

Crisis & Health Rosary eBook



CLICKTOPRAYeROSAARY

For Peace in the World



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING
INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

COVID - 19
Vatican Commission



DICASTERY FOR
COMMUNICATION

The Crisis & Health Rosary eBook aims at helping the faithful to contemplate the Gospel with Mary, our Mother, in the light of a world in crisis generated by COVID-19 and open our hearts to the hope of the Good News of Jesus-Christ.

You will find real testimonies from people affected by the pandemic, in several ways. The writers, members of Vatican COVID-19 Commission, intended to guide the prayer by linking some of the painful and struggling stories of people from all over the world with the contemplation of the different mysteries of the Rosary.

It is also available as an audio-guide Rosary in Click To Pray eRosary, the free app that helps you to pray this Marian prayer, whose contents were created by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network and developed by GTI.

"These are times of suffering, division and uncertainty. But at the same time, this challenging moment is an opportunity to change and to prepare a healthier future. With our gaze fixed on Jesus and contemplating the luminous, sorrowful, joyous and glorious mysteries of His life, we can embrace the hope of the Kingdom of God that opens us to new horizons. Guided by the Virgin Mary, who knew how to keep things in her suffering heart, let us gather together in prayer while we work for the wellbeing of people, institutions and the planet."

Fr. August Zampini, Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and one of the coordinators of the COVID-19 Commission.

"I am very happy that the Vatican COVID-19 Commission could participate in the creation of this Rosary. The Church's common action in the face of this pandemic finds its source in prayer, in the service of Christ's mission. This new Rosary can help many people in these moments of crisis because Mary, our Mother, is a powerful ally to look up to with hope at the times to come."

Fr. Frédéric Fornos SJ, International Director of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network.

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JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. The First Joyful Mystery. *The incarnation of the Son of God*

«*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary*» (Luke 1,26-27).

Story: Every year, Roberto and Juana's small business makes an important donation to a charitable cause. This year, unfortunately, businesses in general – including Roberto and Juana's – have been seriously affected by the coronavirus emergency. All the same it is still possible to do something to help. Roberto and Juana know there are regions with very few ventilators to help those infected to recover and feel the call to use their small factory to build ventilators for hospitals. They know they can make them at a very accessible price but this implies changing their business around. This is an important decision for them to make. Can they say yes?

Let us ask ourselves: *What do I feel called towards today? What are the important decisions I need to take and what are my fears?*

Reflection: The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her she will conceive and bear a Son, who will be the Saviour of the world. By answering yes, Mary cooperates with the grace of God and brings hope to the human family. Amid the torment of this pandemic, we trust in the generosity of God and his unfailing love for us but we also pray for the grace to cooperate with every opportunity God offers us to care for those most in need.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother in heaven, free us from all fear that can paralyse us, hold us back and prevent us being lifted up by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Give us your "Yes", the faithful, trusting Yes, which accepts and commits to fill this world with the love of the Father, beginning with those who are last. May we embrace with your help the will of God, leaving with Him all paralysing doubts and trusting that our "yes" will yield fruit and increase hope in a more healthy and just world.*

Words from Pope Francis: *"Lord you are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing. It is not the time of your judgement, but of our judgement: a time to choose what matters and what passes*

away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others.” Prayer in times of pandemic (Atrium of St Peters Basilica. Friday, 27 March 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

2. The Second Joyful Mystery. *The visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Saint Elizabeth*

«In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb”». (Luke 1, 39-42).

Story: Agnes, aged twelve, greatly misses her grandmother Eleonora, who lives alone. During the three months of quarantine due to coronavirus, Eleonora was not able to see any of her grandchildren and had to make do with calls on virtual platforms. In the evening she looked at photo albums of her husband, her children and grandchildren and thanked God for the happy times spent together. However it is not only the grandmother who needs the company. Agnes feels her body is changing and she is entering a new stage in her life. She would love to talk about this and share secrets with her grandmother Eleonora, who has always counselled her wisely. Yet it is difficult to talk about such issues over the telephone and in any case it can never be the same as face to face. There are things for which personal encounters are fundamental.

