

St. Mary's Parish Dungarvan

May 2024



May 1: St. Joseph the Worker.
May 13: Our Lady of Fatima.
May 20: Mary: Mother of the Church.
May 31: The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



May – Mary's Month – A May Altar.

What is a May Altar?

May is a special time in the church calendar when Catholics honour Mary, the mother of Jesus. The month of May is a time to look forward to better weather and enjoy the flowers and plants which are starting to bloom. This is a good time to create a small altar at home, to pay tribute to Mary.

Creating an Altar to Honour Mary

Choose a room in the home where you can set up your altar. Perhaps a corner of the hallway or an area in a bedroom. Find a flat surface that will act as your altar; a small table or chest of drawers is ideal. You could cover the altar with a cloth, but this isn't essential.

An image of Mary will be your centrepiece. Use a small statue if you have one, or a picture of Mary from a prayer card or prayer book if not. A set of rosary beads or a small crucifix placed on the altar can also help with devotions. Have a chair or stool nearby to encourage family members to stop by and perhaps offer prayers to Mary during the day. If you have any prayer or Mass cards with images of Mary, these could also be placed on the altar.

Decorating a Home Altar

Any flowers can be used for a home altar, the main point being to reflect on the joy of the coming summer season. There are many plants, which throughout history, have been associated with the Virgin Mary. The rose and lily are two of the best known flowers with Marian associations. Lily of the Valley, which flowers in May, is known as 'Our Lady's tears' and May hawthorn, sometimes known as 'Mary's flower of May' is a seasonal plant, which was often used for church celebrations in times past. Sweet pea is another flower associated with the Virgin Mary, which will add a beautiful scent to the altar. Candles can be another addition to your special area, and could be lit during prayer times. Do remove these when not in use if you have children in the house. Creating a home altar to Mary can be a meaningful activity, which creates a special area in your home throughout May, the month of Mary.

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Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

This novena began on Monday, April 8th at 7.30pm and will continue each Monday until Monday, June 3rd, 2024. No 9.30am Mass on Mondays during the novena. 'Mother of Perpetual Help, with the greatest confidence we come before your holy picture to be inspired by the example of your life.' Novena Prayer.

St. Francis de Sales says: 'Let us run to Mary and, as her little children, cast ourselves into her arms with a perfect confidence'. Like Jesus safe in the arms of his mother Mary in the Icon of our Mother of Perpetual Help, St. Francis de Sales advises to run to the safety of Mary's arms and bring our needs to her with a perfect confidence.

May Procession, Dungarvan, Sunday 19th May, 4pm.

A May Procession in honour of Our Lady will be held in Dungarvan on **Sunday 19th of May**. Beginning at 4pm in St Mary's Church Yard, and processing to the Friary Church, for prayers, crowning of Our Lady, & Benediction. Concluding by 5pm. 1st Holy Communion children to wear Communion clothes. All are very welcome.

(For more information contact 0892253100)

The Memorare (Part of a longer 15th century Prayer).

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help, or sought your intercession,
was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence,

I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.

To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word Incarnate,

despise not my petitions,

but in your mercy, hear and answer me.

Amen.

Religious Goods.

A selection of Mass Cards, Mass Bouquets and Get-Well Cards, produced at St. Mary's Abbey, Glencairn are on sale in the Parish Office. Statues, medals, prayer cards, and other small religious goods are also on sale in the Parish Office. St. Joseph Prayer Cards and an explanation of them @ 25 cent each. These were printed at St. Joseph's Carmelite Monastery, Tallow.

Weekly Envelopes, May 2024 – May 2025.

The number of church collections has been increasing in recent years as the costs of running a parish and diocese increase. As the number attending church and the number contributing continue to decrease, the burden has fallen on fewer and fewer people. It is a tremendous tribute to that faithful group of people that the yearly contributions to collections have held up, and in some cases, increased. Of course, we are there for people, but it is understandable that we would like people to show some level of appreciation by contributing to the parish and to the support of the priests.

Year by year, the number of boxes which we order is decreasing. We send a box of envelopes only to household/individuals who use the envelopes during the year. Given the cost of printing the boxes of envelopes, (last year 2023, we paid RPD, the printing company, €1,077.48 for 400 sets of boxes) it doesn't make economic sense to send a box of envelopes to households/individuals who do not return any of them.

Of the 370 boxes of envelopes sent out last year, 271 were used during the year which represents about one seventh or 14% of the households of the parish. This year, 2024, we have ordered 360 boxes. These weekly envelopes continue to be a vital source of parish income. The use of these envelopes also allows us to benefit from the Tax Rebate Scheme. Most envelopes are returned week by week, other less frequently and many are used for the priests' collections and special collections during the year.

Each year we ask parishioners and those who join us for celebrations in St. Mary's to encourage a family member, a neighbour, friend or newcomer to the area to take a box of weekly envelopes and to support the parish and the priests of the parish. Weekly Envelope Box Request Forms are available in the church and parish office which can be contacted at 058 42374 or email parishofficedungarvan@gmail.com

Children Receiving Holy Communion for the First Time.

We congratulate the children who are receiving Holy Communion for the First Time at this time of year. It is most important for these young boys and girls to grow in love of receiving Jesus in Holy Communion frequently. It is Jesus' great gift. The gift of Himself. The best gift we can give him is to be present at Mass and to receive him in Holy Communion.

Queen of the May

Bring flowers of the rarest,
bring blossoms the fairest,
From garden and woodland
and hillside and dale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
our glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
flower of the vale!

Chorus:

O Mary we crown thee
with blossoms today!
Queen of the Angels and
Queen of the May.
O Mary we crown thee
with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels and
Queen of the May. (x2)

Their lady they name thee, their
mistress proclaim thee,
Ah, grant that thy children on
earth be as true.
As long as the bowers are
radiant with flowers,
As long as the azure shall keep
its bright hue.

Chorus: (x2)

Sing gaily in chorus; the bright
angels o'er us,
Re-echo the strains we begin
upon earth;
Their harps are repeating, the
notes of our greeting,
For Mary herself is the cause of
our mirth.

Chorus: (x2)

Pope Francis & May

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

From Pope Francis' letter for Month of May, 25 April 2020

Prayer for Students

Lord, calm my fear at exam time.
help my strained memory
in times of doubt.
Help my tired hand
Write it all down.
Let the work I have done
Stand to me today.
Do not allow what remains undone
To undermine my courage.
Help me to make the best of my
knowledge.
You have a loving plan
For my whole life.
Whatever the outcome,
Exams are a part of this.
Let Your will be done,
And may all I do lead to you.
AMEN