

# **Devotions To Our Blessed Mother**

## **A Saint Cecilia Parish Tradition**



**St. Cecilia Church  
54 Esty Street  
Ashland, MA 01721**

### **Front Cover: The Della Robbia**

The Della Robbia Nativity plaque which is mounted in the Great Hall of the Family Center is a beautiful tribute to The Virgin Mary, under her title “*Mother of God.*”

The Della Robbia family were sculptors and ceramists active in the 15th and 16th century. The most famous was Luca, who was famous for his invention of glazed terra cotta, the secret of which he passed down to his nephew Andrea, and to Andrea’s son, Giovanni. The family created many beautiful works.

Our Della Robbia would have been cast from a master mold and then painted for the market. Some time prior to 1936, a parishioner, Tina Mazzareli and her husband brought the Della Robbia back from Italy and presented it to the parish. It was mounted in the old church, so high above the left side of the altar that it was hard to see.

In the late 1930s, the old church was redecorated and the Della Robbia was painted over in the colors of the church. Fortunately, in 1961, when the present church was built, the plaque’s value was realized. It was restored and mounted on an easel for display, initially in the sanctuary, and later in the church vestibule for many years. It was also displayed in the Sanctuary during the Christmas Season.

When the Family Center was built, it was mounted in its present location in the Great Hall where parishioners and visitors can appreciate its beauty and its message. (Excerpt from *Faith In Action*) parish newsletter, Vol 1, No.3—March 2005)

#### **Prayer:**

*May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. Amen.*

## **Devotion To Our Blessed Mother - A St. Cecilia's Tradition**

St. Cecilia Parish has a long-standing devotion to Our Blessed Mother, going back to the founding of the parish in 1884. That devotion is evident throughout the Parish grounds. The physical reminders of Our Lady's importance to our parish surround us in the stained glass windows of the church, and extend out to the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows on the church's south lawn and the Blessed Mother's Grotto across Esty Street. Depictions of Mary abound, including the right side altar in the church, the Pieta, the statue in the vestibule, and the Della Robbia in the Family Center.

Devotion to Mary is as old as the parish itself. From its beginnings in the 1800s, St. Cecilia Parish has had an annual May procession and crowning of Mary. The celebration of Our Lady has ranged over the years from a simple procession and prayer service to festivals that drew notables from Boston and involved the "Parish Bands" and "May Queens."

Additional Marian spirit has been evident in the form of Living Rosaries, organized by the Knights of Columbus, a Children of Mary Society in the 1930's, and the circulation of a statue of Mary. Families would take the statue home and display it in a suitable garden, inviting friends and neighbors to say the Rosary together. Current devotions include Saturday morning Rosary in honor of Our Lady of Fatima for World Peace, and recitation of the Novena of Our Lady of Perpetual Help every Wednesday.

Our Parish has been fortunate to be situated for many years between three Marian centers. The Sons of Mary and the Marist seminaries in Framingham, and the Xavarian Fatima Shrine in Holliston have been a great support to St. Cecilia's. Through the years, their priests have celebrated Mass here and seminarians have taught Religious Education classes. In the 1950s the parish established a St. Cecilia unit of *The Third Order of Mary*, a Marist lay group of men and women who want to follow more closely in Our Lady's path as she leads us to Jesus.

Continuing in that tradition, the St. Cecilia Stewardship Committee has assembled this booklet of Marian devotions which can be prayed in and around St. Cecilia's. Our goal in this project has been to strengthen our parish's strong devotion to the Blessed Mother.

Mary inevitably leads us to Jesus. Like the servants at the Wedding at Cana, when we bring our troubles to her, she inevitably points us to Jesus and tells us "do whatever He tells you." Throughout history, and throughout the world, Mary has provided inspiration and wisdom in times of troubles.

The goodness, guidance, and intercession of our Blessed Mother is

needed as never before, making it more important than ever to turn to our national patroness, Mary.

We invite you to use the prayers and meditations in this booklet, not just at home, but in the Church and on the grounds of the Parish, where they were meant to inspire, to strengthen, and to bring us peace.

*Autumn, 2020*

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# St. Cecilia Church

## Stained Glass Windows

### Meditations

When the “new” St. Cecilia Church was being planned in 1960, the strong devotion to Our Blessed Mother was built into the building’s stained glass windows. As you look around the church, it is evident that 10 of the 22 side windows are dedicated to the many titles under which we honor Mary. Less apparent is the fact that every one of the remaining 12 windows depicts a saint who had a special relationship or devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

According to Boston Archdiocesan archives, the John Terrence O’Duggin Studio, which provided the windows, suggested 19 saints having Marian “subject matter.” Of these, 12 were adopted by the parish. No records have been located regarding the selection of the windows depicting titles of Mary, however, it was clearly the intent of the parish to keep Mary close to our hearts.

The following pages present brief descriptions of the windows, their Marian connection, and suitable companion prayers or meditations. We invite you to spend a little time in private with these beautiful depictions, to read about them, and pray. Do it in the Church - our wonderful classroom of silence, in the presence of Our Lord in the Tabernacle. Choose one, a few, or many. Conclude each individual meditation with a Hail Mary and pray the Our Father, Three Hail Marys, and the Glory Be To The Father for the intentions of the Pope.

**Additional information on the Saints can be found online at  
[www.franciscanmedia.org](http://www.franciscanmedia.org)**

## St. Joachim - July 26 (Jointly with St. Anne)

Sts. Joachim and Anne, Our Lady's parents have a prominent place on the front right side of the church.

According to the Protoevangelium of James, Joachim and Anne, of the House of David, were wealthy but childless and therefore desolate as they approached old age. Joachim went into the desert and fasted 40 days, at the end of which, an angel of the Lord came and told him to return home and that Anne would conceive. In rejoicing and thanksgiving, Joachim brought great offerings from his flocks to the temple. Joachim is the patron of grandfathers and is pictured in our stained glass with an offering of doves.



### Prayer:

*O Great and glorious patriarch St Joachim, how I rejoice to think that thou wast chosen from among all the Saints to cooperate in the divine mysteries, and enrich the world by bestowing on it the great Mother of God, most holy Mary! By this singular privilege thou hast become so powerful with the Mother and the Son as to obtain whatever graces may be necessary for us.*

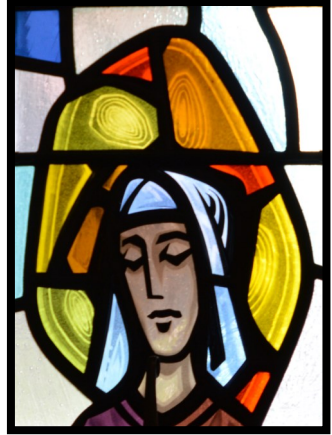
*With great confidence, then, I have recourse to thy most powerful protection, and I commend to thee all the wants of my family, both spiritual and temporal, as well as my own; and especially I appeal to thee for the particular grace which I desire and expect from thy paternal intercession. And since thou wast a perfect model of the interior life, obtain for me interior recollection and a distaste for the fleeting goods of this earth, with a lively and persevering love of Jesus and Mary.*

*Obtain for me, too, devotion and sincere obedience to Holy Church, and to the true Supreme Pontiff who governs her, so that I may live and die in Faith, Hope, and perfect Charity, invoking the most holy names of Jesus and Mary, and may save my soul. Amen.*



**St. Anne - July 26 (Jointly with St. Joachim)**

According to the Protoevangelium of James, While Joachim was enduring his fast in the desert, Anne prayed a lamentation to the Lord. “O God of our fathers, bless me and hear my prayer as You blessed the womb of Sarah, and gave her a son Isaac.” An angel of the Lord appeared to Anne in their garden, telling her that their prayers had been heard that that she would conceive a child whose name would be known throughout the world.



