

OUR LIFE, OUR SWEETNESS, AND OUR HOPE

Reflections on the Rosary



COMPILED BY WOMEN RELIGIOUS
IN THE DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Please pray for all the women religious serving in our diocese:

Adorers of the Holy Cross
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia
Daughters of Saint Paul
Dominican Nuns, Saint Dominic's Monastery
Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia
Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist
Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
Handmaids of Reparation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Poor Clare Nuns, Mary, Mother of the Church Monastery
Poor Sisters of Saint Joseph
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
Sisters of Our Lady of La Salette
Sisters of Saint Joseph
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

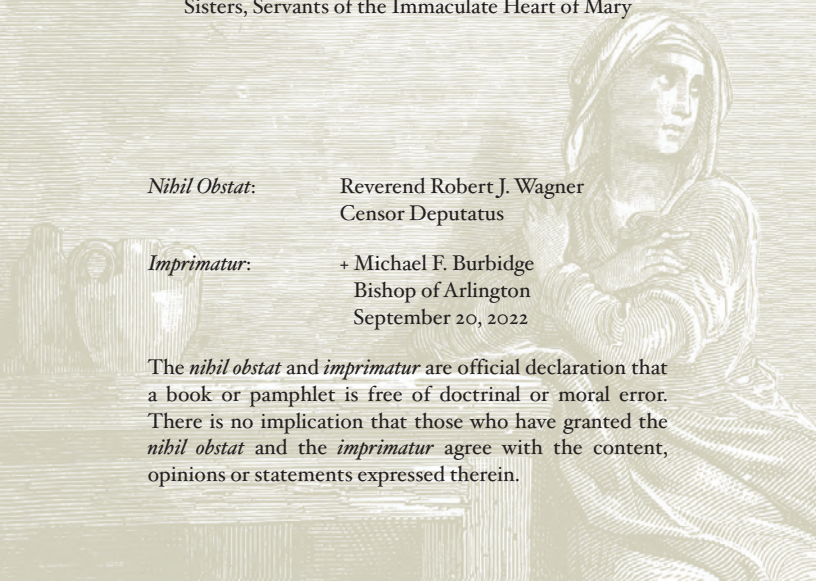
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Reverend Robert J. Wagner
Censor Deputatus

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Bishop of Arlington
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In the second year of preparation for the diocesan jubilee, our theme is “Rejoice.” We celebrate the blessings of God as Our Lady did in her *Magnificat* and ask her to lead us in following Him.

To assist our prayer in this Marian year, the Women Religious of the Diocese of Arlington have written a collection of reflections for each mystery of the rosary. The Sisters are happy to share this role of spiritual motherhood, praying for the diocese and leading the faithful toward deeper prayer.

The rosary is a prayer based in Scripture. The Lord’s Prayer and the greetings of the Archangel Gabriel and of Elizabeth to Our Lady provide the text for the vocal prayers of the Our Father and the Hail Mary. Along with the vocal prayers, when praying the rosary we reflect in our hearts upon the mysteries revealed in Scripture. We ponder the lives of Jesus and Mary and relate them to our own lives.

Please join us in using this booklet to pray for all the people of the diocese—Catholic and non-Catholic—and for the many diocesan ministries included among the intentions for each decade. As we prepare for our diocesan jubilee, may Our Lady draw everyone in our diocese closer to her Son.



PRAYING THE ROSARY

How to Pray the Rosary

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Holding the Crucifix, say the Apostles' Creed.
[The opening Our Father is offered for the Holy Father and the first 3 Hail Marys for an increase in Faith, Hope and Love]
3. On the first bead, say an Our Father.
4. Say one Hail Mary on each of the next three beads.
5. Say the Glory Be.
6. For each of the five decades, announce the Mystery (perhaps followed by a brief reading from Scripture) then say the Our Father.
7. While fingering each of the ten beads of the decade, next say ten Hail Marys while meditating on the Mystery. Then say a Glory Be.
8. (After finishing each decade, some say the following prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of your mercy.)
9. After saying the five decades, say the Hail, Holy Queen, followed by this dialogue and prayer:
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 while meditating on these mysteries of the most holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Conclude the rosary with the Sign of the Cross.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;
blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Glory Be (The Doxology)

Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

The Hail Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
to you we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy toward us;
and after this, our exile,
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.



