

May is ...



By Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira

Why do we honour Mary during May?

- The month of May is a special time for Catholics to honour our Blessed Mother Mary.
- During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts prayer and veneration.
- It's the month we honour Blessed Mary as the Mother of Jesus and our Heavenly Mother.
- Mary has a unique role in salvation history as the Mother of God, conceived without Sin, who by her own free will agreed to bring the "Word made flesh", (John 1:14) our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ into the world.

Why is the month of May chosen?

- Historians aren't exactly sure why May was chosen to honour Mary, but many believe that May being the month when spring is in full bloom has a lot to do with it.
- May is the height of spring—gardens everywhere are alive with blooming flowers and trees are filling their branches with leaves. This new beginning and new birth in nature reminds us of the life Mary gave to Jesus.
- Without Mary giving birth to Jesus, all the events that followed:
- Jesus' life, death, and resurrection wouldn't have happened. So, it's believed that May (when nature is showing signs of life) is the ideal month to honour the woman who gave life to our Saviour

How do we honour Mary in May?

- Procession and Crowning of Mary with flowers
- Erecting a May altar with a statue or picture of Mary as a reminder of her special month
- Praying the Hail Mary ...
... We pray with her and ask her to pray for us and for God's grace to fall on us.
- Praying the Rosary
- Praying a Novena
- Reciting the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Crowning of Mary procession

It's a Catholic tradition to honour Mary during the month of May by crowning her statue with flowers.

The reason why we crown Mary is best summed up by Pope Paul VI who wrote in 1965 that May is an occasion for a “moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world pay to the Queen of Heaven.” The crown symbol is attributed to Mary because she is the Mother of the Son of God, who is our Heavenly King.

Crowning of Mary Procession



Making a May Altar

- If you do not have a statue of Mary – you could paint a picture of Mary and use that instead.



Praying the Hail Mary

The Hail Mary is probably the most popular prayer to Mary and has its basis in Sacred Scripture.

When the Angel Gabriel was sent to Mary by the Father, he greeted her. “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” (Luke 1:28)

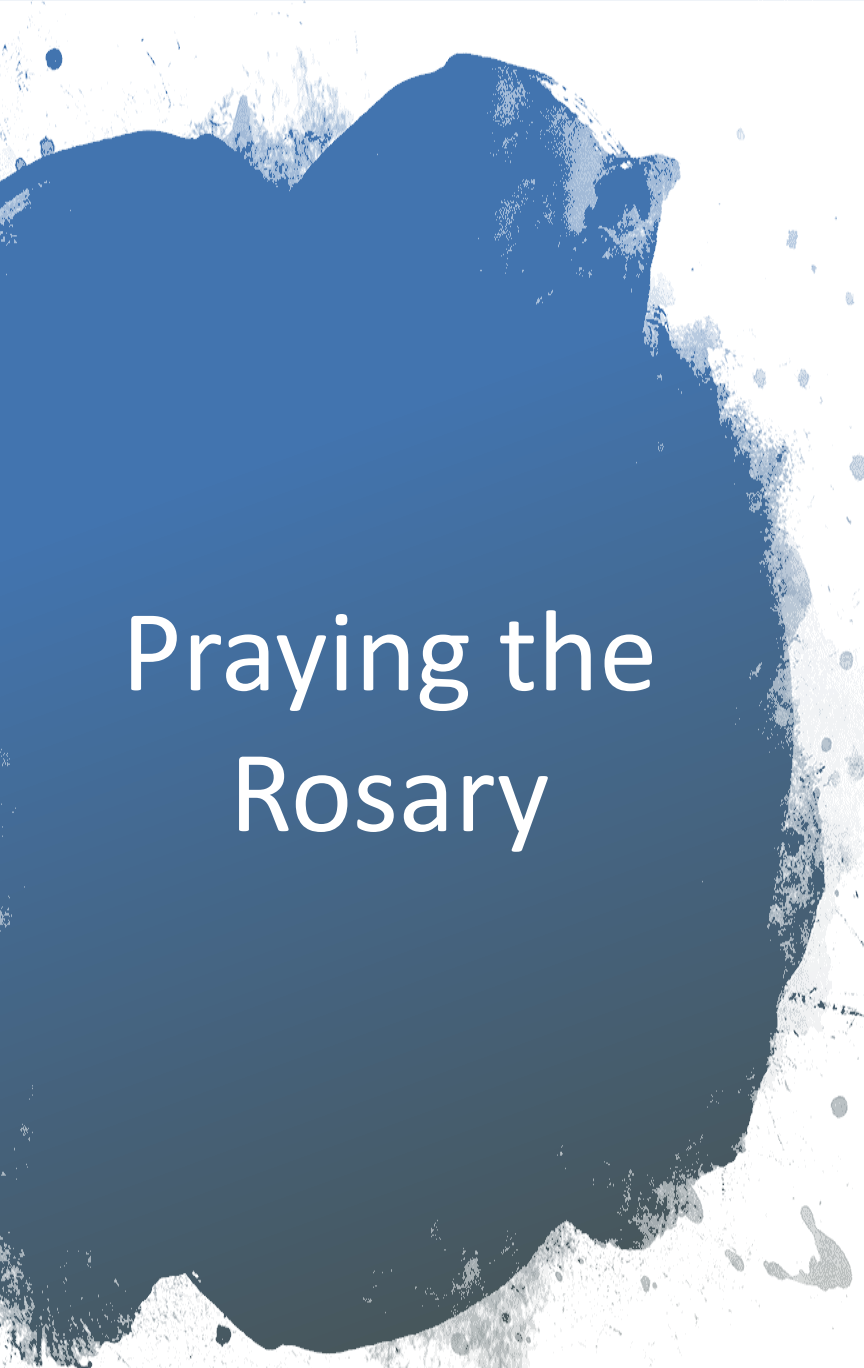
When Mary visited Elizabeth, Elizabeth exclaimed, “ Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!” (Luke 1:41 – 42)

The second part of the prayer is in response to the first, asking Mary to pray for us and addressing her as the Mother of God.



