



The Little Flower Weekly

An Addition to the St. Therese Parish Bulletin



GOSPEL READING FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020

At that time, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But Jesus did not say a word in answer to her. Jesus' disciples came and asked him, "Send her away, for she keeps calling out after us." He said in reply, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But the woman came and did Jesus homage, saying, "Lord, help me." He said in reply, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Please, Lord, for even the dogs eat the scraps that fall from the Master's table." Then Jesus said to her in reply, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And the woman's daughter was healed from that hour (Matthew 15:21-28).

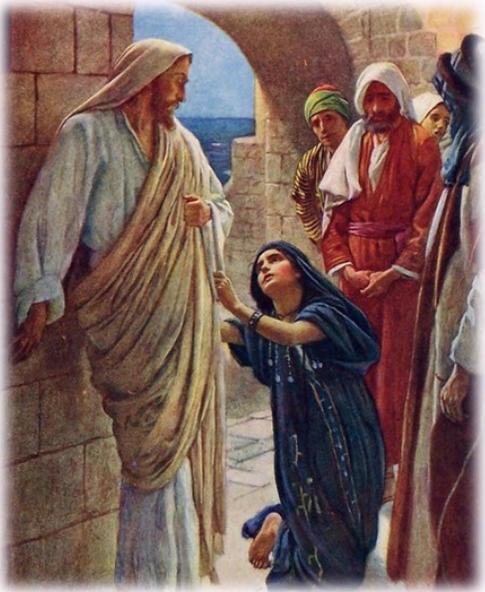
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"Show Your Faith!"

By Bishop Robert Barron
Auxiliary Bishop for Los Angeles



Dr. Stephen Davis, retired professor of the Philosophy of Religion at Claremont University, wrote a book called *Christian Philosophical Theology*, which includes a chapter contrasting two basic approaches to religion. The first—which can be found in much of the East—is a religion of **karma**, and the second—prominent in the Abrahamic religions of the West—is a **religion of grace**. A karmic approach says that, by a cosmic spiritual law, we are punished or rewarded according to our moral activities. If we do bad things, we will suffer, either in this life or a life to come. And if we do good things, we will be rewarded, either here or in the hereafter. Karma may be immediate or in the long run..

Now a religion of grace is different. It teaches that all people are sinners and hence deserving of punishment; but that God, out of sheer generosity, gives them what they *don't* deserve. Think of one of the most popular lines in Christian poetry: "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." In terms of a karmic religion, wretches deserve a wretched fate, and it would be unfair for wicked people to be given a great gift. But

devotees of a religion of grace exult in this generosity. Think of the parable of the workers hired at different times of the day or the story of the Prodigal Son. Those make sense only in a religion-of-grace context. If grace is a gift, why do only some get it and others don't?

This complaint becomes even more acute when we realize that the Bible—from beginning to end—presents a God who chooses. God selects Abel and not Cain, Abraham and not Lot, Jacob and not Esau, David and not Saul. In fact, one of the most basic truths of the Biblical revelation is that Israel itself is a *chosen* people, a people set apart. In order to resolve this dilemma, it might be useful to look at a couple of Biblical texts, one from the Old Testament and today's reading from the New. No one could ever accuse the prophet Isaiah of underplaying Israel's importance as the specially chosen people of God. But listen to these words from the 56th chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah: "The foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, loving the name of the Lord, and becoming His servants... them I will bring to my holy mountain and make joyful in my house of prayer..." Israel was indeed chosen, but precisely for the world and not for itself. What is grace? Gift! But when you cling to a gift, hoarding it for yourself, you undermine its nature as gift. But when you give it away, it is renewed within you.

