

## *Mother of Perpetual Help Devotion*

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**Saturday:**

- 7:30 am - Rosary for Vocations**
- 8:30 am - Holy Mass**
- 8:30 am - Mother of Perpetual Help Devotion**
- 8:50 am - Chaplet of Divine Mercy**



*Saint Laurence Catholic Parish*

**Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston**

## *The Virgin of the Passion*

The icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is painted on a plaque of wood that measures 54 centimeters high and 41½ centimeters wide.

Throughout history it has received two basic titles. For artistic reasons and in accord with the style of the image, it has been called: “The Virgin of the Passion”. Icons of the Virgin of the Passion usually represent the Mother of God holding her Son Jesus and to the side, the angels carrying the instruments of the Passion.

The other title that it bears comes from the devotion that surrounds it: “Our Mother of Perpetual Help”. In our icon, the Mother of God is depicted looking tenderly at her devotees and ever ready to help them in whatever need.

The icon shows four holy figures: The Virgin Mother of God, the Christ Child and the archangels Michael and Gabriel. These personages are identified by the letters that appear on the icon.

**MP - OY** = Mother - of God (on the two sides of the upper part of the icon)

**'IC - XC** = Jesus - Christ (to the right of the Christ Child's head)

**OAM** = Archangel Michael (above the angel on the left, as you look at the icon)

**OAR** = Archangel Gabriel (above the angel on the right, as you look at the icon)

Only half of the Virgin's body is depicted but the impression is that she is standing. She wears a red tunic, a dark blue hooded cape with a green lining, a cobalt-blue headdress that covers her hair and forehead. In the center of her head on the hood, there is a star of eight golden, linear rays; next to it is a gold cross in the form of a star. The circular halo around her head, typical of the School of Crete, can be better appreciated now that the overlaid jeweled crown that has hidden it since 1867 has been removed.

The Virgin's face is slightly inclined toward the Christ Child whom she holds in her left hand. Her larger right hand (its long fingers typical of the images that indicate the way = “Hodigitria”), holds the hand of Jesus. With a sad tenderness, she looks not to her Son but appears to be in dialogue with whomever looks to her (universal perspective). Her almond-shaped, honey colored eye and emphasized eyebrows give her face a sense of beauty and solemnity.

The Child Jesus is depicted in full proportion. He rests in the arms of the Virgin while His hands clutch the right hand of Mary. He is dressed in a green tunic, a red cincture, and a red cloak. He also wears sandals but the one on his right foot is loose so that it allows us to see the sole of his foot, perhaps a sign that, although God, he is also human. He has brown hair and childish features.

His feet and neck position appear to express a brusque movement caused by fear of something that he suddenly senses. What appears to have scared the Child is the vision of the Passion, represented by the cross and nails in the hand of the Archangel Gabriel.

The Archangel Michael presents Him with their other instruments of the Passion: the lance, the pole with a sponge, and a vessel containing vinegar.

The icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is not merely a decoration but a message. It is a dissertation about the central mystery of our faith. The different elements that appear in the icon, tell us about God-with-us, the way of the Cross, the loving intercession of Mary, and the glory of the Divine Light (the golden background).

In Mary's body the promise of salvation became concrete reality when the Son of God took on our human nature. When the human life of her Son ended on the Cross, she was there as His first believer. It was in those last moments that Jesus designated her to be the Mother of all believers: "Behold, your mother" (John 19:27). Mary adopts us in order to bring us to Jesus.

The largest of figures in the icon is that of Mary, but she is not the focal point of the painting. The center is rather in the joining of her hand with those of Jesus and the manner in which she points out that her Son is Jesus Christ, the Son of God who offers his life for us all.

This is a Marian icon with a message. It is a signpost on the road of life. Mary points out and directs us to Jesus.

The Child appears as a victim to be offered, much the same as in the Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40). The Mother's attitude reminds us of the Gospel words: "Mary stood at the foot of the Cross" (John 19:25), not collapsed in pain but erect, strong, and valiant.

All the elements of the composition accentuate the reality of suffering, as is noted in the face of the Mother, the brusque movements of the Child and the instruments of the Passion. But, at the same time, there is an emphasis on the triumph of Jesus, depicted by the golden background and in the way that the angels carry the instruments of the Passion. More than threats of destruction, they appear as trophies of victory, as if they were taken from Calvary on Easter morning.

