

MAY PILGRIMAGES

Sowing Peace and Joy in the World

The May Pilgrimage is a custom that has flourished as a way to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary and can be practiced by all the faithful who desire to grow in their devotion to her.

HOW TO MAKE A MAY PILGRIMAGE

1. Invite a couple of friends or family members to accompany you to a local shrine or church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
2. Keeping a spirit of prayer and penance, pray one of the mysteries of the rosary on the way there and another on the way back.
3. At the shrine itself, or before the picture or statue of our Lady that is visited, pray the mysteries of the rosary for that day of the week, plus the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

For more information on the May Pilgrimage and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, visit the St. Josemaria Institute at www.stjosemaria.org

THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Nativity
4. The Presentation
5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion

Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. The Coronation of Our Lady

Luminous Mysteries

1. The Baptism of Christ
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

THE LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us,
Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary,

Pray for Us

Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of the Church,
Mother of mercy,
Mother of divine grace,
Mother of hope
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,

Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual Vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comfort of migrants,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,

Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of families,
Queen of peace.

**V. Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world,**

R. Spare us, O Lord.

**V. Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world,**

R. Graciously hear us, O Lord.

**V. Lamb of God, who takes away the
sins of the world,**

R. Have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,

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

Let us pray. O God, whose only
begotten Son, by his life, death
and resurrection, has purchased
for us the rewards of eternal life,
grant we beseech thee, that by
meditating upon these mysteries of
the most holy Rosary of the Blessed
Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they
contain and obtain what they prom-
ise, through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

"THE MAY PILGRIMAGE": SOWING PEACE AND JOY IN THE WORLD

www.stjosemaria.org



On May 2, 1935, St. Josemaria Escriva began the custom in Opus Dei of the May Pilgrimage to Mary. Accompanied by two friends, who were also his students, he went to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Sonsoles in Avila, Spain. His intention for this visit was to give special thanks to Mary for the favors received that year through her intercession.

St. Josemaria explained: "Having decided to go to Sonsoles, I wanted to celebrate Holy Mass before setting out toward Avila. During the Mass, in the *Memento of the Living*, with a determination that was particularly strong (more than just my own), I asked our Lord, Jesus, to increase in us - in the Work (Opus Dei) - our love for Mary, and I asked that this love might be expressed in deeds.

When we were on the train, my thoughts kept spontaneously returning to the same idea: that our Lady is no doubt pleased with our affection, crystallized as it is in substantial Marian devotions: her image always kept before us; the tender greetings we give her as we enter and leave the room; the poor of our Lady; the Saturday collection; *omnes... ad Iesum per Mariam* (all... for Jesus through Mary).

But in the month of May, something more was needed. Then I thought of the *May Pilgrimage* as a custom that must be incorporated - and it has been incorporated - into the Work."

Upon arriving in Avila, St. Josemaria and his friends headed straight for the road leading to the shrine. From far off they could see the shrine on the top of the hill. They prayed the *joyful mysteries* of the rosary along way, the *sorrowful mysteries* in the shrine before the beautiful statue of our Lady, and the *glorious mysteries* on the way back to the train station.

"As we walked from Avila, we kept our eyes fixed on the shrine," St. Josemaria explained, "and, naturally, when we reached the foot of the hill, Mary's house disappeared from view. We talked about how this is what God often does with us. He gives us a clear sight of the end of our journey, and allows us to fix our gaze upon it, in order to set our feet firmly on the path of his most lovable will. And then, when we get near him, he leaves us in darkness, seemingly abandoning us. This is the time of temptation: doubts, struggles, obscurity, weariness, the desire to lie down along the way... But no: *forward!* The time of temptation is also the time of faith and of trusting surrender to our Father-God.

Away with doubts, vacillations, and indecision! I have seen the way. I set out on it, and I am following it, up the hill - *come on, hurry up!* - panting, out of breath with the effort, but not stopping to pick the flowers which, to the right and to the left, offer me a moment's rest and the enchantment of their scent and color... and of their possession. For I know very well, from

bitter experience, that if I were to pick them they would instantly start shriveling up and fading, and so there is nothing in them for me - neither color nor scent nor peace."

St. Josemaria would continue to encourage all the faithful to give our Lady this gift during the month of May: to visit a shrine dedicated to the Mother of God and pray the rosary.

He once remarked, "May you learn how to sow peace and joy in the world, through this marvelous Marian devotion and through your refined charity."