We see much the same thing in the famously problematic passage in today's Gospel about Jesus' conversation with the Syro-Phoenician woman. This poor woman, a Canaanite and a foreigner, comes bravely forward and tells Jesus that her daughter is troubled by a demon. She prostrates herself at His feet, saying, "Lord, help me!" However, Jesus seems not to care about her and says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" and then adds, "It is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs." The woman responds with one of the best one-liners in Scripture: "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's scraps." Delighted not only by her cleverness and pluck but also by the depth of her faith, Jesus says, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done to you as you wish," and her daughter was healed from that hour. What's going on is that the **woman is being invited into a life of discipleship, into following Jesus as her Savior**. She is at first resisted by Him, not because Jesus is having a bad day, but because **Jesus wants the strength of her faith to show itself!** Yes, the table of grace was set for the children of Israel, but the food from that table was not meant for Israelites alone, but for all those who would come to that table, by hook or by crook. Israel was chosen, yes, but for the sake of the world.

Thank God we are not living in the dispensation of karma, for who of us would be able to stand in the fierce winds of pure justice? But we devotees of a religion of grace have to know that the gift is not for us alone; rather the generosity of God is meant to awaken a like generosity in us. If amazing grace has saved a wretch like me, I have got to become a vehicle of grace to every lost soul around me.

"Raising Cain"

By Fr. Philip Sullivan, OCD
Pastor

To "raise Cain" means "to cause a commotion, to create a disturbance, to make trouble". The Cain in the phrase, "raise Cain," refers to a character in the Old Testament of the Bible, one of the sons of Adam and Eve who murdered his brother Abel. In the story, both Cain and Abel bring an offering to God. God accepts Abel's offering but rejects Cain's. In a fit of jealousy and revenge, Cain murders Abel.

The verb "raise," as used in the idiom, "Raise Cain," means to conjure the spirit of someone. Therefore, to "raise Cain," in this instance, means to conjure up the murderous spirit of Cain, certainly a good way to create a disturbance or make trouble. Let's look at this passage from Scripture, from whence came this famous idiom:

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife, who conceived and brought forth Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man through God."

2 And again, she brought forth his brother Abel. Abel was a shepherd and Cain, a tiller of the ground.

3 And it came to pass after many days that Cain offered, of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord.

4 Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat; and the Lord had respect to Abel, and to his offerings.

5 But to Cain and his offerings, he had no respect; and Cain was exceedingly angry, and his countenance fell.

6 And the Lord said to him, "Why art thou angry? And why is thy countenance fallen?"

7 If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? But if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? But the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it."

8 And Cain said to Abel his brother, "Let us go forth abroad." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and slew him.

9 And the Lord said to Cain, "Where is thy brother Abel?" And he answered, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:1-9).



What a tragic story about a man who kills his only brother! What was his rage all about anyway? Was Cain jealous of his brother or was this an act of revenge upon God who accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's? Well, there is a lot to ponder in this story, which will hopefully cause us to have some self-reflection on how we offer back to God the gifts we have received from Him. Have you ever considered that maybe God has rejected something you have offered half-heartedly? I think that is one way to understand and consider the story of Cain and Abel.

What about those haunting words, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Recently, I heard a homily given by a Nigerian priest who powerfully exclaimed his belief that we need to hold people accountable in their spiritual lives. He also talked about the serious repercussions that a lack of accountability has on others and, especially, the chaos it has caused within the Church and in society.

“Am I my brother’s keeper?” could easily be applied to all of those negligent cardinals and bishops and pastors who turned a blind eye to the perversions of some of their brother-priests. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” could also be applied to those in your family or in your circle of friends who have gone astray from God and have “disaffiliated” themselves from the Catholic Church. Read this recent article from St. Mary’s Press Research: <https://catholicresearch.smp.org/report-examining-disaffiliation-young-catholics-release/>

Why do we so easily let our loved ones wander around the empty wasteland of adultery? Why do we look away when we see parents who neglect the spiritual formation of their children? Why do we say nothing about today’s acceptance of socialist ideologies, homosexuality, transgenderism, abortion, contraception, the rampant use of drugs and alcohol and—don’t get me started!—bishops and priests who have abandoned their responsibility to provide true Catholic education? These are just a handful of examples to consider. Maybe you can think of some others to add to the ever-growing list of imbecility.