Let us ask ourselves: *Who are those I miss most? Who do I need to meet personally in order to talk about what lies deep in my heart?*

Reflection: Inspired by love, Mary hastens to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She brings her a message of great joy and, moreover, brings Lord Jesus himself. How many people await our prayers, our presence, our faith, while they struggle to work under the effects of the pandemic in these uncertain times! Let us ask for the grace to respond immediately, and generate a “culture of meeting“ through which we can be joyful and offer glory to God, like Mary and Elizabeth. Today, often personal encounter is limited and even impossible. We ask the Lord for creativity to find new bridges of love and closeness.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of encounters*, today we need you to visit us at home, as you did with your cousin Elizabeth. Just like in that joyful encounter, may we share with you our deepest happiness. May your Presence renew our homes, that at times seemed to have forgotten you. May we together offer glory to God for the wonders he does for us, so small, so needful of his strong arm which uplifts all who have fallen, and his mercy which accompanies us from generation to generation.

Words from Pope Francis: *“I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord”»”* (Evangelii Gaudium, 3). *“In this time of tribulation and mourning, I hope that, where you are, you will be able to experience Jesus, who comes to meet you, greets you and says: “Rejoice” (Mt 28:9). And may this greeting mobilize us to invoke and amplify the Good News of the Kingdom of God.”* (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

3. The Third Joyful Mystery. *The birth of the son of God in a simple stable in Bethlehem*

« *In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in clothes and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*» (Luke 2,1-7).

Story: Carolina follows the caravan with a heavy heart, when suddenly she feels the child moving in her womb. She does not know where she is going. She only knows she cannot go back to where she came from and that her husband Rodrigo will do his best to find somewhere for her to give birth. While this global pandemic continues to threaten the world that surrounds her, will there be a future for her, her husband and her baby?

Let us ask ourselves: *What is a treasure and a light within me? What prevents that light from illuminating, welcoming and cheering others?*

Reflection: Mary gave birth to our Saviour and placed him in a manger, since there was no room for them in the inn. Their future seemed uncertain, but God protected them, above all thanks to the care of Saint Joseph. In this coronavirus emergency and in a world full of so many vulnerable women and children, unborn children, migrants and refugees, we commit ourselves once again to welcome, protect, promote and integrate those who are at greatest risk among us, as the Holy Father asks us, so that we can make our love strong and globalise hope.

Prayer: *Holy Mary Mother of God, you who carried Jesus in your womb, help us to trust that, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can participate in the Kingdom your own Son inaugurated in this world, a kingdom of light amid darkness, of justice amid so much abuse, of joy amid so much suffering. Saint Joseph, you who cared for the Holy Family, intercede so we can care for others and all of creation, so we can become the manger, and therefore cherish within us the Saviour of the world.*

Words from Pope Francis: *“The globalization of indifference will continue to threaten and tempt us in our journey... May we find within us the necessary antibodies of justice, charity and solidarity. We must not be afraid to live the alternative – the civilization of love. This is «a civilization of hope”* (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

4. The Fourth Joyful Mystery. *The presentation of Jesus in the temple*

«On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord as it is written in the Law of the Lord: Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord, and to offer a sacrifice a pair of doves or two young pigeons, in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord» (Luke 2, 21-24).

Story: David is confined to bed in his home for the elderly, after having tested positive for coronavirus. His children know he is ill, but visiting him will be extremely difficult. David has always given much to his community, but now he is suffering greatly not being able to do anything. He looks out from his window and lifts up a prayer to God to not let him die alone.

Let us ask ourselves: *Which of my experiences seem to have reached the end of their course? To what new beginning is Jesus inviting me? How does he suggest I begin?*

Reflection: In the Temple in Jerusalem, Simeon and Ana had faithfully served the Lord up to a great age. They were waiting to see the Messiah, but in their advanced age everything seemed to be coming to an end. However, thanks to the young Virgin Mary and her husband Saint Joseph, who obedient to the Law of the Lord came to present their son Jesus in the Temple, Simeon and Ana were able to rejuvenate their spirit. Despite their years, their service and their lives they experienced an extraordinary feeling with the arrival of the infant Jesus. The pandemic we face is a threat for everyone, and especially the elderly. May their lives not end without appreciation and love.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of consolation*, help us to present your Son in the temple of the hearts of all those around us, the elderly, the sick, others without the strength to go on as well as those who are angry, full of

fury and rancour. May no life remain meaningless, forgotten or ignored; and guided by the Lord of life, we can celebrate every ending with the hope of a new beginning.

Words from Pope Francis: “I think of the sick, I think of the elderly. They never appear in the news ... May the Lord of life ... grant comfort and hope to those still suffering, especially the elderly and those who are alone.” (*Life after the pandemic*, 2020).