Five Decades

5. Glory Be

4. Hail Mary on 3 Beads

3. Our Father

2. Apostles' Creed

1. Sign of the Cross

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

*The five Joyful Mysteries are traditionally
prayed on Mondays, Saturdays, and, during
the season of Advent, on Sundays.*



Fra Angelico, *Virgin Mary Annunciate* (1431–1433)

THE ANNUNCIATION

*Intention: For our Bishop and all in positions of leadership
in our diocese*

“Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word’” (Lk 1:38). Mary’s yes at the Annunciation is both inspiring and intimidating. It inspires us because it awakens our own desire to say yes to God at every moment with all of our being. At the same time it intimidates us, because it is radical, risky, and scary to say yes to God at every moment. In the Annunciation we see Mary experiencing all these feelings, too. She feels the fear and the risk—and in the midst of it all, she says yes. May Mary intercede for us, for our Bishop, and for all in positions of leadership in our diocese, that each day we may say a deeper yes to God, who says a profound yes to us in the Incarnation.

Sister Emily Beata Marsh, FSP
Daughters of Saint Paul



THE VISITATION

Intention: For expectant mothers and for all pro-life ministries and initiatives in the diocese

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit” (Lk 1:41). Mary, though pregnant, traveled with haste to visit and help Elizabeth in her sixth month of pregnancy. Upon Mary’s greeting, the infant in Elizabeth’s womb leaped for joy recognizing Jesus the Son of God in Mary’s womb. Elizabeth, joyous and humbled in the presence of the mother of the Lord, exclaimed “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” Like Mary, we are called to bring Jesus to all, in faith, humility, love, service and joy. In this mystery, let us pray: for all expectant mothers, for an ineffable joy of holy motherhood; for all in pro-life ministries, to be filled with the Holy Spirit and fervor in preserving the sanctity of life.

Sister Aniliza P. Juan, snds & Sister Leonida E. Eguilos, snds
Sisters of Our Lady of La Salette



Juan Bautista Maino, *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1615–1620)

THE NATIVITY

Intention: For those experiencing poverty or homelessness in our diocese and the ministries that serve them

“He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him” (Jn 1:11). His own received him not, but the joy of this night could not be contained. God sent his angels into the hedgerows; and simple shepherds hastened to answer the invitation to see an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes. The Savior is found, laid in a borrowed manger. From the day of his birth the Son of Man will have nowhere to lay his head. God’s kingdom is not of this world, and those who are considered lowly and despised are privileged to hear the message of angels. The shepherds return and proclaim the joy of the Gospel to all the people. Jesus, you chose to be poor among the poor. Help me to be humble and to know my own poverty, so that I can also serve as one who is poor among the poor.

The Poor Clare Nuns
Mary, Mother of the Church Monastery



Philippe de Champaigne, *The Presentation of the Temple* (1648)

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

Intention: For religious men and women in our diocese and for those in our diocese who are discerning religious life

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come’” (Rev 22:17). At the dawn of each week—and each day, if we will—we enter God’s house and place our gifts before the altar. Like Joseph and Mary, we offer the turtledoves of the poor: weak wings and lisping song, faltering efforts and feeble prayer. Like Simeon and Anna, we beg for the mercy of our Savior. Come, Lord Jesus! Let us embrace your word. Allow us, though unworthy, to cradle your body within ours. Shed your light upon us—especially on those dedicated to your service and consecrated for your praise. Through your Mother’s prayers, draw many young people to commit their lives to you. She presented you in your Father’s temple; may she present these sons and daughters too, that they may be signs of hope and living tabernacles of your love.

Dominican Nuns
Saint Dominic’s Monastery



Paolo Veronese, *Christ Among the Doctors* (1548)

THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE

Intention: For all in our diocese who suffer from anxiety or depression and the ministries supporting them; for all youth and youth ministries

“[They] looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers” (Lk 2:44–47). As we pray this decade of the rosary, we contemplate Mary and Joseph who are frantically searching for Jesus. They are anxious about their lost son. In this mystery, we pray for all people who suffer anxiety and depression, and all who minister to those who suffer with these afflictions. We pray also for all of our young people and for youth ministers. May the Holy Family be a source of consolation and peace of mind for all.

