

*"Even when I am old and gray,
do not forsake me, O God,
till I declare your power to the next generation,
your might to all who are to come." Psalm 71:18*

The Sts. Anna and Simeon Society



*"Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace,
according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples..." - Luke 2:29-31*

*"And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God,
and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." - Luke 2:38*

The Sts. Anna and Simeon Society is a Catholic society established to benefit from the spiritual wealth of the most cherished sector of our Catholic community. Its members' offerings are fuel for the church's evangelization efforts to redeem souls for Jesus, inspire holy vocations, enrich holy families, and console grieving parents.

*"Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you,
and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions,
for the sake of his body, which is the church." Col 1:24*

Sts. Anna and Simeon were the first to witness to Jesus and the Holy Family in the temple. They encouraged their vocations and consoled the sorrowful heart of our Blessed Mother. Our devout and prayerful senior and suffering Catholics are the heart of these efforts today by joining their prayers, sacrifices and sufferings to the sufferings of Christ for his Body, the Church.



Prayer to Unite Your Sufferings and Sacrifices to Jesus Christ

O Our Lady of Sorrows, who, along with St. Joseph, presented your son, Jesus, to the Lord in the temple witnessed the fulfillment of the prophecies of Sts. Anna and Simeon while you stood at the foot of the Cross.

Please unite my sufferings, prayers and sacrifices to yours.

Present them to your Son, the new Temple, for the Church's efforts to evangelize and redeem souls for Jesus. May these offerings inspire holy vocations, enrich holy families and console grieving parents. Amen.

Membership

The Sts. Anna and Simeon Society

- Who is eligible for enrollment? Anyone who is homebound, resides in a nursing facility or who suffers from chronic illness or those who choose to “pray and offer their trials and sufferings” for His Body, the Church. To enroll go to – www.stsannaandsimeon.org
- Members are recognized and prayed for through monthly Masses offered in their parish as a means of acknowledging the great gift of their life to the church and the even greater gift of their powerful prayers and sacrifices for the church now.
- The parish will provide The Holy Eucharist a minimum of once a week, when possible, and when able, help them with their needs. This becomes a tool for an evangelistic outreach.

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter--when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.

Isaiah 58:6-8

- Each member receives a Seven Sorrows of Mary scapular blessed by Bishop Joseph Siegel, a Seven Sorrows Rosary made especially for them, a Rosary, a membership booklet, and a certificate of membership to display in their home.
- Each member agrees to continue to pray, when able, their normal routine of prayer in a manner that is comfortable to them.
- Each member makes an “Intentional Offering” of their prayers, sufferings, sacrifices and trials, joined to the sufferings of Jesus, for the success of the evangelization efforts to redeem souls for Jesus, inspire holy vocations, enrich holy families, and console grieving parents.
- Upon their passing, if they choose, the Canticle of Simeon would be read or sung at each member’s funeral Mass.

OPTIONAL PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES

- Make spiritual visits to the Blessed Sacrament to console the lonely and suffering heart of Jesus.

“When you awake in the night, transport yourself quickly, in spirit before the Tabernacle, saying:

‘Behold, my God, I come to adore You, to praise, thank, and love you, and to keep you company with all the Angels.’” St. John Vianney

- Join in spirit, the Holy sacrifice of the Mass which is always being offered somewhere in the world.

CANTICLE OF SIMEON (Luke 2: 29-32)

“Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled: My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.”

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit,
A broken and a contrite heart;
These, O God, You will not despise.” Psalm 51:17*

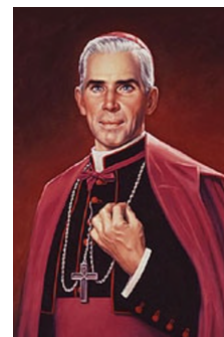
“They shall bear fruit even in old age;
vigorous and sturdy shall they be,
declaring how just is the Lord,
my rock, in whom there is no wrong.” *Psalm 92:15-16*

**For more information or
to join the Sts. Anna and Simeon Society
Please go to www.stsannaandsimeon.org**



Wasted Pain

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen



There is nothing more tragic in all the world than wasted pain. Think of how much suffering there is in hospitals, among the poor and bereaved. Think also of how much of that suffering goes to waste.

