

Bringing The Church Home

A resource for praying the Rosary with your families during the month of May



St Edmund Arrowsmith
Catholic High School

Prepare the way of the Lord

May is often referred to as the Month of Mary – a month where Catholics across the world pay special devotions to our Blessed Mother as ‘Queen of the May’.

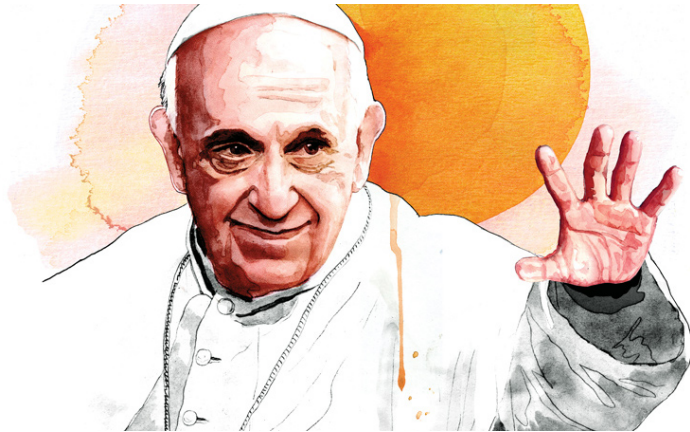
Such devotions include the singing of Marian hymns, reading scripture associated with Our Lady and praying the rosary.

This resource will guide you through these devotions if you wish to take part with your families throughout this month.

The following is the letter of the Holy Father sent by Pope Francis to all the faithful for the month of May 2020:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to



appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020

Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

FRANCIS

The Rosary:

According to Catholic tradition, the rosary was instituted by the Blessed Virgin Mary herself. In the 13th century, she is said to have appeared to St Dominic (the founder of the



Dominicans), gave him a rosary, and asked that Christians prayed the *Hail Mary*, *Our Father* and *Glory Be* prayers instead of the Psalms.

The prayers that compose the Rosary are arranged in sets of 10 Hail Mary's known as decades and five decades are recited per rosary – the rosary beads therefore are an aid towards saying the prayers in the proper sequence.

Whilst praying each Rosary, special thought is given to one of the Mysteries of the Rosary which recall the events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. There are twenty mysteries reflected upon in the Rosary and these are divided into five main mysteries which correspond to the five decades of the rosary.

The Mysteries of the Rosary:

Each mystery is traditionally prayed on specific days:

- Five **Joyful Mysteries** are prayed on Mondays and Saturdays. These events all have to do with Christ's birth
 - The Annunciation of the Lord to Mary – *Mary is chosen to be the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38)*
 - The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth – *Elizabeth recognizes Mary as the mother of our Lord (Luke 1:39-56)*
 - The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ – *Jesus is born and laid in a manger (Luke 2:1-21)*
 - The presentation of our Lord – *Jesus is presented in the Temple of Jerusalem (Luke 2:22-38)*
 - Finding Jesus in the Temple at age 12 – *Jesus is found discussing God's laws in the temple (Luke 2:41-52)*
- Five **Sorrowful Mysteries** relate to Jesus' suffering and death and are recalled on Tuesdays and Fridays.
 - The Agony of Jesus in the Garden – *Jesus prays when confronted with the sins of the world (Matthew 26:36-56)*
 - The Scourging at the Pillar – *Jesus is whipped before His execution (Matthew 27:26)*