These wandering souls are like the prodigal sons and daughters we too easily shrug off or, even worse, become complicit with by ignoring their sinful decisions and actions. Think about the older brother from the “Prodigal Son” story who never went after his little brother, although he knew where he was and what he had been doing (Luke 15:11-32). “Am I my brother’s keeper?” can also be applied to the politicians we have been electing in this country for decades, whose sole purpose seems to be killing babies and, now, euthanizing the elderly. You cannot turn away from the fact that you may be one of

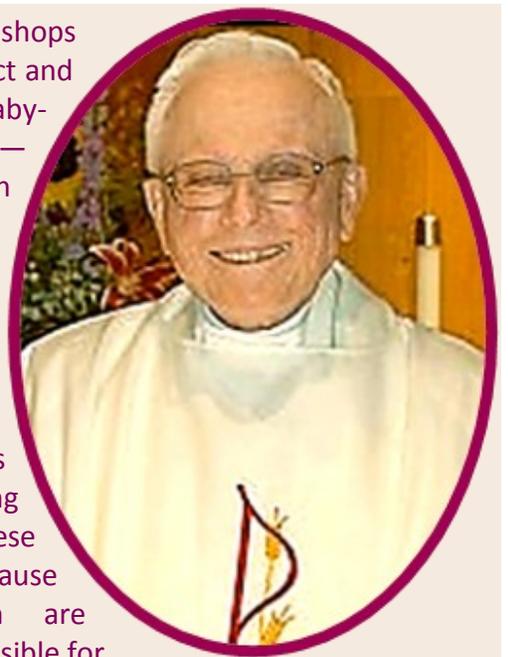
the Catholics who have voted for a politician who supported . . .

POST-BIRTH ABORTIONS!

Why do we so carelessly let these misguided politicians enact laws that are so obviously contrary to Jesus Christ and His Church?!



And why are the Bishops so scared to correct and admonish these baby-killing politicians—especially when they claim to be Roman Catholic? I think that these priests and these bishops who have remained so silent all these years won’t say anything negative about these politicians because many of them are themselves responsible for



their being elected. That’s right! Many of our Catholic bishops and priests stand behind and help elect abortionist-dictators! Think about that reality as you cast your ballot in just a few months from now. **Have you ever heard of a priest named Fr. Gerald Steckler?** I’ve been told by alumni of St. Thomas Aquinas College that he used to pray regularly at Mass this intention: “For wayward bishops, I wish and pray for them the highest good possible, the blessing of a good and holy death”—though he always added the qualifier “immediate”. Note: If you’d like to read more about Fr. Steckler, check out this article:

<https://thomasaquinas.edu/news/remembering-fr-steckler-dean-brian-t-kelly>

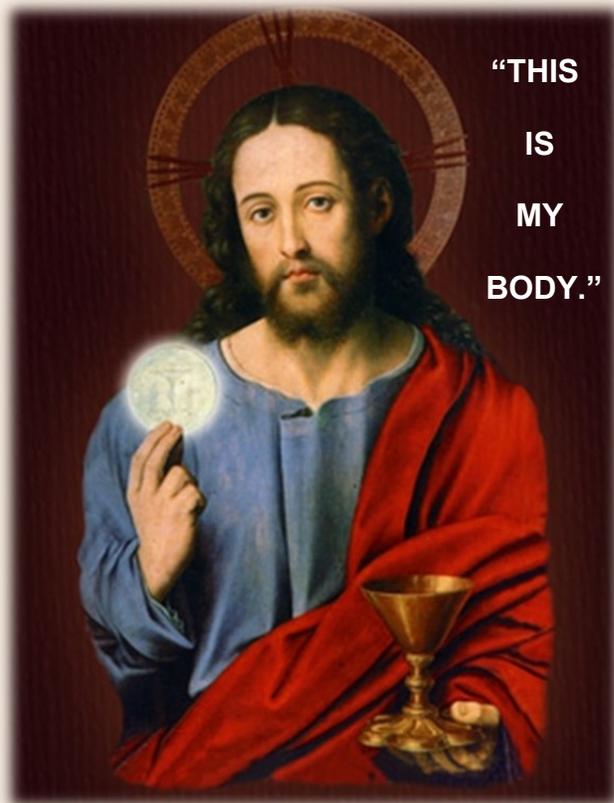
In other words, are these bishops, priests, and—it sadly seems—the majority of Catholic laity contributing to the murder of innocent babies by electing pro-abortion lawmakers? Will they be held accountable for their votes? The answer is YES! If you argue otherwise, consider who is left holding the bag when it comes to the crucifixion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Those responsible are the reckless priests of the Temple who handed Jesus over to Pontius Pilate! Like the first century priests and scribes who turned over the Son of God to their sole enemy, and like the government official, Pontius Pilate, you may be able to wash your hands after you cast your ballot, but you will still be held accountable for your vote. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” are words that may never be used by a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ! You *ARE* your brother’s keeper! Like our Lord said, we must go after the “lost sheep” (Luke 15:3-7). So what are we waiting for?

