

*M*ovena  
2024

# NOVENA

## MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

*fanter  
Vero*

### MARY'S SECRET



Novena in preparation for the Feast of Mary Help of Christians

**Audiovisual Work: 9 videos**

Inspired by the writings of **Luigi Maria Grignion de Montfort** with the Rector Major's commentary

**Coordination:** Pierluigi Lanotte

**Texts:** Francesco Marcoccio, Luigina S.

**Comment:** Rettor Maggiore dei Salesiani don Ángel Fernández Artime

**Testimonies** Coordination: José Luis Muñoz - Rafael Bejarano

by the groups of the Salesian Family

Suor Teresita Ferretti - Argentina

David Tagger - Argentina

Leandro Aballay - Argentina

Luis Chacón - Stati Uniti

Al-Ifrad Omar Lincoln - Gebramel Garay - Filippine

Ledis Tatiana Salazar Hernández- Colombia

Ibrahima Diop - Spagna

Gabriela Vázquez - Argentina

Santino Niz Luciano - Argentina

**Translations:**

Julian Fox (EN), Antenor Velho (PR), Placide Carava (FR), José Luis Muñoz (ES)

**Speakerage e dubbing** Coordination: Piero Giordano

Italiano: Fabrizio Castellano, Elena Sorgato, Francesco Benedetto, Patrizia Mottola, Alex Rigotti.

Portoghese: Bianca Fraccalvieri, Silvonei Protze

Francese: Juliette Vigliotti, Bernard Moutounet

Spagnolo: Mercedes De La Torre, Raul Cabrera

Inglese: Christopher Jones, Alex, Rebecca Viora

**Graphic design:** Pierluigi Lanotte

**Footage and photographs:** Giacomo Di Gravina

**Computer Animation:** Diego De Angelis

**Video editing:** Pierluigi Lanotte

**Curated by IMEComunicazione srl**



M A I D A T A

Don  
Kachib  
ELN

15

MARIA - A U S I L I A T R I C E



# Mary model of holiness

*Mary is Mother and Teacher, she supports us so that we can “fly” on our way to holiness. In this call which is simple and accessible to all, the difference lies in that “extra push” that comes from “true devotion”, that is, the exchange of effective and affective love with Mary which encourages us to grow continuously in the love of God and neighbour. Mary is the most perfect and holy model.*

## Rector Major's comment

Dear members of the Salesian Family and young people, in this novena to Mary Help of Christians I would like to give you a secret of holiness, indeed Mary's secret.

4

This secret is not something inaccessible or reserved for a select few. It is something that we can experience in our everyday actions, in the most ordinary things of life. It is a gift, a grace, that we can ask directly from the Holy Spirit and from Mary herself.

Yes, God wants you to become holy, to reach the fullness of life in this life, and to be glorious beside him in eternity. Holiness is not a privilege reserved for the few, but a universal call, a vocation for each of us. This means that every thought, every word, every action, every suffering, every aspiration must be directed toward God.

There's no reason to be afraid. If you allow God to dwell in you, his love will transform your life into a masterpiece of holiness. The path to holiness is marked by the Gospel of Jesus, who asks us for humility of heart, constant prayer, self-denial, trust in Divine Providence and obedience to God's will.





may 15

It is not about volunteer efforts or self-improvement, but rather about welcoming God's grace and help with humility and trust. And to do this, it is essential to find Mary! It is Mary who guides us, accompanies us along this path of holiness.

So, dear friends, do not be afraid to aspire to holiness. Open your hearts to God's grace, let yourselves be shaped by his love and entrust yourselves to the motherly intercession of Mary Help of Christians. May this novena be a moment of deep reflection and sincere conversion for us, so that we can walk safely on the path of holiness.



