

Why Do a May Crowning of Mary?

“Since the month of May largely corresponds with the fifty days of Easter, the pious exercises practiced at this time could emphasize Our Lady's participation in the Paschal mystery (cf. John 19, 25-27), and the Pentecost event (cf. Acts 1, 14) with which the Church begins: Our Lady journeys with the Church having shared in the novum of the Resurrection, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The fifty days are also a time for the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation and of the mystagogy. The pious exercises connected with the month of May could easily highlight the earthly role played by the glorified Queen of Heaven, here and now, in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.” (from paragraph 191 of the Directory of Popular Piety and the Liturgy, www.vatican.va)

From Legionary of Christ Father Edward McNamara, professor of liturgy at the Regina Apostolorum university (taken from ewtn.com): “The May crowning is an act of popular devotion in honor of our Blessed Mother that is repeated every year. As the name indicates, it is usually done during the month of May, but in some countries, especially in the Southern Hemisphere, it is performed in other months especially in November.

“The custom of the May crowning fell out of favor in many places during the 1970s and '80s. Recently it has made a comeback along with Eucharistic adoration, the rosary, and many other traditional Catholic practices that serve to nurture the faith and devotion of the faithful. There is a lot of flexibility regarding the rite, and it can be adapted to many different circumstances and situations depending on whether the crowning is done in a parish, a school or classroom, or even in the family.

“If the statue of Mary to be crowned is not already in a fixed place, an image may be set up on some suitable support. The area may already be decorated with flowers, but those participating in the crowning may also process to the image carrying flowers and singing appropriate Marian hymns before placing their bouquets at Mary's feet. The rite may consist of hymns, prayers, and maybe an act of consecration to Our Lady.

“The climax of the celebration is the moment when the one of those present places a crown of flowers on Mary's head accompanied by a traditional hymn to the Blessed Mother. After the crowning, the person leading the event concludes with a suitable prayer. If he is a priest or deacon, he may impart a blessing.”

We will crown Our Lady, next Sunday, May 6th!