How many of these lonesome, suffering, abandoned, crucified souls are saying with our Lord at the moment of Consecration, "This is my body. Take it!"? Yet, this is what we should be saying at that second. "Here is my body, take it! Here is my soul, my will, my energy, my strength, my poverty, my wealth – ALL that I have. It is yours. Take it! Consecrate it! Offer it! Offer it to the Heavenly Father with Yourself, in order that He, looking down on this great Sacrifice, may see only You, His Beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

Transmute the poor bread of my life into Your Life. Thrill the wine of my wasted life into Your divine Spirit. Unite my broken heart with Your Heart. Change my cross into a crucifix. Let not my abandonment and my sorrow go to waste. Gather up the fragments and, as the drop of water is absorbed by the wine at the Offertory of the Mass, let my life be absorbed in You. Let my little cross be entwined with Your great cross, so that I may purchase the joys of everlasting happiness in union with You.

Consecrate these trails of my life which would go unrewarded unless united with You. Transubstantiate me so that, like bread which is now Your Body, and wine which is now Your Blood, I, too, may be wholly Yours.

I care not if the species remain or that, like the bread and wine, I may seem to all earthly eyes the same as before. My station in life, my routine duties, my work, my family – all these are but the species of my life which may remain unchanged. But the substance of my life, my soul, my will, heart – transubstantiate them! Transform them wholly into Your service so that all may know how sweet is the love of Christ!"



The Value of Suffering

St. Therese of the Child Jesus

O Lord, You do not like to make us suffer, but You know it is the only way to prepare us to know You as You know Yourself, to prepare us to become like You. You know well that if You sent me but a shadow of earthly happiness, I should cling to it with all the intense ardor of my heart, and so You refuse me even this shadow...because You wish that my heart be wholly Yours.

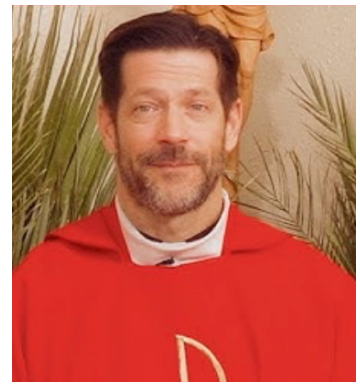
Life passes so quickly that it is obviously better to have a most splendid crown and a little suffering, than an ordinary crown and no suffering. When I think that, for a sorrow borne with joy, I shall be able to love You more for all eternity, I understand clearly that if You gave me the entire universe, with all its treasures, it would be nothing in comparison to the slightest suffering. Each new suffering, each pang of the heart, is a gentle wind to bear to You, O Jesus, the perfume of the soul that loves You; then You smile lovingly, and immediately make ready a new grief, and fill the cup to the brim, thinking the more the soul grows in love, the more it must grow in suffering too.

*What a favor, my Jesus, and how You must love me to send me suffering! Eternity itself will not be long enough to bless You for it. Why this predilection? It is a secret which You will reveal to me in our heavenly home on the day when
You will wipe away all our tears.*

*Lord, You ask me for this suffering, this sorrow...You need it for souls, for my soul. O Jesus, since You have made me understand that You would give me souls through the Cross, the more crosses I meet, the more ardent my thirst for suffering becomes. I am happy not to be free from suffering here; suffering united with love is the only thing that seems desirable to me
in this vale of tears.*

Putting On Christ's Passion

From Fr. Mike Schmitz's Homily - April 24, 2024



I'm invited not just to believe the story; I believe that I have been invited to enter into the story. What is missing is this insight. It says your suffering is sanctifying, that your pain united to Christ has power. We sometimes think that it's the teaching, it's the learning, it's the preaching, it's the healing that changes the world, that's how we participate in God's salvation of the world. Jesus has revealed something more powerful to us. He's revealed to us that we are called to enter into the story by uniting our sufferings to Christ.

For centuries in the in the history of the life of the church there are monks and nuns who have entered into the convents and into the monasteries. They have prayed and they have offered up their ordinary daily sufferings and that has been the fuel for the conversion of the world. Those hidden monks, those hidden nuns, who have lived these hidden lives of ordinary suffering but united to the cross of Jesus Christ have transformed the world and has been the fuel for the gospel to go out into all corners of the world. But now there are fewer monasteries, now there are fewer convents and there are more nursing homes, and we need to allow these nursing homes to become the new convents and the new monasteries. If you're stuck at home this is the new convent, this is the new monastery, this is the new opportunity. It's the new moment for all of us to discover that my pain is powerful united with Jesus, that my suffering is not senseless when it's united to the cross. This is true about your situation as well. You might find yourself stuck in a bed unable to get out of bed, to unite that suffering with the sufferings of Jesus Christ literally will save lives.