In response, Anne promised that the child would be given to the service of the Lord. They named the child Mary. When Mary was but three years of age, her parents fulfilled their promise to offer her to the service of the Temple.

Anne is the patroness of pregnancy and motherhood. She is often depicted with a book or scroll, emphasizing her role teaching Mary to live in virtue.

**Prayer:**

*Good St. Anne, you were especially favored by God to be the mother of the most holy Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Savior. By your power with your most pure daughter and with her divine Son, kindly obtain for us the grace and the favor we now seek. Please secure for us also forgiveness of our past sins, the strength to perform faithfully our daily duties and the help we need to persevere in the love of Jesus and Mary. Amen.*

## Gate of Heaven - May 13 (By Tradition)

Saint John Henry Newman, who was canonized by Pope Francis, tells us that the title *Gate of Heaven* is given to Mary because “it was through her that our Lord passed from heaven to earth.” The title alludes to a prophecy of Mary by Ezechiel: “the gate shall be closed it shall not be opened, and no man shall pass through it.”

Six or so decades after Newman wrote this, the Virgin Mary, Gate of Heaven, appeared on May 13 in Fatima to open our eyes and ears to Heaven.

As Our Lord came to us through Mary, so must we go to Him through her. We must think of Mary as the "Gate of Heaven" not only for we the living, but also for the poor souls in Purgatory. Through her prayers many a soul may at this very moment be passing through the Gate of Heaven. *“Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.”*

Our Gate of Heaven stained glass says “Ave Mar(ia)” on the entryway to Christ. The flames are a familiar representation of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Trinity is in the upper panel.



### Prayer:

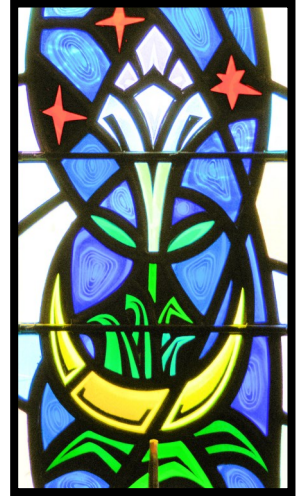
*Lord our God, in Your goodness  
You have made Your Son  
the gateway to salvation and life;  
grant that, as we follow the example  
of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
we may remain faithful in the love of Christ  
and so pass safely through the gate  
of Your city in heaven.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen*

## The Immaculate Conception - December 8

The Immaculate Conception is the singular grace and privilege that God bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin Mary to preserve her from the consequences of original sin from the very first moment of her conception in the womb of her mother, St. Anne. In 1854, Pope Pius IX established this as Church doctrine when he said, in part: “Mary was preserved from the first instant of her conception...from all stain of Original Sin, is revealed by God.”

This doctrine most clearly tells us that Mary’s life, and consequently all human life and dignity, begins at conception. Mary is the patroness of the United States under the title of “The Immaculate Conception.”

Our stained glass window depicts the white lilly, as symbol of Mary’s purity in the womb of St. Anne, by virtue of the Blessed Trinity, shown as the three stars.



### Prayer:

*O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, prepared a worthy dwelling for Your Son, grant, we pray, that as You preserved her from every stain by virtue of the Death of Your Son, which You foresaw, so, through her intercession, we, too, may be cleansed and admitted to Your presence. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen*

## St. Bernadette - April 16

St. Bernadette was born in Lourdes, France in 1844. Her parents were very poor and she was the eldest of nine children. As a toddler, Bernadette contracted cholera and suffered extreme asthma. Unfortunately, she lived the rest of her life in poor health. On Thursday, February 11, 1858, Bernadette was sent with her younger sister and a friend to gather firewood, when a very beautiful lady dressed in blue and white, and carrying a rosary of gold and ivory appeared to her above a rose bush in a grotto called Massabielle. This was the first of eighteen apparitions. The woman told Bernadette "I am the Immaculate Conception." On February 25, the vision had told her "to drink of the water of the spring." The next day, the grotto's muddy waters had been cleared and fresh clear water flowed. Since Bernadette first caused the spring to produce clean water, dozens of cures have occurred at Lourdes. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes is now a major Catholic pilgrimage site.



In 1866, Bernadette joined the Sisters of Charity at Nevers. Unfortunately, her ill health continued to weaken her. She died at the Convent of Saint-Gildard at the age of 35, while praying the Holy Rosary. Saint Bernadette is the patroness of illness, people ridiculed for their piety or poverty, and shepherds. On our stained glass window, she is shown with the rosary, to which she had much devotion.

### Prayer:

*St. Bernadette, pure and simple child, you who were privileged to behold the beauty of Mary Immaculate and to be the recipient of her confidence eighteen times at Lourdes; you who did desire from then on to hide yourself in the cloister of Nevers and there live and die as a victim of sinners, obtain for us that spirit of purity, which will lead us also to the glorious vision of God and of Mary in Heaven. Amen.*

## St. Catherine of Siena - April 29

Catherine was born in 1347 into a large family and grew up as an intelligent, cheerful, and intensely religious person. At 18, she entered the Dominican Third Order (Lay men and women who live out their Dominican vocation in the world).

She spent much time in seclusion, but through her writings developed a following in both spiritual and public affairs. She worked tirelessly for the crusade against the Turks and for peace between Florence and the Pope. When, in 1378, the Western Schism split the allegiance of Christendom between Rome and Avignon, Catherine spent the last two years of her life in Rome, in prayer and pleading on behalf of unity of the Church and accomplished the reconciliation of Pope Urban VI with the Roman Republic. She was canonized in 1461 and named Doctor of The Church in 1970.



The value of her life for us today lies in her recognition of holiness as a goal to be sought over the course of a lifetime. She is the Patron Saint of Europe, Italy, and fire prevention. Her image is portrayed with a cross, symbolizing her devotion to the suffering Jesus, the Rosary of the Dominicans, and the Lily of Mary.

