



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
MARIAN PRAYER PROGRAM

2013
2014



His Holiness Pope Francis cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing
From the Vatican June 29, 2015
+ P. P. S.
Bishop Apostolic Vicar

INTRODUCTION

The Knights of Columbus Immaculate Conception Marian Prayer Program honors the central place the Blessed Virgin Mary holds in the life of our Order and the historic devotion that has been afforded to the Immaculate Conception by the Church in North America. The first cathedral in the New World north of Mexico was named for the Immaculate Conception, and the bishops of the United States named Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception as the patroness of the nation.

The image used for this prayer program is a reproduction of a painting of Mary as the Immaculate Conception that hangs above the main altar of the Basilica-Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Québec. It was painted in 1925 by Sister Mary of the Eucharist, a Sister of Charity of Québec, to replace the 18th-century painting destroyed during a fire at the cathedral in 1922.

In 1664, Bishop François de Laval designated the cathedral as the first parish church of Québec and named it Notre-Dame de l'Immaculée Conception (Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception). At the time, the Diocese of Québec encompassed all the North American possessions of France, from the Atlantic Coast in Canada to the plains of the far West, plus the Mississippi Valley and Louisiana territories — an area far larger than all of Europe. The cathedral celebrates its 350th anniversary in 2014.

A jubilee year will run from Dec. 8, 2013, to Dec. 28, 2014, to mark the cathedral's historic status as the first parish and first cathedral of Canada, and its role as the mother church to all parishes in Canada and the United States. A newly constructed Holy Door, made possible by a gift from the Knights of Columbus, will be open for pilgrims to enter during the jubilee celebrations.

The inauguration ceremony of the Immaculate Conception Marian Prayer Program was conducted Aug. 7, 2013, during the 131st Supreme Convention in San Antonio, Texas. It

was presided over by Supreme Chaplain Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore, the premier See of the United States, with remarks by Québec Archbishop Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, I.S.P.X., Primate of Canada.

At the inauguration ceremony, Archbishop Lacroix addressed all those assembled, "May Our Lady accompany our Church and all the members of our Order all over the world. Like her, we want to be open to the Holy Spirit and available to accomplish God's plan in today's world. And following Our Lady's example, we want to leave with haste as she did, to share the Good News of the Gospel to a world that needs the hope and the truth and the love of Jesus Christ."

Also taking part in the ceremony were state deputies from throughout the Order, who each processed with a framed reproduction of the painting. The images were blessed by Pope Francis on June 29, 2013, the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul, through auspices of the Almoner of His Holiness, Archbishop Guido Pozzo. Under the guidance of the state deputies, these framed images will be brought on a pilgrimage from council to council throughout each jurisdiction as part of the Orderwide prayer program.

This is the 16th prayer program of the Knights of Columbus to use a sacred image as its centerpiece. The first such program was held in 1979 with images of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas. In preparation for the 1982 centennial of the Order, the second prayer program was launched, which also highlighted the Immaculate Conception. Over the years, the Blessed Mother has also been honored by her Knights under her various titles, including: Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of Czestochowa, Our Lady of Pochaiv, Our Lady of the Assumption, Our Lady of the New Advent, Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Charity. Images of the Holy Family and Divine Mercy have also be featured. These Orderwide prayer programs have brought together more than 16 million people at some 140,000 prayer services conducted at local councils and parishes.



PRAYER SERVICE

*Please stand. During the Opening Hymn,
the blessed image of the Immaculate Conception
may be carried in procession and put in a place of honor.*

Opening Hymn

Immaculate Mary



1 Im - mac - u - late Mar - y, thy prais - es we _ sing.
2 In heav - en, the bless - ed thy glo - ry pro - claim;
3 Thy name is our pow - er, thy vir - tues our light,
4 We pray for our moth - er, the Church up - on _ earth;



Who reign - est in splen - dor with Je - sus our _ King.
On earth, we thy chil - dren in - voke thy fair name.
Thy love is our com - fort, thy plead - ing our _ might.
And bless, dear - est La - dy, the land of our _ birth.



Refrain
A - ve, A - ve, A - ve Ma - ri a,



A - ve, A - ve, Ma - ri - - - a.

Greeting

Leader: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: As we gather under the protection of Mary,
recalling her as the Immaculate Conception,
let us beseech God to enter our hearts as we seek
to live out her message of love and fidelity.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray.

