

24 May

**BLESSED VIRGIN MARY,
HELP OF CHRISTIANS**

**Principal Patroness of the Society of Saint Francis de Sales,
of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians,
and of the Secular Institute of the Don Bosco Volunteers.**

Solemnity

On many occasions throughout the course of history, Christian people have experienced the protection of the Virgin Mary. The title of *Help of Christians*, which Don Bosco associated with that of Mary *Mother of the Church*, is an indication of the special intervention of Mary in the most difficult trials of personal human life, of the Church and of the whole human family.

The liturgical celebration was instituted by Pope Pius VII in gratitude for Mary's intervention in a critical period in the history of the Church. Driven out by violence from the See of Rome and held as a prisoner for five years, the Pontiff had implored the help of Mary and had invited all Christians to do the same. Contrary to all expectations he was freed and returned to his See on 24 May 1814.

Devotion to Mary Help of Christians was spread far and wide through the work of St John Bosco, and continues to be propagated in the world by the Salesian Family, which recognizes and invokes *Mary, Help of Christians* as its principal patroness.

Evening Prayer I

* **HYMN**

Whene'er Christ's people sore beset has been,
and ringed with menace of a raging foe,
they've glimps'd her gliding from the sky serene,
Mary their Queen with succour for their woe.

'Tis this the annals of our fathers tell,
and this the trophies of her shrines proclaim;
the wondrous feasts that yearly hymn as well
the glories won invoking her sweet name.

Let all to praises new in song give tongue,
to win fresh favours from her royal hands;
no strain, no melody be left unsung
in Peter's See, in all Creation's lands.

O truly blessed day of history,
relating for all time what then befell,
when exiled Pope returned in jubilee
from banishment and prison's lowly cell.

O souls unstained of youth, of maid and boy,
your tender hearts in gratitude o'erflow;
share now your people's and your pastor's joy,

meet honour on those queenly gifts bestow.

O Maid of maids, O Jesu's Mother blest.
let not these tokens of your love decrease;
so may our shepherd lead his flock to rest
in heaven's fields, in bliss that knows no cease.

O grant us You to ever venerate,
our praise of You, O Triune God prolong,
that we may see what now we celebrate,
our minds in faith, our tongues in vibrant song.
(A.Keogh)

Or another suitable hymn approved by ecclesiastical authority.

Ant. 1: Joyful Mother of the Son of God,
raised to the glory of the kingdom,
with you we praise the name of the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 112 (113)

Praise, O servants of the Lord,*
praise the name of the Lord!
May the name of the Lord be blessed*
both now and for evermore!
From the rising of the sun to its setting*
praised be the name of the Lord!

High above all nations is the Lord,*
above the heavens his glory.
Who is like the Lord, our God,*
who has risen on high to his throne
yet stoops from the heights to look down,*
to look down upon heaven and earth?

From the dust he lifts up the lowly,*
from his misery he raises the poor
to set them in the company of princes,*
yes, with the princes of his people.
To the childless wife he gives a home*
and gladdens her heart with children.

Ant. Joyful Mother of the Son of God,
raised to the glory of the kingdom,
with you we praise the name of the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 2: Mary, through you has come Peace,
in you the Word was made flesh;
with you we glorify the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 147

O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!*
Sion praise your God!

He has strengthened the bars of your gates,*
he has blessed the children within you.
He established peace on your borders,*
he feeds you with finest wheat.

He sends out his word to the earth*
and swiftly runs his command.
He showers down snow white as wool,*
he scatters hoar-frost like ashes.

He hurls down hailstones like crumbs.*
The waters are frozen at his touch;
he sends forth his word and it melts them:*
at the breath of his mouth the waters flow.

He makes his word known to Jacob,*
to Israel his laws and decrees.
He has not dealt thus with other nations;*
he has not taught them his decrees.

Ant. Mary, through you has come Peace,
in you the Word was made flesh;
with you we glorify the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 3: Mary, through you has come
the salvation, strength and kingdom of our God:
with you we sing the power of the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

Canticle Eph 1 : 3-10

Blessed be the God and Father*
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ*
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

He chose us in him*
before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy*
and blameless before him.

