



By Bob Borelli For:

Catholic Men's Ministries of Indian River County Florida (cmmircfl.org)

It's Monday Night Football and the guys are over to watch your favorite team, the Angels, take on their arch rivals the Devils. The girls have headed off to see one of those sobbing love story movies. Well that's what they told you. Whatever? Anyway here you are with your Buds in your now homemade Man Cave. Big 50 inch Hi-Def TV, surround sound bar, salsa and chips at every corner of the room, beer by the bottle, can, or tub, plenty of cigars, of course to smoke outside, drawing for the leather chair with the built-in leg rest has been resolved, and now all of you are set to watch the big game. So the big game begins and it turns into a real nail biter, not a blowout by the Angels that you expected, but an extremely close game. Fact is, it is too close. The game gets down to the last 40 seconds of the 4th quarter and the Devils lead 20 to 14. They have the ball, and are just running out the clock. With the Angels having no time outs, it's all but all over for them. But wait, the Devils just fumbled and the Angels have recovered the ball. Good news? You betcha. However we are on our own 40 yard line, only 30 seconds left on the clock, we are down by 6, so a long field goal won't do. We need a touchdown. We snap the ball and quickly throw it out of bounds to stop the clock. We huddle, we know we need a touchdown and agree that only one play can do it, the Hail Mary Pass. So we line up, our Quarterback sets himself back about 7 yards behind his Center. The play starts, our favorite wide receiver is down field, our Quarterback waits, waits, and finally throws the ball high into the center of the end zone and all of a sudden Mary, the Mother of God, catches the ball and hands it to our wide receiver, who kneels, ball in his hands, in the end zone.

Way to go, a real touchdown. We go on to kick the extra point and win the game. But wait a minute, hold on, let's wait to celebrate.

We need to take a look at the replay. After reviewing the playback, Mary the Mother of God did not, I repeat, did not, catch the ball and give it to our wide receiver. Our wide receiver caught the ball and kneeled in the end zone on his own.

Here's what really happened. Yes our Angels did need a touchdown and yes a Hail Mary pass was their only option so what did the playback really show? It showed the Angels praying in the huddle. The offensive line prayed that they would have the power to build a wall around the Quarterback to give him time to throw the ball, the Quarterback prayed that he would have the ability to throw the ball far enough and high enough to reach the end zone, the wide receiver prayed that he would have the judgment to turn toward the center of the end zone at the right moment, he prayed that he would have agility to jump higher than his defenders, and he prayed that he would have the strength to hold onto the ball as he fell down into the end zone. All the above praying is what really won the game. But wait, what did our team really pray for? Was it to have someone else solve their problem? No! Do you not think Mary, the Mother of God, could have caught that ball and have given it to our wide receiver? She could have but she didn't. No it doesn't work that way. We need to pray, as our team did, for the power to build our own wall, around our own problems. We need to pray to have the ability to throw out our own ideas on solving our own problems. And we need to pray for the strength and agility, with the help of God's grace, to catch the one solution that solves our own problem. It is what our God given free will is all about. From time to time we can, and will fail. But it is never a reason to quit praying. Our God is a merciful God and through His mercy and His grace, and by us trying with all our heart, and all our mind, and all our soul, that God takes care of us. A Hail Mary is not a pass to handoff to someone else to solve our problems, it is a prayer by us to the Mother of God asking her to help us solve our own problems.