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of
the Blessed Virgin prepared a worthy dwelling for
your Son, grant, we pray, that, as you preserved
her from every stain by virtue of the death of
your Son, which you foresaw, so, through her
intercession, we, too, may be cleansed and
admitted to your presence.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who
lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Please be seated.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Revelation 12:1-6a; 10ab

A reading from the Book of Revelation

A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she labored to give birth. Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads were seven diadems. Its tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman about to give birth, to devour her child when she gave birth. She gave birth to a son, a male child, destined to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was caught up to God and his throne. The woman herself fled into the desert where she had a place prepared by God.

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have salvation and power come, and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Anointed One."

The Word of the Lord.

R Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 45:10, 11, 12, 16

R The queen stands at your right hand, arrayed in gold.

The queen takes her place at your right hand
in gold of Ophir. **R**

Hear, O daughter, and see; turn your ear,
forget your people and your father's house. **R**

So shall the king desire your beauty;
for he is your lord. **R**

They are borne in with gladness and joy;
they enter the palace of the king. **R**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:20-27

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order:

Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for "he subjected everything under his feet."

The Word of the Lord.

R Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

Gospel

Luke 1:39-56

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
℟ Glory to you, O Lord.

Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, and has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever." Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

The Gospel of the Lord.

℟ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Please be seated.

*If a bishop, priest or deacon is leading the prayer service,
he may preach a homily. Alternatively,
or if a laymen is leading the prayer service,
the following text may be read aloud.*

Homily

Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis
Solemnity of the Assumption
Aug. 15, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

At the end of its Constitution on the Church, the Second Vatican Council left us a very beautiful meditation on Mary Most Holy. Let us just recall the words referring to the mystery we celebrate today: “the Immaculate Virgin preserved free from all stain of original sin, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, when her earthly life was over, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things.” Then toward the end, there is: “the Mother of Jesus in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven is the image and the beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise, she shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come.” In the light of this most beautiful image of our Mother, we are able to see the message of the biblical readings that we have just heard. We can focus on three key words: struggle, resurrection, hope.

The passage from Revelation presents the vision of the struggle between the woman and the dragon. The figure of the woman, representing the Church, is, on the one hand, glorious and triumphant and yet, on the other, still in travail. And the Church is like that: if in heaven she is already associated in some way with the glory of her Lord, in history she continually lives through the trials and challenges which the conflict between God and the evil one, the perennial enemy, brings. And in the struggle which the disciples must confront — all of us, all the disciples of Jesus, we must face this struggle — Mary does not leave them alone: the Mother of Christ and of the Church is always with us. She walks with us always, she is with us. And in a way, Mary shares this dual condition. She has of course already entered, once and for all, into heavenly glory. But this does not mean that she is distant or detached from us; rather Mary accompanies us, struggles with us, sustains Christians in their fight against the forces of evil. ...

Listen carefully — the Rosary. Do you pray the Rosary every day? ... Really? Well, prayer with Mary, especially the Rosary, has this “suffering” dimension, that is of struggle, a sustaining prayer in the battle against the evil one and his accomplices. The Rosary also sustains us in the battle.

The second reading speaks to us of resurrection. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, insists that being Christian means believing that Christ is truly risen from the dead. Our whole faith is based upon this fundamental truth which is not an idea but an event. Even the mystery of Mary's Assumption, body and soul, is fully inscribed in the resurrection of Christ. The Mother's humanity is “attracted” by the Son in his own passage from death to life. Once and for all, Jesus entered into eternal life with all the humanity he had drawn from Mary; and she, the Mother, who followed him faithfully throughout her life, followed him with her heart, and entered with him into eternal life which we also call heaven, paradise, the Father's house.

Mary also experienced the martyrdom of the Cross: the martyrdom of her heart, the martyrdom of her soul. She lived her Son's Passion to the depths of her soul. She was fully united to him in his death, and so she was given the gift of resurrection. Christ is the first fruits from the dead and Mary is the first of the redeemed, the first of “those who are in Christ.” She is our Mother, but we can also say that she is our representative, our sister, our eldest sister, she is the first of the redeemed, who has arrived in heaven.