### Prayer:

*O Saint Catherine of Siena, God our Father enkindled the flame of holy love in your heart as you meditated on the Passion of Jesus His Son. Moved by His grace, you devoted your life to the poor and the sick, as well as to the peace and unity of the Church. Through your intercession, may we also come to know the love of Jesus, bring His compassion to all, and work for the unity of His Church. We ask this in Jesus' Name and for His sake. God, You caused St. Catherine to shine with Divine love in the contemplation of the Lord's Passion and in the service of Your Church. By her help, grant that Your people, associated in the mystery of Christ, may ever exult in the revelation of His glory. Amen.*

## Refuge of Sinners - August 13

Refuge of Sinners is one of the titles accorded to Mary in the Liturgy of Loreto. The worst evil that can befall us is sin, which separates us from God. Our Lord's infinite mercy has granted us a remedy for our sins through the redemptive grace of Jesus' sacrifice. He has also given us a secure refuge in the assistance of Mary, Our Lady Refuge of Sinners.



In the Old Testament, there were cities of refuge to which the guilty could flee for safety; in the New Covenant, Mary's mantle is for us sinners that place of refuge. Mary's intercession on our behalf, if we only seek it, is depicted in the window as the pure white mantle shielding us from the serpentine dragon and his chains of Hell.

### Prayer:

*O God most kind, Who, as a salvation for sinners and a refuge for the miserable, did will the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the Mother of Your only Son and the distributor of His graces; grant, we pray, that while celebrating the memory of this most loving Mother's Heart, we may obtain for sinners the grace of conversion, and for all the faithful an abundance of heavenly gifts. Amen*

## Mother of Good Counsel - April 26

Devotion to the Mother of Good Counsel is associated with the story of a miraculous icon. In Genazzano, a beautiful town thirty miles south-east of Rome, there is a fourth century church dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel. During a restoration of the church in 1467, the people of Genazzano saw a white, shining cloud descend on the church. When the cloud vanished, it had left a beautiful icon (painting) of Our Lady tenderly holding her Divine Son in the church. Immediately, Mary began to cure the sick and grant countless graces. One hundred-seventy-one miracles were recorded in the months following the icon's appearance.



The icon shows Mother and child, possibly when they had returned from the temple and the prophecies of Simeon. Mary's eyes are half-veiled as though she were lost in contemplation, taking counsel with her God. The little Child is not looking at us but draws our eyes to Mary as if to tell us to look for Counsel there, in the very Seat of Wisdom. She is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, and was granted the wisdom to counsel her Son. Surely, she has the wisdom to counsel us. Our window is a stylized representation that includes the lamp of knowledge and a book opened to the Greek letters alpha and omega – the beginning and the end - Jesus.

### Prayer:

*Lord, you know that our thoughts on earth are full of fear and uncertainty.*

*Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, from whom your Son took flesh and blood, send us the gift of counsel to teach us how to discern your will and to guide us in all we do. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen*



Original painting in  
Genazzano

## St. Francis de Sales - January 24

St. Francis de Sales, the Bishop of Geneva, lived from 1567 to 1622. While he felt an early calling to the priesthood, he honored his father's wishes, earning a doctorate in law in Padua

During the protestant reformation, the Diocese of Geneva was a center for the Calvinists. Francis set about converting this populace. As they would not come to him, he began to write pamphlets about the Faith and slip them under the Calvinists' doors. These became the basis for his most famous work, Introduction To The Devout Life. In it, he challenged an error of the time that devotion and growth of holiness were reserved for the clergy. Francis was very successful in converting the Calvinists.



Tradition holds that Francis' devotion to Our Blessed Mother sprang from a vision he received while in prayer to her. His Act of Consecration to Mary is a beautiful prayer. In 1610, with St. Jane de Chantel, he founded the Order of the Sisters of the Visitation. These women were to practice the virtues exemplified in Mary's visit to Elizabeth: humility, piety, and mutual charity.

On our stained glass window, Francis is depicted in his bishop's robes and carrying a book and quill, symbolic of his writing and teaching. He is the patron of Catholic writing, the deaf, adult education, and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

### **St. Francis de Sales Prayer for Peace From Anxiety:**

*Do not look forward in fear to the changes and chances of this life; rather, look to them with full confidence that, as they arise, God, to Whom you belong, will in His love enable you to profit by them. He has guided you thus far in life, and He will lead you safely through all trials; and when you cannot stand it, God will bury you in His arms. Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day. He will either shield you from suffering, or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations. Amen.*



## St. Catherine Labouré' - November 28

Saint Catherine Labouré was born in France on May 2, 1806. Upon her mother's death, when Catherine was eight years old, the young girl assumed the responsibilities of the household. She entered the community of the Daughters of Charity, the nursing order founded by St. Vincent de Paul, in Paris, France. Three times in 1830 the Virgin Mary appeared to Catherine.



Later, Mary appeared once again and requested that Catherine have a medal made portraying Mary just as she appeared: standing inside an oval frame, upon a globe, with rays of light coming out of her hands . Around the margin of the frame appeared the words "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." (The dogma of the Immaculate Conception had not yet been officially promulgated). On the back of the medal was to be a circle of twelve stars, a large letter M surmounted by a cross, and the stylized Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary underneath.

After the visions ceased, Catherine spent the next forty years caring for the aged and infirm. For this, she is called the patroness of seniors. She died on December 31, 1876, at the age of seventy. Her incorrupt body is encased in glass beneath the side altar in the Chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal at 140 Rue du Bac, Paris. On our stained-glass window, St. Catherine is fittingly portrayed holding the Miraculous Medal.

### Prayer:

*Saint Catherine Labouré, you were the chosen confidant of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She revealed to you her desire that her children wear the Miraculous Medal as a mark of their love for her and in honor of her Immaculate Conception.*

*Intercede for us, that we may follow our heavenly mother's desires. Ask that we may receive those special graces which flow from her motherly hands like rays of light. Amen*

**Mary Pray for Us -**  
(Every Day by Tradition)

The stained-glass window “Mary Pray For Us” serves to remind us of her special relation with Jesus. As Jesus’ mother she knows Him better than anyone. If she asks something of Him on our behalf, like at the wedding feast at Cana, He will grant it. As we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we join His Mystical Body, becoming brother or sister in faith, and adopted child of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for she is the Mother of Jesus, the Head; and what mother would refuse to pray for her children in need?



The window depicts her special relation to Jesus. She is at the foot of the cross, surrounded by three stars representing the three Persons in one God. Her heart, pierced as Simeon predicted, is adjacent to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

This window was dedicated in memory of Kathleen Mary Cunis.

**Prayer:**

*Hail Mary, full of grace,  
The Lord is with Thee;  
Blessed art thou among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners,  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

## Mother of Divine Grace - July 23

This feast and title of Our Blessed Mother is particular to the Carmelite Order. July 23 is the octave of the Solemnity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. We honor Mary as Mother of Divine Grace since she is the Mother of the Son of God, the Author of Grace. God has chosen her to be treasurer and dispenser of all His graces. She has received from God a special power to nourish souls and to make them grow in Him. It is to her that the Holy Spirit has said, "Take root in my elect"(Eccl. 24:12), creating roots of deep humility, of burning charity and of all the virtues.



