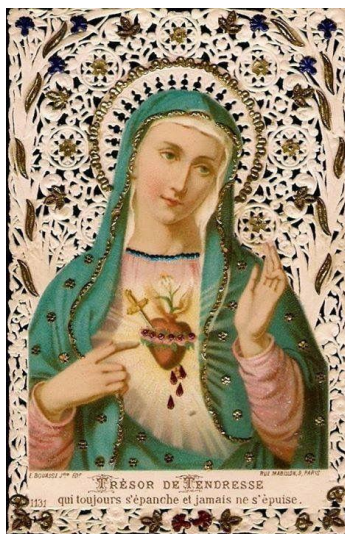


May 1

MARY: THE MOTHER OF GOD



"When the Blessed Virgin said yes, freely, to the plans revealed to her by the Creator, the divine Word assumed a human nature -- a rational soul and a body -- which was formed in the most pure womb of Mary. The divine nature and the human were united in a single Person: Jesus Christ, true God and, thenceforth, true man; the only begotten and eternal son of the Father and from that moment on, as man, the true son of Mary. This is why our Lady is the mother of the Incarnate Word, of the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who has united our human nature to himself for ever, without any confusion of the two natures. The greatest praise we can give to the Blessed Virgin is to address her loudly and clearly by the name that expresses her very highest dignity: 'Mother of God'."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Brief but frequent prayers of love, such as:

"Mother of God, your petitions are most powerful."

May 2

MARY: THE MOST PERFECT CREATURE



"She who is full of grace, the object of God's pleasure, exalted above all the angels and the saints, lived an ordinary life.

"Mary is as much a creature as we are, with a heart like ours, made for joy and mirth as well as suffering and tears. Before Gabriel communicates to her God's plan, our Lady does not know that she has been chosen from all eternity to be the mother of the Messiah. She sees herself as a lowly creature. That is why she can acknowledge, with full humility, that 'he who is mighty has done great things' for her."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A "Hail Mary" each time the clock strikes another hour.

May 3

MARY AND THE BLESSED TRINITY



"Through the Incarnation of our Lord in her immaculate womb, Mary, the Daughter of God the Father, is also the Spouse of God the Holy Spirit and the Mother of God the Son."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Many glances of affection and many words of love, when we see her image or picture in our home, in the church, or anywhere.

May 4

MARY 'S FAMILY: THE TRINITY ON EARTH



"It is only natural that the Church rejoice as one contemplates the modest home of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. We read in the hymn from Matins on the feast of the Holy Family: 'It is pleasing to recall the humble house of Nazareth and its slender resources. It is pleasing to tell again in song Jesus' hidden life.

Jesus grows up in hidden seclusion, to be trained in Joseph's unpretentious trade. The loving mother sits beside her dear Son, the good wife by her husband, content if her loving attention can ease and comfort them in their weariness.' "

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A loving review of her life with Jesus,
as we recite the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

May 5

MARY: HER IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



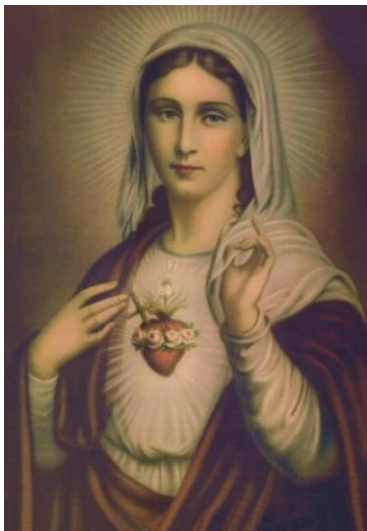
"How would we have acted, if we could have chosen our own mother? I'm sure we would have chosen the one we have, adorning her with every possible grace. That is what Christ did. Christ being all powerful, all wise, Love itself, his power carried out his will. . . . This is the clearest reason why our Lord granted his mother , from the very moment of her Immaculate Conception, all possible privileges. She was free from the power of Satan. She is beautiful, spotless and pure in soul and body."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The renewal of our baptismal vows.