It is understandable why the image of Perpetual Help draws us to pray. It is a synthesis of the mysteries of Salvation. As a community we pray for the salvation of all souls and realizing that just as Mary was there present for Christ in His time of need, she remains ever present in our own time of need as Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

Opening Hymn: (Stand)

### IMMACULATE MARY

1. Immaculate Mary	2. In Heaven the blessed	3. We pray for the Church,
Your praises we sing:	Your glory proclaim;	Our true mother on earth;
You reign now in splendor	On earth, we your children,	And beg you to watch o'er
With Jesus our King.	Invoke your sweet name.	The land of our birth.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!	Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!	Ave, Ave, Ave Maria!
Ave, Ave Maria!	Ave, Ave Maria!	Ave, Ave Maria!

**Presider:** Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin, and our Mother Mary, you are our Perpetual Help, our refuge and our hope.

**All:** We come to you today / We thank God for all the graces received through your intercession./ Mother of Perpetual Help, / we promise to love you always / and to do all we can to lead others to you.

**Presider:** Mother of Perpetual Help, confident of your powerful influence with God, obtain for us these graces:

**All:** The strength to overcome temptation, / a perfect love for Jesus Christ, / and a holy death, / so that we will live with you and your Son for all eternity.

**Presider:** Let us pray to be open to God's Word.

**All:** Mother of Perpetual Help, / you continually sought the meaning of God's words and actions in your life / As we listen to God's Word, / may the Holy Spirit enlighten our understanding /and give us the courage / to put His Word into practice in our daily lives.

Bible reading (Optional) or Reflect on the Readings from Mass

Hymn: (Stand)

## **MARY IMMACULATE STAR OF THE MORNING**

1. Mary Immaculate, star of the morning, Chosen before the creation began,  
Destined to bring, through the light of your dawning, Conquest of Satan and rescue to man.

Bend from your throne at the voice of our crying.

Look to this earth where your footsteps have trod.

Stretch out your arms to us, living and dying,

Mary Immaculate, Mother of God.

2. We sinners honor your sinless perfection: Fallen and weak, for God's mercy we plead.  
Grant us the shield of your mighty protection. Measure your aid by the depth of our need.

Bend from your throne at the voice of our crying.

Look to this earth where your footsteps have trod.

Stretch out your arms to us, living and dying,

Mary Immaculate, Mother of God.

**Presider:** Let us kneel, to pray as a community of faith. Mary, all generations have called you blessed, and the Almighty has done great things for you.

**All:** Mother of Perpetual Help, / we call upon your most powerful name. / Your very name inspires confidence and hope. / May it always be on our lips, / especially in time of temptation / and at the hour of our death. / Blessed Lady, / help us whenever we call on you. / Let us not be content with merely pronouncing your name. / May our daily lives proclaim / that you are our Mother / and our Perpetual Help.

**Presider:** Let us pray for our temporal wants:

**All:** Mother of Perpetual Help, / with the greatest confidence we kneel before you. / We implore your help in the problems of our daily lives. / Trials and sorrows often depress us; / misfortunes and privations bring misery into our lives; / everywhere we meet the cross./ Comforter of the afflicted, / beg your Son, Jesus, / to strengthen us as we bear our burdens, / and to free us from our sufferings. / Or if it be the will of God / that we should suffer still longer, / help us endure all with love and patience. / May we follow the example of your Son, / and through Him, with Him, and in Him / commend ourselves to the care of our heavenly Father.

**Presider:** Let us now stand to present our petitions and our thanks. Lord Jesus Christ, at a word from Mary, your Mother, you changed water into wine at Cana of Galilee. Listen now to the people of God gathered here to honor Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Grant our petitions and accept our sincere thanks.

**Presider:** Grant wisdom and guidance to our Holy Father, Pope ....., our Archbishop ..., our priests, and all the leaders of our nation, state, and community.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Grant peace and unity throughout the world, especially in our homes and families.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Grant that young people respond generously to the call of the Holy Spirit in deepening their faith and choosing their vocation in life.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Grant children to those couples who pray and desire that blessing, and bless expectant mothers so that they may have a safe childbirth.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Grant us continued health of mind and body, and help the sick, especially ..., to regain their health according to your holy will.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Grant eternal rest to all the deceased, especially ..., and to all the souls of the faithful departed.