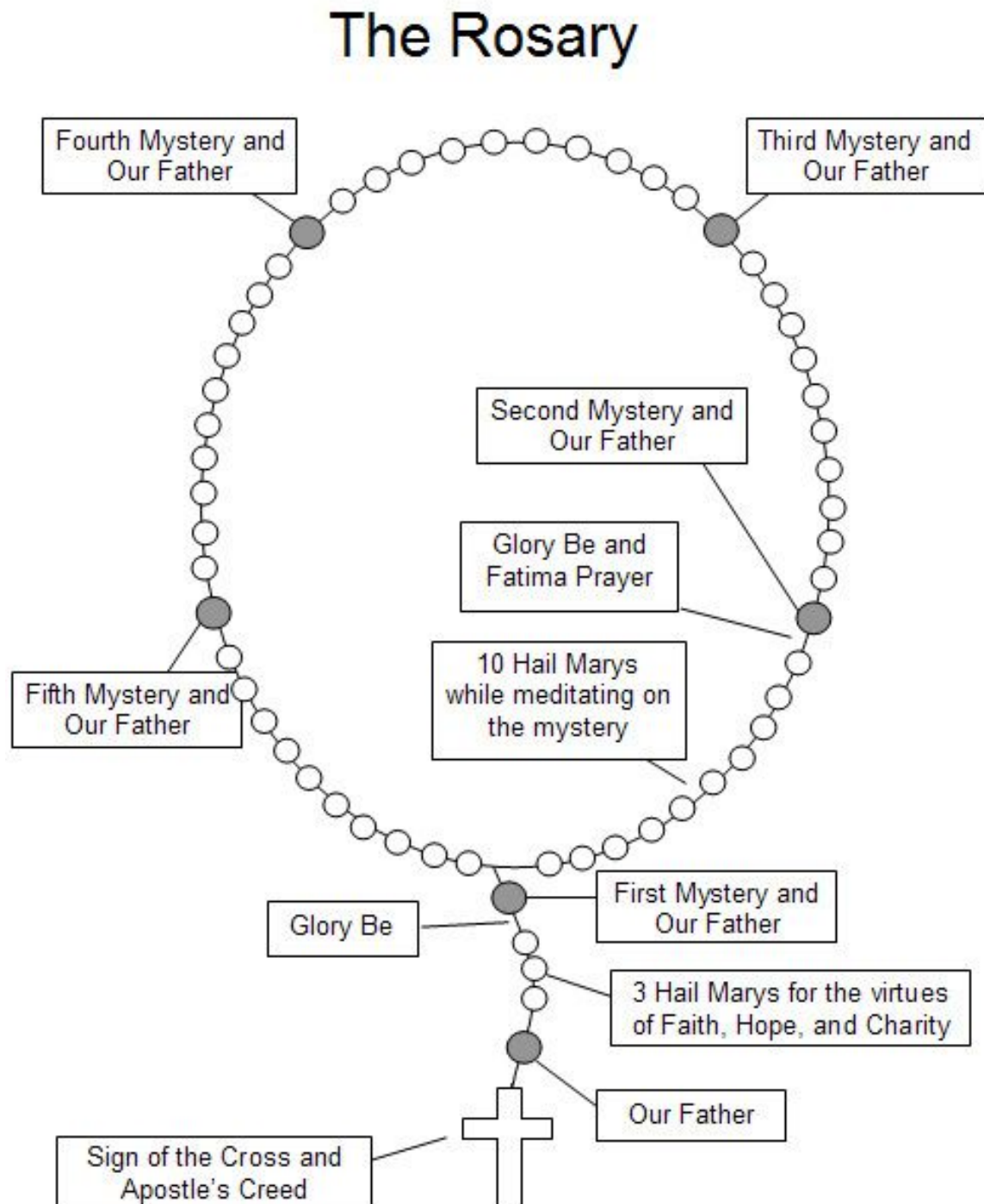
- Jesus is Crowned with Thorns – *Jesus is mocked with a painful crown of thorns (Matthew 27:27-31)*
- Jesus Carried the Cross – *Jesus carries the weight of our sins to His crucifixion (Matthew 27:32)*
- The Crucifixion of our Lord – *Jesus Christ dies to save all mankind (Matthew 27:33-56)*
- Five **Glorious Mysteries** remind the faithful of Jesus' resurrection and the glories of heaven and are prayed on Wednesdays and Sundays.
 - The Resurrection of Jesus Christ – *Jesus rises triumphant over death (John 20:1-29)*
 - The Ascension of Jesus to Heaven – *As Jesus ascends, He gives us a special task (Luke 24:36-53)*
 - The Descent of the Holy Spirit – *At Pentecost the Church is born (Acts 2:1-41)*
 - The Assumption of Mary into Heaven – *The Virgin Mary is gloriously assumed into heaven*
 - Mary is Crowned as Queen of Heaven and Earth – *Mary is honoured above all creatures*
- Five **Luminous Mysteries** are recalled on Thursdays and were instituted by Pope John Paul II in 2002.
 - The Baptism in the Jordan - *God proclaims Jesus is His Son (Matthew 3:13-16)*
 - The Wedding at Cana – *Jesus performs a surprising miracle at a wedding (John 2:1-11)*
 - The Proclamation of the Kingdom – *Jesus calls us to do something important (Mark 1:14-15)*
 - The Transfiguration – *Jesus is gloriously transformed (Matthew 17:1-8)*
 - The Institution of the Eucharist – *Jesus shares His Body and Blood for our salvation (Matthew 26)*



In addition to the scriptures, meditations on these mysteries can be found on the Catholic Online website: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/mystery.php>

How to Pray the Rosary:

The Rosary begins at the Crucifix with the Sign of the Cross



At the end of the Rosary, pray the Hail Holy Queen, final prayer and finish with the Sign of the Cross

Prayers of the Rosary:

1. On the crucifix make the sign of the cross and then pray the Apostles Creed

I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended into hell;
on the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the
Father Almighty;
from there He will come to judge the living and
the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.



2. On the next large bead, say the Our Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

3. On the following three small beads, pray three Hail Marys

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

4. On the chain, pray the Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

5. On the large bead, meditate on the first mystery and pray the Our Father

Pray the mysteries for each of the five decades of the rosary according to the day of the week (as above).

6. If your rosary has a centrepiece medallion, skip it. Then on the ten beads after that pray a Hail Mary on each bead; on the chain, pray a Glory Be

Although a decade is 10, these 12 prayers form a decade of the rosary.