May 6

THE ANNUNCIATION MARY: THE FIRST TABERNACLE



"If you seek Mary, you will find Jesus. And you will learn a bit more about what is in the heart of God, who humbles himself, discarding all manifestations of his power and majesty to take the form of a servant. Speaking in human terms, we could say that God outdoes himself, because he goes much further than he needs to go in order to save us. The only way to measure what he does is to say that it cannot be measured; it comes from a madness of love which leads him to take on our flesh and bear the weight of our sins."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The Angelus recited punctually at noon and with great affection.

May 7

MARY: OUR MODEL IN ORDINARY LIFE



"We can't forget that Mary spent nearly every day of her life just like millions of other women who look after their families, bring up their children, and take care of their houses. Mary sanctifies the ordinary, everyday things -- what some people wrongly regard as unimportant and insignificant: everyday work, looking after those closest to you, visits to friends and relatives. What a blessed ordinariness, that can be so full of love of God."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Affectionate details of service and attention to those closest to us.

May 8

MARY: MOTHER OF CHRIST



"Jesus Christus, Deus homo: Jesus Christ, God man. This is one of the 'mighty works of God,' which we should reflect upon and thank him for. He has come to bring 'peace on earth to men of good will,' to all who want to unite their wills to the holy will of God -- not just the rich, not just the poor, but everyone: all the brethren. We are all brothers in Jesus, children of God, brothers of Christ. His mother is our mother."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Jesus himself, when we receive him in holy Communion.

May 9

MARY: WELCOMING THE SHEPHERDS



"You must look at the Child in the manger. He is our Love. Look at him, realizing that the whole thing is a mystery. We need to accept this mystery on faith and use our faith to explore it very deeply. To do this, we must have the humble attitude of a Christian soul."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Small hidden sacrifices, especially those that go against the grain.

May 10

MARY: PRESENTING JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



"She teaches us to have charity. Remember the scene of the presentation of Jesus in the temple. An old man, Simeon, said to Mary, 'Behold: This child is destined to bring about the fall of many and the rise of many in Israel-and to be a sign, which people will refuse to acknowledge, so that the thoughts of many hearts shall be made manifest. As for your own soul, it shall have a sword pierce it.' So great is Mary's love for all mankind that she, too, fulfilled Christ's words: 'Greater love has no man than this, that he should lay down his life for his friends.' "

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A pilgrimage to one of her shrines.

May 11

MARY: WELCOMING THE MAGI



"Going into the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother. Our Lady is always near her Son. The Magi are not received by a king on a high throne, but by a child in the arms of his mother. Let us ask the Mother of God, who is our mother, to prepare for us the way that leads to the fullness of love Her sweet heart knows the surest path for finding Christ."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A visit to a poor person to communicate our Lady's concern for that person.

May 12

MARY: HER FLIGHT TO EGYPT WITH JOSEPH AND THE CHILD JESUS



"The mystery of Mary helps us to see that in order to approach God, we must become little. Christ said to his disciples: 'Believe me, unless you become like little children again, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'

"To become children, we must renounce our pride and self-sufficiency, recognizing that we can do nothing by ourselves. We must realize that we need grace and the help of God our Father to find our way and keep to it."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A visit to a lonely person to share the joy of trusting in God alone.

May 13

MARY: HER HIDDEN LIFE WITH JESUS



"I like to go back in my imagination to the years Jesus spent close to his mother, years which span almost the whole of his life on earth. I like to picture him as a little child, cared for by Mary, who kisses him and plays with him. I like to see him growing up before the loving eyes of his mother and of Joseph, his father on earth. What tenderness and care Mary and the holy Patriarch must have shown toward Jesus, as they looked after him during his childhood, all the while, silently, learning so much from him. Their souls would become more and more like the soul of that Son, who was both man and God. This is why his mother, and after her St. Joseph, understand better than anyone the feelings of the heart of Christ; and the two of them are thus the best way, I would say the only way, to reach the Savior."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The effort of doing our ordinary work well, on time, with competence and finesse.

May 14

MARY: LOSING AND FINDING THE CHILD JESUS



"The Mother of God, who looked for her Son so anxiously when he was lost (through no fault of her own) and experienced such great joy in finding him, will help us retrace our steps and put right whatever may be necessary when, because of our carelessness or our sins, we have been unable to recognize Christ. With her help, we will know the happiness of holding him in our arms once more and telling him we will never lose him again."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A good, sincere, sorrowful confession of our sins and failures, in the sacrament of Penance.

