



Dear parishioners,

If any of you have seen the invitation to join the community of prayer but have forgotten or have never known how to pray the rosary then please don't let this put you off. I have always found it incredibly difficult to pray the rosary by myself, but earlier this year I discovered "Catholic Devotions" on YouTube and I haven't looked back since. All the details are the end of this letter.

### Mary's Mantle

Mary's Mantle Consecration is based on a tradition in Mexico where 46 families would gather in each other's houses to pray the rosary each day. They carried a cloak (mantle) from house to house and a star was sewn on to the mantle by each family. When the mantle was complete with 46 stars, as depicted in the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the community gathered together in the church on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (12<sup>th</sup> December) and draped the cloak over her statue as the priest led the congregation in prayers of devotion and consecration.



The book that we are using can be purchased here in kindle or paperback editions, should you wish to have your own copy. <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Marys-Mantle-Consecration-Spiritual-Retreat/dp/1947701061>

When desiring Our Lady's protection, mum has always taught us to ask Our Lady to wrap her mantle around us and I take great comfort from imagining myself being held warm and snug in the folds of her cloak.



### Who is Our Lady of Guadalupe?

Our Lady of Guadalupe first introduced herself as the Mother of God and the mother of all humanity when she appeared on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico in 1531. An indigenous peasant, Juan Diego, saw a glowing figure on the hill. After she had identified herself to him, Our Lady asked that Juan build her a shrine in that same spot, in order for her to show and share her love and compassion with all those who believe.

Afterwards, Juan Diego visited Juan de Zumárraga, who was Archbishop of what is now Mexico City. Zumárraga dismissed him in disbelief and asked that the future Saint provide proof of his story and proof of the Lady's identity. Juan Diego returned to the hill and encountered Our Lady again. The Virgin told him to climb to the top of the hill and pick some flowers to present to the Archbishop. Although it was winter and nothing should have been in bloom, Juan Diego found an abundance of flowers of a type he had never seen before. The Virgin bundled the flowers into Juan's cloak, known as a tilma. When Juan Diego presented the tilma of exotic flowers to Zumárraga, the flowers fell out and he recognised them as Castilian roses, which are not found in Mexico. What was even more significant, however, was that the tilma had been miraculously imprinted with a colourful image of the Virgin herself. This is the only "self-portrait" given by the Blessed Mother, and it is the only apparition in which she is "with child," signified by the band above her waist. For this reason, she is the Patroness of the Unborn.

This actual tilma, preserved since that date and showing the familiar image of the Virgin Mary with her head bowed and hands together in prayer, represents the Virgin of Guadalupe. It remains perhaps the most sacred object in all of Mexico. The story is best known from a manuscript written in the Aztec's native language Nahuatl by the scholar Antonio Valeriano. It was written sometime after 1556. Over 20 million people visit the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe each year, now situated on the very same hill on which she appeared. In 1990, Pope Saint John Paul II visited Mexico and beatified Juan Diego. 10 years later, in the year 2000, he was declared a Saint.

Further information here: <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/the-amazing-truth-of-our-lady-of-guadalupe.html> The facts about the tilma are incredible, science can't explain it.

## **Our Community of prayer**

Although we will be praying our daily rosary individually, we will be united in our shared purpose, our shared intentions, our reading of the daily reflections that I will what's app/email each morning and in our consecration to Our Lady at the end. My hope is that people might be willing to share, via what's app or email, any thoughts or insights that they have over the six week period. We are beginning on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July and finishing on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August, the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven – and maybe by then we'll be able to have a celebration together!

## **Prayer Intentions**

Please give some thought as to what prayer intentions you would like to bring before Our Lady over these coming weeks. I will share with the group whatever prayer intentions you would like me to share. Even if there are only ten of us praying together, that would be 460 rosaries offered up for your intentions. Expect miracles!!

## **Reflections**

The daily reflections are a contemplation of the virtues and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. By meditating on the virtues and gifts that Mary possessed and by striving to incorporate them more fully into our lives, we will become more like Mary. We become more effective prayer warriors when we cultivate the virtues and open our hearts to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear or awe of the Lord. (Taken directly from Christine Watkins' book)

## **Fasting**

Prayer and fasting are a powerful combination. When we fast, we practise the virtue of self-control and we put other people's needs before our own when we offer it up in prayer. You are only required to fast once during the 46 days (medical conditions permitting) but you are welcome to fast every Wednesday and/or Friday. A strict fast is bread and water but you could eat simple, plain food and abstain from meat and anything sweet. I make mum's "fasting buns" for lunch as they are filling (recipe at the end). Asking for the grace to fast in the morning makes all the difference and offering it up for a particular intention gives our fast meaning. For some, fasting from TV or social media or gossip, for example, is the greater need. St Basil the Great said "Fasting gives birth to prophets and strengthens the powerful; fasting makes lawgivers wise. Fasting is a good safeguard for the soul, a steadfast companion for the body, a weapon for the valiant, and a gymnasium for athletes. Fasting repels temptations, anoints unto piety; it is the comrade of watchfulness and the artificer of chastity. In war it fights bravely, in peace it teaches stillness."

## **Rosary beads**

If anyone needs Rosary beads then I have numerous pairs to give away in a little cloth bag on my doorstep that you are welcome to help yourself to (next to the miraculous medals!), or I will drop them off/post to you. 8a Victoria Road, BA14 7LH.