Many Catholics add the Fatima prayer after the Glory Be and before the next Our Father:

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls into heaven, especially those who have most need of your mercy. Amen.

7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 four more times to finish the next four decades.

8. At the end of the Rosary, say the Hail Holy Queen and final Prayer



Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ*

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant we beseech thee, that meditating upon these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

9. Pope Francis in his letter to Catholics for May has shared with us two prayers to be said at the end of the Rosary that the Pope himself will also be praying daily. Let us join in unison with Pope Francis and Catholics world-wide by praying the following:

First Prayer:

O Mary,
You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the foot of the cross,
were united with Jesus' suffering,
and persevered in your faith.
"Protectress of the Roman people",
you know our needs,
and we know that you will provide,
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.
For he took upon himself our suffering,
and burdened himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.
We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God;
Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always
from every danger, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.



Second Prayer:

"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.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realise that we are all members of one great family and to recognise the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

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.

Sign of the Cross

Family Devotions:

The traditional devotion of a May Altar could be a lovely focal point for your families prayer time during this month. Praying the rosary with your family around this altar or in view of can really aid us spiritually. The May Altars traditionally consist of a Marian picture or statue, candles and decorated with many May flowers.

Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Ingruentium malorum* explains the beauty of this custom perfectly:

The custom of the family recitation of the Holy Rosary is a most efficacious means. What a sweet sight - most pleasing to God - when, at eventide, the Christian home resounds with the frequent repetition of praises in honour of the High Queen of Heaven! Then the Rosary, recited in the family, assembled before the image of the Virgin, in an admirable union of hearts, the parents and their children, who come back



from their daily work. It unites them piously with those absent and those dead. It links all more tightly in a sweet bond of love, with the most Holy Virgin, who, like a loving mother, in the circle of her children, will be there bestowing upon them an abundance of the gifts of concord and family peace.

Why not make your own paper flowers to decorate your May Altar or get creative?

Marian Hymns and Music:

“He who sings, prays twice” said St Augustus of Hippo – meaning that singing hymns adds to our praise and worship.

May is a wonderful time to rediscover the beauty of the Marian hymn!

Below are a selection of some traditional hymns you could sing as a family or read out as a prayer!

Bring Flowers of the Rarest:

Bring flow'rs of the fairest,
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,
From garden and woodland
And hillside and vale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
Our Glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
Rose of the vale.

[Chorus]

O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May,
O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May.

Our voices ascending,
In harmony blending,
Oh! Thus may our hearts turn
Dear Mother, to thee;
Oh! Thus shall we prove thee
How truly we love thee,
How dark without Mary
Life's journey would be. [Chorus]

O Virgin most tender,
Our homage we render,
Thy love and protection,
Sweet Mother, to win;
In danger defend us,



In sorrow befriend us,
And shield our hearts
From contagion and sin. [Chorus]

Of Mothers the dearest,
Oh, wilt thou be nearest,
When life with temptation
Is darkly replete?
Forsake us, O never!
Our hearts be they ever
As Pure as the lilies
We lay at thy feet. [Chorus]

Immaculate Mary:

Immaculate Mary! Our hearts are on fire,
that title so wondrous fills all our desire.

[Chorus]
Ave, ave, ave Maria! Ave, ave, ave Maria!



We pray for God's glory, the Lord's kingdom come!
We pray for his vicar, our father, and Rome. [Chorus]

We pray for our mother the church upon earth,
and bless, sweetest lady the land of our birth.
[Chorus]

For poor, sick, afflicted thy mercy we crave;
and comfort the dying thou light of the grave.
[Chorus]

In grief and temptation, in joy or in pain,
we'll ask thee, our mother, nor seek thee in vain.
[Chorus]

O bless us, dear lady, with blessings from heaven.
And to our petitions let answer be given. [Chorus]

In death's solemn moment, our mother, be nigh;
as children of Mary — help us when we die. [Chorus]

And crown thy sweet mercy with this special grace,
to behold soon in heaven God's ravishing face. [Chorus]

To God be all glory and worship for aye,
and to God's virgin mother an endless Ave. [Chorus]

As I kneel Before You:

As I kneel before you,
As I bow my head in prayer,
Take this day, make it yours
and fill me with your love.

[Chorus]
Ave Maria,
Gratia plena,
Dominus tecum,
Benedicta tu.

All I have I give you,
Every dream and wish are yours,
Mother of Christ, Mother of mine,
present them to my Lord.

[Chorus]

As I kneel before you,
And I see your smiling face,
Ev'ry thought, ev'ry word
Is lost in your embrace.

[Chorus]



A Marion prayer for your household

O sweet and gentle Lady, Immaculate Mother of God, we choose thee this day to be the Lady of this house.

Guard it, dear Mother from all harm and enemies.

\Protect this family, sweet Mary; watch over their coming and going.

Keep us all from sin and harm, and pray for us to God, that we may live in His service and depart this life in His grace.

Amen.

