

Novena to the Immaculate Conception,

November 30 through December 7

This novena is taken from the [Handbook of Prayers](#) edited by Reverend James Socias. Since the Immaculate Conception is the Patroness of the United States of America, it seems appropriate to include this very special novena.

Pope Pius XI formally instituted the celebration of the Immaculate Conception when he proclaimed this dogma on December 8, 1854. Affirming the constant faith of the Church, he expressed in that definition the exact meaning of the truth of Mary's Immaculate Conception: that she was conceived free from the stain of original sin. This feast has been celebrated in the East, and also in many places in the West, since the eighth century. This privilege of Mary is the most beautiful fruit of her Son's Redemption. Chosen as mother of the Savior, Mary received the benefits of salvation from the moment of her conception. Christ came to take away the sin of mankind; he did not allow it to contaminate Mary. The sanctity of our Blessed Mother is a model for all Christians. We seek her intercession that we may be rid of our sins and achieve sanctity.

First Day

(November 30)

Mary, the New Eve

Introductory Prayer

Lord God,
may our gifts be sanctified by the Holy Spirit,
who formed the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be a new creation
and sent down upon her
the dew of heavenly grace,
so that her womb might bear the fruits of our salvation, Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: Genesis 3:1-6, 13-15

Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that The Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate." The Lord Go said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all cattle,
and above all wild animals;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.
I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed;

he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.

Consideration

"Mary, Mother of the Incarnate Word, is placed *at the very center of that enmity*, that struggle, that accompanies the history of humanity on earth and the history of salvation itself. In this central place, she who belongs to the 'weak and poor of the Lord' bears in herself, like no other member of the human race, that 'glory of grace' which the Father 'has bestowed on us in his Beloved Son,' and this *grace determines the extraordinary greatness and beauty* of her whole being. Mary thus remains before God, and also before the whole of humanity, as the unchangeable and inviolable sign of God's election, spoken of in Paul's letter: 'in Christ...he chose us...before the foundation of the world,...he destined us...to be his sons' (Eph 1:4, 5). This election is more powerful than any experience of evil and sin, than all that 'enmity' that marks the history of man. In this history Mary remains a sign of sure hope" (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 11).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Second Day
(December 1)
Mary, full of grace

Introductory Prayer

Lord God,
in your plan for our salvation
your Word became man,
announced by an angel
and born of the Virgin Mary.
May we who believe
that she is the Mother of God
receive the help of her prayers.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Luke 1:26-33

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Consideration

"When we read that the messenger addresses Mary as 'full of grace,' the gospel context, which mingles revelations and ancient promises, enables us to understand that among all the 'spiritual blessings in Christ,' this is a special 'blessing.' In the mystery of Christ she is *present* even 'before the creation of the world,' as the one whom the Father 'has chosen' as *Mother* of his Son in the Incarnation. And, what is more, together with the Father, the Son has chosen her, entrusting her eternally to the Spirit of holiness. In an entirely special and exceptional way, Mary is united to Christ, and similarly she is *eternally loved in this 'beloved Son,'* this Son who is of one being with the Father, in whom is concentrated all the 'glory of grace.' At the same time, she is—and remains—perfectly open to this 'gift from above' (cf. Jas 1:17). As the Council teaches, Mary 'stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently await and receive salvation from him' (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 8).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your
Son by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin; grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THIRD DAY

(DECEMBER 2)

Mary, the handmaid of the Lord

Introductory Prayer

Lord God,
when your Son came down from heaven,
Mary had conceived him in her heart
before she conceived him in her womb:
grant that by holy and just deeds
we may show forth in our lives the Christ whom we have received by faith,
and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reading: Luke 1:34-38

And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?"

And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Consideration

"Indeed, at the Annunciation Mary entrusted herself to God completely, with the 'full submission of intellect and will,' manifesting 'the obedience of faith' to him who spoke to her through his messenger. She responded, therefore, *with all her human and feminine* 'I,' and this response of faith included both perfect cooperation with 'the grace of God that precedes and assists' and perfect openness to the action of the Holy Spirit, who 'constantly brings faith to completion by his gifts.'

