

Mary, Mother of the Church

The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, on March 3, 2018, issued this Decree instituting the Memorial of Mary, Mother of the Church. Cardinal Sarah, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, said the Decree – dated 11 February 2018, the 160th anniversary of the first apparition of the Virgin at Lourdes – is a result of a decision by Pope Francis to insert the Memorial in the General Roman Calendar. The Memorial will be celebrated annually on the Monday following Pentecost.

By issuing the Decree on the celebration of the feast of Mary, Mother of the Church, Pope Francis wishes to promote this devotion in order to “encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety”. The decree reflects on the history of Marian theology in the Church’s liturgical tradition and the writings of the Church Fathers. It says Saint Augustine and Pope Saint Leo the Great both reflected on the Virgin Mary’s importance in the mystery of Christ. “In fact the former [St. Augustine] says that Mary is the mother of the members of Christ, because with charity she cooperated in the rebirth of the faithful into the Church, while the latter [St. Leo the Great] says that the birth of the Head is also the birth of the body, thus indicating that Mary is at once Mother of Christ, the Son of God, and mother of the members of his Mystical Body, which is the Church.” The decree says these reflections are a result of the “divine motherhood of Mary and from her intimate union in the work of the Redeemer”. Scripture, the decree says, depicts Mary at the foot of the Cross (cf. Jn 19:25). There she became the Mother of the Church when she “accepted her Son’s testament of love and welcomed all people in the person of the beloved disciple as sons and daughters to be reborn unto life eternal.” In 1964, the decree says, Pope Paul VI “declared the Blessed Virgin Mary as ‘Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother’ and established that ‘the Mother of God should be further honoured and invoked by the entire Christian people by this tenderest of titles’”.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. 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, pray for us. / Holy Mother of God, pray for us. / Holy Virgin of virgins, pray for us. / Mother of Christ, pray for us. / Mother of divine grace, pray for us. / Mother most pure, pray for us. / Mother most chaste, pray for us. / Mother inviolate, pray for us. / Mother undefiled, pray for us. / Mother most amiable, pray for us. / Mother most admirable, pray for us. / Mother of good counsel, pray for us. / Mother of our Creator, pray for us. / Mother of our Savior, pray for us. / Virgin most prudent, pray for us. / Virgin most venerable, pray for us. / Virgin most renowned, pray for us. / Virgin most powerful, pray for us. / Virgin most merciful, pray for us. / Virgin most faithful, pray for us. / Mirror of justice, pray for us. / Seat of wisdom, pray for us. / Cause of our joy, pray for us. / Spiritual vessel, pray for us. / Vessel of honor, pray for us. / Singular vessel of devotion, pray for us. / Mystical rose, pray for us. / Tower of David, pray for us. / Tower of ivory, pray for us. / House of gold, pray for us. / Ark of the covenant, pray for us. / Gate of heaven, pray for us. / Morning star, pray for us. / Health of the sick, pray for us. / Refuge of sinners, pray for us. / Comforter of the afflicted, pray for us. / Help of Christians, pray for us. / Queen of Angels, pray for us. / Queen of Patriarchs, pray for us. / Queen of Prophets, pray for us. / Queen of Apostles, pray for us. / Queen of Martyrs, pray for us. / Queen of Confessors, pray for us. / Queen of Virgins, pray for us. / Queen of all Saints, pray for us. / Queen conceived without original sin, pray for us. / Queen assumed into heaven, pray for us. / Queen of the most holy Rosary, pray for us. / Queen of Peace, pray for us.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord! / Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord! / Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray. Grant, we beg you, O Lord God, that we your servants, may enjoy lasting health of mind and body, and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, be delivered from present sorrow and enter into the joy of eternal happiness. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

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*The Family that Prays
Together Stays Together*





The Family that Prays Together Stays Together

Pentecost Prayer

From the Byzantine Liturgy, published by the Jesuits at Fordham University in New York, is this adapted prayer for the family. It includes both family needs and those of the Mystical Body.

Father: Blessed be our God always, now and ever unto ages of ages. Amen. O heavenly King, Paraclete, Spirit of Truth who art present everywhere and dost permeate all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and take up Thy dwelling within us. Purify us from every stain of sin and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Family: Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men (twice).

Father: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: For peace that comes from on high, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: For the peace of the whole world and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: For His Holiness Pope Francis, for our most Reverend Bishop Cornelius, for our priesthood and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: For our city (or village), for our school, for our country and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: For seasonable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth and for

Family: peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy.

Father: For those who sail the sea, for those who are traveling, for those who are sick or suffering or in prison, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Father: Help and save us, pity and preserve us, O God by Thy grace.

Family: Lord, have mercy.

Mother: Let us commemorate one most holy, most pure, the most blessed and glorious Lady, Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, together with all the Saints, and commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our God.

Family: To You O Lord.

Renewal of Confirmation

On the evening of Pentecost, the whole family might come together for a renewal of their confirmation. Here is a suggested form for a simple renewal devotion.

All: *Sing the hymn Come Holy Ghost*

1. Come Holy Ghost, Creator Blest,
And in our hearts take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heav'nly aid,
To fill the hearts which Thou has made,
To fill the hearts which Thou has made.

2. O Comfort Blest to Thee we cry,
Thou heav'nly Gift of God most high;
Thou fount of life and fire of love,
And sweet anointing from above,
And sweet anointing from above.

3. Praise be to Thee Father and Son,
And Holy Spirit Three in one;
And may the Son on us bestow
The gifts that from the Spirit flow,

The gifts that from the Spirit flow,

Father: *Reads Acts 2:1-11 and Acts 8:14-17*

All: *Sing a hymn.*

All: (*Prayer commemorating the Reception of Confirmation*): Thanks be unto Thee, O my God, for all Thy infinite goodness, and, especially, for the love Thou hast shown unto me at my Confirmation. I Give Thee thanks that Thou didst then send down Thy Holy Spirit unto my soul with all His gifts and graces.

May He take full possession of me for ever.
May His divine unction cause my face to shine.
May His heavenly wisdom reign in my heart.
May His understanding enlighten my darkness.
May His counsel guide me.
May His knowledge instruct me.
May His piety make me fervent.
May His divine fear keep me from all evil.

Drive from my soul, O Lord, all that may defile it.
Give me grace to be Thy faithful soldier, that having fought the good fight of faith, I may be brought to the crown of everlasting life, through the merits of Thy dearly beloved Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Father: Confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us, from Thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem.

All: *Say the Credo and the Our Father (standing).*
All: *Sing a hymn in honor of the Pope.*