Prayer

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

5. The Fifth Joyful Mystery. *The finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple*

«Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they travelled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.» (Luke 2, 41-47).

Story: Once again, the intensive therapy unit in the hospital is completely full. Karen, the nurse in charge, is exhausted and breathless, just like her patients. She was raised in the Catholic faith, but feels she has lost that now. How can God allow all this suffering? Overwhelmed, she sighs and hears herself offer up a Prayer; “Oh God, please help us”.

Let us ask ourselves: *What are the experiences in which I have felt I lost the faith in the presence of God?*

Reflection: After journeying three days back to their village, the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph could not find Jesus. They were the carers of the Saviour but the child could not be found and they experienced

difficult moments of testing and searching. Finally they found him teaching in the Temple. These days of pandemic have made it difficult to find God. It seems he has hid and we are seeking him anxiously. May we discover him in his Word, in our churches and communities and in our actions of care, respect and solidarity.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of hope*, nobody knows better than you how to keep everything in your heart. You never lost your faith, in fact thanks to that faith you kept going and shared with the first apostles. We ask you to give us your faith, so that when we feel we are losing everything, taken by your hand, we recreate in your Son. He hides from our sight in order to be found in the temple of each person, in the temple of community life and in the temple of creation.

Words from Pope Francis: *“In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side. The Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame (cf. Is 42:3) that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.”* Prayer in times of pandemic (Atrium of St Peters Basilica. Friday, 27 March 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

1. The First Luminous Mystery. *The Baptism in the Jordan*

«And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."» (Matthew 3,16-17).

Story: Laura was away on a work trip when the borders were closed in Europe. It is three months now since she saw her husband and her children, isolated in a foreign country. Every night she feels homesick and worries about her family far away. She feels powerless and at times guilty, the lockdown is becoming unbearable. Suddenly, as if hearing a voice, she remembers that through Baptism she and her family, along with all Christians, are incorporated into the Heart of Jesus, with our joys and our sorrows, and are called to share and be a community. She trusts that, through Jesus and the Christian community, her family and loved ones now far from her, may receive the strength that they need.

Let us ask ourselves: *Was I once a much loved child? Do I remember the day I was baptised? Remembering I am baptised, like Laura, can I try and recover total trust in the Father of Jesus who is also my Father and who loves me?*

Reflection: Through Baptism we have died and resuscitated with Christ and shared his very life. Christ wished to show solidarity with every human experience and lives in us and with us in every single circumstance. In Him and in the light of the Spirit, we discover our true identity: we are Children loved by the Father, precious in his eyes and members of his own Family.

Prayer: *Lord*, Baptism restores us and opens the doors to a new life, the life of the Church. Yet the doors of the churches we attend are closed and many of us have been isolated at home because of the coronavirus threat. Others have spent years spiritually held back by other viruses that have infected the body, the soul or the heart. We long to begin again, to return to a social life, but in true communion. We would like to go back to the parks, the squares, the streets and the parishes but we do not want to return to all this as if nothing had happened. Let us help ourselves rediscover the brotherhood that springs from

baptism and, trusting in our Father, promote solidarity among our brothers and sisters... a new universal solidarity.

Words from Pope Francis: *“In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized (Evangelii Gaudium, 120). “If we have learned anything in all this time, it is that no one saves himself.... It is the breath of the Spirit that opens horizons, awakens creativity and renews us in fraternity to say I am present (or here I am) before the enormous and imperative task that awaits us.” (Life after the pandemic, 2020).*

Prayer

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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

2. The Second Luminous Mystery. *The Wedding at Cana*

« *On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” “Woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”*» (John 2, 1-5).

Story: Guadalupe and Bernardo were just about to get married but the pandemic obliged them to postpone the celebration of the sacrament which they were preparing for with such great joy. Guadalupe offered up this Prayer, “The Wedding at Cana reminds us that alone we cannot do it, and in this wonderful project of forming a family we are going to run out of wine. The presence of Mary at the scene gives me confidence, since she is our Mother and she looks after our needs. In front of the image of Our Lady Undoer of Knots, I felt the Blessed Mother was watching over us with great love and looking after our lives and our Story, just like at the wedding at Cana”.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I recognise myself under the gaze of Mary, who watches out for me and presents Jesus with our needs? Am I aware of the needs of those around me? What can I do for them today?*

Reflection: Mary realises straight away that something is wrong, she is attentive and takes the initiative. Somehow she anticipates Jesus, her Son. Jesus attends to the call of his Mother and precedes his hour. How many times does a small gesture illuminate the darkness of monotonous days! How often does an unexpected attention allow us to live and share joy once again. The gratuitousness of God became flesh in Mary and today He expects us to bring this to those men and women for whom life is not a celebration.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of Cana* you who know what we long for: meeting up, parties and family celebrations. Contemplating your presence at that wedding we ask you to renew our trust in you. May we see the needs of our brothers and sisters and feel ourselves committed to them. May we present them with you to Jesus, so he may transform water into wine.