## **More on the rosary**

If you would like to find out more about the power of the rosary and some of the promises that are made by Our Lady then this is a really powerful talk that I recently listened to by Fr Don Calloway – I learned loads and it is captivating! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwVdYXyxln0&list=PLVsLuF1zmHU68wSFOPkwSPUYxl3FJteMS>

## **Spread the word**

If you know anyone that might be interested in join us, then please pass on my details – no matter where in the world they reside, or even if we have already started. Sinead Peacock [haywoodsmv@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:haywoodsmv@yahoo.co.uk) 01225 971020 07903 120266

## We're not perfect

Mary's Mantle Consecration does not have to be done perfectly. God rejoices in our trying. If you miss a day of prayer or stumble in your attempts, allow God's mercy and appreciation for your efforts to enfold you, leaving no room for discouragement or self-reproach. (Taken directly from Christine Watkins' book)

## Consecration to Mary

The end goal of Mary's Mantle Consecration is the same as that of every authentic Marian consecration: perfect union with Jesus Christ through a total gift of all that we are, and the offering of ourselves to Our Lady. When we consecrate ourselves to Mary, we give her our bodies, our souls, and the value of our good work and prayers – past, present and future – to use and distribute as she wills. She is the Mediatrix of All Graces, which means that all of God's graces are distributed through her. Thus Mary, in return for our consecration, uses the full power of her intercession to help conform us to Christ. To be an open vessel to receive the fullness of grace that God and Mary wish to impart to us, it is important that we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation a few days in advance of the final consecration. (Taken directly from Christine Watkins' book)

## A Prayer to Begin



O most Holy Mother, whom I love tenderly as my own, in your sacred presence, I offer to you these days of preparation for consecration in honour of the stars that adorned your heavenly mantle. I appeal to you to intercede for these 46 days for all of my needs, for those of my loved ones and for [our shared intentions]. Please show me the sweet compassion that you showered upon St Juan Diego, your messenger. Please give me a pure and virtuous heart, like your own, so that I might derive the same consolation – the soothing of my pains and the lifting of my soul – that Juan Diego received from the gentle words you gave to him centuries ago: *“Listen, put it into your heart, my dearest one, that then thing that disturbs you, the thing that afflicts you, is nothing. Do not let your countenance, your heart be disturbed. Do not fear any sickness, nor anything that is sharp or hurtful. Am I not here, I, who am your Mother? Are you not in the hollow of my mantle, in the crossing of my arms? Do you need anything more?”*

## Finally...

I hope that I have covered everything. This is my first time doing something like this, I am open to any and all feedback and suggestions, please keep in touch.

Love and God bless,

Sinead

## Useful resources: Catholic Devotions

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CatholicDevotions> A lilting Irish voice guides you through the rosary and the beautiful artwork depicts each scene and provides a focus for wandering minds! There are various options, i.e. with or without music, with subtitles (so you know what to say when).

The Joyful Mysteries Experienced (with Ave Maria as background music – my favourite)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AW5wueFe-w&list=PLV-W7uF0YnP5zzD7AQlfn15HJww9LjFf1>

The Joyful Mysteries (no music) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArhIkO8gGG4&list=PLV-W7uF0YnP69EtXe7AddHh2t-iEjVEC1>

The Joyful Mysteries (with subtitles) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6u7rZ8Oo2I&list=PLV-W7uF0YnP4EgV1201p0qPT1HVGp77N9>

The same is available for each of the mysteries: Sorrowful, Luminous and Glorious. There is also a scripture rosary. “Subscribing” to the YouTube channel is the equivalent of using a bookmark and it is free.

## The Rosary in different formats



The Rosary (Experienced)

Catholic Devotions

[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)

The Rosary (No Music)

Catholic Devotions

[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)

The Rosary (With Subtitles)

Catholic Devotions

[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)

Scriptural Rosary

Catholic Devotions

[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)

Below is a table that indicates which mysteries of the rosary to pray on each day, as indicated by the church.

Monday	Joyful Mysteries
Tuesday	Sorrowful Mysteries
Wednesday	Glorious Mysteries
Thursday	Luminous Mysteries
Friday	Sorrowful Mysteries
Saturday	Joyful Mysteries
Sunday	Glorious Mysteries – ordinary time Advent & Christmas – Joyful Mysteries Lent – Sorrowful Mysteries

Help on how to pray the rosary <https://www.rosarycenter.org/homepage-2/rosary/how-to-pray-the-rosary/>

## Fasting Buns

To make 6 buns	To make 12 buns
7oz flour (could be wholemeal, country grain flour, plain) 1tbsp porridge oats Handful of raisins 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda 1 tsp salt  1tbsp olive oil 1tbsp honey 1 egg beaten Natural yoghurt (at least 250ml)	14oz flour (could be 10oz wholemeal or country grain flour plus 4oz plain flour) 2oz porridge oats 5oz raisins 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda 1 tsp salt  1tbsp olive oil 1tbsp honey 1 or 2 eggs beaten Natural yoghurt (at least 250ml)

These are really quick and easy to make and very forgiving. The quantities can be approximate. Mix all the dry ingredients then add the rest. Use as much natural yoghurt as is needed to bind the ingredients to make a manageable dough. Flatten on a floured board and cut into bun shapes. Place on a baking tray.

Bake at 205 degrees for 10-12 mins