"The word of the living God, announced to Mary by the angel, referred to her: 'And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son' (Lk 1:31). By accepting this announcement, Mary was to become the 'Mother of the Lord,' and the divine mystery of the In-carnation was to be accomplished in her: 'The Father of mercies willed that the consent of the predestined Mother should precede the Incarnation.' And Mary gives this consent after she has heard everything the messenger has to say.... The mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished when Mary uttered her *fiat*: 'Let it be to me according to your word,' which made possible, as far as it depended upon her in the divine plan, the granting of her Son's desire." (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 13).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin; grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOURTH DAY

(DECEMBER 3)

Mary, blessed among women

Introductory Prayer

Lord, our God,
Savior of the human family, you brought salvation and joy
to the house of Elizabeth
through the visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
the Ark of the new Covenant. We ask that, in obedience
to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we too may bring Christ to others
and magnify your name by the praise of our lips and the holiness of our lives.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Luke 1:39-44

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy."

Consideration

"Immediately after the narration of the Annunciation, the evangelist Luke guides us in the footsteps of the Virgin of Nazareth towards 'a city of Judah' (Lk 1:39). According to scholars, this city would be the modern Ain Karim, situated in the mountains, not far from Jerusalem. Mary arrived there 'in haste,' *to visit Elizabeth* her kinswoman... .

"Moved by charity, therefore, Mary goes to the house of her kinswoman. When Mary enters, Elizabeth replies to her greeting and feels the child leap in her womb, and, being 'filled with the Holy Spirit,' she *greet*s Mary with a loud cry: 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!' Elizabeth's exclamation or acclamation was subsequently to become part of the *Hail Mary*, as a continuation of the angel's greeting, thus becoming one of the Church's most frequently used prayers. But still more significant are the words of Elizabeth in the question that follows: 'And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?' (Lk 1:43). Elizabeth bears witness to Mary: she recognizes and proclaims that before her stands the mother of the Lord, the mother of the Messiah. The son whom Elizabeth is carrying in her womb also shares in this witness: 'The babe in my womb leaped for joy' (Lk 1:44). This child is the future John the Baptist, who at the Jordan will point out Jesus as the Messiah' " (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 12).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your
Son by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin
in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIFTH DAY
(DECEMBER 4)
Mary, Model of Faith

Introductory Prayer

All-holy Father, eternal God,
in your goodness
you prepared a royal throne for your Wisdom
in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
bathe your Church in the radiance of your life-giving Word,
that it may press forward on its pilgrim way in the light of your truth,
and so come to the joy
of a perfect knowledge of your love. God of wisdom,
in your desire to restore us to your friendship after we had lost it by sin,
you chose the Blessed Virgin Mary as the seat of your Wisdom.
Grant through her intercession
that we may seek not the folly of the wise but the loving service
that marks out the poor in spirit.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Luke 1:45-56

[And Elizabeth exclaimed:]

"And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;
for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on those who fear him, from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm,
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
he has put down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of low degree;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his posterity for ever."
And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.

Consideration

"Elizabeth's words 'And blessed is she who believed' do not apply only to that particular moment of the Annunciation. Certainly the Annunciation is the culminating moment of Mary's faith in her awaiting of Christ, but it is also the point of departure from which her whole 'journey towards God' begins, her whole pilgrimage of faith. And on this road, in an eminent and truly heroic manner—indeed, with an ever-greater heroism of faith—the 'obedience' which she professes to the word of divine revelation will be fulfilled. Mary's 'obedience of faith' during the whole of her pilgrimage will show surprising similarities to the faith of Abraham. Just like the Patriarch of the People of God, so too Mary, during the pilgrimage of her filial and maternal *fiat*, 'in hope believed against hope.'