## Testimony | suor Teresita Ferretti

*Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube*

### Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, wise woman and Jesus' first Disciple,  
who in the silence of your heart  
overshadowed by the Holy Spirit  
you have found grace with God and have begotten the Saviour in your  
womb,  
grant us to understand that the path of holiness  
is a universal call  
to which everyone is invited to respond.  
Open our hearts to God's Grace  
So that our thoughts, our motivations and our daily actions  
are all directed towards God. Amen

**When people asked for some special grace Don Bosco used to say:**

*"If you wish to obtain graces from the Blessed Virgin, make a Novena" (MB IX, 289). This novena, according to him, had to take place if possible "in church, with lively faith" as an act of fervent homage to the Eucharist. According to Don Bosco, for the novena to be efficacious, the dispositions of the soul should be as follows:*

- Do not put your hope in human forces but have faith in God.
- The request should be made to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, fount of grace, kindness and blessing, and with trust in the power of Mary whom God wishes to be honored on earth in this temple.
- Always add the intention "Thy will be done" and the condition "if it is for the good of the soul of the person being prayed for".

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.

**Personal Conditions required:**

*Approach the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist.*

*Give an offering or do some work to support the apostolate, preferably on behalf of youth.*

*Renew your faith in Jesus in the Eucharist and devotion to Mary Help of Christians.*







# Mary, mother of Humility and Love.

*"She did everything", Don Bosco said at the end of his earthly life as he thought about all he had experienced and done for his boys. This priest and educator sees Our Lady bursting into his life in a charismatic and very real way, such that it can be said of him as it was said of Mary herself: "he pondered in his heart" the Mary-inspired events that happened in his life.*

## 8 Rector Major's comment

Dear friends,

yesterday we said that we must find Mary. But why does God want this? Why do we need to go through her? Why does Don Bosco say that "she did everything"? Let us be helped by Scripture and Tradition:

- Mary has found grace with God, she is "full of grace" because she gave her life to Jesus who is the author of all grace;
- God has chosen her as the treasurer and keeper of God's gifts. This means that every gift passes through her hands. Remember at Cana in Galilee: the bride and groom would not have had a good celebration without the intervention of Mary's concrete "help";
- Each child is born of a father and a mother, and in the same way each of us has God for a father and Mary for a mother;



may 16

- Since the Holy Spirit formed Jesus in Mary's womb, in the same way, Jesus being formed in us also happens thanks to Mary's intervention;
- Mary, like every mother, has nourished her son Jesus, even today she continues to nourish us, her children;

Therefore, when Mary lives beside us, her virtues arise in us, in particular humility and love.



**Testimony** | David Tagger  
*Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube*

## Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, woman of simple and pure heart who fulfilled the Will of the Father in silent hiddenness and with exquisite humility and prudent shrewdness you intervened with your Son when happiness fell from the faces of the bride and groom at Cana, make us attentive to the needs of suffering humanity and of those who live beside us.

May our hearts overflow with joy and gladness to radiate peace and serenity where tension and conflict, pain and loneliness reign. Amen

## **When people asked for some special grace Don Bosco used to say:**

*"If you wish to obtain graces from the Blessed Virgin, make a Novena" (MB IX, 289). This novena, according to him, had to take place if possible "in church, with lively faith" as an act of fervent homage to the Eucharist. According to Don Bosco, for the novena to be efficacious, the dispositions of the soul should be as follows:*

- Do not put your hope in human forces but have faith in God.
- The request should be made to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, fount of grace, kindness and blessing, and with trust in the power of Mary whom God wishes to be honored on earth in this temple.
- Always add the intention "Thy will be done" and the condition "if it is for the good of the soul of the person being prayed for".

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

10

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.

### **Personal Conditions required:**

*Approach the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist.*

*Give an offering or do some work to support the apostolate, preferably on behalf of youth.*

*Renew your faith in Jesus in the Eucharist and devotion to Mary Help of Christians.*





# MARTIN



## MARTIN

I have a dream  
 that one day  
 this nation will  
 stand up  
 and be true  
 to its principles  
 of justice  
 and equality  
 for all  
 men and  
 women  
 here and  
 abroad  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the sons of  
 former slaves  
 and the sons  
 of former  
 slaveholders  
 will be able  
 to sit at the  
 same table  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the state of  
 Mississippi  
 will be as free  
 as the state  
 of Ohio  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 every valley  
 shall be exalted  
 and every hill  
 and mountain  
 shall be made  
 low  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the power of  
 love will be  
 greater than  
 the power of  
 hate  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 we will be able  
 to live together  
 in brotherly  
 love  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 all men will be  
 created equal