Words from Pope Francis: *“It needs to be said that, generally speaking, there is little in the way of clear awareness of problems which especially affect the excluded. Yet they are the majority of the planet’s population, billions of people. These days, they are mentioned in international political and economic discussions, but one often has the impression that their problems are brought up as an afterthought, a question which gets added almost out of duty or in a tangential way, if not treated merely as collateral damage. Indeed, when all is said and done, they frequently remain at the bottom of the pile..... Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”* (Laudato Si’ 49).

Prayer

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

3. The Third Luminous Mystery. *The Proclamation of the Kingdom*

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1, 15).

Story: A group of women in Paula's village have decided to work together to make handmade hospital gowns and masks. There are not enough of these in the outpatient department and they are cooperating for free, without being asked. As each one of them sews at home, they feel united among themselves and with those using what they make. With their hands and eyes exhausted at the end of the day, they desire to be rest for those who are on the front line, together with those who are sick.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I dare to involve myself with others to respond to the needs around me? Can I join initiatives set up to help others? What inspires me to do this and what holds me back from doing this?*

Reflection: *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7, 21).* The will of the Father is that we participate in his Kingdom of love and justice. His Kingdom restores harmony with the Creator, with humanity and all creation, destroyed when we try to put ourselves in place of God. This Kingdom of Christ is present in us, even though we cannot see it. The Kingdom advances each time that we partake in good initiatives, each time we wash each others' feet, each time we respect the laws of the natural and delicate balance between human beings in this world, each time we let love be stronger than indifference in our hearts and in our works.

Prayer: *Jesus, we know your Kingdom is not of this world and this Kingdom grows inside of us like the mustard seed. Let us help ourselves to recognise it and follow your example. May the Kingdom be the horizon towards which we encourage ourselves to walk with others to construct a world according to your Heart.*

Words from Pope Francis: *"Reading the Scriptures also makes it clear that the Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our loving response to God be seen simply as an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of "charity à la carte", or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (cf. Luke 4:43); it is about loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity. Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society. We are seeking God's kingdom: "Seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). Jesus' mission is to*

inaugurate the kingdom of his Father; he commands his disciples to proclaim the good news that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:7).” (Evangelii Gaudium 180)

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

4. The Fourth Luminous Mystery. *The Transfiguration*

« And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. » (Matthew 17, 1-2).

Story: Juan lost his job in the second week of the coronavirus emergency. It was the third time he was left with nothing in less than a year, and he could not manage to accept the situation. He became more and more depressed and his mood was very low. His wife stood firmly by his side and many times repeated that she trusted him and was proud of his struggle. While waiting for him to find something they can live both of them on her modest salary. She has not abandoned him and is the anchor which allows him to continue believing in himself.

Let us ask ourselves: *Have I at times felt the strength of Christ in my weakness? What has he promised me during the course of my life? Do I remember his promises in moments of darkness?*

Reflection: The Transfiguration prepares the apostles for the scandal of Calvary, and illuminates the darkness of the cross where our Lord will suffer on Good Friday. Moments of trial are often preceded by moments of transfiguration, which God sends to fortify us and prepare us. The Spirit leads us to relive our faith in God and trust Him when we come down the mountain and no longer listen to the voice of the Father.

Prayer: *Lord, we need you to reveal your Transfigured Face. Look on those in despair and those already overwhelmed by this pandemic. We need to remember your transfigured presence, and know that you are the Lord of life and of the Story.*

Words from Pope Francis

“It is enough to open a crack so that the anointing that the Lord wants to give us expands with an unstoppable force and allows us to contemplate the reality of suffering with a renewing outlook.” (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

5. The Fifth Luminous Mystery. *The Eucharist*

« *Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.”* » (Matthew 26, 26).