The Gospel suggests to us the third word: hope. Hope is the virtue of those who, experiencing conflict — the struggle between life and death, good and evil — believe in the resurrection of Christ, in the victory of love. We heard the Song of Mary, the Magnificat: it is the song of hope, it is the song of the People of God walking through history. It is the song many saints, men and women, some famous, and very many others unknown to us but known to God: moms, dads, catechists, missionaries, priests, sisters, young people, even children and grandparents. These have faced the struggle of

life while carrying in their heart the hope of the little and the humble. Mary says, "My soul glorifies the Lord" — today, the Church too sings this in every part of the world. This song is particularly strong in places where the Body of Christ is suffering the Passion. For us Christians, wherever the Cross is, there is hope, always. If there is no hope, we are not Christian. That is why I like to say: do not allow yourselves to be robbed of hope. May we not be robbed of hope, because this strength is a grace, a gift from God that carries us forward with our eyes fixed on heaven. And Mary is always there, near those communities, our brothers and sisters, she accompanies them, suffers with them, and sings the Magnificat of hope with them.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, with all our heart let us too unite ourselves to this song of patience and victory, of struggle and joy, that unites the triumphant Church with the pilgrim one, earth with heaven, and that joins our lives to the eternity toward which we journey. Amen.

Silent Reflection

*After a period of silence,
please stand for the intercessions.*

Intercessions

Leader: For the Church, the sacrament of salvation, that she may continue to witness boldly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who was made known to us through the Virgin Mary. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord.

℟ Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for Supreme Pontiff Emeritus Benedict XVI, and all bishops, that their ministry may bring all men and women together as one Church in Jesus Christ. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

Leader: For all priests, religious and deacons, that those chosen by God for a religious vocation may seek holiness in their daily duties of work and prayer, and that more young men and women may respond to God's call. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

Leader: For married couples and families, and for single people, that they may be witnesses to the truths of the Catholic faith and the beauty of God's plan for life and love. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

Leader: For all those who serve us in elected office, that they will enact laws and policies that uphold the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death, the dignity of marriage as the permanent, faithful and fruitful union of a man and a woman, and religious liberty for all. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

Leader: For the cause for canonization of Venerable Michael McGivney, founder of the Knights of Columbus, that this holy priest may soon be raised to the honors of the altar. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

Leader: For the New Evangelization, that Knights and all Catholics may bring the Good News anew into the world by word and deed. Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, we pray to the Lord. **℟**

THE MOST HOLY ROSARY

Please sit or kneel.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Apostles' Creed

All: I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

(bow for the following two lines)

*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. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Leader: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

All: **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

Leader: Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All: **Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Repeat three times.

Glory Be

Leader: Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

All: **As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

Joyful Mysteries (*prayed on Mondays and Saturdays*)

1. The Annunciation of the Lord
2. The Visitation of Mary
3. The Nativity of the Lord
4. The Presentation of the Lord in the Temple
5. The Finding of the Lord in the Temple

Luminous Mysteries (*prayed on Thursdays*)

1. The Baptism of the Lord in the Jordan
2. The Manifestation of the Lord at the Wedding of Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration of the Lord
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

Sorrowful Mysteries (*prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays*)

1. The Agony of the Lord in the Garden
2. The Scourging of the Lord at the Pillar
3. The Crowning of the Lord with Thorns
4. The Lord's Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion of the Lord

Glorious Mysteries (*prayed on Sundays and Wednesdays*)

1. The Resurrection of the Lord
2. The Ascension of the Lord
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Mary as Queen of the Angels and the Saints

The leader announces the mystery on which to reflect during the next decade. After five decades, proceed to the Hail, Holy Queen.

Lord's Prayer

Leader: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

All: **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

Leader: Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All: **Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Repeat ten times.

Glory Be

Leader: Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

All: **As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

Hail, Holy Queen

All: 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 valley 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.

Leader: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

All: That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Prayer

Leader: Let us pray.

All: 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 on 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.

If kneeling, please be seated.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Leader: Lord, have mercy on us.

All: Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the World,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, One God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary

R/ Pray for us...

Holy Mother of God **R/**

Mother Most Admirable **R/**

Holy Virgin of Virgins **R/**

Mother of Good Counsel **R/**

Mother of Christ **R/**

Mother of Our Creator **R/**

Mother of Divine Grace **R/**

Mother of Our Savior **R/**

Mother Most Pure **R/**

Virgin Most Prudent **R/**

Mother Most Chaste **R/**

Virgin Most Venerable **R/**

Mother Inviolable **R/**

Virgin Most Renowned **R/**

Mother undefiled **R/**

Virgin Most Powerful **R/**

Mother Most Amiable **R/**

Virgin Most Merciful **R/**

Virgin Most Faithful
R/ Pray for us...