"In the expression 'Blessed is she who believed,' we can therefore rightly find *a kind of 'key'* that unlocks for us the innermost reality of Mary, whom the angel hailed as 'full of grace.' If as 'full of grace' she has been eternally present in the mystery of Christ, through faith she became a sharer in that *mystery* in every extension of her earthly journey. She 'advanced in her pilgrimage of faith,' and at the same time, in a discreet yet direct and effective way, she made present to humanity *the mystery of Christ*. And she still continues to do so. Through the mystery of Christ, she too is present within mankind. Thus through the mystery of the Son the mystery of the Mother also is made clear" " (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 14 & 19).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin; grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SIXTH DAY
(DECEMBER 5)
Mary, co-redemptrix

Introductory Prayer

Lord our God,
in your eternal wisdom
you fill out the passion of Christ
through the suffering that his members endure
in the many trials of this life.
As you gave his mother strength in her agony
to stand by the cross of your Son,
grant that we too may bring loving comfort to others
in their distress of mind or body.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Luke 2:25-35

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel."

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed."

Consideration

"A just and God-fearing man, called Simeon, appears at this beginning of Mary's 'journey' of faith. His words, suggested by the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 2:25-27), confirm the truth of the Annunciation. For we read that he took up in his arms the Child to whom—in accordance with the angel's command—the name Jesus was given (cf. Lk 2:21). Simeon's words match the meaning of this name, which is Savior: 'God is salvation.' Turning to the Lord, he says: 'For my eyes have seen your *salvation*, which you have prepared *in the presence of all peoples*, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.' At the same time, however, Simeon addresses Mary with the following words: 'Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for *a sign that is spoken against*, that thoughts of many hearts may be revealed'; and he adds with direct reference to her: 'and a sword will pierce through your own soul also.'

"Simeon's words cast new light on the announcement that Mary had heard from the angel: Jesus is the Savior, he is '*a light for revelation*' to mankind. Is not this what was manifested in a way on Christmas night, when the shepherds came to the stable (cf. Lk 2:8-20)? Is not this what was to be manifested even more clearly in the coming of the *Magi from the East* (Mt 2:1-12)? But at the same time, at the very beginning of his life, the Son of Mary, and his Mother with him, will experience in themselves the truth of those other words of Simeon: 'a sign that is spoken against.'

"Simeon's words seem like a *second Annunciation to Mary*, for they tell her of the actual historical situation in which the Son is to accomplish his mission, namely, in misunderstanding and sorrow. While this announcement on the one hand confirms her faith in the accomplishment of the divine promises of salvation, on the other hand it also reveals to her that she will have to live her obedience of faith in suffering, at the side of the suffering Savior, and that her motherhood will be mysterious and sorrowful" (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 16).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin
in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY

(DECEMBER 6)

*Mary, the first of those
who heard the word of God and did it*

Introductory Prayer

Lord our God,
you sent your Son from heaven
into the womb of the Blessed Virgin
to be your saving word and our bread of life:
grant that like Mary we may welcome Christ,
by treasuring his words in our hearts
and celebrating in faith
the deep mysteries of our redemption.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Luke 11:27-28

As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed, rather, are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

Consideration

"The gospel of Luke records the moment when 'a woman in the crowd raised her voice' and said to Jesus: *'Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!'* (Lk 11:27). These words were an expression of praise of Mary as Jesus' mother according to the flesh... .

"But to the blessing uttered by that woman upon her who was his mother according to the flesh, Jesus re-plies in a significant way: *Blessed, rather, are those who hear the word of God and keep it'* (Lk 11:28). He wishes to divert attention from motherhood understood only as a fleshly bond, in order to direct it towards those mysterious bonds of the spirit which develop from hearing and keeping God's word... . "Without any doubt, Mary is worthy of blessing by the very fact that she became the mother of Jesus according to the flesh ('Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked'), but also and especially because already at the Annunciation she accepted the word of God, because she believed it, *because she was obedient to God*, and because she 'kept' the word and 'pondered it in her heart' (cf. Lk 1:38, 45; 2:19, 51) and by means of her whole life accomplished it. Thus we can say that the blessing pro-claimed by Jesus is not in opposition, despite appearances, to the blessing uttered by the unknown woman, but rather coincides with that blessing in the person of this Virgin Mother, who called herself only 'the handmaid of the Lord' (Lk 1:38)... .