**All:** Hear us, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Let us pause now to silently present our own petitions to Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

**Presider:** With confidence in the intercession of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, let us pray the Memorare:

**All:** Remember, / O most gracious Virgin Mary, / that never was it known / hat anyone who fled to thy protection, / implored thy help, / or sought thy intercession, / was left unaided. / Inspired with this confidence, / I fly unto thee, / O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! / To thee 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.

**Presider:** Lord, accept our thanks for the new life of grace you gave us.

**All:** We thank you, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Accept our thanks, for all the graces received through the sacramental life of the Church.

**All:** We thank you, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Accept our thanks for the spiritual and material blessing we have received.

**All:** We thank you, Lord, through Mary our Mother.

**Presider:** Let us pause now to silently thank Our Mother of Perpetual Help for our own favors received.

**Presider:** Please kneel as we pray for the sick:

**All:** Lord, look upon your servants / laboring under bodily weakness. / Cherish and revive the souls which you have created, / so that, purified by their sufferings / they may soon find themselves healed by your mercy. / We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

**Presider:** May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you that He may defend you, within you that He may sustain you, before you that He may lead you, behind you that He may protect you, above you that He may bless you, ✚ in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Presider:** Let us renew our confidence in Mary as Perpetual Help.

**All:** Mother of Perpetual Help, / you have been blessed and favored by God. / You became not only the Mother of the Redeemer, / but the Mother of the redeemed as well. / We come to you today / as your loving children. / Watch over us and take care of us. / As you held the child Jesus in your loving arms / so take us in your arms. / Be a mother ready at every moment to help us, / for God who is mighty / has done great things for you. / and his mercy is from age to age / on those who love Him. / Our greatest fear is / that in time of temptation / we may fail to call out to you, / and become lost children. / Intercede for us dear Mother, / in obtaining pardon for our sins, / love for Jesus, / final perseverance, / and the grace always to call upon you, / Mother of Perpetual Help.

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[The following Act of Consecration is to be said the first week of the month]

**Presider:** Let us renew our consecration to the Blessed Mother:

**All:** Immaculate Virgin Mary, / Mother of God and Mother of the Church, / you are also our Mother of Perpetual Help. / With hearts full of Love for you, / we consecrate ourselves to your Immaculate Heart, / so that we may be your devoted children. / Obtain for us true sorrow for our sins, / and fidelity to the promise of our baptism.

We consecrate our minds and hearts to you, / that we may always do the will of our Heavenly Father. / We consecrate our lives to you, / that we may love God better, / and live not for ourselves, / but for Christ, your Son, / and that we may see Him and serve Him in others.

By this humble act of consecration, / dear Mother of Perpetual Help, / we pledge to model our lives on you, / the perfect Christian, / so that consecrated to you in life and in death, / we may belong to your Divine Son for all eternity.

Amen

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**Presider:** Let us stand now and unite with Christians of all ages in praising Mary and in committing ourselves to her powerful protection:

**All:** Hail Mary, / full of grace, / the Lord is with you. / Blessed are you among women, / and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, / Mother of God, / pray for us sinners now / and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

**Presider:** Pray for us, Oh holy Mother of God.

**All:** That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ.

**Presider:** Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, who gave us your Mother Mary, whose image we venerate, as a mother ready at every moment to help us, grant we beg you, that we who call on her help may always enjoy the fruit of your redemption. This we ask through You who live and reign forever and ever.

**All:** Amen

Final Hymn:

## **Mother of Christ**

Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
What shall I ask of thee?  
I do not sigh for the wealth on earth  
For the joys that fade and flee. But,  
Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
This do I long to see,  
The bliss untold, which thine arms enfold,  
The treasure upon thy knee.

Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
He was all in all to thee.  
In Bethlehem's cave, in Nazareth's home,  
In the hamlets of Galilee. So,  
Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
He will not say nay to thee.  
When He lifts his face, to thy sweet embrace,  
Speak to Him, Mother, of me.

Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
I toss on a stormy sea.  
Oh, lift thy Child as a beacon light  
To the port where I fain would be. And,  
Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ,  
This do I ask of thee:  
When the voyage is o'er, O stand on the shore,  
And show Him at last to me.