I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the sons of  
 former slaves  
 and the sons  
 of former  
 slaveholders  
 will be able  
 to sit at the  
 same table  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the state of  
 Mississippi  
 will be as free  
 as the state  
 of Ohio  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 every valley  
 shall be exalted  
 and every hill  
 and mountain  
 shall be made  
 low  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the power of  
 love will be  
 greater than  
 the power of  
 hate  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 we will be able  
 to live together  
 in brotherly  
 love  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 all men will be  
 created equal

I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the sons of  
 former slaves  
 and the sons  
 of former  
 slaveholders  
 will be able  
 to sit at the  
 same table  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the state of  
 Mississippi  
 will be as free  
 as the state  
 of Ohio  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 every valley  
 shall be exalted  
 and every hill  
 and mountain  
 shall be made  
 low  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the power of  
 love will be  
 greater than  
 the power of  
 hate  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 we will be able  
 to live together  
 in brotherly  
 love  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 all men will be  
 created equal

I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the sons of  
 former slaves  
 and the sons  
 of former  
 slaveholders  
 will be able  
 to sit at the  
 same table  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the state of  
 Mississippi  
 will be as free  
 as the state  
 of Ohio  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 every valley  
 shall be exalted  
 and every hill  
 and mountain  
 shall be made  
 low  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 the power of  
 love will be  
 greater than  
 the power of  
 hate  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 we will be able  
 to live together  
 in brotherly  
 love  
 I have a dream  
 that one day  
 all men will be  
 created equal

# 17

# Mary, guides us on our journey of faith.

*It would be really difficult to underestimate the importance of Our Lady in the life, spirit and work of Don Bosco. He is one of those saints who best highlighted the figure of Mary as a central and not marginal element of God's plan. He demonstrated with factual evidence that devotion to Mary is an essential and not a secondary dimension of faith. He did not do it at a theoretical, reflective, theological or spiritual level, but at a practical, testimonial, educative and pastoral level.*

12

## Rector Major's comment

Let us reflect together on the words of our beloved Pope Francis, expressed in the apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate*: "To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious." We often find ourselves thinking that holiness is a privilege reserved for those who can withdraw from the world to devote themselves entirely to prayer, but this is not the case. Each of us, in the context of our daily lives, is called to live with love and to offer our own witness of faith.

The path to holiness is the one indicated by Jesus, but along the way his mother Mary also accompanies us. She is the living form of God, the perfect model that shows us how to conform to him. Mary is the



may 17

great mould of God through which the Holy Spirit moulded the Man-God, Jesus himself. In the child Jesus, in fact, both human and divine nature are united. Those who entrust themselves to Mary and let themselves be shaped by the Holy Spirit acquire a unique beauty and holiness. It is surely the fastest and quickest way to holiness.

For us members of the Salesian Family, it is important to remember that the Holy Spirit revealed to Don Bosco the secret to knowing Mary. She is like a “secret garden” from which we draw the water of grace in abundance from the “sealed fountain”, to be generously distributed to young people.

Mary does not hold back for herself, but always leads us to Jesus. She is the wonderful echo of God: when we cry “Mary!”, she replies “God!”

There’s one last point I would like to make. Finding Mary does not mean being exempt from crosses and suffering, rather Mary gives all her children a piece of that tree of life that is the cross of Jesus. Like a good mother with her baby faced with a bitter medicine, she tries to sweeten it with her presence. Thus Mary makes us sharers in her Son’s Cross.

May this teaching guide us on our journey of faith and inspire us to follow Mary’s example in the pursuit of holiness.



