



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.

Pope Francis at Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020  
Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

### **FIRST PRAYER**

O 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.

## 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.

## IF WE REMEMBER

Yvonne Abraham, in her recent article in the Boston Globe, wonders if this Easter Season could be the beginning of something extraordinary:

*“What would it be like if the things that have become so important to us during this pandemic remained so? How would our lives look if what we truly value remained “frozen” right here – if we were always kind to each other; and as worried about the world as we are today?*

*It seems we would do just about everything differently. We would place a much higher value on teachers – not to mention caregivers and hospital personnel. Our hands would always be so clean, we could eat off them.*

*We would definitely have more respect – and pay higher wages – for the service workers who deliver our basic needs: grocery store clerks and others who work to bring food to the tables; drivers who keep delivering packages; trash haulers, maintenance workers, and others who put themselves at risk to keep us going. We would really “see” the servers and the restaurant staff and give them the dignity they deserve – we would leave bigger tips.*

*We would use what we have and waste less. We would spend more time connected to family and friends – and be more keenly aware of our massive good fortune to have them! We would hug longer and linger in each other’s presence.*

*We would speak to our neighbors – even the ones we don’t really know.*

*We would be more grateful for all we have, and more outraged at what others do not. We would – we will – be happier on the other side of this....*

*If we remember....”*

In the most difficult challenges of life, Christ – the Good Shepherd – speaks amid the turmoil and fear. If we listen with open hearts, we can hear Christ speaking in those small acts of kindness, forgiveness, and justice that eventually get us beyond those obstacles. In this familiar Gospel, Jesus calls himself the “gate” – the passage-way through which we step from our incomplete imperfect reality into the perfect wholeness – holiness – of God. May we learn the lessons of compassion and justice that these demanding days are teaching us – and may we step into the days to come with a greater sense of appreciation for the humanity we all share

## SAINT ROCCO—PRAY FOR US

Saint Rocco (AKA "Saint Roch") was born in Montpellier, France in the 14th century to a noble family. Legend has it that his mother had been barren until she prayed to the Virgin Mary. Saint Rocco's birth was made all the more miraculous by a birthmark resembling a red cross on his chest.

His parents died when he was twenty years old, at which point he gave away all his worldly possessions and set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. At the time, Italy was suffering from a plague epidemic. Saint Rocco cared selflessly for the sick, effecting many miraculous cures by making the sign of the cross or laying his hands on them.

In Piacenza, however, he finally fell ill. He was driven out of town and into the forest, where he made a hut for himself out of leaves and branches. Miraculously, a spring arose near his hut to provide him with water and a local dog began bringing him bread to eat. The dog would also lick his wounds clean, eventually healing him.

He returned to Montpellier looking like a wild man with unkempt hair and a long beard. Unrecognized by the townspeople, he was thrown in prison as a spy. He



remained there for five years before dying, unwilling to reveal his identity out of humility. The townspeople recognized the birthmark across his chest, and he was venerated as a folk saint almost immediately after his death. But he was not officially canonized until the 17th century. He is traditionally depicted in religious art with a wound on his thigh, a dog (often seen bringing him a loaf of bread), pilgrim's hat and staff. Saint Rocco is venerated in the Roman Catholic Church as the protector against the plague and all contagious diseases. Let us pray for St. Rocco's intercession for protection from the Coronavirus.

### **Saint Rocco Prayer for Healing and Protection**

During your travels on earth,  
God worked His miraculous healing  
through your intercession.

Many were cured of the plague  
from your prayers and the sign of the cross.

We implore you Saint Rocco  
to intercede before the throne of God.  
Send forth a blessing of protection from  
Contagious diseases and the Coronavirus.

Bless us Heavenly Father with your healing grace.  
We ask this in the name of your Divine Son, Jesus.

