Crowning an Image of the Blessed Mother

From the Office for Divine Worship

INTRODUCTION
The Second Vatican Council saw to it that in the writing of Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 1964), Mary is, “united to all those who are to be saved” and that she was hailed as a significant and outstanding model of faith and charity. Mary’s own life was a pilgrimage of faith. While the Second Vatican Council did not intend to promote a new vision of Mary, the Council fathers supported devotions to Mary through the fullness and glorification of Jesus. Pope Paul VI asked that Mary be presented as a model of faith, by the way that she fully and responsibly accepted the will of God (cf. Luke 1:38).

THE OFFICIAL RITE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
Order of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1) The Rite of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary can take place either within Mass or outside of Mass. The official Rite provides text for either. The Rite is best celebrated on a Marian Solemnity or Feast. It should never happen on a Solemnity of Our Lord or on a penitential day (Lent). The crowning is not restricted to the month of May. If it is planned within Mass, it takes places after the homily.

2) If the crowning takes place outside of Mass, it is best planned during Vespers of Our Lady or at a Liturgy of the Word.

3) Items that will be needed are candles, flowers, an aspersillum and crown. The candles and flowers should be arranged around or near the image not blocking the sight lines to the image.

4) The crown should be in harmony with the image, and it seems sensible that it be “permanently crafted” of silk flowers. Fresh flowers would be difficult to maintain for any period of time.

5) During Mass the priest (or bishop), along with the congregation, stands after the homily is finished. The crown is brought forward to the priest. The priest, using the Ritual, says the Prayer of Thanksgiving. The crown is then sprinkled with Holy Water. The priest (or bishop) may then take the crown to the image and carefully place it on/near it. A lay person may also crown an image of the Blessed Mother. If the Crowning occurs outside of Mass, a priest, deacon or lay minister can lead the Liturgy of the Word or Vesper service.

6) If the image cannot be brought into the sanctuary, it is blessed and crowned where it is located. If the crowning needs to happen in a place outside of the church, then it should be done after Mass, using a Liturgy of the Word service.

7) During a Sunday Mass, it is not appropriate to replace the Responsorial Psalm with a Marian antiphon.

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1 Lumen Gentium, n. 53
APPROVED TEXT

There is an approved set of texts that are found in the ritual book *Order of Crowning an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The texts include suggestions for Readings (for Liturgy of the Word); and provide a script for the presiding minister. Please contact the *Office for Divine Worship*; and we will send you copies of the approved text.