**Testimony** | Leandro Aballay  
*Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube*

13



# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, Temple of the Holy Spirit  
who always stood by your Son with  
tenderness and discretion  
do not abandon us in the trials of the journey, but  
take us by the hand and sustain us  
in the dark moments when faith falters.  
Lead us to Jesus, Source of Grace  
that we may draw Living Water in abundance from him  
to be generously distributed to young people to alleviate their  
suffering  
and give New Life to their hearts parched by addictions, ephemeral  
pleasure and loneliness. Amen

14

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy  
Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised  
every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short  
prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of,  
that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help,  
or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore  
with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of  
Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise  
not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear  
and grant my prayer. Amen.



18



MAGNIFICAT

# Mary, witness of God's love in the world.

*Mary is the living example of God's love for humanity. Through her maternal love, Mary shows everyone how God loves us and accompanies us in everyday life. By looking to Mary as a witness to our Heavenly Father's love, we can experience an ever deeper and more authentic relationship with God.*

16

## Rector Major's comment

Dear friends, here we are on our fourth day. We are almost halfway through our journey in the company of Mary. Today we take another step in understanding true devotion to Mary.

Our patron, St Francis de Sales, taught us that devotion is not simply an outward act, but rather a deep and authentic relationship with God. It is God himself who loves us first and who opens the channel of communication with us. And he did it through Mary, who gave the world the Saviour. Just as God became man through Mary, we too can draw closer to him through her, our heavenly Mother.

There are three degrees of devotion to Mary: the first consists of living an authentic Christian life, avoiding evil and praying to Mary occasionally; the second degree involves a deeper love, trust and





may 18

eneration for Mary, taking her as a model of life; finally, the third degree involves a total consecration to Mary and Jesus through her, doing everything with Mary, in Mary and for Mary.

We remember Saint Dominic Savio with affection, who entrusted himself completely to Mary by founding the Immaculate Conception Sodality, a gesture that inspired many other young people to follow him. This first group of young people consecrated to Mary then gave rise to the founding core group of Salesians, together with Don Bosco, thus creating the Salesian Society. Even in the meeting between Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello we can grasp the ardent desire to extend Mary's love to young women, which took shape in the institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

The experience in Valdocco and Mornese clearly shows us Mary's direct intervention in the life of Don Bosco, the young people and his collaborators, who gave themselves to her as her children. In all this we see the power and motherhood of Mary who, as a loving Mother, guides and protects her children along life's journey. May this journey of devotion to Mary bring us ever closer to Jesus and make us authentic witnesses of his love in the world.



**Testimony | Luis Chacón**  
Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube

17

## Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, woman of contemplation,  
witness of God's love for all his creatures,  
you who lived in deep relationship with the Lord,  
deliver us from the anxiety of needing 'to do' and the daily frenzy.  
Draw our educative communities to you by your example.  
We wish to consecrate ourselves to Jesus, your Son,  
so that with you, in you and for you  
we can understand the secret of "knowing how  
to spend time with Jesus"  
preserving the inner peace that makes us authentic,  
faithful and joyful believers  
as pregnant and generative wombs of vocations in the Church  
and in the Salesian Family. Amen