Amen

Stained glass window photographed inside Saint Francis Xavier  
Catholic Church, Newark, NJ

**PLEASE HELP US KEEP  
THESE LISTS UP TO DATE**

**PRAY FOR THE ILL OF THE PARISH**

Martin Coughlin, Loretta Stephens, Harry Marcoux, John Keane, Tris Windle, David Cousins, Lynne Scalia, Alex Podeszwa, Thomas Stone, Nick Bartick, Pam Hedlund, Len Hedlund, Greg Morongell, Nora Gould, Edan Pearl, Anne Caruso, John M. Pollard, Peter Cruckshank, Bill Hannon, Ivy Davis, Maddy Hayes, Clare Stevenson, Joseph Nosari, Vincent Lencvewski, Jeffrey Wolfgang, Joan Ouellette, Bev Sarazin, Tyler Benscoter, Agnes Wolfgang, Fr. Paul Smith, Marilyn Drewes, Ray Castriotta, Julianne Sullivan, Robert Grudzina, Marge LaGrassa, Jim Lewis, Joyce Loechner, Frank Salomone, Chad Larivee, Dick Wentworth, Nuvia Downs, Karen Mary McNulty, Olivia Hart, Alex Haas, Patrick Devine, Gerry Csaposs, Peggy Carson, Addie Priess, Frank McCarthy, Andree Yager, Loretta Reiter, Paul Kasczak, Patty Camarra, James Manley, Betty Babcock, Thomas Murphy, Chris Frazier, Melissa K., Baby Lillian Thoman, Jessica O., Fran McDonagh, Donna Hibbert, Margaret Royce, Beth Nixon, Anne O'Brien, Ben McMahan, Gerry Moynihan, Martha Moynihan, Richard Paskiewicz, Mary Rodrigues, Emily Sparks, Stephen Moreau, Paula Madeiro, Paul Brandon, Rita Folger, Gerri DiCristina, Kathleen Kilmer, Marguerite Forren, Mary Pickard, Deepthi Moola, Steve Novick, Ernie T., Eleanor Symecko, Susanne Albert, Joseph Wignot, Hector Pelletier, Bob Cunnane

**PRAY FOR OUR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE  
MEN AND WOMEN**

Brandy Nelson, Timothy Horigan, Scott Doucette, Michael Wilson, David Lucas, Sean Lucas, Peter Civita Shayne, Peter Cabral, Gregory DeLuca, Joshua Schmitt, Joseph Long, Brad Howard, Thomas Scudder, Jeffrey Stebbins, Phillip McDonough, David Wilcox, John Amick, David McDonald, Lt. Edward J. Maloney, Andrew Kelley, William James Miller, David Orloski, Stephen Tamaro, Michael L. Hamilton, Thomas Crawford, Aaron Charette, Nicholas McGahey, Edward Prufer, Brandon Stubbs, Christian P. Goodman, Trevor Lafontaine, Connor Lafontaine, Colin Bracken, Michael Bracken

*Please keep these deceased loved ones in your prayers.*

**THIS WEEK**

Saturday 5:00 Carl Legg  
Sunday 8:00 Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family  
10:00 Charlie Wolff  
Monday 8:00 Elizabeth Dunn  
Tuesday 8:00 Frank & Rose Lamborghini  
Wed 8:00 Tom Cosgrove  
Fri 8:00 Eleanor Culik

**NEXT WEEKEND**

Saturday 5:00 Val & Denise Plantier  
Sunday 8:00 Eulalie Sullivan  
Fr. Bob Kemmery, Parish Family  
10:00 Jennifer Reiss

**PRAY FOR OUR BELOVED DECEASED**

Gerald Covault, Manya Gaiardelli

**COLLECTION RESULTS—THANK YOU!**

This Week's Donations \$8,133.60

*Your generosity to St. Joan of Arc is greatly appreciated.*

**GABRIEL SYSTEM—PLEASE REGISTER**

We are so grateful to all who have donated through the envelope system or through Gabriel, our new on-line giving program. **Whether you choose to continue with the envelopes or donate on-line, we encourage everyone to register with Gabriel so we can build an up-to-date parish census including emails and mobile phone numbers to better handle situations like this going forward.** **Directions:** On the left-hand side of the website home page scroll down beneath the photo of the church until you see the Online Giving Icon. Click the icon which gives you two options: one to register and one to donate. Once we establish a member portal — down the road — registered donors will have the ability to manage and track donations.