As mentioned in the beginning of this sermon, “Raising Cain” is an idiom known in many cultures, having its direct roots to the account in the Bible of Cain murdering his brother Abel. It seems to me that murdering the innocent is the Enemy’s way of attacking God. We may be able to think of other “brother conflicts” in the Sacred Scriptures, such as that between Ishmael and Isaac or between Jacob and Esau. Also, the book of Genesis, Chapters 37 through 50, depicts the life of Joseph, who was nearly killed by his own brothers and then sold into slavery by them. Most of the prophets of the Old Testament were also killed by their own people. What about the betrayal of Jesus by Judas? Yes, killing the innocent is a constant theme in the Holy Bible, but it has never reached the level of depravity and wickedness that we have seen in our own time!

Abortion is not only killing our innocent brothers and sisters, but it is also a pleasing sacrifice of human life to the Evil One. All the while, the majority of Catholics sit back and claim this hideous act of violence is really just “women’s health care” or, as I have heard some politicians, outspoken athletes, and famous movie stars claim, killing a baby in its mother’s womb is a “woman’s reproductive right.” If you are not convinced this is an evil act of the Enemy upon God, then consider the mocking words that so many ignorant women say in defense of abortion: “This is MY body”. This diabolical parody calls to mind the most sacred words the world has ever heard, from Jesus Christ Himself, said at the Last Supper as He confers the first Eucharist with His Apostles:

“THIS IS MY BODY.”

So what are we to do now? The abortion mills are milling. The politicians are expanding the definition of life and enacting laws to civilize the brutal deaths of innocent babies and the unwanted elderly. The voices of Catholics to stop this atrocity are almost inaudible when up against the loud cheerleading that is booming from the mouths of famous fools. In his enlightening book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Dr. Stephen Covey quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Your actions speak so loudly, I cannot hear what you are saying.” These words should ring loud and clear as we prayerfully discern whom we elect as leaders and lawmakers in the United States of America. Cast your vote to defend life—not to kill the innocent. Let us be a United Nation that defends the life, liberty, and happiness of all our citizens, especially the most innocent and most vulnerable. Raising Cain is synonymous with raising hell. Raising hell is the only way to see abortion for what it really is.



PRAYER OF DELIVERANCE FROM THE EVIL OF ABORTION

God, our Merciful and Just Father, in the Holy Name of your Son Jesus Christ, and in the Power of your Holy Spirit, deliver us from the evil and insidious sin of abortion. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, give us the courage to defend life from its natural conception in the womb to its natural end. Heavenly Father, in the Holy Name of Jesus, restore our hearts and minds to defend the innocent lives growing in the wombs of their mothers. In the Holy Name of Jesus, cast into Hell Satan and all his evil spirits who roam throughout this world seeking the ruin of souls! Mary, Most Holy Mother of God, Mother of Jesus, and Spouse of the Holy Spirit, crush the head of the ancient serpent, the devil! The United States of America is consecrated to your Immaculate Conception; pray for us and protect us! Guide our fickle hearts through this valley of tears and bolster your children to fight with you. Dearest and most beautiful Mother, lead us into battle as we carry this heavy cross of abortion, and may we lay down our lives for its immediate end! Jesus, we trust in you! Jesus, we trust in you! Jesus, we trust in you! Amen.

