

INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST

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Our Lady Help of Christians Feast: 24th May



From St Peter and Paul, Shropshire, by Margaret Rope

Feast of Mary, Help of Christians – May 24

From *The Liturgical Year* by Abbot Gueranger*

The Holy Ghost, Who guides our Holy Mother the Church, has gradually led the faithful to devote in an especial manner to the honor of Mary the entire month of May, the whole, or at least a major part, of which comes under the glad Season of Easter. No doubt, the loveliness of the month would, some time or other, suggest the idea of consecrating it to the holy Mother of God; but if we reflect on the divine and mysterious influence which guides the Church in all that She does, we shall recognize, in this present instance, a heavenly inspiration, which prompted the faithful to unite their own happiness to that of Mary, and spend this beau-



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SHREWSBURY BULLETIN



Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest in Shrewsbury

Weekly Schedule *

	Ordo	Cathedral	St Winefride's	Mass Intention
Sun	12 th May III Sunday after Easter		11.45 Confession & Rosary 12.15 Mass 6pm Vespers/Benediction	John Roseingrae & Anne Marie Finn
Mon	13 th May St. Robert Bellarmine Bishop, Conf. & Doctor, III class.	7.30am Mass		For a vocation
Tue	14 th May St. Boniface Martyr, Comm. IV Class.	7.30am Mass	5.30pm Confession & Rosary 6pm Mass	Mr. & Mrs. Drake Mgr. Wachs Prior General
Wed	15 th May St. John Baptist de la Salle Conf., III class.	7.30am Mass 7.00pm Parish Catechesis	* No Vespers: Parish Catechesis at the Cathedral	Rita O'Rourke
Thu	16 th May St. Ubald Bishop and Conf., III class.	7.30am Mass 11am Holy Hour	6pm Vespers & Compline	Nora Carroll
Fri	17 th May St. Paschal Baylon Conf., III class.	7.30am Mass	5.30pm Confession & Rosary 6pm Mass	Bridget & Tessa Connolly RIP Private Intention
Sat	18 th May St. Venantius Martyr, III class.		11am Confession & Rosary 11.30 am Mass 6pm Vespers & Compline	Nora Bennis RIP
Sun	19 th May IV Sunday after Easter		11.45 Confession & Rosary 12.15 Mass 6pm Vespers/Benediction	Eithna Foran RIP

* Changes from the usual schedule

tiful month, which is radiant with their Easter joy, in commemorating the maternal delight experienced, during that same period, by our Immaculate Mother when on earth.

This feast is not on the universal Calendar of the Church; yet it is so widely spread, with the consent of the Holy See, that our Liturgical Year would have been incomplete without it. Its object is to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Help of Christians – a title the Mother of God has justly merited by the innumerable favors She has conferred upon Christendom. Since the day when the Holy Ghost descended upon Mary in the Cenacle, in order that She might begin to exercise over the Church Militant Her power as Queen – who could tell the number of times that She has aided, by Her protection, the Kingdom of Her Son on earth?

Holy Church tells us that it is Mary who “alone destroys all heresies throughout the whole world.” If public scandals or persecutions, or the tyranny of secular interference, have at times threatened to stay the progress of the Church, Mary has stretched forth Her arm, the obstacles were removed, and the Spouse of Jesus continued Her onward march, leaving Her foes and Her fetters behind Her. All this was vividly brought before the mind of the Holy Pontiff, St. Pius V, by the victory of Lepanto, gained by the Blessed Virgin Mary’s intercession, over the Turkish fleet, and he resolved to add one more title to the glorious list given to Our Lady in Her Litany: it was *Auxilium Christianorum*, Help of Christians.

Pope Pius VII.

The 19th century had the happiness of seeing another Pontiff, also named Pius, institute a Feast under this same title – a Feast which is intended to commemorate the help bestowed on Christendom in all ages by the

Mother of God. Nothing could be happier than the choice of the day on which this Feast was to be kept. On May 24, in the year 1814, there was witnessed in Rome the most magnificent triumph that has yet been recorded in the annals of the Church.

That was a grand day, whereon Constantine marked out the foundations of the Vatican Basilica in honor of the Prince of the Apostles; Pope St. Sylvester stood by, and blessed the Emperor, who had just been converted to the True Faith: but important as was this event, it was but a sign of the last and decisive victory won by the Church in the then recent persecution of Diocletian.