Fittingly, our stained glass depicts Mary as the chalice from which comes forth Christ and all His graces, overflowing like rivers.

### Prayer:

*O God, you gave the human race the grace of forgiveness through the immaculate motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary; grant that we who call her the Mother of Grace on earth, may enjoy her happy presence forever in heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## St. Bernardine of Siena - May 20

At 22, Bernardine entered the Franciscan Order. For almost a dozen years he lived in solitude and prayer, but his gifts ultimately caused him to be sent to preach. He always traveled on foot, sometimes speaking for hours in one place, then doing the same in another town. He was the greatest preacher of his time, journeying across Italy, calming strife-torn cities, attacking the paganism he found rampant, attracting crowds of 30,000. He accomplished all this despite having a very weak and hoarse voice, miraculously improved later because of his devotion to Mary.



Bernadine is especially known for his devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. He devised a symbol—IHS, which stands for Jesus Hominum Salvator - Jesus Savior of men (humanity), Gothic letters on a blazing sun. This was to displace the superstitious symbols of the day. The devotion spread, and the symbol began to appear in churches, homes and public buildings. He is portrayed in our stained glass holding the symbol of the Holy Name of Jesus.

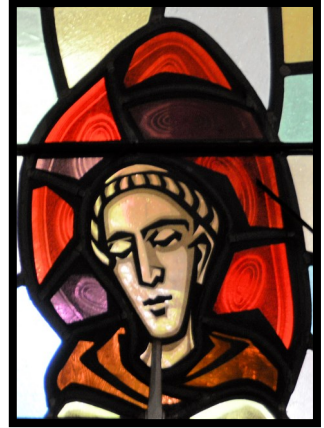
### Prayer of St. Bernardine of Siena:

*Jesus, Name full of glory, grace, love and strength!  
You are the refuge of those who repent,  
our banner of warfare in this life,  
the medicine of souls,  
the comfort of those who mourn,  
the delight of those who believe,  
the light of those who preach the true faith,  
the wages of those who toil,  
the healing of the sick.*

*To You our devotion aspires;  
by You our prayers are received;  
we delight in contemplating You.  
O Name of Jesus,  
You are the glory of all the saints for eternity. Amen.*

## St. Simon Stock - May 16

Little is known about Simon Stock's early life. He was born in England; legend says that the name Stock, meaning "tree trunk," derived from the fact that, beginning at age twelve, he lived as a hermit in a hollow tree trunk of an oak tree. He joined a group of Carmelites and later founded many Carmelite Communities, especially in University towns such as Cambridge, Oxford, Paris, and Bologna, and he helped to change the Carmelites from a hermit lifestyle to one of poverty, traveling, and living in urban areas, preaching, evangelizing, and ministering to the poor.



On July 16, 1251, the Virgin Mary appeared to him holding the brown scapular in one hand. Her words were: "Receive, my beloved son, this scapular of thy Order; it is the special sign of my favor, which I have obtained for thee and for thy children of Mount Carmel. He who dies clothed with this habit shall be preserved from eternal fire. It is the badge of salvation, a shield in time of danger, and a pledge of special peace and protection." The scapular (from the Latin, scapula, meaning "shoulder blade") consists of two pieces of cloth, one worn on the chest, and the other on the back, which were connected by straps or strings passing over the shoulders. On our stained glass window, he is pictured in the brown Carmelite habit, holding the Scapular.

### Prayer:

*Heavenly Father, You called Saint Simon Stock to serve You in the brotherhood of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Through his prayers, help us, like him, to live in Your presence, and to work for the salvation of the human family. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Queen of Peace - July 9

Our Lady is celebrated under the title “Queen of Peace “ on July 9<sup>th</sup>. Mary is the Mother of the Prince of Peace, Jesus, who reconciled heaven and earth. The devotion began in France in the 1500s among the Capuchin Franciscans. Notre Dame de Paix (Our Lady of Peace) was typically depicted in art holding the baby Jesus in on one arm and the olive branch of peace in the other. On our stained glass window, the dove and olive branch are pictured descending from Mary’s crown to the world.



### Prayer:

*Lord our God, You sent Your only Son  
to bring peace to our world.*

*Through the intercession  
of Blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
hear our earnest prayer;*

*grant that our times may be tranquil,  
so that we may live in peace as one family,  
united in love for one another.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,  
Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.*

*Amen.*

## Mother of Christ - January 1

Mother of Christ is another of the titles given to Mary in the Litany of Loreto. In proclaiming Mary as the Mother of Christ, we are also proclaiming her as Mother of God. This was affirmed by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. when it reaffirmed that Jesus Christ is One Person, with two natures--human and divine and that this is a union which cannot be separated.

The Council's affirmation that Mary can rightfully be called the Mother of God is specifically "Christological," affirming Who Jesus is and who we can become in Him. Mary is not Mother of God - the Father, or Mother of God - the Holy Spirit; rather, she is Mother of God - the Son, Jesus Christ. The Incarnation is a "mystery," in the sense of the Greek word from which our English word is derived, "mysterion." It is incapable of being fully expressed in words but needs to be received as a gift in faith. On our window, "PX" refers to Christ. It is superimposed on the Eucharistic bread emerging from the womb, with the fullness of grace radiating over us.



### Prayer:

*God of love,*

*You chose the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the Mother of Your only Son;*

*grant that we who have been redeemed by His blood,  
may share with her the glory of Your eternal kingdom;*

*through the same Jesus Christ our Lord  
Who is alive with You and the Holy Spirit,  
one God ,now and forever.*

*Amen.*

## St. Raymond of Penafort - January 7

St. Raymond was born in Barcelona in 1175 to the noble family of Pennafort. From an early age, Raymond expressed extraordinary devotion to the Holy Mother of God and he zealously promoted devotion and honor of Mary. His noble status enabled him to have a fine education, including a doctorate in both civil and canon law, and to become a renowned teacher. He gave this life up to become a Dominican friar and eventually became leader of the Order.



In 1218, The Blessed Virgin appeared, separately, to Raymond, St. Peter Nolasco, and King James I of Aragon asking them to establish an Order for the liberation of Christians in African prisons. They founded the Order of Our Lady of Mercy for the Ransom of Captives, which eventually ransomed many thousands from the Moors. Raymond remained humble and close to God, throughout his 99 years. He was an extraordinary writer and organizer, at one point creating a compilation of Church Law for Pope Gregory IX that guided the Church until 1971.

St. Raymond is credited with many miracles, including “sailing” across the sea on just his cloak. In stained glass, Raymond is shown in the Dominican Habit, symbolically carrying the Cross and Eucharist – symbols of his teaching vocation. He is the patron of attorneys, barristers, canonists, lawyers, and medical record librarians.