Hail Mary





Praying the Rosary

- **The Rosary is a series of prayers based on scripture. When Christian people pray the Rosary they meditate on (think about) the life of Jesus. The Rosary divides the life of Jesus into sections called mysteries:**
 - **The 5 Joyful mysteries**
 - **The 5 Luminous mysteries**
 - **The 5 Sorrowful mysteries**
 - **The 5 Glorious mysteries**

How to Pray the Rosary



Praying the rosary online

- <http://members.rushmore.com/~iamclay/demo/Interactive%20Rosary/>

Praying a Novena

- A Novena is a nine day period of private or public prayer to obtain special graces, to implore special favours, or make special petitions. (Novena is derived from the Latin *novem*, meaning nine.)



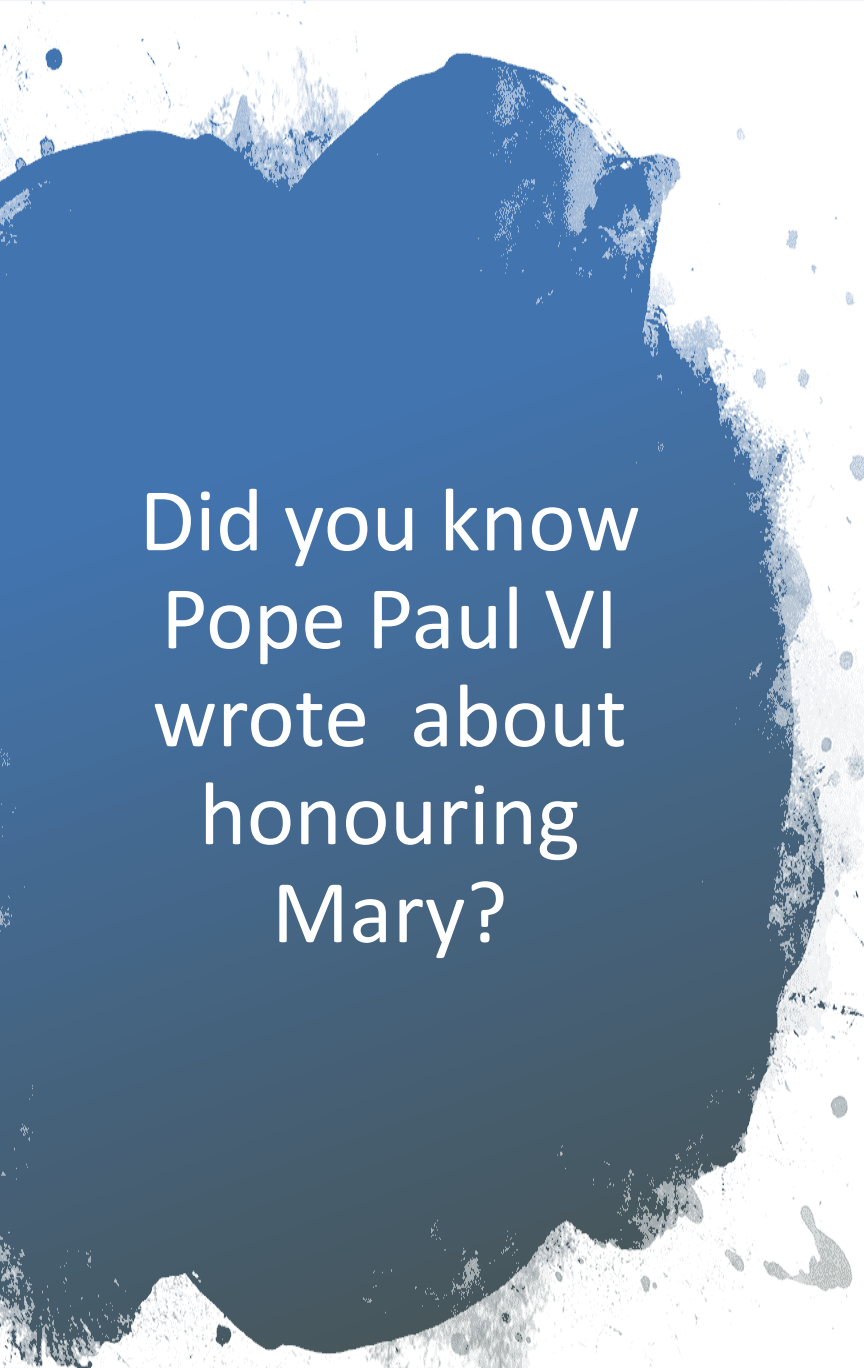
Praying the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

- Mary is worthy of honour and she has been given so many titles through history and they reflect various aspects of her life and nature
- A litany is a form of prayer using the titles as part of the prayer.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, 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.*





Did you know Pope Paul VI wrote about honouring Mary?

- In 1965 Pope Paul VI published an encyclical, *Mense Maio* ('The Month of May') which details the church's special devotion to Mary during May.

... *"The month of May is a month which the piety of the faithful has long dedicated to Mary, the Mother of god. Our heart rejoices at the thought of the moving tribute of faith and love which will soon be paid to the Queen of heaven in every corner of the earth. For this is the month during which Christian, in their churches and their homes, offer the Virgin Mother more fervent and loving acts of homage and veneration; and it is the month in which a greater abundance of God's merciful gifts comes down to us from our Mother's throne"*