

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

SAT MAY 10	St. Damien de Veuster, Priest
TUE MAY 13	Our Lady of Fatima
MON MAY 26	St. Phillip Neri, Priest

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

May 2025 – May begins with honoring St. Joseph the Worker (May 1st) and ends with the Visitation of Our Lady to St. Elizabeth (May 31st). May is also spent entirely in the Easter season basking in the glory of the Risen Christ. This month gives us a unique opportunity to renew our commitment to our faith and open our hearts to receive many spiritual blessings.

SUB TUUM PRAESIDIUM

In a library in Manchester, England, there is torn piece of a papyrus document that contains evidence of an ancient prayer to Our Lady. It is written in Greek, but we are familiar with its Latin name, *Sub Tuum Praesidium*, which is translated into English as “Under Thy Mantle”, emphasizing Mary’s protection of the Church.

The fragment of the document was written around the year 250 AD, which means that the prayer had been formally prayed by the faithful for a very long time before that. The Emperor Constantine hadn’t even been born yet!

This prayer also describes Our Lady by the tremendously descriptive Greek name, “Theotokos” (“God-bearer”), a title which also predated the most significant early councils of the Church. More than a century later, the Council of Ephesus (431 AD) formally defined Mary as “Theotokos” in order to combat the heresy of Nestorius who asserted that Mary was only the mother of the *human* Jesus.

No, she was/is the Mother of God, as we recite in the Hail Mary. It was precisely the devotion of the faithful to Our Lady’s divine motherhood that motivated the Church fathers to pronounce this teaching as a way of safeguarding Christ’s divinity.

As a testimony to its enduring popularity, this prayer is used in the liturgies of numerous Eastern and Western

Rites (Byzantine, Ambrosian, Ukrainian, Slavonic, Armenian, and Roman) and has been set to music by such greats as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven.

The prayer is a true gem of the Church’s Tradition, not only because of its brevity and doctrinal clarity, but also because it seems to come directly from the praying heart of the Church.

SUB TUUM PRAESIDIUM

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

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

Amen.

BIBLE BASICS



Acts 6:6-7 “They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. The word of God continued to spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly.”

1 Timothy 3:15 “But if I should be delayed, you should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.”

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

In the month of May we should aim to deepen our devotion to Mary. Our challenge this month is to make sure Our Lady is well-represented in our homes, not only through pious religious images but more importantly through tangible prayer. The recitation of the family Rosary is a time-honored tradition. The family that prays together stays together.



The Four Marks of the Church

Throughout the centuries, there has always been a need to clearly identify the Church that Christ founded. Four marks (characteristics or qualities) identify the Catholic Church as the one, true Church, and they are familiar to us. We recite them in the Creed at Mass every week when we say that the Church is *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic*:

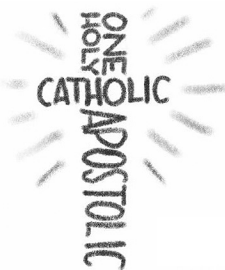
One – The Church is united as a single body of believers under one pope, and all share the same faith in teaching and practice.

Holy – The Church is holy because it was founded by Jesus Christ and teaches holy doctrine. It is also holy in its sacraments and saints.

Catholic – The Church is universal (the Greek word is “catholic”) because it embraces all peoples and cultures throughout time and teaches the fullness of the truth.

Apostolic — The Church is apostolic because it was founded on the 12 Apostles. This same apostolic authority has been handed down from bishop to bishop throughout the ages.

How blessed we are that Christ has given us the Four Marks to be able to recognize His Church when we see it! And by the way, of all the churches on earth, only the Roman Catholic Church has *all four* marks.



— THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS —



“I would not believe in the gospel myself if the authority of the Catholic Church did not move me to do so.” ~ **St. Augustine**

“There are not a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.” ~ **Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen**

— CATECHISM CONNECTION —



811 – These four characteristics, inseparably linked with each other, indicate essential features of the Church and her mission. The Church does not possess them of herself; it is Christ who, through the Holy Spirit, makes his Church one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, and it is he who calls her to realize each of these qualities.

CALENDAR OF FAITH | May

MAY 1	St. Joseph the Worker
MAY 2	St. Athanasius, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
MAY 3	Sts. Philip and James, Apostles
MAY 10	St. Damien de Veuster, Priest and St. John of Avila, Priest
MAY 12	Sts. Nereus and Achilleus, Martyrs
MAY 13	Our Lady of Fatima
MAY 14	St. Matthias, Apostle
MAY 15	St. Isidore the Farmer
MAY 18	St. John I, Pope and Martyr
MAY 20	St. Bernardine of Siena, Priest
MAY 21	St. Christopher Magallanes and companions, Mexican Martyrs
MAY 22	St. Rita of Cascia, Holy Woman
MAY 25	St. Gregory VII, Pope; Venerable Bede, Priest and Doctor
MAY 26	St. Phillip Neri, Priest
MAY 27	St. Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop
MAY 31	The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Featured Prayer for May

Mary’s Magnificat

(Luke 1:46-55)

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, He 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.

(This prayer is taken from the Prayers in the Pew Family Edition Prayer Card. Please refer to our website www.sitstandkneel.com for the online version of this newsletter and all our prayer cards.)

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Helping Catholics to Learn, Live, and Love their Faith.

