



# May Month of Mary

**Hail, holy Mother,  
thou who didst bring forth the King  
who rules heaven and earth  
forever and ever.**

## Highlights Prayer of the Month

### **An Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Holy Mary, Mother of God and Virgin, I choose thee this day for my queen, patron, and advocate, and firmly resolve and purpose never to abandon thee, never to say or do anything against thee, nor to permit that aught be done by others to dishonor thee. Receive me, then, I conjure thee, as thy perpetual servant; assist me in all my actions, and do not abandon me at the hour of my death. Amen. — *St. John Berchmans*

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### **Devotions to the Mother of God**

*Regina Coeli (Queen of Heaven)*    *The Rosary*    *The "Akathistos" Hymn*

*Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Litany of Loretto)*    *The Brown Scapular* -- Fr. William G. Most

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### **The Mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary**



#### **Joyful**

(Monday / Saturday)

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

## **Sorrowful**

(Tuesday / Friday)

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

## **Glorious**

(Sunday / Wednesday)

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. The Coronation

## **Luminous**

(Thursday)

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

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## Documents

*Act of Consecration of the World to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*— John Paul II

*Act of Entrustment to the Blessed Virgin Mary*

*On Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (Marialis Cultus)* — Paul IV

*On Reciting The Rosary (Ingruentium Malorum)* — Pius XII

*St. Louis de Montfort's Consecration to Mary* — Fr. William G. Most

*The Necessity and Extent of Devotion to Mary* — Fr. William G. Most

*The Holy Spirit And Mary* — Dwight P. Campbell

## Websites

[EWTN](#)

[Catholic Encyclopedia](#)

[Mary Gardens Explored](#)

[Legion of Mary](#)

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### ***Our Life, Our Sweetness and Our Hope***



The month of May ([Overview](#) - [Calendar](#)) is the "month which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady," and it is the occasion for a "moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world [pay] to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God's mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance" (Paul VI: Encyclical on the [Month of May](#), no. 1).

This Christian custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century. In this way, the Church was able to Christianize the secular feasts which were wont to take place at that time. In the 16th century, books appeared and fostered this devotion.

The practice became especially popular among the members of the Jesuit Order — by 1700 it took hold among their students at the Roman College and a bit later it was publicly practiced in the Gesu Church in Rome. From there it spread to the whole Church.

The practice was granted a partial indulgence by Pius VII in 1815 and a plenary indulgence by Pius IX in 1859. With the complete revision of indulgences in 1966 and the decreased emphasis on specific indulgences, it no longer carries an indulgence; however it certainly falls within the category of the First General Grant of Indulgences. (A *partial indulgence* is granted to the faithful who, in the performance of their duties and in bearing the trials of life, raise their mind with humble confidence to God, adding — even if only mentally — some pious invocation.

Excerpted from *Enchiridion of Indulgences*.

## The Month of Mary and the Popes



The pious practice of honoring Mary during the month of May has been especially recommended by the Popes. Pius XII made frequent reference to it and in his great Encyclical *on the Sacred Liturgy* (*Mediator Dei*) characterized it as one of "other exercises of piety which although not strictly belonging to the Sacred Liturgy, are nevertheless of special import and dignity, and may be considered in a certain way to be an addition to the liturgical cult: they have been approved and praised over and over again by the Apostolic See and by the Bishops" (no. 182).

Paul VI wrote a short encyclical in 1965 using the [Month of Mary](#) devotion as a means of obtaining prayers for peace. He urged the faithful to make use of this practice which is "gladdening and consoling" and by which the Blessed Virgin Mary is honored and the Christian people are enriched with spiritual gifts" (no. 2).

In May of 2002 Pope John Paul II said, "Today we begin the month dedicated to Our Lady a favorite of popular devotion. In accord with a long-standing tradition of devotion, parishes and families continue to make the month of May a 'Marian' month, celebrating it with many devout liturgical, catechetical and pastoral initiatives!"

## Devotion to Mary

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Church and therefore the example, as well as the guide and inspiration, of everyone who, in and through the Church, seeks to be the servant of God and man and the obedient agent of the promptings of the Holy Spirit.



The Holy Spirit, as Pope Leo XIII reminded us, is the soul of the Church: All the activity and service of the members of the Church, beginning with the supreme participation of the Blessed Mother in the work of the Church, is vivified by the Holy Spirit as the body, in all its activities, is vivified by its soul. The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, Advocate, and Comforter which Christ Himself sent to be our consolation in the sorrowful mysteries of life, our source of moderation in the joyful mysteries of life, our added principle of exaltation in the glorious mysteries of life.

So, He was for the Blessed Mother; so also He is for the least of us; so also He is for the rest of the Church, even for those who are its unconscious but conscientious members.