Sister Judith Gebelein, FSE
Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

*The five Luminous Mysteries are traditionally
prayed on Thursdays.*



Perugino, *Baptism of Christ* (1498–1500)

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST IN THE JORDAN

Intention: For all in RCIA in our diocese and those supporting them, for all families preparing for the Baptism of their children

“Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. And a voice came from the heavens, ‘You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased’” (Mk 1:9, 11). Jesus’ public ministry began with an experience of the Father’s love. From there, Jesus went out and healed, preached and proclaimed the Kingdom of God, so that everyone was invited to discover their own belovedness as children of the Father. Jesus’ baptism brought him close to all of the baptized who have come to know their belovedness through God’s gift of forgiveness and faith. We pray for those adults preparing to enter the Church through RCIA, and for parents preparing for the baptism of children; may they know the depth of God’s love for them and rejoice in being invited into the family of the Father.

Sister Stephanie Gabriel Tracy, IHM
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, *The Wedding Feast at Cana* (1819)

THE WEDDING FEAST AT CANA

Intention: For those in our diocese preparing for marriage; for faithfulness in marriage and family life and ministries supporting families

“[T]here was a wedding in Cana in Galilee” (Jn 2:1). Our Lord works His first public miracle at a wedding. Throughout salvation history, God speaks of His covenant relationship with His people as a marriage. The Baptist and Our Lord Himself speak of Jesus as the Bridegroom. Revelation speaks of heaven as the wedding feast of the Lamb. In this mystery, we pray for those called to marriage; for mothers, fathers, children and the holiness of families. May we forgive as He so often forgave His beloved people, Israel. Like Jesus, may we lay down our lives as a total gift. As at Cana, may He, through the intercession of His Mother, bless our humble offering, making it the richest, rarest delight, poured forth in abundance, that we may rejoice together forever at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb.

Sister Mary Sheila Maksim, OP
Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia



James Tissot, *The Sermon of the Beatitudes* (1886-1894)

JESUS' PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Intention: For students and for all Education and Communication institutions and ministries located within our diocese

“After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God: ‘This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel’” (Mk 1:14-15). Jesus’ preaching about the Kingdom of God is a trumpet blast ringing through all of history. Jesus’ coming lifts hearts with hope. In his mercy Jesus forgives sin, banishing death and darkness. Young and old, simple and sophisticated, serving on the world stage or in more quiet ways, each is called to conversion that we might be one with God forever. We pray for students and all serving in education and communications—may they live and proclaim the Gospel with courage. “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messengers who bring good news, announcing salvation” (cf. Is 52:7).

Sister Kathryn James Hermes, FSP
Daughters of Saint Paul



Raphael, *The Transfiguration* (1516–1520)

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Intention: For all who will go on retreat this year in the diocese and the ministries that support them

“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Mt 17:5). Jesus and his three disciples leave town and walk up to a quiet mountain spot. Undoubtedly, Peter, James and John have no clue as to what awaits them. Perhaps they are talking about what’s been happening in their ministry, when suddenly, something changes. Jesus isn’t the Jesus they know; he is transfigured as the Christ with his Father claiming him as his beloved Son. We are called to be transformed as well: to love those who annoy us; to be patient when we want to lash out; to listen and not interrupt; and to understand those who are different from us. In this mystery, let us pray for the grace of listening to Jesus that we might become more like Him, especially during our retreats and in our ministries.

Sister Dolores Dean, OSB
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia



Juan de Juanes, *The Last Supper* (1560)

THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

Intention: For all priests, seminarians, and those discerning priesthood in our diocese; for an increase of faith in the True Presence

“Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me.’ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you’” (Lk 22:19–20). In the fifth decade of the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, we pray and give thanks for the institution of the Most Holy Eucharist: the source and summit of our Faith. We pray for the ministerial priesthood and for those men contemplating this vocation; may each be given the graces to live and witness the love, integrity and dedication of Jesus.

