



**Welcome to *Opening Doors!***

## **I. *Did You Know?***

### **The Story Behind Mary, Undoer of Knots**

The great Church Father St. Irenaeus of Lyons, writing in the second century, laid the foundation for the Mary Undoer of Knots devotion when he said: 'The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, this did the virgin Mary set free through faith.'

In the Bible, St. Paul contrasted the disobedience of Adam with the obedience of Christ, the New Adam. Similarly, St. Irenaeus in his seminal work, *Against Heresies*, portrayed the parallel between Eve's disobedience and the Virgin Mary's faithful obedience, through which the knot of sin and death was undone.



**Our Lady, Undoer of Knots**

This novena has grown in popularity over the past several centuries, most recently with Pope Francis's devotion to it.

Let's look at how this unique devotion developed.

Johann Melchior Georg Schmittndner (1625-1707) painted the famous Baroque image of Mary Undoer of Knots with great grace. In the painting, our Lady is holding a ribbon and untying knots in it. She is in Heaven, surrounded by angels, and stands on a crescent moon while crushing the head of the serpent (the devil). The Holy Spirit, through the image of a dove, flies above her head.

The striking simplicity and beauty of the image is one of the reasons that many are drawn to this devotion. Beginning in 1700 AD, the image has been venerated in the Church of St. Peter in Perlach (Augsburg, Germany).

### **The Knots in Our Lives**

We each have knots in our life: emotional wounds, fractured relationships, deaths of loved ones, personal problems that we cannot overcome, addictions, habitual sins, fears, sickness, and so many more. These knots build up over time and can lead us to feel helpless, powerless, and hopeless about ever overcoming them.

This is where Mary Undoer of Knots comes in, to pray for us as only she can, with intercession that is unfailing, so that our Lord can heal us from these knots. Our Lady knows the struggles and pains that we face. She is our Mother, given to us by God, and for her honor and God's glory she will obtain for us the untying of all our knots, if we but approach her faithfully, believing that God can and will deliver us.

### **Pope Francis Devotes Himself to It**

Pope Francis, in the 1980s while still a priest, came upon this image while traveling and studying in Germany and was instantly struck by it. He returned to Argentina and began to spread the devotion to those around him there, including after he became Archbishop of Buenos Aires. If you wish to pray the Novena to Our Lady Undoer of Knots you should start on August 6, The feast day is August 15, (Assumption of Mary into Heaven). Of course, you can pray the Novena anytime. You can get the novena by clicking on the link below:

<https://catholicnovenaapp.com/novenas/mary-undoer-of-knots-novena/>

### **Prayer to Our Lady Undoer of Knots**

Virgin Mary, Mother of fair love, Mother who never refuses to come to the aid of a child in need, Mother whose hands never cease to serve your beloved children because they are moved by the divine love and immense mercy that exists in your heart, cast your compassionate eyes upon me and see the snarl of knots that exist in my life. You know very well how desperate I am, my pain and how I am bound by these knots.

Mary, Mother to whom God entrusted the undoing of the knots in the lives of his children, I entrust into your hands the ribbon of my life. No one, not even the Evil One himself, can take it away from your precious care. In your hands there is no knot that cannot be undone. Powerful Mother, by your grace and intercessory power with Your Son and My Liberator, Jesus, take into your hands today this knot...I beg you to undo it for the glory of God, once for all, You are my hope.

O my Lady, you are the only consolation God gives me, the fortification of my feeble strength, the enrichment of my destitution and with Christ the freedom from my chains.

Hear my plea.

Keep me, guide me, and protect me, o safe refuge!

Mary, Undoer of Knots, pray for me

## **II. What's Happening!**

- ***Save the Date for 2019-2020 Advocate Workshops***

***Saturday, November 9, 2019, 9:00-Noon***

***Saturday, May 2, 2020, 9:00-Noon***

**Both workshops will be held at Transfiguration of the Lord Gymnasium, 2241 Mendez St., New Orleans. You don't want to miss this!!**

- ***Mass for God's Special Children, their families and friends is held every month at 2:00 PM at St Francis Xavier Church, 444 Metairie Road, Metairie, LA on the following dates:***
  - ❖ August 4, 2019
  - ❖ September 8, 2019
  - ❖ **SAVE THE DATE:** October 15, 2019, 2:00 PM for the 15th Anniversary Mass for God's Special Children with Archbishop Aymond
  - ❖ November 3, 2019
  - ❖ December 8, 2019

**October 1 - 31, 2019** in the USA.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month. National Disability Employment Awareness Month was declared in 1988 by the United States Congress to raise awareness about the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities.

For more information you may visit: <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam/>

**Disabilities in Parish Life Online Course** is offered by University of Dayton.

- Catechists and Catholic School teachers learn varied ways of evangelizing persons with disabilities. A wide range of methodologies are explained and employed in these online sessions for catechists and Catholic School teachers who teach persons with disabilities.



- All facilitators for our special needs online courses have background in special needs ministries.

You can get full course description at the link below:

[https://vlcff.udayton.edu/courses/course\\_details.php?course=173](https://vlcff.udayton.edu/courses/course_details.php?course=173)

### III. *Question Corner???*

At times due to the behavioral aspects of some disabling conditions, parents seem to sense from some parishioners that their child may not be welcome during the celebration of Mass. Can we work together to change this perception?

Catholics believe that all people are made in the image and likeness of God, and that all the Baptized share in the life and mission of the Church. This includes people from every range of ability. As a parish we are mindful and respectful of families who have children with disabilities. At times due to the behavioral aspects of some disabling conditions, parents seem to sense from some parishioners that their child may not be welcome during the celebration of Mass. Can we work together to change this perception? As a parish community, let us strive to be patient, respectful and helpful to individuals with disabilities and seek ways to assist families so that they can worship together as a family and we may have the blessing of their presence with us as we become one Eucharistic community of faith. (ncpd.org)

We are preeminently a Eucharistic community and a sacrament, a living sign of Jesus Christ's presence. The Eucharist which we celebrate together is both the sign and the means of our present unity, as well as of the still greater unity to be achieved in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. (RCAN Mission Statement: As Church; Constitution of the Liturgy, 2; Lumen Gentium, 1)

"People with autism often compensate for their deficit by relying more on their visual sense. One way to capitalize on this is to use a missal containing icons."

*Faith, Family, and Children with Special Needs* by David Rizzo

Below is a link to **We Go to Mass Picture Schedule** (pdf):

<https://www.rcan.org/sites/default/files/files/WeGoToMass-2019b.pdf>

You can submit your questions or information you would like to see in Opening Doors e-Newsletter to [klivauda@bellsouth.net](mailto:klivauda@bellsouth.net). Please use Opening Doors in the subject line. We encourage you to share some of what is in *Opening Doors* with your parish by publishing some info in your church bulletins.