### Prayer:

*O God, You Who chose blessed Raymond to be a renowned minister of the Sacrament of Penance, and miraculously brought him through the waves of the sea, grant that by his intercession we may produce good results from our penitence and reach the heaven of eternal salvation. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.*



## St. Pius V - April 30

St. Pius V was Born Antonio Ghislieri at Bosco Marengo, Italy in 1504 to a noble but poor family. He was educated by the Dominicans and entered the order in 1528, where he taught theology and philosophy for 16 years. He was made Bishop of Sutri in 1556 and elected Pope upon the death of Pius IV. Throughout his life, St. Pius V was known for his zeal in defending the Faith. He was a great reformer, urging the church leadership back to simplicity and piety. He led by example, embracing the poor and the ill.



St. Pius V is also known for his great devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and as a promoter of the Holy Rosary. In 1569, he issued a Papal Bull (decree) establishing the Dominican Rosary as the standard throughout the Church. On October 7, 1571, when the great naval Battle of Lepanto took place, St. Pius called on all of Europe to recite the Rosary and called for a 40 hour devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Rome. Despite overwhelming odds, the Christian ships defeated the mighty armada of the Ottoman Turks, settling the fate of Europe as a Christian continent. He is often depicted wearing the red mazzotta, or cape. In our window, he wears the cape over his Dominican habit. He holds the lamp of knowledge, symbolizing his role as a great reformer.

### Prayer:

*O God, Who in Your providence raised up Pope Saint Pius the Fifth in Your Church that the faith might be safeguarded and more fitting worship be offered to You, grant, through his intercession, that we may participate in Your mysteries with lively faith and fruitful charity. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen*

## Help of Christians - May 24

Because of her closeness to Jesus and her unique role in bringing about God's plan, Catholics see Mary as a particularly effective intercessor.

The title "Help of Christians" came into being in 1571, when the Ottoman Empire prepared to invade Europe. In the face of this threat, Pope Pius V called on Catholics to pray for Mary's intercession. When the Turks were defeated at the Battle of Lepanto, the pope hailed Mary as Our Lady, Help of Christians.

A later pope, Pope Pius VII, was imprisoned by Napoleon in 1808 and held captive for nearly six years. During his captivity, he promised the Lord that if he returned to Rome, he would institute a special feast to honor Mary. He formally established the feast day of Mary, Help of Christians.

Our stained-glass window depicts the "Ship of the Church" being guided by the lighthouse of Mary's help.



### Prayer:

*O God, You chose the glorious Virgin Mary to be our mother and the help of all Christians; grant that through her prayers, to strengthen Your Church, so as to accept all trials patiently, and overcome all obstacles through steadfast love, and in so doing, manifest the truth of Jesus Christ to the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Your Son who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.*

## Queen of The Rosary - October 7

The development of the Rosary has a long history. Originally, the practice developed of praying 150 Our Fathers in imitation of the 150 Psalms. Then there was a parallel practice of praying 150 Hail Marys. Soon a mystery of Jesus' life was attached to each Hail Mary.

Though Mary's giving of the Rosary to Saint Dominic is recognized as a legend, the Dominican form of 15 mysteries became standardized by Pope St. Pius V in 1569 - Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious. (In 2002, Pope St. John Paul II added the five Luminous Mysteries (Mysteries of Light) to the Rosary devotion.)

Pope St. Pius V established the feast of Our Lady of Victory to thank God for the victory of Christians over the Turks at Lepanto - a victory attributed to the praying of the Rosary. Later, Pope Gregory XIII renamed the feast in honor of "Our Lady of The Most Holy Rosary", or "Queen of The Rosary." The feast is celebrated on the anniversary of the battle of Lepanto.



### Prayer:

*O Queen of the most holy Rosary, in these times of brazen impiety, show again thy power, with the signs which accompanied thy victories of old, and from the throne where thou art seated, dispense pardon and grace. In pity watch over the Church of thy Son, His Vicar, and every order of the clergy and laity, suffering in grievous warfare. Hasten, O most powerful destroyer of heresy, hasten the hour of mercy, seeing that the hour of judgment is daily challenged by innumerable offenses. Obtain for me, a sinner, kneeling supplicant in thy presence, the grace which may enable me to live a just life on earth, and reign with the just in Heaven. Whilst with the faithful throughout the world, O Queen of the most holy Rosary, I salute thee and cry out: Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us! Amen.*

## St. Dominic - August 8

Saint Dominic was born in Caleruega, Spain in 1170. His parents were members of the Spanish nobility. Dominic was educated in Palencia, and in 1194, he joined a Benedictine order in Osma. He became the superior, or “Prior” of the chapter in 1201. At that time, the Albigensian heresy was flourishing. That heresy wrongly taught that all material things, including the human body itself, were fundamentally evil. Despite threats against him, Dominic preached against this heresy, traveling throughout the region, and bringing many back to Catholic Christian faith and practice. Dominic knew that to continue to fight this heresy would require that teachers remain in the region. He established a convent at Prouille, which would become the first Dominican Abbey.



According to legend, St. Dominic received the Rosary during a period of prayer at the Abbey in Prouille. This allegedly took place in 1214 during an apparition of the Virgin Mary. While this account is disputed by some historians, the Marian Rosary in its current form became popular at this time. Dominic became famous as a result of his mercy and his work. In 1217, Pope Honorius III dubbed Dominic and his followers "The Order of Preachers." Dominic then began a period of travel that would continue until his death at age 51. Saint Dominic is the patron saint of astronomers, the Dominican Republic, and the innocent who are falsely accused of crimes. Dominic is depicted in our window dressed in the Dominican habit and the cloak of a traveler. He is holding the Rosary in one hand and the book of a preacher in the other.

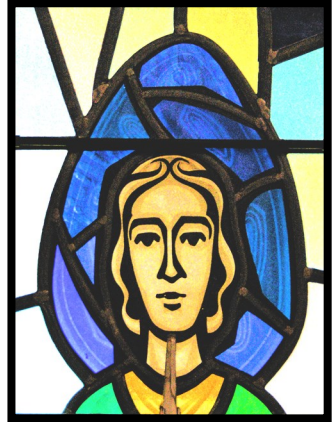
### Prayer

*O God, You have enlightened Your Church by the eminent virtues and preaching of St. Dominic, Your confessor. Mercifully grant that by his prayers we may be protected against temporal imbalances and daily improve in all that is spiritually good. Jesus, Mary and Joseph most kind, bless us now and at the hour of our death. Amen*

## St. John The Evangelist -

**December 27**

John was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the brother of James the Greater. Jesus called them, together with Peter and Andrew, to become His disciples. John had a prominent position among the Apostles. For example, Peter, James, and John were the only witnesses of the raising of Jairus's daughter, the Transfiguration, and the Agony in Gethsemane. John was also that "other disciple" who with Peter followed Christ into the palace of the high priest after His arrest. John alone remained at the foot of the Cross on Calvary with the Mother of Jesus.