Story: Since the death of his wife, after 53 years of marriage, Agapito’s life revolves around daily Mass every morning. He is a Eucharistic minister, and after Mass usually brings Communion to those who are sick in his area. Now he has not left his house for nine weeks. He participates in Mass on the television every morning. Without daily communion he realises how much he is alone, and at the same time discovers a new form of encounter with God and with others.

Let us ask ourselves: *Does my Prayer and participation in the Eucharist open me to communion with my brothers and sisters? Does my faith manifest in works of charity?*

Reflection: Often we present ourselves before the altar externally impeccable, but with our hearts full of envy and prejudice. We do not realise that we cannot enter into communion with God while walls inside divide us from our neighbours. *“He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God*

whom he has not seen. (1 John 4:20). *How can we present ourselves in front of the altar if we do not recognise our neighbour, and if we do not listen to the cry of the poor? Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbour, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth.*” (Laudato Si’, 70) May this time without being able to receive communion prepare us to return to the Church with a pure heart, open to everyone, beginning with the last. Christ has entrusted us to the altar for all of these people.

Prayer: *Eucharistic Jesus*, never as much as now have we missed your Eucharistic presence, and yearned to join together around this bread shared with everyone. What joy it will be Lord, when we can go back to experiencing this moment together, and embrace each other to share this joy that only you can give! We feel ourselves close to all those who cannot experience this joy because they are persecuted. Only now can we completely understand their suffering. Lord, offer yourself up to us and with us today. Thank you Lord, because the shared bread makes us brothers and sisters, today more than ever.

Words from Pope Francis: *“It is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. Grace, which tends to manifest itself tangibly, found an unsurpassable expression when God himself became man and gave himself as food for his creatures. The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above, but from within, he comes that we might find him in this world of ours. In the Eucharist, fullness is already achieved; it is the living centre of the universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life. Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God. Indeed the Eucharist is itself an act of cosmic love: “Yes, cosmic! Because even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world”.[166] The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation. The world which came forth from God’s hands returns to him in blessed and undivided adoration: in the bread of the Eucharist, “creation is projected towards divinization, towards the holy wedding feast, towards unification with the Creator himself”.[167] Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation.”* (Laudato si’, 236).

Prayer

- The Our Father

- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

1. The First Sorrowful Mystery. *Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane*

« Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go yonder and pray.” And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.” And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” » (Matthew 26, 36-39).

Story: Mary is hoping her cousins will lower the cost of her house rent, because since the crisis she has not been able to make ends meet. She is left stunned when she asks them and they reply not only that they cannot drop the rent, but that the rent will be going up slightly. Her cousins know what is going on, but they show no compassion. She hangs up the phone, deeply worried, and the most bitter part is she feels abandoned by her own kith and kin.

Let us ask ourselves: *Before the current crisis did I think only about saving myself or how to save myself together with those around me?*

Reflection: Jesus experienced solitude and betrayal. His friends were not able to accompany him in his agony, and left him alone. He also felt abandoned by the Father. In embracing his night, Jesus joins our nights. The world today needs a new universal solidarity which allows us to build tomorrow on new priorities. This is not the moment to withdraw into ourselves, but to reach out to others and walk the path together. Jesus shows us the path to follow, surrendering to the arms of the Father and conquering evil with good.

Prayer: *Jesus*, you who experienced the sorrow of abandonment by those you loved, look into our hearts which often feel deceived and betrayed by those from whom we expect love. Teach us to join our sorrow with Yours so we can respond with You and as You: trusting in God, our Father, and confirming our desire to construct your Kingdom. *Blessed Mother of all consolation*, you who supported Jesus throughout his agony, continue to accompany us in our own despondency.

Words from Pope Francis:

“Every time we take part in the Passion of the Lord, we accompany the passion of our brothers and sisters; living that same passion too, our ears will hear the novelty of the Resurrection: we are not alone, the Lord precedes us on our way, removing the stones that block us.” (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

2. The Second Sorrowful Mystery. *The Scourging of Jesus*

«Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple robe; they came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands.» (John 19,1-3).

Story: Eugenie was promised a future as a hairdresser in Europe, and full of hope left her village in Nigeria. When she reached her destination she found herself a prisoner in a network of human traffickers who forced her to work on the street as a prostitute. The coronavirus emergency has caused a crisis in the repugnant trafficking sector, who offload their anger on the bodies of these girls and beat them up every day just for amusement.