He destined us in love*
to be his sons through Jesus Christ,
according to the purpose of his will,†
to the praise of his glorious grace*
which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood,*
the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of his grace*
which he lavished upon us.

He has made known to us†
in all wisdom and insight *
the mystery of his will,
according to his purpose*
which he set forth in Christ.

His purpose he set forth in Christ,*
as a plan for the fulness of time,
to unite all things in him,*
things in heaven and things on earth.

Ant. Mary, through you has come
the salvation, strength and kingdom of our God:
with you we sing the power of the Lord (T.P. Alleluia).

SCRIPTURE READING
5, 6-11

1 Pt

Dearly beloved, humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you. Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you. Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

RESPONSORY

In the Easter season:

R/. Hail, O Virgin, Mother of the Church. * Alleluia, alleluia.
Hail, O Virgin, Mother of the Church. Alleluia, alleluia.

V/. Come to the aid of your children, who praise the Lord.

* Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Hail, O Virgin, Mother of the Church

Outside the Easter season:

R/. Mother of hope, * the whole world implores your help.
Mother of hope, the whole world implores your help. .

V/. Come to the aid of your children, O blessed Mother.

* the whole world implores your help. .

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Mother of hope, the whole world implores your help.

Ant. At the Magn. The hand of the Lord has strengthened you;
and therefore you shall be blessed forever, alleluia.

Or: In dangers, difficulties and doubt,
we invoke you as Help of Christians:
with your support we cannot fall;
with you as guide, we shall not tire on the way;
with your assistance we shall attain the goal of heaven, alleluia.

INTERCESSIONS

Mary, Mother of Christ the Lord, is a shining light on the path of the people of God as a sign of sure hope and consolation. Let us bless God whose will it was that she should collaborate in the work of salvation, and let us pray:

Mary, help of Christians, intercede for us.

God our Father, you made of Mary the new Eve, the woman clothed with the sun, conqueror of the serpent:

– give us courage and hope in our struggle against evil.

You made of Mary the new Judith, the liberator of her people, blessed among all women:

– help Christian people to preserve the faith in the midst of life's trials.

You made of Mary the new Esther, the pious and beautiful queen, ready to intercede for the salvation of her people:

– guide the Church in overcoming every peril met with on her pilgrimage.

You made of Mary the defence of Christian people in perilous moments of her history:

– enlighten Peter's successor and the Bishops in communion with him in surmounting every danger to Christian values.

You made of Mary the mystical spouse of the Holy Spirit, mother of your pilgrim people:

– sustain and render fruitful the educative work of the members of the Salesian Family.

You made of Mary, assumed into heaven, the Queen of angels and saints:

– may she intercede that our deceased confreres may enjoy the fullness of everlasting happiness.

Our Father.

Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

Compline

Night Prayer of Sunday. Outside the Easter Season it is appropriate to use as the final antiphon "Sub tuum praesidium", or "O Maria, Virgo potens":

"O Maria, Virgo potens

Tu magnum et praeclarum in Ecclesia praesidium;

Tu singulare Auxilium Christianorum:
Tu terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.
Tu cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo.
Tu in angustiis,
Tu in bello,
Tu in necessitatibus nos ab hoste protege,
atque in aeterna gaudia in mortis hora suscipe."

INVITATORY

Ant. On the feast of Mary Help of Christians,
let us sing to the Lord, alleluia.

Invitatory psalm as in the Ordinary.

Office of Readings

* HYMN

Most glorious your light does shine,
O Princess of your race,
And highest is your only shrine
Midst heaven's populace.
Of David's line to you we sing,
O Mary, with your Son, the King.

Maternity, virginity -
Most wondrously are met;
An harbour for your progeny
Within your womb is set.
And he whom in that womb you bore
'Tis He whom creatures shall adore.

Give ear to all who search and plead
Like beggars in the dark;
For you alone are light indeed
By which their eyes might mark
The scatt'ring of the shade of night
Which shrouds your Son, your sole delight.

'Tis He to whom it is but just
That ev'ry knee should bend;
To him alone this prayer we thrust
But beg your sway commend:
That be dispelled the gloom of night
And be infused the joys of light.