From the day of the Crucifixion, when Jesus entrusted His mother to the care of John, he took her into his heart and home and cared for her. In the year 42, John left Jerusalem and sailed with Mary to safety to Ephesus, in what is now Turkey. There he built her a house where she lived and from which she was assumed into heaven. There is extensive evidence that the remains of a house found in Ephesus in 1891 is that which St. John built for our Mother Mary. Pope St. John XXIII, Pope St. Paul VI, Pope St. John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI all made pilgrimages to the restored shrine of Mary's house. Over one million visitors journey there each year.

In addition to the Fourth Gospel, John wrote three New Testament Letters and the Book of Revelation. He preached in Jerusalem, Asia Minor, and other communities. He is the patron of love, loyalty, friendships, and authors. In our final window, John is fittingly shown holding a sacred scroll.

### **Prayer**

*O Glorious Saint John, you were so loved by Jesus that you merited to rest your head upon His breast, and to be left in His place as a son to Mary. Obtain for us an ardent love for Jesus and Mary. Let me be united with Them now on earth and forever after in heaven. Amen*

## Our Lady of Sorrows

The statue of Our Lady of Sorrows that now stands on the side of the church stood in the front yard of Marian High School in Framingham for fifty-seven years. The statue was a gift from the Marian High School class of 1962 and dedicated to the memory of two Marian students, Frederick W. Keane, Jr. ('62) and Kathleen M. Cunis ('63), who tragically died in an automobile accident in January of 1962. "Katie" Cunis was from Ashland, and was an active parishioner until her untimely death at the age of sixteen. When Marian High School closed, thanks to donations from numerous Marian High School alumni, and with assistance from the Knights of Columbus, sufficient funds were raised to move the statue here to St. Cecilia Parish. The "Pray For Us" stained-glass window in the Church is also dedicated in memory of Kathleen Cunis.



### **The Seven Sorrows Devotion**

The purpose of the Devotion of the Seven Sorrows is to promote union with the sufferings of Christ through union with the special suffering that Our Lady endured because she was the Mother of God. By uniting ourselves with both the Passion of Christ and His holy Mother, we enter into Jesus' Heart and honor Him greatly; He is more honored **because we have so honored His Mother.**

**Say one "Hail Mary" after each Meditation**

**1. The prophecy of Simeon:** "And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother: Behold this child is set for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted; And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed." – Luke II, 34-35.

**Meditation:** *How great was the shock to Mary's Heart at hearing the sorrowful words, in which holy Simeon told the bitter Passion and Death of her sweet Jesus, since in that same moment she realized in her mind all the insults, blows, and torments which the impious men were to offer to the Redeemer of the world. But a still sharper sword pierced her soul. It was the thought of our ingratitude to her beloved Son. Now consider that because of your sins you are unhappily among the ungrateful.*

**2. The flight into Egypt:** "And after they (the wise men) were departed, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise and take the Child and His mother and fly into Egypt: and be there

until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy Him. Joseph arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and retired into Egypt: and He was there until the death of Herod." – Matt. II, 13-14.

**Meditation:** *Consider the sharp sorrow which Mary felt when, St. Joseph being warned by an angel, she had to flee by night in order to preserve her beloved Child from the slaughter decreed by Herod. What anguish was hers, in leaving Judea, lest she should be overtaken by the soldiers of the cruel king! How great her privations in that long journey! What sufferings she bore in that land of exile, what sorrow amid that people given to idolatry! Consider how often you have renewed that bitter grief of Mary when your sins have caused her Son to flee from our hearts.*

**3. The loss of the Child Jesus in the temple:** "And having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the Child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and His parents knew it not. And thinking that He was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And not finding Him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking Him." Luke II, 43-45.

**Meditation:** *How dread was the grief of Mary, when she saw that she had lost her beloved Son! And as if to increase her sorrow, when she sought Him diligently among her kinsfolk and acquaintances, she could hear no tidings of Him. No hindrances stayed her, nor weariness, nor danger; but she forthwith returned to Jerusalem, and for three long days sought Him sorrowing. Great be your confusion, O my soul, who has so often lost your Jesus by your sins, and has given no heed to seek Him at once, a sign that you make very little or no account of the precious treasure of divine love.*

**4. The meeting of Jesus and Mary on the Way of the Cross:** "And there followed Him a great multitude of people, and of women, who bewailed and lamented Him." – Luke XXIII, 27.

**Meditation:** *Come, O ye sinners, come and see if ye can endure so sad a sight. This Mother, so tender and loving, meets her beloved Son, meets Him amid an impious rabble, who drag Him to a cruel death, wounded, torn by stripes, crowned with thorns, streaming with blood, bearing His heavy cross. Ah, consider, my soul, the grief of the blessed Virgin thus behold-*

*ing her Son! Who would not weep at seeing this Mother's grief? But who has been the cause of such woe? I, it is I, who with my sins have so cruelly wounded the heart of my sorrowing Mother! And yet I am not moved; I am as a stone, when my heart should break because of my ingratitude.*

**5. The Crucifixion:** "They crucified Him. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, His Mother. When Jesus therefore had seen His Mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith to His Mother: Woman: behold thy Son. After that he saith to the disciple: Behold thy Mother." – John XIX, 18-25-27.

**Meditation:** *Look, devout soul, look to Calvary, whereon are raised two altars of sacrifice, one on the body of Jesus, the other on the heart of Mary. Sad is the sight of that dear Mother drowned in a sea of woe, seeing her beloved Son, part of her very self, cruelly nailed to the shameful tree of the cross. Ah me! how every blow of the hammer, how every stripe which fell on the Saviour's form, fell also on the disconsolate spirit of the Virgin. As she stood at the foot of the cross, pierced by the sword of sorrow, she turned her eyes on Him, until she knew that He lived no longer and had resigned His spirit to His Eternal Father. Then her own soul was like to have left the body and joined itself to that of Jesus.*

**6. The taking down of the Body of Jesus from the Cross:**

"Joseph of Arimathea, a noble counselor, came and went in boldly to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And Joseph buying fine linen, and taking Him down, wrapped Him up in the fine linen." – Mark XV, 43-46.

**Meditation:** *Consider the most bitter sorrow which rent the soul of Mary, when she saw the dead body of her dear Jesus on her knees, covered with blood, all torn with deep wounds. O mournful Mother, a bundle of myrrh, indeed, is thy Beloved to thee. Who would not pity thee? Whose heart would not be softened, seeing affliction which would move a stone? Behold John, not to be comforted, Magdalen and the other Mary, in deep affliction, and Nicodemus, who can scarcely bear his sorrow.*

**7. The burial of Jesus:** "Now there was in the place where He was crucified, a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, it was the sabbath eve of the Jews, they laid Jesus, because the sepulcher was nigh at



hand." John XIX, 41-42.