That was a grand day whereon Pope Leo III, Vicar of the King of kings, crowned St. Karl the Great with the imperial diadem, and by his apostolic power gave continuance to the long interrupted line of Emperors: but Leo III, by this, did but give an official and solemn expression to the power which the Church had already frequently exercised in the newly constituted nations, which received from Her the idea of Christian government, to enable them to fulfil their duties.

That was a grand day whereon Pope Gregory IX restored to the city of Peter the Papal Throne, which had been transferred to Avignon for 70 years; but Gregory IX, in this, did but fulfil a duty, and

his predecessors, had they willed it, might have effected this return to Rome for which the necessities of Christendom so imperatively called.

Yes, all these were glorious days; but May 24 of 1814 surpasses them all. Pope Pius VII re-entered Rome amidst the acclamations of the Holy City, whose entire population went forth to meet him, holding palm branches in their hands, and greeting him with their hosannas of enthusiastic joy. He had been a captive of Napoleon for five years, during which the spiritual government of

the Christian world had suffered a total suspension.

It was not the Powers allied against his oppressor who broke the Pontiff’s fetters; the very tyrant who kept him from Rome had given him permission to return at the close of the preceding year; but the Pontiff chose his own time, and did not leave Fontainebleau till January 25th. Rome, whither he was about to return, had been made a part of the French Empire five years previously, by a decree in which was spuriously cited the name of Charlemagne!

The city of Peter had been made the head town of a Department, with a prefect for its administrator; and, with a view to making men forget that it was the city of the Vicars of Christ, the tyrant gave its name as a title to the heir-presumptive of the imperial crown of France.

What a day was that 24th of May, which witnessed the triumphant return of the Pontiff into the Holy City, whence he had been dragged during the night by the soldiers of an ambitious tyrant! He made the journey in short stages, meeting, on his way, the allied armies of Europe, who recognized his right as King. This right is superior, both in antiquity and dignity, to that of all other monarchs; and all, no matter whether they be heretics, schismatics or Catholics, must admit it, were it only on the strength of its being a historical fact.

The first blessing, therefore, for which we are indebted to Mary on this day, is that She brought back the pastor to his flock, and restored the supreme government of Holy Church to its normal state. The second is her having reinstated the Pope in possession of his temporal power, the surest guarantee of his being independent in the exercise of his spiritual power. We have but to consult history, and we shall learn what miseries and dangers have followed from the Popes being subjects of any earthly monarch.

But what we have said so far is not sufficient to give an adequate idea of the greatness of the prodigy thus achieved by Our Lady, Help of Christians. In order to have a just

appreciation of it, we must remember that the miracle was not wrought in the age of St. Sylvester and Constantine, or of St. Leo III and St. Karl the Great, or of the great prophetess St. Catherine of Siena, who made known the commands of God to the people of Italy and the Popes of Avignon.

The century that witnessed this wondrous event was the 19th. Europe was under the degrading influence of Voltairism, and there were still living the authors and abettors of the crimes and impieties that resulted from the false principles taught in the 18th century. Everything was adverse to such a glorious and unexpected triumph; Catholic feeling was far from being roused; the action of God’s Providence had to show itself in a direct and visible manner; and to let the Christian world know that such was the case, Rome instituted the annual Feast of May 24, as an offering of acknowledgment to Mary, Help of Christians.

Let us then give thanks to the Blessed Mother of God on this Feast; let us unite in the fervent acclamations of the then loyal citizens of Rome, and like them sing with all the glad joy of our Easter Alleluia, our greetings of Hosanna to the Vicar of Christ. The remembrance of St. Peter’s deliverance from prison and his restoration to liberty must have been vividly on the minds of that immense concourse of people, whose love for their Pontiff was redoubled by the sufferings he had gone through. As the triumphal chariot on which he had been placed came near the Flaminian Gate, the horses were unyoked, and the Pontiff was conveyed by the people to the Vatican Basilica, where a solemn thanksgiving was made, over the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles.

*Source: <https://www.salvemariaregina.info/SalveMariaRegina/SMR-152/Mary%20Help%20of%20Christians.htm>

Announcements

Choir practice during May will be on Friday nights after Mass. You are welcome to join us.