This do you grant, O God of light,
Both through your only Son
And with your Holy Spirit bright -
The Third of Three in One,
Who live with you in realms resplendent
And reign with you all time transcendent.

Or another suitable hymn approved by ecclesiastical authority.

Ant. 1: Mary, you have received a blessing from the Lord,
and mercy from the God of salvation (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 23 (24)

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,*
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;*
on the waters he made it firm.

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?*

Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,†
who desires not worthless things,*
who have not sworn so as to deceive their neighbour.

He shall receive blessings from the Lord*
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,*
seek the face of the God of Jacob.

O gates, lift high your heads;†
grow higher, ancient doors.*
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is the king of glory?†
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,*
the Lord, the valiant in war.

O gates, lift high your heads;†
grow higher, ancient doors.*
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is he, the king of glory?†
He, the Lord of armies,*
he is the king of glory.

Ant. Mary, you have received a blessing from the Lord,
and mercy from the God of salvation (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 2: God, our refuge and our strength,
you have given us in Mary a helper in our trials (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 45 (46)

God is for us a refuge and strength,*
a helper close at hand, in time of distress,
so we shall not fear though the earth should rock,*
though the mountains fall into the depths of the sea;
even though its waters rage and foam,*
even though the mountains be shaken by its waves.

The Lord of hosts is with us:*
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

The waters of a river give joy to God's city,*
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within, it cannot be shaken,*
God will help it at the dawning of the day.
Nations are in tumult, kingdoms are shaken:*
he lifts his voice, the earth shrinks away.

The Lord of hosts is with us:*
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come, consider the works of the Lord,*
the redoubtable deeds he has done on the earth.
He puts an end to wars over all the earth;†
the bow he breaks, the spear he snaps.*
(He burns the shields with fire.)
"Be still and know that I am God,*
supreme among the nations, supreme on the earth!"

The Lord of hosts is with us:*
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Ant. God, our refuge and our strength,
you have given us in Mary a helper in our trials (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 3: Wonderful things are said of you,
O Mother of all peoples (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 86 (87)

On the holy mountain is his city*
cherished by the Lord.
The Lord prefers the gates of Sion*
to all Jacob's dwellings.
Of you are told glorious things,*

O city of God!

Babylon and Egypt I will count *
among those who know me;
Philistia, Tyre, Ethiopia, *
these will be her children
and Sion shall be called "Mother"*
for all shall be her children."

It is he, the Lord Most High,*
who gives each his place.
In his register of peoples he writes:*
"These are her children,"
and while they dance they will sing:*
"In you all find their home."

Ant. Wonderful things are said of you,
O Mother of all peoples (*T.P.* Alleluia).

In the Easter season:

V/. The Almighty has done great things for me, alleluia.

R/. He has mercy on those who fear him, alleluia.

FIRST READING

From the Book of Revelation of St John, the apostle.
12,17

11,19a-

The majestic sign of the woman in the heavens

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. And 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; she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth. She brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world -- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying:

"Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had borne the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus.

RESPONSORY
12,5.1

Cf Rev.

R/. The woman brought forth a male child, who is to rule all the nations; and the child was caught up to God and to his throne. * Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, alleluia.

V/. 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.

R/. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, alleluia.

Outside the Easter season:

V/. Mary pondered in her heart

R/. the wonderful events of her Son.

* *Or:*

FIRST READING

From the Book of Judith
(Vg.)

13,11-14.16a-20; 15,8-10,12-14

*The Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women!*

Judith called out from afar to the watchmen at the gates, "Open, open the gate! God, our God, is still with us, to show his power in Israel, and his strength against our enemies, even as he has done this day!" When the men of her city heard her voice, they hurried down to the city gate and called together the elders of the city. They all ran together, both small and great, for it was unbelievable that she had returned; they opened the gate and

admitted them, and they kindled a fire for light, and gathered around them. Then she said to them with a loud voice, "Praise God, O praise him! Praise God, who has not withdrawn his mercy from the house of Israel, but has destroyed our enemies by my hand this very night!"