You might experience a great and powerful loneliness in this moment. To unite your loneliness to the loneliness of Jesus Christ has the capacity to transform this world. Accept every moment as from God's hand to surrender and give him access to every aspect of your life and take action knowing that your suffering is salvific. Your pain does have power!



"Together we can do something beautiful for God."

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta only knew too well the immense value of joining our sufferings to the sufferings of Christ to help others. She maintained that her sick and suffering co-workers did much more offering their sufferings and sacrifices than she did running on her feet.

"Your suffering & prayers will be the chalice in which we the working members will pour in the love of souls we gather round. Therefore you are just as important and necessary for the fulfillment of our aim. – To satiate His Thirst we must have a chalice – & you & the others – men, women, children, old & young, poor & rich – are all welcome to make the chalice. In reality you can do much more while on your bed of pain than I running on my feet, but you & I together can do all things in Him who strengthens us.

Cf. Philipians 4:13

...Everyone and anyone who wishes to become a Missionary of Charity – a carrier of God's love – is welcome, but I want specially the paralyzed, the crippled, the incurables to join, for I know they will bring to the feet of Jesus many souls. You see, my dear sister, our work is a most difficult one. If you are with us -- praying & suffering for us & the work – we shall be able to do great things for love of Him – because of you.

...Personally I feel very happy & a new strength has come in my soul at the thought of you & others joining the Society spiritually. Now with you & others doing the work with us, what would we not do, what can't we not do for Him? As for you, your life is like a burning light which is being consumed for souls..."

(Mother Teresa to Jacqueline de Decker, January 13, 1953)

Pope St. John Paul II
Salvifici Doloris
On the Meaning of Human Suffering



“Suffering is present in the world in order to release love.”

The Redeemer suffered in place of man and for man. Every man has *his own share in the Redemption*. Each one is also *called to share in that suffering* through which the Redemption was accomplished. He is called to share in that suffering through which all human suffering has also been redeemed. In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, *Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption*. Thus each man, in his suffering, can also become a sharer in the redemptive suffering of Christ.” (Salvifici Doloris, 19)

“It is suffering, more than anything else, which clears the way for the grace which transforms human souls.” Suffering, more than anything else, makes present in the history of humanity the powers of the Redemption. In that "cosmic" struggle between the spiritual powers of good and evil, spoken of in the Letter to the Ephesians, human sufferings, united to the redemptive suffering of Christ, *constitute a special support for the powers of good*, and open the way to the victory of these salvific powers. (27)

Suffering, which is present under so many different forms in our human world, is also present in order *to unleash love in the human person*, that unselfish gift of one's "I" on behalf of other people, especially those who suffer. The world of human suffering unceasingly calls for, so to speak, another world: the world of human love; and in a certain sense man owes to suffering that unselfish love which stirs in his heart and actions. (29)



*When you can't go to Holy Mass,
send your Guardian Angel in your place
by saying this prayer.....*



**O Holy Angel at my side, go to the church for me,
Kneel in my place at Holy Mass, where I desire to be.
At Offertory, in my stead, take all I am and own,
And place it as a sacrifice, upon the altar throne.
At Holy Consecration's bell, adore with seraph's love
My Jesus hidden in the Host, come down from Heav'n above.
Then pray for those I dearly love,
and those who cause me grief,
That Jesus' Blood may cleanse all hearts,
and suffering souls relieve.
And when the priest Communion takes,
oh, bring my Lord to me,
That His sweet Heart may rest on mine, and I His temple be.
Pray that this Sacrifice Divine, may mankind's sins efface;
Then bring me Jesus' blessing home,
the pledge of every grace.
In the Name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**



Act of Spiritual Communion

***My Jesus, I believe that You are present
in the Most Holy Sacrament.***

***I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.***

***Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.***

***I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.***

Prayers of the Holy Rosary

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

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.

Hail Mary

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.

Glory be to the Father

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

Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

Hail, Holy Queen

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 towards 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 worthy of the promises of Christ.

Closing Prayers

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 by 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.