"If *through faith* Mary became the bearer of the Son given to her by the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit, while preserving her virginity intact, in that same faith she *discovered and accepted the other dimension of motherhood* revealed by Jesus during his messianic mission. One can say that this dimension of motherhood belonged to Mary from the beginning, that is to say, from the moment of the conception and birth of her Son. From that time she was 'the one who believed.' . . . Thus *in a sense* Mary as mother became *the first 'disciple' of her Son*, the first to whom he seemed to say 'Follow me,' even before he addressed this call to the apostles or to anyone else (cf. Jn 1:43)" (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 20).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin
in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession, may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EIGHTH DAY

(DECEMBER 7)

Mary, mediatrix of all graces

Introductory Prayer

God of heaven and earth,
your Son, Jesus the Lord, while dying on the altar of the cross,
chose Mary, his mother, to be our mother also.
Grant that we, who entrust ourselves to her maternal care,
may always be protected when we call upon her name.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: John 2:1-11

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it.

When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Consideration

"Mary is present at Cana in Galilee as the *Mother of Jesus*, and in a significant way she *contributes* to that 'beginning of the signs' which reveal the messianic power of her Son. We read: 'When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come"' (Jn 2: 3-4). In John's gospel that 'hour' means the time appointed by the Father when the Son accomplishes his task and is to be glorified (cf. Jn 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1; 19:27). Even though Jesus' reply to his mother sounds like a refusal (especially if we consider the blunt statement 'My hour has not yet come,' rather than the question), Mary nevertheless turns to the servants and says to them: 'Do whatever he tells you' (Jn 2:5). Then Jesus orders the servants to fill the stone jars with water, and the water becomes wine, better than the wine which has previously been served to the wedding guests."⁴⁵

"In this passage of John's gospel we find as it were a first manifestation of the truth concerning Mary's maternal care. This truth has also found expression *in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council*. ... 'Mary's maternal function towards mankind *in no way obscures or diminishes the unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its efficacy,*' because "'there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"' (1 Tm 2:5).... The episode at Cana in Galilee offers us *a sort of first announcement of Mary's mediation*, wholly oriented towards Christ and tending to the revelation of his salvific power.

"From the *text of John*, it is evident that it is a mediation that is maternal. As the Council proclaims: Mary became 'a mother to us in the order of grace.' This motherhood in the order of grace flows from her divine motherhood. Because she was, by the design of divine Providence, the mother who nourished the divine Redeemer, Mary became 'an associate of unique nobility, and the Lord's humble handmaid,' who 'co-operated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the Savior's work of restoring supernatural life to souls.' And

'this *maternity of Mary in the order of grace* . . . will last without interruption until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect'" (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 21 & 22).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin
in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession, may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

NINTH DAY

(DECEMBER 8)

Mary, Mother of God and our mother

Introductory Prayer

God of mercies,
your only Son, while hanging on the cross,
appointed Mary, his mother, to be our mother also.
Like her, and under her loving care, may your Church grow day by day,
rejoice in the holiness of its children,
and so attract to itself all the peoples of the earth.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: John 19:23-27

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the scripture, "They parted my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did this.

But standing by 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 near her, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Consideration

"If John's description of the event at Cana presents Mary's caring motherhood at the beginning of Christ's messianic activity, another passage from the same gospel confirms this motherhood in the salvific economy of grace at its crowning moment, namely, when Christ's sacrifice on the cross, his paschal mystery, is accomplished. John's description is concise: '*Standing by 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 near her, he said to his mother: "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home' (Jn 19:25-27).

"... And yet the 'testament of Christ's Cross' says more. Jesus highlights a new relationship between Mother and Son, the whole truth and reality of which he solemnly confirms. One can say that if Mary's motherhood of the human race had already been outlined, now it is clearly stated and established. It *emerges* from the definitive accomplishment of *the Redeemer's paschal mystery*. The mother of Christ, who stands at the very center of this mystery—a mystery that embraces each individual and all humanity—is given as mother to every single individual and all mankind" (John Paul II, *Mother of the Redeemer*, 24).

The Holy Rosary may be prayed.

Concluding Prayer

Lord God,
you prepared a worthy dwelling place for your Son
by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin;
grant, we pray,
that, as you preserved her from all stain of sin in your foreknowledge of his death,
so we, by her intercession,
may come to you with pure hearts.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.