All the people were greatly astonished, and bowed down and worshipped God, and said with one accord, "Blessed art thou, our God, who hast brought into contempt this day the enemies of thy people." And Uzziah said to her, "O daughter, you are blessed by the Most High God above all women on earth; and blessed be the Lord God, who created the heavens and the earth, who has guided you to strike the head of the leader of our enemies. Your hope will never depart from the hearts of men, as they remember the power of God. May God grant this to be a perpetual honour to you, and may he visit you with blessings, because you did not spare your own life when our nation was brought low, but have avenged our ruin, walking in the straight path before our God." And all the people said, "So be it, so be it!"

Then Joakim the high priest, and the senate of the people of Israel who lived at Jerusalem, came to witness the good things which the Lord had done for Israel, and to see Judith and to greet her. And when they met her they all blessed her with one accord and said to her, "You are the exaltation of Jerusalem, you are the great glory of Israel, you are the great pride of our nation! You have done all this singlehanded; you have done great good to Israel, and God is well pleased with it. May the Almighty Lord bless you for ever!" And all the people said, "So be it!"

Then all the women of Israel gathered to see her, and blessed her, and some of them performed a dance for her; and she took branches in her hands and gave them to the women who were with her; And they crowned themselves with olive wreaths, she and those who were with her; and she went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women, while all the men of Israel followed, bearing their arms and wearing garlands and with songs on their lips.

Then Judith began this thanksgiving before all Israel, and all the people loudly sang this song of praise:

RESPONSORY
14

Jud 16,1.13-

R/. Sing to my God with tambourines,
sing to my Lord with cymbals;
raise to him a new psalm;

* exalt him, and call upon his name.

V/. I will sing to my God a new song::

O Lord, thou art great and glorious
wonderful in strength, invincible.

* exalt him, and call upon his name.

V/. Let all thy creatures serve thee,
for thou didst speak, and they were made;
thou didst send forth thy Spirit, and it formed them;
there is none that can resist thy voice.

* exalt him, and call upon his name.

SECOND READING

From the *Regulations of the Association of the Clients of Mary Help of Christians*, written by
St John Bosco

(Opere edite, XXI, Rome 1976, 343-347)

Mary Help of Christians

The title of Help of Christians, attributed to the august Mother of the Saviour, is not something new. In the holy books themselves Mary is spoken of as the Queen who stands at the right hand of her Divine Son, clothed in gold and surrounded with variety. This golden vesture and radiant surroundings, according to the spirit of the Church, are so many gems and diamonds, or titles, we are accustomed to use in addressing Mary. And so when we call the holy Virgin "Help of Christians", we are only using a special title which befits her, as one of the diamonds on her golden garment. In this sense Mary has been greeted as the Help of the human race from the earliest ages of the world when Adam, after falling into sin, was promised a liberator, to be born of a woman, who would crush the head of the insidious serpent by her sinless foot.

This great Woman, indeed, is symbolized in the tree of life which existed in the earthly paradise; in the ark of Noah which saved the adorers of the true God from the universal deluge; in Jacob's ladder which reached up to heaven; in Moses' bush which burned but was not consumed, and which is an allusion to Mary who remained a virgin after childbirth; in the ark of the covenant; in the tower of David which resisted all assaults; in the rose of Jericho; in the sealed fountain; in the garden, well cultivated and guarded by Solomon, she is symbolized in an outpouring of blessings; in Gideon's fleece. Elsewhere she is called the star of Jacob, splendid as the moon, noble as the sun, rainbow of peace, pupil of God's eye, rising dawn of consolations, Virgin and Mother of her Lord. These symbols and expressions which the Church applies to Mary manifest the providential designs of God, which he willed to make known even before her birth, as the firstborn of all creatures, the most excellent protectress, help and support and even redresser of the evils to which the human race is subject.

