

Consecration of Canada to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, in time of pandemic

1 May 2020

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

GREETING

Bishop: Peace be with you.¹

All: And with your spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Brothers and Sisters, in this time of pandemic marked by desolation and with worry about the future, let us entrust our country² to the care and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that we may benefit from her powerful intercession as we join our prayers and efforts with her maternal mediation in Christ.

By imploring the incomparable help of Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, we invoke her solicitude upon our country and ask that she intercede with her Son Jesus to hear the prayers of her children who seek protection from the ravages of the coronavirus, healing for those who are ill, wisdom and courage for those who assist the sick and distressed, and eternal rest for those who have died.

During this month of May³, which the Church particularly dedicates to the Mother of Christ, we are one in consecrating ourselves and our loved ones to Mary most Holy, the humble Handmaid of the Lord and his most perfect Disciple. We lift up in prayer and in recognition all those many women and men, clergy, religious and laity, who tirelessly commit themselves to the care of others. The innumerable acts of deep human kindness as well as authentic Christian charity which we witness across the globe are a source of great consolation for all. We are reminded evermore of the need to believe and hope against all hope, and we are called to reach out to the needy, the lonely and the dying, and so welcome the graces of divine consolation.

¹ **A Priest or a Deacon says:** The Lord be with you.

A Layperson says: Let us praise our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself to us. **All respond:** Blessed be God for ever.

² The following may be added: Dioceses/Eparchies, parishes, families, communities and institutions.

³ Cf. Pope Saint Paul VI, *Mense Maio*, 1-2: "The month of May is almost here, a month which the piety of the faithful has long dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. Our heart rejoices at the thought of the moving tribute of faith and love which will soon be paid to the Queen of Heaven in every corner of the earth. For this is the month during which Christians, in their churches and their homes, offer the Virgin Mother more fervent and loving acts of homage and veneration; and it is the month in which a greater abundance of God's merciful gifts comes down to us from our Mother's throne. We are delighted and consoled by this pious custom associated with the month of May, which pays honor to the Blessed Virgin and brings such rich benefits to the Christian people. Since Mary is rightly to be regarded as the way by which we are led to Christ, the person who encounters Mary cannot help but encounter Christ likewise. For what other reason do we continually turn to Mary except to seek the Christ in her arms, to seek our Savior in her, through her, and with her? To Him men are to turn amid the anxieties and perils of this world, urged on by duty and driven by the compelling needs of their heart, to find a haven of salvation, a transcendent fountain of life."

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.

O God, Father of mercies,
whose Only Begotten Son, as he hung upon the Cross,
chose the Blessed Virgin Mary, his Mother,
to be our Mother also,
grant, we pray, that with her loving help
your Church may be more fruitful day by day
and, exulting in the holiness of her children,
may draw to her embrace all the families of the peoples.
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.

R. Amen.

WORD OF GOD

John 19.25-27

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Standing near the Cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SHORT REFLECTION

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.

R. Amen.

ROSARY – *Jesus is Crucified*

Recalling Jesus' words as he hung on the cross – “Behold your mother” – we meditate on the fifth sorrowful mystery of the Rosary, *The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord*.

*Our Father*⁴
10 Hail Marys
Glory Be

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell,
and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of your mercy.

⁴ The Our Father may be omitted here if it is to be included later in the celebration.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church,
in this time of pandemic, we turn our gaze to you, and in Christ consecrate to you *the faithful of our Diocese/Eparchy*⁵ together with all the people of Canada.

At the Annunciation,
fear gave way to trust as you embraced the mysterious and loving plan of God, who through his providence, care and concern brought about newness of life in you and through you.
Intercede, we pray, on our behalf as your children, *Virgin most faithful*.
Grant us faith, hope and perseverance, as we strive to serve and bear witness to all persons, responding to the needs of those affected by this virus.

Standing at the foot of the Cross at Calvary,
you united yourself with the sufferings of Christ and so uniquely contributed to the mystery of our redemption.
We beseech you as *Health of the sick*, draw to yourself in maternal compassion the brothers and sisters of your Son Jesus and all those who are grieved by this pandemic.
Strengthen the dying and comfort those who weep so that all may experience the healing grace of Christ our Divine Physician.

At the Cenacle, after the Resurrection,
you accompanied the Apostles with prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
In your maternal care as *Consoler of the afflicted*, accompany healthcare professionals, all who minister to the sick and those who seek a cure to end this pandemic, that the Holy Spirit may renew the face of the earth.

To all of us, dearest Mary, *Mother of all the living*,
be present and show forth your tenderness, as we raise our eyes to you who shines forth before the entire community as a merciful and compassionate companion on our journey. Time and time again, with burdens weighing heavily on their hearts and in their many necessities, the Christian faithful have sought refuge under your mantle of protection.

Come quickly to our aid at this time, *Mother of Mercy*, and deliver us from the dangers that surround us in our hour of need; watch over especially the elderly, the weak and the infirm, our children and the unity of our families, and all those who give of themselves selflessly in pastoral care to those in need until in your arms and in your gentle embrace we all find safety and solace.

R. Amen.

⁵ The following wording may be adapted accordingly: **For a Bishop:** *the faithful of our Diocese/Eparchy*; **for a Priest:** *the faithful of our parish*; **for families:** *the members of our family*; **for groups and other faith communities:** *the members of N.*; **for an individual:** *myself*.

INTERCESSIONS

United as one Body in Christ, let us direct our prayer to our All-loving God, who wants us to honour Mary our Mother; with her we, too, praise the Lord's mighty deeds as he continues to lift up the lowly, remembering his promise of mercy:

R. Look upon Mary and hear our prayer.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, who experienced the cares and hardships of earthly life, the weariness of daily toil, the trials of poverty and the sorrows of Calvary, come to assist the needs of the Church, the initial budding forth of your Kingdom on earth, and all of humankind. **R.**

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, lend a gracious ear to the devout pleas of those who from across the world implore her goodness for health, safety and peace, especially for our parishes, our domestic churches and all our communities of faith. **R.**

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, obtain the gifts of knowledge and wisdom for government officials and medical professionals that a cure for the virus may be found, and for all who care for the sick, the suffering and the dying, may she obtain from the Lord courage and benevolence. **R.**

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, pray on our behalf and with us to the Lord of life and love, who rules the winds and storms, to calm the tempests in our minds and hearts and grant us consolation, security and peace in our day. **R.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER⁶

CONCLUDING PRAYER

As we conclude this consecration, we ask the blessing of Almighty God:

Bestow the grace of your kindness
upon your supplicant people, O Lord,
that, formed by you, their Creator,
and restored by you, their sustainer,
through your constant action they may be saved.

Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

⁶ If not included as part of the recitation of the fifth mystery of the Rosary above, the Lord's Prayer is recited here.

FINAL BLESSING

Bishop/Priest/Deacon:⁷

The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

REGINA CAELI⁸

Regina caeli laetare, alleluia;
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia :
Resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluia :
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For Christ, your Son and Son of God, alleluia,
has risen as He said, alleluia.
Pray to God for us, alleluia.

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⁷ A Layperson says: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. R. Amen.

⁸ Especially for Eastern Churches, an alternate Marian hymn/antiphon may be used where appropriate.

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