Let us ask ourselves: *Have I become indifferent to the suffering of my brothers and sisters?*

Reflection: Jesus suffers more from indifference than the blows of his executioners. In the courtyard where he is scourged some watch out of curiosity, others distracted or bored. One soldier yawns, waiting for the end of his shift to go home to rest. They are not moved by the blood that is spilt. They do not feel guilty or responsible for this blood. Likewise we grow accustomed to see in the news images which transform into cold numbers of immigrants or refugees, families who find themselves in the most absolute precariousness and already we are not moved. They are anonymous numbers, without faces or names for us. May God convert our hearts each time we are insensitive to the suffering of our brothers and sisters.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of sorrows*, you who collected the Blood of Jesus and encourage us all to fulfil the will of His Father, keep revealing your tenderness for our brothers and sisters who are victims of abuse and violence. Teach us to recognise Jesus in them and not to fall into the blind insanity of indifference.

Words from Pope Francis: *“Embracing his cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring. It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity.”* (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

3. The Third Sorrowful Mystery. *The Crowning with Thorns*

«Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”». (Matthew 27, 27-29)

Story: Esteban works as a security guard in the local hospital. He has the difficult task of informing families that they cannot visit their relatives who are ill and putting up with their complaints. He has often been insulted and sometimes even pushed around. Today a furious woman even spat at him. Esteban goes to bed remembering the woman and her angry face.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I realise that violence often masks pain and fear? Can I look with mercy at those who offend me?*

Reflection: Jesus puts up with the humiliation with patience and dignity. *“Nobody is taking my life: it is I myself who gives it up”*. He seeks the gaze of those mocking Him, in order to meet them. Internally he embraces and offers himself up for each one. All the hate of the world hurtles at his heart, yet only manages to obtain a response of pure love. The pandemic has aggravated all problems, and this brings out the best or the worst in us. This is not the moment for egoism, divisions or indifference. This is the moment to realise we are all together in this storm, all fragile and disoriented but, at the same time, important and necessary with much to give.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, you who support sorrow without condemnation, help us to live in these times and develop understanding for our brothers and sisters. The pandemic has placed us in situations we did not expect and our fragility has emerged in new forms. Lord, in your attitude towards humiliation, we will discover the path to follow.*

Words from Pope Francis: *“The storm exposes our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities.... In this storm, the façade of those stereotypes with which we camouflaged our egos, always worrying about our image, has fallen away, uncovering once more that (blessed) common belonging, of which we cannot be deprived: our belonging as brothers and sisters”*. (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

4. The Fourth Sorrowful Mystery. *Jesus carries the cross*

« And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. They brought him to the place called Golgotha which means the place of the “Skull”. » (Mark 15, 21-22).

Story: Ester is a widow aged 80 living alone. Solange visits her twice a week and spends the afternoon keeping her company. However since self-isolation began she has not been able to make these visits. Solange is worried about Ester's solitude and has spent her savings to provide her with twenty skeins of pure wool so she can make scarves. In this way Ester feels useful, and her solitude is more tolerable.

Let us ask ourselves: *Can I be Simon the Cyrene to somebody today?*

Reflection: Jesus allows Simon the Cyrene to help carry his Cross. Simon of Cyrene finds himself suddenly under a burden he knows is not his, deeply annoyed at having to change direction that day. The path to Calvary leads him to realise that the burden he is carrying, actually does belong to him, and that by carrying it he receives infinitely more than what he gives.

Prayer: *Jesus*, You who on the path to Calvary were helped by Simon of Cyrene, help us to recognise you in everyone who suffers, those condemned by human justice, those marginalised in society and all those enduring violence and injustice. May we feel their burdens as our own, and feel responsible in helping them carry these burdens.

Words from Pope Francis: *"This is not a time for indifference, because the whole world is suffering and needs to be united in facing the pandemic.... This is not a time for self-centredness, because the challenge we are facing is shared by all, without distinguishing between persons."* (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

5. The Fifth Sorrowful Mystery. *Jesus dies on the cross*

« And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the two criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.... It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the

ninth hour, 45 while the sun's light failed;[i] and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" » (Luke. 23, 33-46).