Mirror of Justice **R/**

Seat of Wisdom **R/**

Cause of Our Joy **R/**

Spiritual Vessel **R/**

Vessel of Honor **R/**

Singular Vessel of Devotion **R/**

Mystical Rose **R/**

Tower of David **R/**

Tower of Ivory **R/**

House of Gold **R/**

Ark of the Covenant **R/**

Gate of Heaven **R/**

Morning Star **R/**

Health of the Sick **R/**

Refuge of Sinners **R/**

Comforter of the Afflicted **R/**

Help of Christians **R/**

Queen of Angels **R/**

Queen of Patriarchs **R/**

Queen of Prophets **R/**

Queen of Apostles **R/**

Queen of Martyrs **R/**

Queen of Confessors **R/**

Queen of Virgins **R/**

Queen of all Saints **R/**

Queen conceived
without original sin **R/**

Queen assumed into
Heaven **R/**

Queen of the Most Holy
Rosary **R/**

Queen of Peace **R/**

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,
that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

INVOCATION OF MARY'S MATERNAL PROTECTION

*This ancient Marian prayer is the oldest
extant hymn to the Blessed Virgin Mary:*

Sub Tuum Præsidium

Leader: We fly to thy protection,
O holy Mother of God.

**All: Despise not our petitions
in our necessities,
but deliver us always
from all dangers,
O glorious and blessed Virgin.**

Amen.

Repeat three times.

Fiat Prayer

Prayer at Loreto (Adapted)

By Pope Benedict XVI

Oct. 4, 2012

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Mary, Mother of the “Yes,” you listened to Jesus, and know the tone of his voice and the beating of his heart. Morning Star, speak to us of him, and tell us about your journey of following him on the path of faith.

Mary, who dwelt with Jesus in Nazareth, impress on our lives your sentiments, your docility, your attentive silence, and make the Word flourish in genuinely free choices.

Mary, speak to us of Jesus, so that the freshness of our faith shines in our eyes and warms the heart of those we meet, as you did when visiting Elizabeth, who in her old age rejoiced with you for the gift of life.

Mary, Virgin of the Magnificat, help us to bring joy to the world and, as at Cana, lead every family involved in service of others to do only what Jesus will tell them.

Mary, Queen of the Family, Gate of Heaven, help us to lift our eyes on high. We want to see Jesus, to speak with him, to proclaim his love to all.

Amen.



PRAYER FOR POPE FRANCIS

Leader: Let us pray for the Pope.

All: Lord, source of eternal life and truth,
give to your shepherd,
our Holy Father Pope Francis,
a spirit of courage and right judgment,
a spirit of knowledge and love.

**By governing with fidelity
those entrusted to his care, may he,
as successor of the Apostle Peter and Vicar of Christ,
build your Church into a sacrament
of unity, love and peace for all the world
and may we, in faithful communion with him,
always seek to further the pastoral mission
of your Church.**

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please stand.

The Angelus

Leader: The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

All: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Leader: Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

**All: Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**



Leader: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

All: Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Leader: Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

**All: Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**



Leader: *(all genuflect)* And the Word was made flesh.

All: And dwelt among us.

Leader: Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee:
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

**All: Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now,
and at the hour of our death. Amen.**



Leader: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

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

Leader: Let us pray.

**All: Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into
our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of
Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message
of an angel, may, by his Passion and Cross, be
brought to the glory of his resurrection.**

Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Conclusion

*Angelus Address
of His Holiness Pope Francis
XXVII World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro
July 28, 2013*

Leader: The Immaculate Virgin intercedes for us in heaven as a good mother who watches over her children. May Mary teach us by her life what it means to be a missionary disciple. Every time we pray the Angelus, we recall the event that changed the history of mankind for ever. When the Angel Gabriel proclaimed to Mary that she would become the Mother of Jesus the Savior, even without understanding the full significance of that call, she trusted God and replied: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." But what did she do immediately afterwards? On receiving the grace of being the Mother of the Incarnate Word, she did not keep that gift to herself; with a sense of responsibility, she set off from her home and went in haste to help her kinswoman Elizabeth, who was in need of assistance; she carried out an act of love, of charity, and of practical service, bringing Jesus who was in her womb. And she did all this in haste!

There, my dear friends, we have our model. She who received the most precious gift from God, as her immediate response sets off to be of service and to bring Jesus. Let us ask Our Lady to help us too, to give Christ's joy to our families, our companions, our friends, to everyone. Never be afraid to be generous with Christ. It is worth it! Go out and set off with courage and generosity, so that every man and every woman may meet the Lord.