May 15

MARY: AT CANA



"In the Gospel, St. John has recorded a wonderful phrase of our Lady. At the wedding of Cana she turned to the waiters and said: 'Do whatever he tells you.' That is what it is all about -- getting people to face Jesus and ask him: 'Lord, what do you want me to do?' "

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Prompt obedience, when we are called or asked to do some errand or some act of service.

May 16

MARY: AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS



"We find her on Calvary, at the foot of the cross, praying. This is nothing new for Mary. She has always acted like this, in fulfilling her duties and looking after her home. As she went about the things of this earth, she kept her attention on God."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

An act of contrition, said many times, asking her to offer our sorrow for our sins to Jesus crucified.

May 17

MARY: THE SORROWING MOTHER



"Our Lady is there listening to the words of her Son, united to him in his suffering, when he cried out 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' What could she do? She united herself fully with the redemptive love of her Son and offered to the Father her immense sorrow, which pierced her pure heart like a sharp-edged sword."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The mortification of keeping quiet about any pain or discomfort, any inconvenience or disappointment, uniting it with her pain as she stood by her crucified Son..

May 18

MARY: THE CO-REDEMPTRIX



"It is with good reason that the popes have called Mary co-redemptrix. 'So fully, in union with her suffering and dying Son, did she suffer and nearly die; so fully, for the sake of the salvation of all souls, did she abdicate the rights of a mother over her Son, and immolate him, insofar as it was in her power, to satisfy the justice of God, that it can rightly be said that she redeemed mankind together with Christ.' This gives us a deeper understanding of that moment in the Passion of our Lord on which we shall never tire of meditating: *Stabat autem iuxta crucem Iesu mater eius*, 'There, standing by the cross of Jesus, was his mother.'"

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Five small hidden sacrifices in honor of the five major wounds of our Lord.

May 19

MARY: HER FAITH



"If our faith is weak, we should turn to Mary. St. John tells us that it was because of the miracle that Christ performed, at his mother's request, at the marriage feast at Cana, that 'his disciples learned to believe in him.' Our Mother is always interceding with her Son, so that he may attend to our needs and show himself to us in such a way that we can cry out, 'You are the Son of God!' "

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The "Memorare" for the person in our family who most needs the help of our Lady.

May 20

MARY: OUR HOPE



"Our Lady, a full participant in the work of our salvation, follows in the footsteps of her son: the poverty of Bethlehem, the everyday work of a hidden life in Nazareth, the manifestation of his divinity in Cana of Galilee, the tortures of his passion, the divine sacrifice on the cross, the eternal blessedness of paradise.

"All of this affects us directly, because this supernatural itinerary is the way we are to follow. Mary shows us that we can walk this path with confidence. She has preceded us on the way of imitating Christ; her glorification is the firm hope of our own salvation. For these reasons we call her 'our hope, cause of our joy.' "

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A smile when we do not feel like smiling.

May 21

MARY'S PRAYER



"Let us ask the Blessed Virgin to make us contemplatives, to teach us to recognize the constant calls from God at the door of our heart. Let us ask her now: Our Mother, you brought to earth Jesus, who reveals the love of our Father God. Help us to recognize him in the midst of the cares of each day. Stir up our mind and will so that we may listen to the voice of God, to the calls of grace."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A visit to Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

May 22

MARY: EVER VIRGIN



"The purity, humility, and generosity of Mary are in sharp contrast to our wretchedness and selfishness. To the extent that we realize this, we should feel moved to imitate her. We too are creatures of God, and if we strive to imitate her fidelity, God will surely do great things in us. Our small worth is no obstacle, because God chooses what is of little value so that the power of his love may be more manifest."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The prayer "Blessed be your purity"

May 23

MARY: QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES



"If we take our Lady's hand, she will make us realize more fully that all men are our brothers -- because we are all sons of that God whose daughter, spouse, and mother she is. Our neighbors' problems must be our problems. Christian fraternity should be something very deep in the soul, so that we are indifferent to no one. Mary, who brought up Jesus and accompanied him through his life and is now beside him in heaven, will help us recognize Jesus as he crosses our path and makes himself present to us in the needs of others."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A kind word, a friendly conversation, a helping hand to persons with whom we live or work.