How to Pray the Rosary

- 1. Make the Sign of the Cross and say the Apostles Creed*** (On the Crucifix)
- 2. Say the Our Father.*** (On the first bead)
- 3. Say three Hail Marys.*** (On next 3 beads)
- 4. Say the Glory be to the Father*** then...
- 5. Announce the First Mystery;*** then say the ***Our Father*** (All 3 on next single bead)
- 6. Say ten Hail Marys,*** while meditating on the Mystery. (On next 10 beads)
- 7. Say the Glory be to the Father.***
- 8. Say the Fatima Prayer*** after each decade.
- 9. Announce the Second Mystery:*** then say the ***Our Father.*** (All on next single bead)
Repeat 6-8 and continue with the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Mysteries..
- 10. Say the Hail, Holy Queen and Closing Prayers*** on the medal after the five decades are completed.

The Mysteries of the Rosary and the Virtues

Joyful Mysteries

Traditionally prayed on Mondays and Saturdays

1. The Annunciation: The Archangel Gabriel appears to Mary and asks her to be the mother of the Savior.

Virtue: Humility

2. The Visitation: Mary visits Elizabeth, who the Archangel told her was expecting a baby.

Virtue: Love of neighbor

3. The Nativity: Jesus is born in a stable.

Virtue: Detachment

4. The Presentation: Joseph and Mary take Jesus to the Temple for His presentation.

Virtue: Obedience

5. The Finding in the Temple: Joseph and Mary find the child Jesus in the Temple after searching for Him for three days.

Virtue: Greater commitment and devotion to Jesus

Luminous Mysteries

Traditionally prayed on Thursdays.

1. The Baptism of Jesus: Jesus is baptized in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist.

Virtue: Openness to the Holy Spirit

2. The Wedding at Cana: Jesus performs His first public miracle at the wedding feast by turning water into wine.

Virtue: Mary's intercession

3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven: Jesus proclaims the Kingdom of God.

Virtue: Christian witness and conversion

4. The Transfiguration: Jesus is transfigured on the mountain in front of His apostles Peter, James, and John.

Virtue: Courage to bear the cross

5. The Institution of the Eucharist: Jesus institutes the Eucharist at the Last Supper—the first Mass.

Virtue: Greater love for the Holy Eucharist.

Sorrowful Mysteries

Traditionally prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays.

1. The Agony in the Garden: Jesus sweats blood and suffers in the garden after the Last Supper.

Virtue: Trust in God

2. The Scourging at the Pillar: Jesus is cruelly scourged.

Virtue: Purity; mortification.

3. The Crowning with Thorns: The soldiers put a crown of thorns on Jesus' head.

Virtue: Moral courage; fortitude.

4. The Carrying of the Cross: Jesus carries His cross to Calvary.

Virtue: Perseverance in trials.

5. The Crucifixion and death of Jesus on the Cross: Jesus is crucified, suffers for three hours, and dies on the cross.

Virtue: Forgiveness for others.

Glorious Mysteries

Traditionally prayed on Sundays and Wednesdays.

1. The Resurrection: Jesus rises from the dead three days after His crucifixion.

Virtue: Faith

2. The Ascension: Jesus ascends into Heaven forty days after His Resurrection.

Virtue: Hope

3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit descends as tongues of fire upon the disciples and Mary nine days after Jesus' Ascension into Heaven.

Virtue: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

4. The Assumption of Mary: Mary is assumed into Heaven.

Virtue: To Jesus through Mary.

5. The Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth: Mary is crowned Queen of Heaven and earth.

Virtue: Final perseverance.

May we grow closer to God and His Mother as we pray the Mysteries of the Rosary and work to cultivate the virtues in our hearts.

Prayers of the Seven Sorrows Rosary

Sign of the Cross:

In the name of The Father, and The Son, and The Holy Spirit. Amen.

Introductory Prayer:

My God, I offer You this Rosary for Your glory, so I can honor your Holy Mother, the Blessed Virgin, so I can share and meditate upon her suffering. I humbly beg you to give me true repentance for all my sins. Give me wisdom and humility, so that I may receive all the indulgences contained in this prayer.

Act of Contrition:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend You, my God, You Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Hail Mary:

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.

***Most Merciful Mother, remind us always
about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.***

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.