Story: Juan died from coronavirus in hospital alone. Five years earlier his wife had died from cancer. His three children were able to talk to him very little during his time in hospital and could not even accompany him on the day of his funeral. The impossibility of saying goodbye and keeping him company in his last moments has made their bereavement particularly strange and bitter.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I know how to abandon myself in the hands of God? What is troubling me today? Do I feel accompanied in my sorrows?*

Reflection: "Yet God, who wishes to act with us and counts on our cooperation, can also bring good out of the evil we have done because "the Holy Spirit can be said to possess an infinite creativity, proper to the divine mind, which knows how to loosen the knots of human affairs, including the most complex and inscrutable" (Laudato Sí, 80). The death of Christ is not the end. Mary takes in her arms the lifeless body of her Son, and lifts her pierced Heart to the Father of all good. Throughout Holy Saturday her soul opens to hope, so that on Sunday she will be ready to embrace her Resurrected Son. Mary teaches us to hope against all hope, and recognise the work of the Spirit which makes all things new.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother*, you who stood at the foot of the Cross and accompanied Jesus in his last breath; be present at the beds of those who are dying, the families who cannot accompany them and those who feel their faith is lacking. Take us by the hand as you did with Saint John, so we can learn to hope and walk with you.

Words from Pope Francis: "The Lord asks us and, in the midst of our tempest, invites us to reawaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering. The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love." (Life after the pandemic, 2020).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys

- 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.

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. The First Glorious Mystery. *The Resurrection of the Lord*

« *On the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen" » (Luke 24, 1-6).*

Story: Sara is the mother of two adolescent children and a doctor by profession. Since the start of the pandemic she has worked on the front line to care for patients seriously ill in intensive therapy units. She has been very afraid for herself and for her family; fear of contagion, fear of having to stay away from her children. Even so, she decided to stay in the struggle and keep caring for all her patients, despite knowing that many of them would not be able to survive their trials.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I recognise I have a mission in my life? How does this awareness affect my daily life?*

Reflection: The women go to the tomb of Jesus with a love that is stronger than fear. They wish to serve their Master one more time, despite the danger they are well aware of. Their courage is rewarded beyond all expectations. They witness the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus and are sent out into the world to announce Jesus is Alive forever. The power of God has conquered sin, evil and death. The encounter with the Resurrected Christ dispels all fear and inspires us to collaborate with the Spirit, which makes everything new.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother of hope*, teach us to meet together in the Resurrected Christ, and listen to Him explain the Scriptures of our lives. May we recognise him when he shares the bread and inspires us to run together with our brothers and sisters to proclaim with them his Kingdom.

Words from Pope Francis: *"The Church which "goes forth" is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand*

at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father's infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved". (Evangelii Gaudium, 24).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

2. The Second Glorious Mystery. *The Ascension of our Lord*

«After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. » (Mark 16, 19).

Story: Jorge works for a big automobile company. The board of directors are meeting to discuss how to make progress in the current economic crisis. Among the alternatives presented one proposes that more jobs can be saved immediately if the regulations to respect the environment are relaxed. How can we respond to this emergency? Some solutions may seem more immediate, but are not part of the path to sustainable and integrated development.

Let us ask ourselves: *What criteria have directed my decisions in this time of crisis?*

Reflection: The apostles go to Galilee on the mountain Jesus indicates and there they are witness to the Ascension. The angels ask them why they stay watching the sky, when they have a mission before them. The Father is counting on them to extend the Kingdom of Christ. It is now their turn to act with responsibility.

Prayer: *Jesus*, help us to feel responsible for our brothers and sisters and our common home. May we continue on, trusting You to watch over us from the right hand of God. With you we can do everything.

Words from Pope Francis: *The ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God, which has already been attained by the risen Christ, the measure of the maturity of all things. Here we can add yet*

another argument for rejecting every tyrannical and irresponsible domination of human beings over other creatures. The ultimate purpose of other creatures is not to be found in us. Rather, all creatures are moving forward with us and through us towards a common point of arrival, which is God, in that transcendent fullness where the risen Christ embraces and illumines all things. Human beings, endowed with intelligence and love, and drawn by the fullness of Christ, are called to lead all creatures back to their Creator”. (Laudato Sí, 83).

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

3. The Third Glorious Mystery. *The descent of the Holy Spirit*

«When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.» (Acts 2, 1-4).

Story: Ana has been a volunteer at a meal centre for the poor in her city for more than ten years. However she has never seen such a long line at the entrance! She thinks it will be impossible to help all those needing hot food today. The urgency of the moment requires special strength to finish her service as usual, and also an extraordinary enthusiasm and faith. Suddenly, without anyone realising it, the human resources and materials necessary to deal with the emergency have multiplied.