**Meditation:** *Consider the sighs which burst from Mary's sad heart when she saw her beloved Jesus laid within the tomb. What grief was hers when she saw the stone lifted to cover that sacred tomb! She gazed a last time on the lifeless body of her Son, and could scarce detach her eyes from those gaping wounds. And when the great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulcher, oh, then indeed her heart seemed torn from her body!*

*Excerpted from The Most Holy Rosary website.*

## **The Grotto of The Blessed Virgin Mary**

The original Grotto was built in 1937 and dedicated to The Blessed Virgin Mary. In the late 1950s, it was rebuilt, after the purchase of land between the Rectory and Union St.

Annual May processions have, weather permitting, culminated at the Grotto with the Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven.



Despite being in the middle of town, with its benches under the pine trees, the Grotto is a wonderfully peaceful site for silent meditation, or to pray, particularly the Rosary.

## **The Rosary**

### **History of the Rosary**

The Rosary dates back to the Middle Ages, when it was developed as a way for the laity to participate in the monastic tradition of praying the 150 psalms in the Divine Office every week. The practice began with people praying 150 Our Fathers, and it later expanded to include 150 Hail Marys as it became more popular.

The Rosary as we know it today was developed in Carthusian monasteries in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It developed first with the Scriptural verses of the Hail Mary. In the later Middle Ages, the Dominican Order spread the practice of praying the Rosary as a devotion to Mary.

Over time, brief reflections on the life of Jesus were added. These additions became the Mysteries of the Rosary. At first, there were 50 such reflections; this number eventually grew to 150, divided into three sets of 50 each. Eventually, the number of reflections was reduced to 15 Mysteries of the Rosary: five Joyful Mysteries, five Sorrowful Mysteries, and five Glorious Mysteries. In 2002 Pope St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* introduced the five Luminous Mysteries, which focus on the public ministry of Jesus Christ.

### **How To Pray The Rosary**

*(The prayers of The Rosary are found on pages 40-43)*

1. Make the sign of The Cross.
2. Holding the Crucifix, say the Apostles Creed.
3. On the first bead, say the Our Father.
4. On each of the next 3 beads, say the Hail Mary.
5. On the next bead, say the Glory Be, Announce the First Mystery, and say the Our Father.
6. Going around the circle, on each of the ten beads of the first decade, say the Hail Mary, while meditating on the Mystery.
7. On the bead separating the decades, say a Glory Be and the following prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: *O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of your mercy.*
8. While on the same bead, Announce the next Mystery, and say the Our Father.
9. Repeat steps 6 -8 to complete the five decades. (See diagram on page 35.)
10. After saying the five decades, say the Hail Holy Queen, followed by this dialogue and prayer:

**V.** Pray for Us, O holy Mother of God.

**R.** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray: *O God, whose Only Begotten Son,*

*By His life, death, and Resurrection,*

*Has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life,*

*Grant, we beseech Thee,*

*That while meditating on these mysteries*

*Of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,*

*We may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen*

## Mysteries of the Rosary

### Joyful Mysteries (Monday, Saturday)

- \* The Annunciation
- \* The Visitation
- \* The Nativity
- \* The Presentation in The Temple
- \* The Finding of Jesus In The Temple

### Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday, Friday)

- \* The Agony In The Garden
- \* The Scourging At The Pillar
- \* The Crowning With Thorns
- \* The Carrying of The Cross
- \* The Crucifixion

### Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday, Sunday)

- \* The Resurrection
- \* The Ascension
- \* The Descent of The Holy Spirit
- \* The Assumption
- \* The Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven

### Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)

- \* The Baptism of Jesus
- \* The Wedding Feast at Cana
- \* The Proclamation of The Kingdom
- \* The Transfiguration
- \* The Institution of The Holy Eucharist



*Need A Rosary? St. Cecilia's usually has a supply of Rosary Beads in the Church vestibule*

## Divine Mercy Devotion

In 1988, Father Darius Szleszynski came in Residence to St. Cecilia Parish. Father Darius brought a strong devotion to Blessed Faustina Kowalska and The Divine Mercy. By the time Father Darius left in 1999, there was a strong devotion to The Divine Mercy and praying the Chaplet of The Divine Mercy. A beautiful depiction of The Divine Mercy rests in the Sanctuary.



The message of The Divine Mercy is simple. It is that God loves us – all of us. And, He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC:

**A** - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

**B** - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

**C** - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

This message and devotion to Jesus as The Divine Mercy is based on the writings of Saint Faustina Kowalska, an uneducated Polish nun who, in obedience to her spiritual director, wrote a diary of about 600 pages recording the revelations she received about God's mercy. Even before her death in 1938, the devotion to The Divine Mercy had begun to spread.

### The Image of The Divine Mercy

In 1931, our Lord appeared to St. Faustina in a vision. She saw Jesus clothed in a white garment with His right hand raised in blessing. His left hand was touching His garment in the area of the Heart, from which two large rays came forth, one red and the other pale. She gazed intently at the Lord in silence, her soul filled with awe, but also with great

joy. Jesus said to her:

*Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over [its] enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory (Diary, 47, 48). I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You (327). I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and [then] throughout the world (47).*

At the request of her spiritual director, St. Faustina asked the Lord about the meaning of the rays in the image. She heard these words in reply:

*The two rays denote Blood and Water. The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issued forth from the depths of My tender mercy when My agonized Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross. Happy is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him (299). By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works (742).*

These words indicate that the Image represents the graces of Divine Mercy poured out upon the world, especially through Baptism and the Eucharist.

Many different versions of this image have been painted, but our Lord made it clear that the painting itself is not what is important. When St. Faustina first saw the original image that was being painted under her direction, she wept in disappointment and complained to Jesus: "Who will paint You as beautiful as You are?" (313).

In answer, she heard these words: ***Not in the beauty of the color, nor of the brush lies the greatness of this image, but in My grace*** (313). So, no matter which version of the image we prefer, we can be assured that it is a vehicle of God's grace if we revere it with trust in His mercy.

**The National Shrine of The Divine Mercy is in Stockbridge Massachusetts, maintained by the Marians of The Immaculate Conception. This Divine Mercy information is based on their website.**

## The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy

In 1935, St. Faustina received a vision of an angel sent by God to chastise a certain city. She began to pray for mercy, but her prayers were powerless. Suddenly she saw the Holy Trinity and felt the power of Jesus' grace within her. At the same time she found herself pleading with God for mercy with words she heard interiorly: *Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us.* (St. Faustina's Diary, 475)

As she continued saying this inspired prayer, the angel became helpless and could not carry out the deserved punishment (see 474). The next day, as she was entering the chapel, she again heard this interior voice, instructing her how to recite the prayer that our Lord later called "the Chaplet." This time, after "*have mercy on us*" were added the words "*and on the whole world*" (476). From then on, she recited this form of prayer almost constantly, offering it especially for the dying.

