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# FROM THE CHAPLAINCY

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## Dear Woodrose Parents

As we begin the month of May, the month of Mary, let us go to her with the simplicity and confidence of children to show our love for her and to ask her to be with us as we live through these difficult times of the world wide pandemic brought about by the Covid-19 virus.

Just as there are many ways of showing love, there are also varied ways of showing our filial love for Mary, the Mother of God and our mother. Among the many ways are of course the centuries old Marian prayers so much loved by the Christian faithful. Among these are the Holy Rosary which the Pope in his letter encouraged us to pray together in the family.

Below is the Pope's letter that includes the two prayers we could say at the end of the Rosary. We could choose any of the two prayers. We also share with you the letter of the Prelate of Opus Dei, Msgr. Fernando Ocáriz, for the month of May.

May is also the month to go on a Marian pilgrimage. Given the lockdown, we could go on a virtual pilgrimage to various Marian shrines all over the world like in Guadalupe, Mexico, Fatima in Portugal, Lourdes in France and Torreciudad in Spain.

Lastly, let us join our bishops and our civil authorities as they reconsecrate our nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on May 13. Many countries will do the same during this month of May. We pray that with Mary, all of us would always stay safe and sane.

## LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO 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  
Pope Francis*

### **First Prayer to Our Lady**

○ 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.*

### **The 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 realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize 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.

## Letter of the Prelate of Opus Dei for May 2020

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

We are about to begin the month that traditionally in the Church we dedicate to our Lady. In Mary's motherly mediation we find security and also strength in order to continue bringing her Son's consolation to those in need of it. What confidence it gives us to address our Mother, as did Saint Josemaria, with that invocation: *refugium nostrum et virtus*. In the circumstances we are now experiencing all over the world, Mary is our strength and our refuge.

In many countries, the beginning of May will find us still in our homes, hardly able to go anywhere. This situation will perhaps make it easier for us to live the customs of Marian piety more as a family, including the Rosary and even the May pilgrimage. Although in these circumstances we may not be able physically to visit sanctuaries or shrines, we can always visit these places virtually with the digital means technology places at our disposal. And we can even invite our relatives, friends and acquaintances to accompany us.

I especially ask you that, in these visits to our Mother, you keep very much in mind the intentions that Pope Francis expressed to us in his letter on April 25th. There he invites us to rediscover the practice of the family rosary and to continue asking for the end of the pandemic and for our Lady's protection for those who are suffering most intensely.

Your Father blesses you with all his affection,



Rome, 29 April 2020