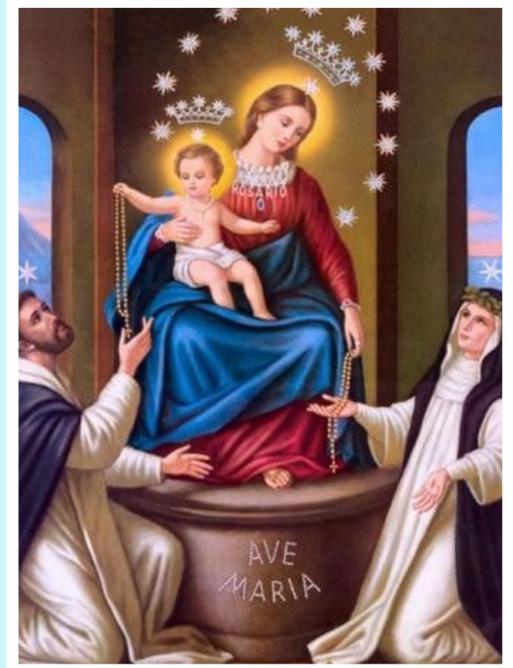
54-Day Miracle Rosary Novena

From August 15 to October 7

Queen of Peace Media, spearheaded by Fr. James Blount and Fr. Tony Blount (brothers), is asking **all Catholics to join in praying this miraculous novena, beginning on the Feast of the Assumption on August 15 and continuing through the Feast of the Holy Rosary on October 7.**

PETITION: From August 15 to September 10, pray the Rosary in PETITION for the intention of peace and blessings for our country, especially surrounding the November Presidential election, and that there will be no violence or civil unrest.

THANKSGIVING: From September 11 to October 7, pray the Rosary in THANKSGIVING, believing the favor was already granted. For more information, go to www.QueenofPeaceMedia.com (link button on e-blast cover). On that site, you can download a calendar to help you keep track of your rosaries.



HISTORY OF THE 54-DAY MIRACULOUS ROSARY NOVENA:

On March 3, 1884 (33 years before the Fatima apparitions), a young girl named **Fortuna Agrelli** was graced with an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary and given this special devotion which she passed onto others. At the time, young Fortuna was ill with three separate incurable diseases and her doctors had given up on her case, saying it was hopeless. In desperation, the young girl and her family began praying the Rosary. Our Lady appeared to the girl, sitting upon a high throne, surrounded by luminous figures, holding the Divine Child on Her lap, and in Her hand a Rosary. The sick girl greeted the Blessed Virgin with the following words: “Queen of the Holy Rosary, be gracious to me, restore me to health! I have already prayed to Thee in a novena, O Mary, but have not yet experienced Thy aid. I am so anxious to be cured!” □ “Child,” responded the Blessed Virgin, “you have invoked me by various titles and have always obtained favors from me. Now, since you have called me by that title so pleasing to me, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, I can no longer refuse the favor you petition; for this name is most precious and dear to me. Make three novenas of the Rosary, and you shall obtain all.” Once more, the Queen of the Holy Rosary appeared to the young girl and said, “Whoever desires to obtain favors from Me should make three novenas of the prayers of the Rosary in Petition, and three novenas in Thanksgiving.” Obeying Our Lady’s instructions, the young girl was healed and restored to perfect health.

54-Day Rosary Novena: This novena consists of praying five decades of the Rosary (one set of mysteries) each day for twenty-seven days in petition; then immediately five decades each day for an additional twenty-seven days in thanksgiving, regardless of whether or not the request has been granted yet. To do the novena properly, one must pray the Rosary for 54 consecutive days, without missing a day, and must pray the particular Mystery indicated for that day following the correct sequence. The first day of the novena always begins with the Joyful Mysteries (regardless of what day of the week the novena is started); the second day, the Sorrowful Mysteries are prayed; and the third day of the novena, the Glorious Mysteries are prayed. The fourth day of the novena begins again with the Joyful Mysteries and continues on in that sequence throughout the 54 days of the novena. Because this novena was given by Our Lady in 1884, it does not include the Luminous Mysteries. As an option, however, you may pray the Luminous Mysteries for a personal intention on Thursdays. For more information about this particular Rosary devotion and for the prayers that go with each mystery, go to the website: <http://www.54daynovena.com/Fifty%20Four%20Day%20Novena.pdf> (link on the e-blast cover).



