the statue and lit a new taper held in the hand of the statue of Our Lady. Many pilgrims still venerate the statue at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Taper today.

**“Our Lady is the one who fully reflects the light of her glorified Son and she embraces each pilgrim in the warmth of her love.”**

**~ Fr. Jason, rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Taper, 2010**

This year, we focus on Mary, [the Mediatrix of All Graces](#), the model disciple, who shows us how to receive and bear the Word to the world. For more on Year 2 preparation, visit: [www.arlingtondiocese.org/goldenjubiliecelebration/](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/goldenjubiliecelebration/)