In the New Testament it is not only with symbols and prophecies that she is referred to as the helper of mankind in general, but she is also called the help, the support and defence of Christians; and this no longer in figures, no longer in symbolic expressions; in the Gospel everything is reality and fulfilment of the past. Mary is greeted by the archangel Gabriel who calls her 'full of grace'. God gazes upon the surpassing humility of Mary and raises her to the dignity of Mother of the Eternal Word. Jesus, the immense unfathomed God, becomes the Son of Mary. Of her he is born; by her he is educated and fostered, the Eternal Word made flesh obedient in all things to his noble Mother. At her request he works his first miracle at Cana in Galilee; on Calvary she was constituted the Mother of all Christians. The Apostles took her as their guide and teacher of virtue. With her they gathered in the Cenacle to pray; with her they awaited in recollection the coming of the Holy Spirit. To the Apostles she addressed her last words before her glorious flight to heaven.

And from the height of her throne of glory she turns her motherly gaze on mankind, saying: From this highest and glorious throne I enrich with blessings those who love me and enhance with heavenly favours their treasuries of grace. And hence there began from the time of her Assumption into heaven the constant and uninterrupted convergence of Christians on Mary, nor has it ever been said - as St Bernard tells us - that anyone ever had trusting recourse to this loving Mother and was left forsaken. This is why every century, every year, every day, and we may say every moment in history has been marked by some great favour granted to those who have invoked her with faith. This too is the reason why every kingdom, every city and town, every family has a church, a chapel, an altar, a statue, a picture or some other sign which calls to mind the universal veneration for Mary, and at the same time recalls some of the many graces granted to those who have had recourse to her in life's necessities.

RESPONSORY
63,16

Psal 34,4; Lk 1,48; Psal

R/. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!: * For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. Behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed

V/. Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me.

R/. For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. Behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

* Or:

SECOND READING

From the writings of Saint John Bosco, priest

(“Marvels of the Mother of God [...]”,
Opere edite, XX, Roma 1976, 217-220; 197-200)

*Mary has been constituted by God
as the Help of Christians*

When the Blessed Virgin Mary came to visit her, Saint Elizabeth was so filled with the Holy Spirit, that she was inspired to prophesy: *"Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. "*

With these words the Holy Spirit through the lips of Elizabeth extolled Mary as blessed and favoured by God and chosen by him to bring to men the blessing which was lost in Eve and for which mankind has been yearning for so many centuries.

To the congratulations of her kinswoman Mary, also inspired by God, replied: *"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord. . .For he has looked with favour on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed. "*

Now, in order that Mary's glory might be extended to all generations, so that all might call her blessed, it was necessary that Mary should bestow upon every generation an extraordinary and lasting benefit, so that the reason for gratitude and praise might be ever present. This continuous and marvellous benefit is none other than the help that Mary gives to men - a help that is extended to all ages, places, and people.

The title of "Help of Christians", attributed to the august Mother of the Redeemer is not new in the Church of Christ, but in these latter times it has been proclaimed of the Blessed Virgin Mary for a special reason. Not only for private favours is Mary being invoked, but especially because of the serious and imminent dangers that threaten the faithful. Today the Catholic Church itself is attacked in its mission, in its institutions, in its head, in its doctrine, in its discipline. It is attacked as the Catholic Church, the pillar of truth and the teacher of all the faithful.

And it is precisely to obtain the special protection of heaven that we have recourse to Mary as the Mother of us all, the special helper of Catholics throughout the world and of their leaders.

Hence we can truly say that Mary has been constituted by God as the Help of Christians and that in times of crisis she has shown herself to be the helper especially of those who suffer and fight for the faith.

May the Blessed Virgin help us to be faithful to the teachings and the faith, of which the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, is the head, and obtain for us the grace of persevering in serving God on this earth, so as to join her one day in the kingdom of heavenly glory.

RESPONSORY

Lk 1,48-49; cf Psal 17,33

R/. All generations shall call me blessed because he who is mighty has done great things for me. * And holy is his name (T.P. Alleluia).

V/. God girded me with strength and set me on the heights.

R/. And holy is his name (T.P. Alleluia).

Te Deum.

Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

Vigil Celebration

Those who desire a prolonged vigil liturgy, after the recital of the Office of Readings and before the Te Deum may add the canticles and Gospel readings indicated below.

Ant. Bless the Lord in all his works:
he has clothed Mary with the garments of salvation
and wrapped her in the mantle of justice
(T.P. Alleluia).