Intro/Concluding Prayers for the 54-Day Rosary Novena

During the 27 days of **petition**, before praying the Creed, the Our Father, the three Hail Mary's, and the Glory Be, pray: Hail, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, my Mother Mary, hail! At thy feet I humbly kneel to offer thee a Crown of Roses, **(INSERT HERE from box below for the particular set of mysteries you are praying)**... recalling to thee a holy mystery; each ten bound together with my petition for a particular grace. O Holy Queen, dispenser of God's graces, and Mother of all who invoke thee! Thou canst not look upon my gift and fail to see its binding. As thou receivest my gift, so wilt thou receive my petition; from thy bounty thou wilt give me the favor I so earnestly and trustingly seek. I despair of nothing that I ask of thee. Show thyself my Mother!

During the 27 days of **thanksgiving**, before praying the Creed, the Our Father, the three Hail Mary's, and the Glory Be, pray: Hail, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, my Mother Mary, hail! At thy feet I gratefully kneel to offer thee a Crown of Roses, **(INSERT HERE from box below for the particular set of mysteries you are praying)**... each bud recalling to thee a holy mystery; each ten bound together with my petition for a particular grace. O Holy Queen, dispenser of God's graces, and Mother of all who invoke thee! Thou canst not look upon my gift and fail to see its binding. As thou receivest my gift, so wilt thou receive my thanksgiving; from thy bounty thou hast given me the favor I so earnestly and trustingly sought. I despaired not of what I asked of thee, and thou hast truly shown thyself my Mother.



Insert the italicized words from below into each space highlighted in red above:

JOYFUL: ...*snow white buds to remind thee of thy joys, each bud...*(...recalling to thee...)

SORROWFUL: ...*blood-red roses to remind thee of the Passion of thy Divine Son, with Whom thou didst so fully partake of its bitterness, each rose...* (...recalling to thee...)

GLORIOUS: ...*full-blown white roses, tinged with the red of the Passion, to remind thee of thy glories, fruits of the sufferings of thy Son and thee, each rose...* (...recalling to thee...)

After each decade of each Rosary mystery, following the Fatima prayer, add the following prayer to obtain the virtue that is personified in the mystery (different for each mystery):

JOYFUL

ANNUNCIATION: I bind these snow-white buds with a petition for the virtue of **HUMILITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

VISITATION: I bind these snow-white buds with a petition for the virtue of **CHARITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

NATIVITY: I bind these snow-white buds with a petition for the virtue of **DETACHMENT FROM THE WORLD** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

PRESENTATION: I bind these snow-white buds with a petition for the virtue of **PURITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

FINDING OF THE CHILD JESUS: I bind these snow-white buds with a petition for the virtue of **OBEDIENCE TO THE WILL OF GOD** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

SORROWFUL

AGONY IN THE GARDEN: I bind these blood-red roses with a petition for the virtue of **RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

SCOURGING: I bind these blood-red roses with a petition for the virtue of **MORTIFICATION** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

CROWNING WITH THORNS: I bind these blood-red roses with a petition for the virtue of **HUMILITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

CARRYING OF THE CROSS: I bind these blood-red roses with a petition for the virtue of **PATIENCE IN ADVERSITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

CRUCIFIXION: I bind these blood-red roses with a petition for the virtue of **LOVE OF OUR ENEMIES** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

GLORIOUS

RESURRECTION: I bind these full-blown roses with a petition for the virtue of **FAITH** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

ASCENSION: I bind these full-blown roses with a petition for the virtue of **HOPE** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: I bind these full-blown white roses with a petition for the virtue of **CHARITY** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

ASSUMPTION OF MARY: I bind these full-blown white roses with a petition for the virtue of **FINAL PERSEVERANCE** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

CORONATION OF MARY IN HEAVEN: I bind these full-blown white roses with a petition for the virtue of **TRUE DEVOTION TO THEE** and humbly lay this bouquet at thy feet.