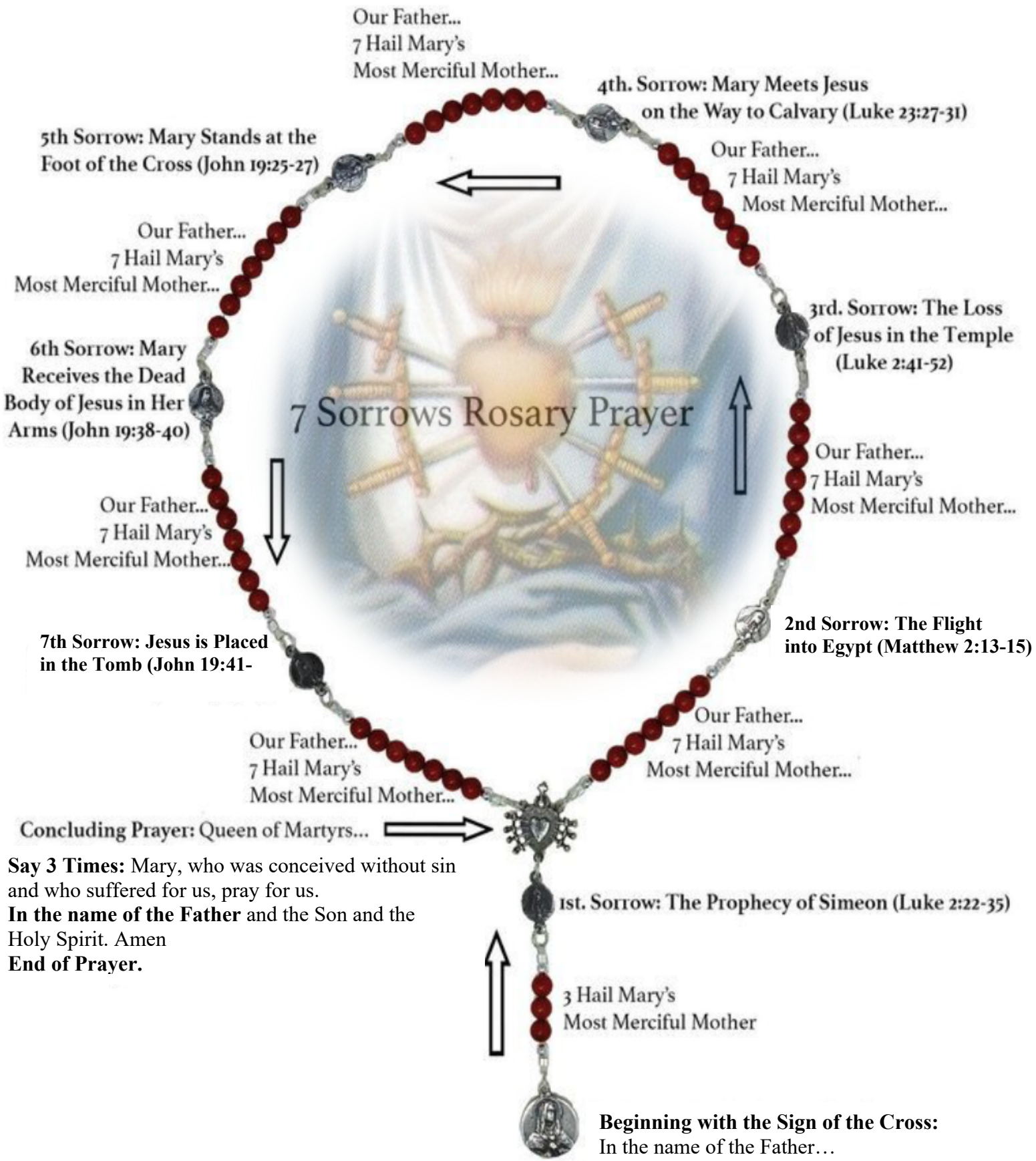
Concluding Prayer:

Queen of Martyrs, your heart suffered so much. I beg you, by the merits of the tears you shed in these terrible and sorrowful times, to obtain for me and all the sinners of the world the grace of complete sincerity and repentance. Amen.

Three times, say:

Mary, who was conceived without sin and who suffered for us, pray for us.