In subsequent revelations, the Lord made it clear that the Chaplet was not just for her, but for the whole world. He also attached extraordinary promises to its recitation. *Encourage souls to say the Chaplet which I have given you (1541). Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death (687). When they say this Chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between My Father and the dying person, not as the just Judge but as the Merciful Savior (1541). Priests will recommend it to sinners as their last hope of salvation. Even if there were a sinner most hardened, if he were to recite this Chaplet only once, he would receive grace from My infinite mercy (687). I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy (687). Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will. (1731)*

Prayed on ordinary rosary beads, The Chaplet is an intercessory prayer. It is especially appropriate to use it after having received Holy Communion. It may be said at any time, but our Lord specifically told St. Faustina to recite it during the nine days before the Feast of Mercy (the first Sunday after Easter). He then added: "By this Novena, [of Chaplets] I will grant every possible grace to souls." (796) It is likewise appropriate to pray the Chaplet during the "Hour of Great Mercy" - three o'clock each afternoon (recalling the time of Christ's death on the cross). In His revelations to St. Faustina, Our Lord asked for a special remembrance of His Passion at that hour.

## How To Pray The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy

1. *Make the Sign of the Cross*

2. Optional Opening Prayers: *You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty Yourself out upon us.*

Then repeat 3 times: *O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You!*

3. *Our Father*

4. *Hail Mary*

5. *The Apostles' Creed*

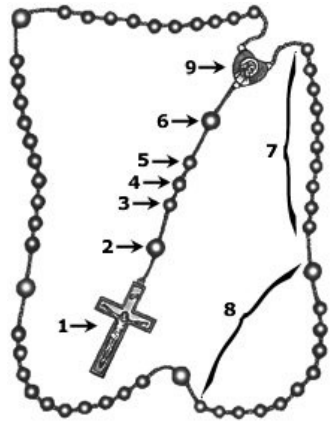
6. "The Eternal Father": *Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.*

7. On the 10 small beads of the first decade: *For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.*

8. Repeat for the remaining decades, saying the "Eternal Father" (6) on the "Our Father" bead and then "For the sake of His sorrowful Passion" (7) on the 10 "Hail Mary" beads.

9. Conclude with "Holy God" (Repeat three times): *Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.*

10. Optional Closing Prayer: *Eternal God, in Whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion — inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself.*



## The Power of Prayer

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Also known as the Our Father, it was composed by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This magnificent prayer beautifully reflects the wishes of its Divine Author. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount where it first appears in the Gospels (Matt 6:9-13): “When praying do not choose many words” (Matthew 6:7). In other words, quantity doesn’t necessarily mean quality in your prayer life, especially if you’re not being sincere! We can marvel that the Lord’s Prayer sums up what we need from God (and what He wants from us!) so succinctly:

**Our Father,  
Who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy Name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.**

### **The Hail Mary**

Sometimes called the “angelic salutation,” is the foundation for such famous prayers such as the Rosary and the Angelus. It has inspired much fervent devotion to Jesus and His Blessed Mother. This wonderful prayer has helped give people the graces, strength, and spiritual protection they’ve needed for hundreds of years.

**Hail Mary, full of grace,  
The Lord is with thee;  
Blessed art thou among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
Pray for us sinners,  
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

### **The Glory Be...**

The Glory Be... goes back many centuries and is known also by its Lat-



in name and version as the *Gloria Patri* (Glory Be to the Father). It is also referred to in some older prayer books and scholarly writings as a doxology (a short expression of praise for God). The Jewish tradition of doxologies was often used by St. Paul in his letters.

**Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

### **The Apostles' Creed**

The Apostles' Creed can be traced in its present form back to around the 7th or 8th century AD. It appeared in slightly different forms in documents as early as the year 200 AD. Although this prayer was probably not composed as we know it by the Apostles themselves, it nonetheless reflects their teachings, as well as those found in the New Testament. The Apostles' Creed is divided into what we refer to as 12 articles of Faith. It is a solid profession of the fundamental truths of our faith:

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth; (*The 1st article*)  
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; (*The 2nd*)  
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, (*The 3rd*)  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried. (*The 4th*)  
He descended into hell;  
the third day he rose again from the dead; (*The 5th*)  
He ascended into Heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;  
(*The 6th*)  
from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.  
(*The 7th*)  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, (*The 8th*)  
the Holy Catholic Church,  
the Communion of Saints, (*The 9th*)  
the forgiveness of sins, (*The 10th*)  
the resurrection of the body, (*The 11th*)  
and life everlasting. Amen. (*The 12th*)**

## **The Hail Holy Queen**

This prayer, originally known by its Latin name, *Salve Regina*, is recited at the end of the Rosary and is also used in night prayers. It dates back to around the 11th century and is still sung today as a hymn in various forms, among them a beautiful chant. In this prayer, as noted by St. Alphonus Liguori in his book *The Glories of Mary*, we pay homage to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our “Mother of Mercy,” and humbly ask for her assistance. Many religious over the centuries (including quite a few saints!) have considered her help to be essential for our salvation.

**Hail Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us. And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement O loving O sweet Virgin Mary.**

*These lines may be added when the prayer is recited by a group:*

**Leader: Pray for us O holy mother of God.**

**Response: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

## **The Memorare**

The Memorare invites us to ask the Blessed Mother for her assistance and her grace, especially when we feel most troubled in our daily lives.

**REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to you do I come; before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.**

## **The Magnificat**

The Magnificat, taken from Luke’s Gospel (1:46-55), is the Blessed Virgin Mary’s hymn of praise to the Lord. It is also known as the Cantic of Mary in the Liturgy of the Hours, a special collection of scripture readings, psalms, and hymns that constitute what is known as the prayer of the Church. (Priests and other religious are required to pray sections from the Liturgy of the Hours each day.) Its name comes from the first line of its text in Latin (“Magnificat anima mea Dominum”) translated

in the first line below. Mary proclaims the Lord's greatness with characteristic humility and grace here.

**My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior  
for He has looked with favor on His lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is His Name.**

**He has mercy on those who fear Him  
in every generation.**

**He has shown the strength of His arm,  
He has scattered the proud in their conceit.  
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.**

**He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich He has sent away empty.  
He has come to the help of His servant Israel  
for He has remembered His promise of mercy,  
the promise He made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Commentary taken from "Our Catholic Prayers" website.*

**Rear Cover: St. Cecilia**

This statue of St. Cecilia stood on the altar of the old church since the early days of the Parish. When that building was razed to make way for the Family Center, the statue was moved outside in front of the present Church.

*Prayer: O Eternal God, Who did give us, in the person of Saint Cecilia, a powerful protectress, grant that after having faithfully passed our days, like herself, in innocence and holiness, we may one day attain the land of beatitude, where in concert with her, we may praise You and bless You forevermore in eternity. Amen.*

*From Thanksgiving Prayer of Rev. Jason R. Giombetti  
Ordained May 20, 2017*



**Saint Cecilia**