Let us ask ourselves: *Do I know how to count on the strength of God who helps me with all my tasks? Do I let Him be my guide and my strength?*

Reflection: Before the descent of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were all cooped up inside the Cenacle, limited by their fears and their lack of strength. When Jesus breathes the Spirit over them they feel inspired to go out and announce the Good News. Now they are no longer counting on their meagre

resources, but with the strength of God activated in them. They are ready to risk everything and let themselves be uplifted by the creativity of the Spirit, which leads them to find new ways and new energies to announce the Gospel.

Prayer: *Oh Holy Spirit*, together with Mary, we desire you to take control of our lives. We would like to be docile to your inspirations, convinced that Jesus wishes to do great works through us. Before the mission we wonder if we can or cannot, if it is not you who wishes it, because we know that You are all our strength.

Words from Pope Francis: *“Let us go forth, then, let us go forth to offer everyone the life of Jesus Christ (...) I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life. More than by fear of going astray, my hope is that we will be moved by the fear of remaining shut up within structures which give us a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door people are starving and Jesus never tires of saying to us: “Give them something to eat” (Mark 6:37).” (Evangelii Gaudium, 49).*

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

4. The Fourth Glorious Mystery. *The Assumption of the Blessed Mary*

« All generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me » (Luke 1, 48-49).

Story: Nobody is calling Damien to ask him to do building work. The city is no longer granting work permits. Neither is Eduardo faring any better. He has a mechanic's workshop in his home. In the last two months he has not had one single car in. In the evening the two men pray together to the Blessed Virgin that she may intervene from heaven for her children.

Let us ask ourselves: *How is my relationship with my work? Can I do anything to make the work of others more dignified?*

Reflection: Mary is received into the heart of the Trinity. Being elevated in body and soul to heaven, she brings there all that concerns us too. There is nothing regarding human beings that passes unobserved by the eyes of the Blessed Mother and there is no human sorrow or tribulation that is not elevated with Her and in Her.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother, you who were the wife of a carpenter and know what it is like to eat from the proceeds of daily work, watch now over all our brothers and sisters who are suffering from unemployment, live in precarious conditions and whose businesses are on the point of going bankrupt. You who were assumed into heaven, speak to the Father of our needs and our suffering. Support those in despair with no bread to bring home, and open the eyes of those who can do something to assist them.*

Words from Pope Francis: *"We are convinced that "man is the source, the focus and the aim of all economic and social life". Nonetheless, once our human capacity for contemplation and reverence is impaired, it becomes easy for the meaning of work to be misunderstood. We need to remember that men and women have "the capacity to improve their lot, to further their moral growth and to develop their spiritual endowments". Work should be the setting for this rich personal growth, where many aspects of life enter into play: creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to others, giving glory to God. It follows that, in the reality of today's global society, it is essential that "we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone", no matter the limited interests of business and dubious economic reasoning." (Laudato Si, 127).*

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys

- 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

5. The Fifth Glorious Mystery. *The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

«A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.» (Revelation 12, 1).

Story: Teresa and Mario had been experiencing many rows and issues of conflict over the last few months. Their marriage was undergoing a crisis. When they saw themselves obliged to stay in isolation, both feared the tensions would escalate. However slowly but surely they were in less of a hurry to talk to each other. They gave each other more space for listening and forgiving. They are learning to look at and listen to each other in a new way

Let us ask ourselves: *With whom can I relate to more deeply in these times? What do I need for this?*

Reflection: The coronation of Mary Mother of the Church is the end of her pilgrimage in the faith. There was no lack of dark moments, where the silence of God was painful. Mary looked into her heart every moment of her life. She learnt that God revealed his Face to her in the concrete story of her life and always remembered his promises. In this time we have been obliged to change our plans and our agendas. It could very well be a propitious moment to take a break, revise our priorities, extend bridges to those we have lost contact with and especially remember the loyalty of God in our lives.

Prayer: *Blessed Mother, Heavenly Queen and our Mother*, you know how many times we get distracted and do not dedicate enough time to those we love. You know the commotions that interfere in our most important relationships. Look over our families now, and take us by the hand so that this may be a moment of familiar conversation, where we learn to place them first.

Prayer of the Pope: (Evangelii Gaudium 288)

Mary, Virgin and Mother, (...)

*Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,*

*service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.*

*Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.*

Amen. Alleluia!

Prayer:

- The Our Father
- Ten Hail Marys
- 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.

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