Sister Judith Gebelein, FSE
Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

*The five Sorrowful Mysteries are traditionally
prayed on Tuesdays, Fridays, and, during the
season of Lent, on Sundays.*



Paolo Veronese, *The Agony in the Garden* (1584)

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

Intention: For those in the diocese experiencing temptation and for a renewed devotion to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

“After withdrawing about a stone’s throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, ‘Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done.’ He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently” (Lk 22:41–42,44). Jesus suffered out of love for us, and in his agony he showed us that prayer overcomes temptation. God is love, and we can pray to our heavenly Father to abide in and be strengthened by his love in the trials of our life. Jesus, I believe in your love for me, and I desire to love you by keeping your commandments. Help me to pray in temptation, and to seek your forgiveness and strength to sin no more in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Poor Clare Nuns
Mary, Mother of the Church Monastery



Caravaggio, *The Flagellation of Christ* (1607)

THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR

Intention: For those in the diocese undergoing surgery or treatment and for all health institutions and ministries located in our diocese

“So Pilate...released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified” (Mk 15:15). After a sleepless night, and several mock trials, Jesus hears Pilate’s sentence of death, and is led away to be scourged. Jesus endured the excruciating pain without comfort or relief; there was no escape. “[B]y his wounds we were healed” (Is 53:5). People undergoing surgery or long-term medical treatment often suffer greatly, sometimes alone and without much relief. They live in hope that their pain will lead to healing. Those who accompany them in these situations can bring relief in the midst of an inescapable circumstance. May our prayers give the sick the strength and hope to endure, and may all healthcare workers be channels of mercy, compassion and hope.

Sister Stephanie Gabriel Tracy, IHM
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



Anthony van Dyck, *The Crowning with Thorns* (1618–1620)

THE CROWNING WITH THORNS

Intention: For those in the diocese suffering from discrimination, persecution, or abuse and for the ministries that support them

“Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’” (Mt 27:29). Jesus was spit upon, derided, and whipped, but this was not enough for His tormentors. They took their cruelty to an excruciating level, pressing a crown of long, sharp thorns on Jesus’ head. Jesus silently accepted this agony for us. Many of us experience our own crown of thorns: our dignity is shattered, our courage fails, our will crumbles, our thoughts bring fear, all the good we want to do is diminished. As we wear our crown of thorns, we look to Jesus, and pray for strength and perseverance for all who suffer from discrimination, persecution, or abuse, and for all who work to support them and ease their pain.

Sister Dolores Dean, OSB
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia



Raphael, *Christ Falling on the Way to Calvary* (1515–1516)

THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS

Intention: For members of our diocese serving in the military and for those holding public office in our diocese

“Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother” (Jn 19:25). After Pilate condemned Jesus, the storm of confusion and agony surrounding Jesus must have increased to staggering intensity. He now had to make his final journey to Golgotha, alone and without pity from those around him. Until, as tradition tells us, he met his mother. The sight of her must surely have given him the courage to continue. In our own time, our military personnel and their families are often separated by distance and by the heavy burden of duty. Those holding public office carry crosses that very few can truly understand. May Mary’s faithful, prayerful presence accompany them, and us, as we carry the crosses of our lives. May she help us with the same courage and trust that she offered to her Son.

Sister Stephanie Gabriel Tracy, IHM
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary



Giotto, *Crucifixion* (1303-1305)

THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH

Intention: For the those near death in our diocese, for the ministries supporting them, for a strengthening of faith in their families

“[B]ehold, your son....Behold, your mother” (Jn 19:26–27). How often we invoke Our Lady, asking her to guard our hearts and guide our steps all the days of our life. “Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.” The rosary thus becomes a continual gesture toward our journey’s end: through this valley of tears, the shadow of death, and up to the gates of eternal life. Mary reminds us that we do not make this journey first nor do we bear its grief alone. Jesus shares our sufferings, even unto death, and she accompanies him every step of the way. O Mary, your heart knew piercing sorrow, yet also unwavering trust. Pray for our brothers and sisters approaching the hour of death, and for all who are walking and watching by their side. Be to them a mother; lead them to Jesus’ rest.

