

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTION
OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION



**“Prayer by the Church was
fervently being made to God”**

(cf. Acts 12:5)

*Let us pray for the end of the pandemic united in the recitation of the
Holy Rosary together with the Shrines around the world.*

Liturgical Guide

May 2021

INTRODUCTION

Pope Francis is requesting that during this month of May the entire Church invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the end of the pandemic and, in a special way, he is inviting all of us to pray fervently for those most closely affected by it.

During each day of May, guided by a calendar with specific intentions, all the Shrines around the world, united in a communion of supplication, will lift up their prayers, which, like the fragrance of incense, will rise up to heaven.

Thirty Marian Shrines will take turns leading this prayer throughout the Church and offering the faithful a series of prayer moments for them to participate throughout the entire day.

- **The Shrine's Morning Prayer** will begin with the symbolic gesture of the *lighting of the candle* and placed in front of the image of Our Lady. Immediately afterwards, the passage of Scripture taken from chapter eighteen (18) of Saint Luke's Gospel, from which this sign takes its name, will be proclaimed. The celebrant will then explain the meaning of this gesture and of the day, and will end by praying, with the faithful present, the ancient prayer *Sub tuum praesidium* addressed to the Virgin Mary.
- **The Holy Rosary:** the highlight of the Shrine's day of prayer will be *the Recitation of the Holy Rosary*, prayed according to local traditions and customs, for the end of the pandemic and for the particular daily intention entrusted by Pope Francis, according to the directions provided in the *Prayer Calendar*.

- **At the end of the day**, all the faithful, gathered at the Shrine, will address a farewell greeting to Mother Mary, ideally, handing over to the next Shrine the prayer baton.

It is important to emphasize that, in addition to the recitation of the Holy Rosary, Shrines are invited to promote during the entire day other moments of prayer. Before each act of worship, the celebrant should remind the faithful of the significance of this initiative, including an intention in the prayer of the faithful at Mass.

Each Shrine should arrange for the participation of the faithful in the various celebrations proposed, following the health regulations in force, exhorting them also to pray in their own homes and families where attendance is impossible.

SHRINE PRAYER OUTLINE

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE

In the morning, the Celebrant begins the time of prayer with the liturgical greeting. He himself, or a designated member of the faithful, lights the candle placed before the image of Our Lady. At the conclusion of this gesture, a reader proclaims the scheduled passage of Holy Scripture.

READING

God will do justice to his elect who cry out to him.

From the Gospel according to Luke

18:1-8

Then Jesus told them a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. He said, "There was a judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor respected any human being. And a widow in that town used to come to him and say, 'Render a just decision for me against my adversary.' For a long time the judge was unwilling, but eventually he thought, 'While it is true that I neither fear God nor respect any human being, because this widow keeps bothering me I shall deliver a just decision for her lest she finally come and strike me.'" The Lord said, "Pay attention to what the dishonest judge says. Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them? I tell you, he will see to it that justice is done for them speedily. But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The Word of God.

After a brief moment of silence, the Celebrant continues with these or similar words:

Dear brothers and sisters, the time of pandemic has deeply affected our lives. This trial is an opportunity to witness to our faith, to nurture hope and to make gestures of charity through corporal and spiritual works of charity.

So many are marked by grief because they have lost a loved one or have been unable to accompany them at the time of their passing and burial. Family and social relationships have been severely tested; the economic crisis and the lack of work cause fear due to the increasingly uncertain future of one's family.

In this experience, we feel like the first Christian community, which the text of the Acts of the Apostles describes with this beautiful expression: *"Prayer by the Church was fervently being made to God"* (Acts 12:5). We, too, wish to join together in raising our prayers to God so that He may hear our petitions.

In this month of May we gather around the Holy Father, who asks the entire Church, to raise together with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, supplications for the end of this trial.

The candle that has just been lit will remind our community that we have been called to pray for the end of the pandemic and in particular for *[see as indicated in the text of the appendix]*.

We ask you to keep vigil in this Shrine and invite those throughout our nation, who cannot be present, to join us in prayer, for the duration of this day, from their homes, workplaces, and parish communities

Let us pray together:

We fly to thy protection,

O holy Mother of God.

Despise not our petitions in our necessities,

but deliver us always from all dangers,

O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Amen.

THE RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY

The prayer of the Holy Rosary may begin with the lighting of a few candles from the previously lit candle before the image of Our Lady. The celebrant explains the meaning of the gesture and the day's prayer intention in view of the pandemic and the particular needs of that geographic region. The following text may be used, adapting it according to the needs of the place and situation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, in communion with the Holy Father following the example of the first Christian communities in this time of great trial, we lift up to the Lord through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, unceasing supplications for the end of the pandemic.

Today, in particular, at this Shrine of *[insert name of Shrine]* we wish to pray for *[insert prayer intention found in the appendix]*.

May these candles, lit from the candle that burns before the image of Our Lady, may illuminate and transform this moment of darkness into an aurora of new light.

We invite all those who follow us through our web channels to join spiritually to the recitation of this Holy Rosary with their families.

The recitation of the Holy Rosary according to the local tradition follows. At the end, after the singing of the Salve Regina and the recitation of the Litanies, the celebrant and the faithful present address the following prayer to Our Lady:

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity, and continued health.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

FAREWELL GREETING TO MOTHER MARY

At the conclusion of the day, the Celebrant addresses the faithful present with these or similar words:

Dear Brothers and Sisters at the end of this day we entrust into the hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary the people touched by the pandemic and in particular *[insert prayer intention found in the appendix]*, that she may entrust them to her Son: May He hear and grant our petitions.

Let us invoke her together:

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, or sought thy intercession,
was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence
I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.

To thee do I come,
before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.