CANTICLE I **Is 61,10-62,3** The prophet rejoices over the new Jerusalem.

CANTICLE II **Is 62,4-7** The glory of the new Jerusalem.

CANTICLE III **Sir 39,13-16a** How great are your works, O Lord!

GOSPEL

One of the following Gospel extracts is read from the Lectionary of the Mass for the Blessed Virgin Mary help of Christians:

1. Mt 12,46-50: Here are my mother and my brothers!
2. Lk 1,26-38: You will conceive in your womb and bear a son.
3. Lk 1,39-47: Blessed is she who believed.
4. Lk 11,27-28: Blessed is the womb that bore you.

5. Jn 2,1-11: His mother said: Do whatever he tells you.

6. Jn 19,25-27: Behold your son! Behold your mother!

If it be thought opportune a homily may be given.

Te Deum.

Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

Morning Prayer

*** HYMN**

Mary immaculate, star of the morning,
Chosen before the creation began,
Chosen to bring for thy bridal adorning,
Woe to the serpent and rescue to man.

Here, in an orbit of shadow and sadness,
Veiling thy splendour, thy course thou hast run;
Now thou are throned in all glory and gladness,
Crowned by the hand of thy saviour and Son.

Sinners, we worship thy sinless perfection;
Fallen and weak, for thy pity we plead;
Grant us the shield of thy sovereign protection,
Measure thine aid by the depth of our need.

Bend from the throne at the voice of our crying,
Bend to this earth which thy footsteps have trod;
Stretch out thine arms to us, living and dying,
Mary immaculate, Mother of God.

Or:

O quam glorifica luce coruscas,
stirpis davidicae regia proles,
sublimis residens, Virgo Maria,
supra caeligenas aetheris omnes.

Tu cum virgineo Mater honore,
angelorum Domino pectoris aulam
sacris visceribus casta parasti;
natus hinc Deus est corpore Christus.

Cunctis auxilium praebe, tuorum
audi vota, graves solve catenas;
nostras, tu nova lux, discute noctes,
da, quo tu frueris, cernere Natum.

Quem cunctus venerans orbis adorat,
cui nunc rite genu flectitur omne;
a quo, te, petimus, subveniente,
abiectis tenebris, gaudia lucis.

Hoc largire, Pater luminis omnis,
Natum per proprium, Flamine sacro;
qui tecum nitida vivit in aethra,
regnans ac moderans saecula cuncta.
Amen.

Or another suitable hymn approved by ecclesiastical authority.

1 ant. My song and my strength is the Lord:
for me he is both health and salvation, alleluia.

Psalms and canticle from Sunday, Week 1.

2 ant. Blessed are you, O Virgin Mary,
Among all the women of the earth, alleluia.

3 ant. We praise you, Lord, for your wonderful works;
we praise you for Mary's help, alleluia.

In the Easter season:

SCRIPTURE READING

Rev 12,10-12a.17

I John heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein!

Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus.

SHORT RESPONSORY

R/. Virgin Mary, you have given birth to the light of the world, * Alleluia, alleluia!
Virgin Mary, you have given birth to the light of the world, Alleluia, alleluia!

V/. Helped by your prayer, we praise the Lord.

* Alleluia, alleluia!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Virgin Mary, you have given birth to the light of the world, Alleluia, alleluia!

Outside the Easter season:

SCRIPTURE READING

13,18b-20a

Jud

Blessed be the Lord God, who created the heavens and the earth, who has guided you to strike the head of the leader of our enemies. Your hope will never depart from the hearts of men, as they remember the power of God. May God grant this to be a perpetual honour to you, and may he visit you with blessings, because you did not spare your own life when our nation was brought low, but have avenged our ruin, walking in the straight path before our God.

SHORT RESPONSORY

R/. O loving Mother of Christ, * O worker of wonders.

O loving Mother of Christ, O worker of wonders.

V/. You are our hope; to you we fly for help.

* O worker of wonders.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O loving Mother of Christ, O worker of wonders.

Ant. At the Ben. O Mary, you rise like the dawn, alleluia;
and bear the new sun, alleluia

INTERCESSIONS

At the beginning of this new day let us give thanks with Mary Help of Christians to our God and Saviour, and let us say:

We hope in you, O Son of Mary.