Dominican Nuns
Saint Dominic’s Monastery

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

*The five Glorious Mysteries are traditionally
prayed on Wednesdays and, outside the seasons
of Advent and Lent, on Sundays.*



Era Angelico, *Touch Me Not* (1442)

THE RESURRECTION

Intention: For a renewed spirit of joy and evangelization in our diocese

But Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping” (Jn 20:11). After the shock of the crucifixion, the one solace left to Mary Magdalene seems cruelly stolen away when she finds the tomb empty. She alerts the apostles; after they depart, she remains. Her heart is tired and utterly broken. Without knowing where He is, she has no place to go. Her world is turned upside down when Jesus Himself appears to her, alive, and calls her by name, “Mary.” She cries out to Him, clings to Him, and is sent by Him to be a witness. Her heart bursts into a flame of joy and zeal as she runs to tell others, “I have seen the Lord!” In this mystery, let us pray for a renewed spirit of joy in our diocese, that we, too, may be witnesses of the good news that Jesus is alive.

Sister Mary Sheila Maksim, OP
Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia



Pacino di Bonaguida, *The Ascension of Christ* (detail) from the *Laudario of Sant'Agnese* (1340)

THE ASCENSION

Intention: For those in our diocese who are searching for meaning or faith, and for the return of those who have fallen away

“Then he led them [out] as far as Bethany, raised his hands, and blessed them. As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven” (Lk 24:50–51). Jesus was lifted up before the eyes of the apostles. Now he sits at God’s right hand where he constantly makes intercession for us. After the Ascension, the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, and they were found in the temple constantly praising God. Jesus was taken from their sight, but the apostles were filled with faith and joy. They trusted in the words of the angel that Jesus would return. Jesus, I trust in you, and in your intercession for me in every moment of my life. Help me to have the faith and joy of the apostles and to constantly praise you.

The Poor Clare Nuns
Mary, Mother of the Church Monastery



Pacino di Bonaguida, *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* (detail) from the *Laudario of Sant'Agnese* (1340)

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Intention: For the communities who speak different languages in our diocese and the ministries who serve them

“When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind” (Acts 2:1–2). The disciples were an anguished, suffering, scared community, yet united together. A shared trust and love for one person is what drew this diverse community together. Jesus gave them the hope they waited for. The world tried to take that away, and our Blessed Mother and the apostles found themselves in the midst of a storm. Yet this was a storm that revived and renewed, giving courage and strength. The Holy Spirit came down upon a community troubled and worried, giving them life and joy. In this mystery, let us pray for the communities in our diocese who speak different languages and the ministries who serve them.

Sister Maria Gonzalez, PSSJ
Poor Sisters of Saint Joseph



Fra Angelico, *The Death and the Assumption of the Virgin* (1432)

THE ASSUMPTION

Intention: For building projects and all the temporal needs of the diocese, for those who oversee and provide for them

“Arise, my friend, my beautiful one, and come! For see, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone” (Songs 2:10–11). The Assumption is a mystery of fulfillment. Mary lived her entire life in a spirit of faith and trust, pain and acceptance, hope and wonder. Most likely, her final days were lived quietly and prayerfully until she slipped into the arms of her God. Like Mary, we live our chosen vocations as faithfully as possible, responding throughout our lives in love to the God who is infinite Love. We give to God all of our efforts regardless of whether they are successful, trusting that God can use our offerings. Let us pray that God will bless our building projects and all who oversee and provide for the temporal needs of our diocese.

Sister Dolores Dean, OSB
Benedictine Sisters of Virginia



Agnolo Gaddi, *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels* (1390)

THE CORONATION OF MARY

Intention: For a renewed love for the liturgy and for all liturgical ministers and musicians in our diocese

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior” (Lk 1:46–47). When we are caught up in an experience of delight or true joy, we tend to break out into song. The same was true for Mary. Her song, the Magnificat, was an outward expression of her inward joy. After her Assumption, Mary was crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth, and therefore, her song of joy is not only repeated on earth but echoes in heaven as well. As we contemplate the delight and joy that permeates the song of endless praise in heaven, let us pray for a renewed love for the liturgy. We also pray for all liturgical ministers and musicians in our diocese. May our celebration of the Sacred Liturgy express the joy of redemption that has come to us from God, our Savior.

Sister Ann Dominic Mahowald, OP
Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia

Made in commemoration of the
50TH JUBILEE *of the*
DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON



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Sources:

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