*If a bishop or priest is leading the prayer service,
he may conclude by giving a blessing.
All depart in silence.*

APPENDIX

What Catholics Believe & Cherish ***About Mary: A Summary***

From *Mary's Journey* by Rev. Louis J. Cameli

God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel according to St. Luke describes the angel Gabriel bringing God's invitation to Mary. This is called the Annunciation, the great announcement of the birth of the Savior of the human family, the Savior who would free us from sin and death. In response to God's call, Mary generously and wholeheartedly gives her loving assent by saying, "Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Traditionally, this response has been called her *fiat*, the Latin word for "let it be done."

Mary does not conceive Jesus with a human father. She conceives him as a virgin by the power of God's Holy Spirit. She remains a virgin always. That is why in Christian tradition she is called the Blessed Ever-Virgin Mary.

She gives birth to her child. She presents him in the temple of Jerusalem. She presents him to a waiting world as she holds him out to the Wise Men who came in search of the newborn King of the Jews. She protects him by fleeing to Egypt with him and his foster father, Joseph, when King Herod threatens to kill him. She cares for him as he grows in wisdom and grace in the town of Nazareth.

Mary is present to Jesus in his public ministry. As he begins his ministry and offers his first great sign, changing water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana, she is there. She is the one who tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:1-11). She continues to speak that same message to the followers of Jesus today, "Do whatever he tells you." Her whole life pointed to her Son, Jesus Christ.

Mary stands at the foot of the Cross. Jesus says to his beloved disciple, who represents all the disciples who would follow him, "Behold, your mother." In those words, Jesus gives Mary to all of us who follow Jesus as our Mother.

The last scene of Mary in the Bible is in the Acts of the Apostles. She is gathered in prayer with the Apostles waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the birth of the Church. She is the Mother of the Church who continues to pray and intercede for us.

Across the years, the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has come to understand more clearly and affirm more surely certain privileges of Mary. These privileges belong to her because of her unique role in bringing Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, into the world. In her unique role, she represented the whole human family in accepting the Savior into the world. These privileges and truths are dogmas or sure teachings of the faith taught and professed by the Church. There are four principal dogmas.

The first is the virginal conception of Jesus. Mary conceived Jesus and brought him forth into the world as a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit. The second is that she is the Mother of God. This does not mean that she is before God. Rather, it means that she gave birth to Jesus who is true God and true man, one person who has both a human and a divine nature. In giving birth to him, she can truly be called Mother of God. The third dogma is her Immaculate Conception. This means that God prepared her for her great role by preserving her from original sin from the very first moment of her conception in view of the merits of her Son, Jesus the Redeemer. She is, as we so often pray, "full of grace." The fourth dogma is that of her Assumption into heaven. At the end of her earthly life, God drew her to himself. He brought (assumed) her into heaven body and soul. She shares in the fullness of redemption, body and soul, which we hope will be ours one day.

We cherish Mary because she is our mother: watchful, attentive and protecting. She also intercedes or prays for us.

And we depend on her prayers for us, as we often say, “Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.” She also prays with us, especially in the Eucharist, when we join our worship on earth with the worship of heaven. Mary offers us an example and a path of living out our discipleship of Jesus. Her free and complete surrender to God’s will, her generous availability to whatever God asked of her, her sharing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus — all these offer us a pattern for our discipleship. She is both a uniquely privileged person and someone like us, who helps us to live more and more fully in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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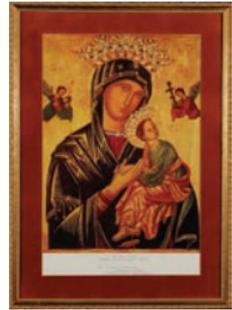
HISTORY OF PRAYER PROGRAM SUBJECTS



1979-80
Our Lady of Guadalupe



1981-82
Immaculate Conception



1984-85
Our Lady of
Perpetual Help



1986-87
Our Lady of
Czestochowa



1988-89
Our Lady of Pochaiv



1990-91
Our Lady of the
Assumption



1993-94
The Holy Family



1995-96
Our Lady of Guadalupe



1997-98
Our Lady of the
New Advent



1999-2000
Millennium Cross



2000-01
Our Lady of Guadalupe



2002-03
Our Lady of the Rosary



2003-04
Divine Mercy



2007-08
Our Lady of Charity



2011-13
Our Lady of Guadalupe



2013-14
Immaculate Conception

*You are all beautiful,
Mary,
and there is in you
no stain of original sin.*



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