Jesus, sun of justice, you were born of Mary, star of the morning:

- grant that we may walk today in your light, so that evening may find us worthy of your benevolent gaze.

Christ our Saviour, in your Immaculate Mother you have symbolized the beginning of the Church:

- grant that we may tend with all our strength to justice and holiness.

Christ Jesus, consolation of those who entrust themselves to you:

- help us through the example of your Mother to carry the crosses we encounter on life's pilgrimage.

Christ our Lord, through the mystery of your death and resurrection you free mankind from evil:

- grant that young people may overcome the many forms of slavery that exist in our times.

Lord Jesus you gave Don Bosco a powerful help and a sure guide in Mary Help of Christians:

- that that the whole Salesian Family may always feel her motherly presence in the work of the education and evangelisation of youth.

Our Father.

PRAYER

Lord our God, you chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother and help of Christians; by her prayers give to the Church the strength of your Spirit so that with patience and love its

members may overcome every trial and share even now in the victory of Christ, your Son. He lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Prayer during the Day

Hymn from the Ordinary; complementary psalms. If the Solemnity falls on a Sunday in Ordinary Time, the psalms are as on Sunday of Week 1.

Before Noon

Ant. He who is Almighty has done great things in me:
Holy is his name (**T.P.** Alleluia).

SCRIPTURE READING

Rev 12,1

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.

V/. You are the Mother of our Lord and Saviour (**T.P.** Alleluia).

R/. The honour of the Church and help in difficulties (**T.P.** Alleluia).

Midday

Ant. With the power of your arm you have put the proud to flight,
you have exalted the humble (**T.P.** Alleluia).

SCRIPTURE READING

Rev 21,3b

Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them

V/. Hail, holy Mother; hail, glory of the world (**T.P.** Alleluia).

R/. Intercede for us with your Son (**T.P.** Alleluia).

Afternoon

Ant. The Lord comes to the aid of his faithful ones,
remembering his mercy (**T.P.** Alleluia).

SCRIPTURE READING

Rev 12,17

The dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus.

V/. Mary, fountain of grace and mother of forgiveness (T.P. Alleluia).

R/. Protect us from the evil one and receive us at the hour of our death (T.P. Alleluia).

Concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

Evening Prayer II

* HYMN

Attentive Virgin Mother, it never has been known
that anyone who loved you was ever left alone.
Inspired by your goodness we ask for help and pray
to know your Son incarnate, the only perfect way.

Attentive Virgin Mother, protect the Church of God,
provide her with apostles to spread the faith abroad.
Obtain for youth the wisdom to build on Christ the Lord,
with freedom of the spirit to seek the will of God.

Attentive Virgin Mother, our Model and our Sign,
your faith and love at Cana proved Jesus' power divine.
True Mother of the living, receive this humble pray'r:
Make Life the choice and glory of fam'lies everywhere.

(R.McShane FMA)

Or:

O sanctissima, O piissima,
Dulcis virgo Maria!
Mater amata, intemerata,
Ora, ora pro nobis.

Tu solacium et refugium,
Virgo, mater Maria!
Quidquid optamus, per te speramus;
Ora, ora pro nobis.

Ecce debiles, perquam flebiles,
Salva nos, O Maria!
Tolle languores, sana dolores,
Ora, ora pro nobis.

Virgo respice, Mater, adspice,
Audi nos, O Maria.
Tu medicinam portas divinam,
Ora, ora pro nobis.

Tua gaudia et suspiria
Iuvent nos, O Maria!
In te speramus, ad te clamamus,
Ora, ora pro nobis.

Or the hymn Ave maris stella or another suitable hymn approved by ecclesiastical authority.

Ant. 1: The joy of the Lord is with you, Mary:
obtain for us benevolence and peace (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 121 (122)

I rejoiced when I heard them say: *
"Let us go to God's house."
And now our feet are standing *
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city *
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up, *
the tribes of the Lord.

For Israel's law it is, *
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgment *
of the house of David.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray: *
"Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls, *
in your palaces, peace!"