May 24

MARY: HELP OF CHRISTIANS



"Yes, we are still pilgrims, but our Mother has gone on ahead, where she points to the reward for our efforts. She tells us that we can make it. If we are faithful, we will reach home. Not only is the Blessed Virgin our model, but she is also the Help of Christians. And as we besiege her with our petitions - - 'Show that you are our Mother' -- she cannot help but watch over her children with motherly care."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

In addition to the mysteries of the day, one more part (five decades) of the Holy Rosary.

May 25

MARY: OUR MOTHER



"Find out for yourself by personal experience the meaning of Mary's maternal love. It is not enough just to know that she is our Mother, and to think and talk about her as such. She is your Mother and you are her child. She loves you as if you were her only child in this world. Treat her accordingly. Tell her about everything that happens to you; honor her and love her. No one will do it for you or as well as you."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Many affectionate thoughts and prayers, by saying "Mary, my mother" each time we pause in our work.

May 26

MARY: THE WAY TO JESUS



"Mary does the immense favor of bringing to the cross, of placing face to face with the example of the Son of God, those who come close to her and contemplate her life. It is in this confrontation that Christian life is decided. And here Mary intercedes for us so that our behavior may lead to a reconciliation of the younger brother -- you and me -- with the firstborn Son of the Father.

"Many conversions, many decisions to give oneself to the service of God have been preceded by an encounter with Mary. Our Lady has encouraged us to look for God, to desire to change, to lead a new life."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

Teaching someone how to say the Holy Rosary.

May 27

MARY: MOTHER OF FAIR LOVE



"This is what explains Mary's life -- her love. A complete love, so complete that she forgets herself and is happy just to be there where God wants her, fulfilling with care what God wants her to do. That is why even her slightest action is never routine or vain but, rather, full of meaning. Mary, our Mother, is for us both an example and a way. In the ordinary circumstances in which God wants us to live, we have to try to be like her."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The resolution to say, before going to sleep every night, three Hail Mary.

May 28

THE ASSUMPTION MARY: TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN



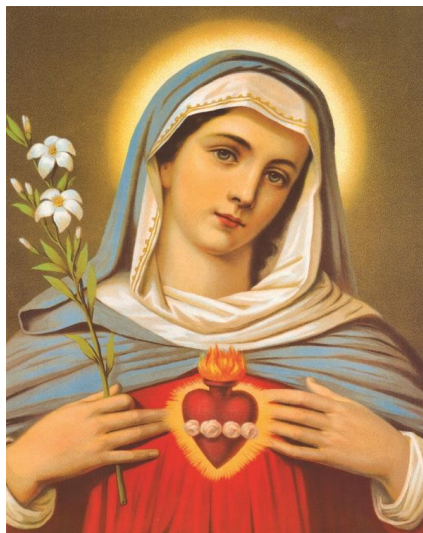
"Mary has gone to heaven in both body and soul, and the angels rejoice. I can imagine, too, the delight of St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse, who awaited her in paradise. Yet what of us who remain on earth? Our faith tells us that here below, in our present life, we are pilgrims, wayfarers. Our lot is one of suffering, of sacrifices, and privations. Nonetheless, joy must mark the rhythm of our steps. 'Serve the Lord with joy' -- there is no other way to serve him."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

A smile when someone corrects us or misjudges us.

May 29

MARY: THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN



"She lives now and is protecting us. She is there [in heaven], body and soul, with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. She is the same person who was born in Palestine, who gave herself to God while still a child, who received the message from St. Gabriel the Archangel, who gave birth to our Savior, and who stood beside him at the foot of the Cross. In her, all ideals become a reality. But we should never think that this sublime greatness of hers makes her inaccessible to us. She is the one who is full of grace and the sum of all perfections . . . and she is also our Mother."

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The "Hail Holy Queen" at each hour.

May 31

THE VISITATION MARY SINGS OF THE LOVE OF GOD



"God is interested in even the smallest events in the lives of his creatures -- in your affairs and mine -- and he calls each of us by name. This certainty that the faith gives enables us to look at everything in a new light. And everything, while remaining exactly the same, becomes different, because it is an expression of God's love. Our life is turned into a continuous prayer, we find ourselves with good humor and a peace that never ends, and everything we do is an act of thanksgiving running through all our day. 'My soul magnifies the Lord,' Mary sang, 'and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.'"

Let us offer to our Mother today:

The Holy Rosary said with concentration and affection.