Wherever there is faith there is the example of Mary, because she lived by faith as the Scriptures remind us....

If, then, piety is the virtue which binds us to the sources of all life, to God, to our parents, to the Church, to Christ, certainly Christian piety binds us, in grateful love, to Mary — or our acceptance of Christ and of the mystery of our kinship with Him is imperfect, partial, and unfulfilled.

— *Cardinal John Wright*

## Mary and Our Spiritual Life



In our observance of the Marian month we should take into account the season of the Liturgical Year which largely corresponds with the fifty days of Easter. Our pious exercises could emphasize Our Lady's participation in the Paschal mystery and in Pentecost with which the Church begins. The pious exercises connected with the month of May can easily highlight the earthly role played by the glorified Queen of Heaven, here and now, in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

The following practices which are recommended by the Magisterium are offered as suggestions for honoring Our Lady during Her month.

### **The Regina Coeli**

The ecclesial community addresses this antiphon to Mary for the Resurrection of her Son. It adverts to, and depends on, the invitation to joy addressed by Gabriel to the Lord's humble servant who was called to become the Mother of the saving Messiah.

### **The Rosary**

Also called the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Rosary is one of the most excellent prayers to the Mother of God. Thus, "the Roman Pontiffs have repeatedly exhorted the faithful to the frequent recitation of this biblically inspired prayer which is centered on contemplation of the salvific events of Christ's life, and their close association with the Virgin Mother."

## **Litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

These consist of a long series of invocations to Our Lady, which follow in a uniform rhythm, thereby creating a stream of prayer characterized by insistent praise and supplication.

## **Consecration and Entrustment to Mary**

The Roman Pontiffs have frequently expressed appreciation for the pious practice of "consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary" and the formulas publicly used by them are well known.

Louis Grignon de Montfort is one of the great masters of the spirituality underlying the act of "consecration to Mary". He "proposed to the faithful consecration to Jesus through Mary, as an effective way of living out their baptismal commitment."

## **The Brown Scapular and other Scapulars**

The scapular is an external sign of the filial relationship established between the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Queen of Mount Carmel, and the faithful who entrust themselves totally to her protection, who have recourse to her maternal intercession, who are mindful of the primacy of the spiritual life and the need for prayer.

## **Medals**

These are witnesses of faith and a sign of veneration of the Holy Mother of God, as well as of trust in her maternal protection.

The Church blesses such objects of Marian devotion in the belief that "they help to remind the faithful of the love of God, and to increase trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary."

## **The "Akathistos" Hymn**

In the Byzantine tradition, one of the oldest and most revered expressions of Marian devotion is the hymn of the "Akathistos" — meaning the hymn sung while standing. It is a literary and theological masterpiece, encapsulating in the form of a prayer, the universally held Marian belief of the primitive Church.

Excepted from the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*



## The Litany of Loretto

[The Litany of the Blessed Virgin](#)—also called the Litany of Loreto—is one of the many Marian litanies, or praises of Mary, composed during the Middle Ages. The place of honor it now holds, in the life of the Church, is due its faithful use at the shrine of the Holy House at Loreto, which, according to tradition, was the small cottage-like home where the Holy Family had lived and which was miraculously transported by angels, in 1291, from the Holy Land to its present location in Loreto. It was definitely recommended by Pope Clement VII and approved by Sixtus V in 1587, and all other Marian litanies were suppressed, at least for public use.

Its forty-nine titles (fifty, or fifty-one, or even more, in some versions: with "Mother of the Church" and "Mother of Mercy" and being the 'official' 'newcomers' in recent times and which are included on the Vatican website version) and invocations set before us Mary's exalted privileges, her holiness of life, her amiability and power, her motherly spirit and queenly majesty. Reflection on the titles of the litany, therefore, will unfold before us a magnificent picture of our heavenly Mother, even though we know little about her life.

In form, the Litany of Loreto is composed on a fixed plan common to several Marian litanies already in existence during the second half of the fifteenth century, which in turn are connected with a notable series of Marian litanies that began to appear in the twelfth century and became numerous in the thirteenth and fourteenth. The Loreto text had, however, the good fortune to be adopted in the famous shrine, and in this way to become known, more than any other, to the many pilgrims who flocked there during the sixteenth century. The text was brought home to the various countries of Christendom, and finally it received for all time the supreme ecclesiastical sanction.

Sixtus V, who had entertained a singular devotion for Loreto, by the Bull "Reddituri" of 11 July, 1587, gave formal approval to it, as to the litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, and recommended preachers everywhere to propagate its use among the faithful.

Excerpted from [The History of the Litany of Our Lady](#)