For love of my brethren and friends *
I say: "Peace upon you."
For love of the house of the Lord *
I will ask for your good.

Ant. The joy of the Lord is with you, Mary:
obtain for us benevolence and peace (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 2: Mary, Mother of the Church,
Keep us with the love you have for your people (T.P. Alleluia).

Psalm 126 (127)

If the Lord does not build the house, *
in vain do its builders labour;
if the Lord does not watch over the city, *
in vain does the watchman keep vigil.

In vain is your earlier rising,*
your going later to rest,
you who toil for the bread you eat,*
when he pours gifts on his beloved while they slumber.

Truly sons are a gift from the Lord,*
a blessing, the fruit of the womb.
Indeed the sons of youth*
are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

O the happiness of the man*
who has filled his quiver with these arrows!
He will have no cause for shame*
when he disputes with his foes in the gateways.

Ant. Mary, Mother of the Church,
Keep us with the love you have for your people (T.P. Alleluia).

Ant. 3: Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb (T.P. Alleluia).

Canticle Eph 1 . 3-10

Blessed be the God and Father*
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ*
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

He chose us in him*
before the foundation of the world,
that we should be holy*
and blameless before him.

He destined us in love*
to be his sons through Jesus Christ,
according to the purpose of his will,†
to the praise of his glorious grace*
which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood,*
the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of his grace*
which he lavished upon us.

He has made known to us†
in all wisdom and insight *
the mystery of his will,
according to his purpose*
which he set forth in Christ.

His purpose he set forth in Christ,*
as a plan for the fulness of time,
to unite all things in him,*
things in heaven and things on earth.

Ant Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb (**T.P.** Alleluia).

SCRIPTURE READING

Rm 8,28-32.37

Brothers, we know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

SHORT RESPONSORY

In the Easter season:

R/. You are blessed, O Mary. * Alleluia, alleluia.

You are blessed, O Mary. Alleluia, alleluia.

V/. Through you the world has received salvation.

* Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

You are blessed, O Mary. Alleluia, alleluia!

Outside the Easter season:

R/. Queen of the world, * Sovereign of the heavens.

Queen of the world, Sovereign of the heavens.

V/. Pray for the salvation of Christian people:

* Sovereign of the heavens.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Queen of the world, Sovereign of the heavens.

Ant. al Magn. To you we have recourse in our trials, O Mother of God:
through you we receive help from the Lord (**T.P.** Alleluia).

INTERCESSIONS

Let us give thanks to God our Father who in the Virgin Mary has given us the image and beginning of the Church, and let us pray:

Lord, renew us in your Spirit.

Father, you willed that Mary should be present in the Cenacle in the midst of the apostles:

- assist with your Holy Spirit, the Pope, bishops and priests, that they may be sure guides for the Church in the ways of the world.

You willed that Mary be present in the first steps of the Church's work of evangelization:

- bless the missionaries and all those who work for the extension of your Kingdom.

You willed that Mary should be at the side of Elizabeth, and with the young married couple at Cana:

- make us solicitous and attentive to those who are in need, or lonely or suffering.

You willed that Mary should be, with Joseph, the educator of your Son:

- sustain the entire Salesian Family in its work of the human and Christian advancement of the young, and especially of those who are poor and abandoned.

You made Mary resplendent as a sign of consolation and sure hope for your Church:

- receive into the glory of your Kingdom the dead who have believed and hoped in you.

Our Father.

PRAYER

Lord our God, you chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother and help of Christians; by her prayers give to the Church the strength of your Spirit so that with patience and love its members may overcome every trial and share even now in the victory of Christ, your Son. He lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Compline

Night Prayer of Sunday. Outside the Easter Season it is appropriate to use as the final antiphon "Sub tuum praesidium", or "O Maria, Virgo potens":

"O Maria, Virgo potens
Tu magnum et praeclarum in Ecclesia praesidium;
Tu singulare Auxilium Christianorum:
Tu terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.
Tu cunctas haereses sola interemisti in universo mundo.
Tu in angustiis,
Tu in bello,
Tu in necessitatibus nos ab hoste protege,
atque in aeterna gaudia in mortis hora suscipe."