7 Sorrows Rosary Prayer



The Surrender Novena

The Words of Jesus to Fr. Dolindo Ruotolo

Day 1

Why do you confuse yourselves by worrying? Leave the care of your affairs to me and everything will be peaceful. I say to you in truth that every act of true, blind, complete surrender to me produces the effect that you desire and resolves all difficult situations.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 2

Surrender to me does not mean to fret, to be upset, or to lose hope, nor does it mean offering to me a worried prayer asking me to follow you and change your worry into prayer. It is against this surrender, deeply against it, to worry, to be nervous and to desire to think about the consequences of anything. It is like the confusion that children feel when they ask their mother to see to their needs, and then try to take care of those needs for themselves so that their childlike efforts get in their mother's way. Surrender means to placidly close the eyes of the soul, to turn away from thoughts of tribulation and to put yourself in my care, so that only I act. Saying "You take care of it."

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 3

How many things I do when the soul, in so much spiritual and material need turns to me, looks at me and says to me; "You take care of it," then closes its eyes and rests. In pain you pray for me to act, but that I act in the way you want. You do not turn to me, instead, you want me to adapt to your ideas. You are not sick people who ask the doctor to cure you, but rather sick people who tell the doctor how to. So do not act this way, but pray as I taught you in the Our Father: "Hallowed be thy Name", that is, be glorified in my need. "Thy kingdom come", that is, let all that is in us and in the world be in accord with your kingdom. "Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven", that is, in our need, decide as you see fit for our temporal and eternal life. If you say to me truly: "Thy will be done" which is the same as saying: "You take care of it," I will intervene with all my omnipotence, and I will resolve the most difficult situations.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 4

You see evil growing instead of weakening? Do not worry, close your eyes and say to me with faith: "Thy will be done, you take care of it." I say to you that I will take care of it, and that I will intervene as does a doctor and I will accomplish miracles when they are needed. Do you see that the sick person is getting worse? Do not be upset, but close your eyes and say, "You take care of it." I say to you that I will take care of it, and that there is no medicine more powerful than my loving intervention. By my love, I promise this to you.

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O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 5

And when I must lead you on a path different from the one you see, I will prepare you; I will carry you in my arms; I will let you find yourself, like children who have fallen asleep in their mother's arms, on the other bank of the river. What troubles you and hurts you immensely are your reason, your thoughts and worry, and your desire at all costs to deal with what afflicts you.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 6

You are sleepless; you want to judge everything, direct everything and see to everything and you surrender to human strength, or worse- to men themselves, trusting in their intervention, this is what hinders my words and my views. Oh, how much I wish from you this surrender, to help you and how I suffer when I see you so agitated! Satan tries to do exactly this: to agitate you and to remove you from my protection and to throw you into the jaws of human initiative. So, trust only in me, rest in me, surrender to me in everything.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 7

I perform miracles in proportion to your full surrender to me and to your not thinking of yourselves. I sow treasure troves of graces when you are in the deepest poverty. No person of reason, no thinker, has ever performed miracles, not even among the saints. He does divine works whosoever surrenders to God. So, don't think about it anymore, because your mind is acute and for you it is very hard to see evil and to trust in me and to not think of yourself. Do this for all your needs, do this all of you and you will see great continual silent miracles. I will take care of things. I promise this to you.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 8

Close your eyes and let yourself be carried away on the flowing current of my grace; close your eyes and do not think of the present, turning your thoughts away from the future just as you would from temptation. Repose in me, believing in my goodness, and I promise you by my love that if you say, "You take care of it," I will take care of it all; I will console you, liberate you and guide you.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Day 9

Pray always in readiness to surrender, and you will receive from it great peace and great rewards, even when I confer on you the grace of immolation, of repentance and of love. Then what does suffering matter? It seems impossible to you? Close your eyes and say with all your soul, "Jesus, you take care of it." Do not be afraid, I will take care of things and you will bless my name by humbling yourself. A thousand prayers cannot equal one single act of surrender, remember this well. There is no novena more effective than this.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything! (10 times)

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary - Mother, I am yours now and forever. Through you and with you I always want to belong completely to Jesus.

From Sorrow to Joy

By Fr. Daniel Brandenburg, L.C.



How can joy and sorrow go together? After all, you don't usually find grieving widows laughing, nor newlyweds weeping. Joy and sorrow are so far removed from each other on the spectrum of human emotion that it seems illogical to stick them together. Yet there is a deep mystery here to unlock.

Your life has sorrows. You are meant for joy. Facing the reality of sorrow, we can either live in denial of the pain or dig deeper for meaning...and then find joy. When contemplating the seven sorrows of the mother of Jesus, we can discover what so many Christians over the centuries have found: in Mary's sorrows there is a model of how to discover happiness in the midst of suffering.

The seven sorrows include (1) the prophecy of Simeon, (2) the flight into Egypt, (3) the loss of Jesus in the Temple, (4) her meeting with Jesus on the way to Calvary, (5) the death of Jesus on the Cross, (6) the piercing of Jesus with a lance and his placement in Mary's arms, and (7) Jesus' burial in the tomb. All of these sorrows are experiences we can easily understand. Each stem from Mary's love of Jesus, and amazingly, while all these trials begin in sorrow, none end in sorrow.

Mary's sorrows reveal key principles for dealing with trials in our lives:

- Joy is a fruit of love, and joy comes from knowing that we are loved.
- Love makes us vulnerable to suffering, but we cannot protect ourselves from suffering by avoiding love. We love more when suffering comes.
- Suffering and sorrow without meaning, without God, lead to despair.
- When we suffer with Christ and for Christ, we unlock the transcendence that leads to meaning, purpose, completion, and joy. It brings us to a deep level of intimacy with Christ, who chose to suffer for each of us.
- Suffering well can lead to greater and deeper joy.
- Jesus is the cause of our joy and Mary leads us to him.
- When we use our freedom wisely, we focus our attention on concrete acts of love and dedication instead of our particular sufferings.

Let us pray. Virgin Mary, Mother of Sorrows, but also Mother of Joy, you wrapped your Son in love before wrapping Him in the shroud. Teach me to let go and trust in the Father's plan. Show me how to hold on to faith, hope and love. Guide me on the Way – your Son – toward the life He has in store for those who love Him and keep his commandments. Mary, I renew again today my trust in the Father. By following your example, guide me through sorrows to deeper joy in my life, and to the happiness of eternal life forever in heaven. Amen.

For more information, please refer to Fr. Brandenburg's book, *Journey to Joy: Reflections on the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, published by the Regnum Christi Center in Atlanta, Georgia [<https://www.regnumchrististore.com/>].



**Servant of God Mother Mary Magdalen Bentivoglio, O.S.C.
Patroness of the Sts. Anna and Simeon Society**

Anna Marie Bentivoglio was born in 1834, the 12th of 16 children of Count Domenico and Angela Bentivoglio. Their close friendship with Pope Pius IX reflected the importance of their Catholic faith. Annetta, as she was fondly called, loved the Lord from an early age and dreamed of martyrdom. She possessed both a mischievous spirit and a stubborn streak that would equip her to fulfill God's plan for her life.

After losing her parents as a young adult, Blessed Pope Pius IX assumed responsibility for Annetta and her younger sister. He entrusted them to the care of the cloistered Poor Clare nuns in Rome, where they found their vocations and became Sister Mary Magdalene, OSC, and Sister Maria Constanza, OSC.

Observing the Rule of Saint Clare, Sister Mary Magdalene spent the following 10 years embracing a daily martyrdom of her strong will. In 1875, a Franciscan sister from Minnesota requested that Pope Pius IX send Poor Clare nuns to America. Their life of prayer, sacrifice, and penance would provide the spiritual support needed to strengthen the active work she was doing. He sent Sister Mary Magdalene and her sister.

After a month at sea, they arrived in New York and were instructed to remain there by the accompanying priest. To Sister Mary Magdalene's dismay the Archbishop rejected her offer to start a contemplative community in New York, stating that their order was incompatible with the active life of Americans.

Finally, word came from Rome instructing the penniless sisters to seek a Bishop who would accept them. Lost in a foreign country and not knowing the language, they traveled from diocese to diocese. Remaining true to their vows, they suffered immense poverty and repeated rejections because no one recognized the value of their life of enclosure, prayer, and sacrifice.

The Poor Clares were finally accepted and able to establish roots in Omaha. Soon after, Mother Mary Magdalen was asked to establish foundations in New Orleans and then in Evansville, Indiana. Throughout her journey, she endured cold, hunger, and persecution until her death in Evansville in 1905. By 2000, over 20 Poor Clare monasteries with a total membership of 350 nuns traced their roots to her labors.

Her incorrupt body is buried in St. Joseph Cemetery in Evansville, IN.
Her cause for beatification was accepted by the Vatican in 1969.

Servant of God, Mother Mary Magdalen Bentivoglio, please pray for us!