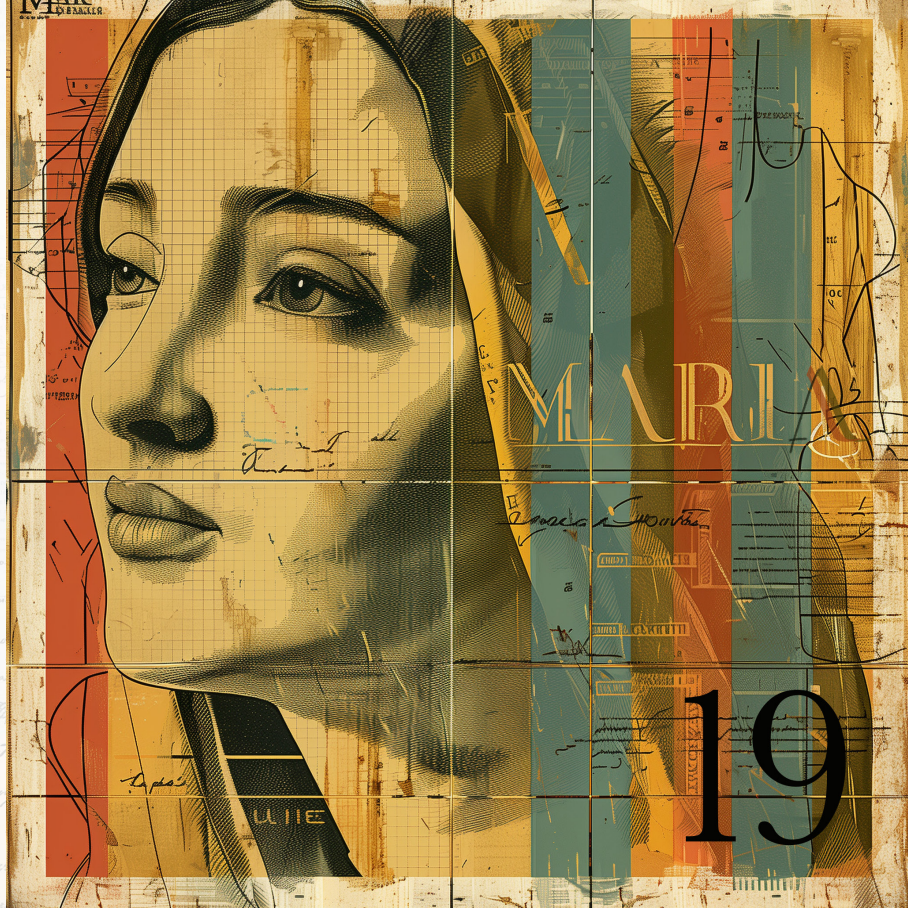
18

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.





MURRI

19

*Handwritten text*

*Handwritten signature*

*Handwritten text*

LIE

ARCHITECTURE  
L'ESSENCE

DESIGN



# Mary, in her total trust and abandonment.

*"If you follow her you will not get lost. If you pray to her you will not despair. If you think about her you will not make a mistake. Supported by her you will not fall. Protected by her you will not fear. Guided by her you will not get tired. Through her kindness you will get there ..."*  
*In Saint Bernard's words we see Mary chosen by God as the dispenser of all graces.*

## Rector Major's comment

20

Dear friends,  
the basis of true devotion to Mary lies at the beginning of our faith. When we received the grace of baptism we were immersed in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We belong to Jesus, we are consecrated to him through the Yes that Mary said to God's work.

Giving oneself to Jesus through the hands of Mary means imitating the gesture of the Heavenly Father, who gave us his Son precisely through Mary and continues to dispense his graces through her. This consecration to Jesus through Mary is equivalent to placing our works in Mary's hands, recognising her as an advocate and helper with Jesus, our mediator.



may 19

We learn from Mamma Margaret, who recommended Don Bosco to be all for Mary, trusting her completely. When we give ourselves totally to Mary, stripping ourselves of all our possessions and worries, she responds with infinite generosity, giving us much more than we can imagine.

This act of self-giving to Mary is also an exercise of charity towards our neighbour, as we make Mary the custodian of all that we are and do. It is a way of living our lives in complete dependence and entrustment to her, aware that she, as a Helper, will never abandon us.

A striking example of this total entrustment to Mary was given by St John Paul II, whose episcopal motto was "Totus Tuus" (All Yours), indicating his complete consecration to Mary. He experienced this relationship with Mary as a full dependence on her, without which he could not have accomplished anything. His life has been an extraordinary example of how this devotion to Mary can profoundly influence the course of history.

Let us therefore ask Mary Help of Christians, our heavenly Mother, to assist and help us along our journey of faith, so that we can give ourselves to her with total trust and abandonment.



**Testimony** | Al-Ifrad - Garay  
Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube

# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Universal Church,  
powerful help of those who trust in you and live the "Totus tuus"  
all of us who through Baptism have become children in the Son,  
surrender our lives entirely to you.

Give us to understand the human virtues that have made you great  
in the eyes of God, and make us capable of imitating them.

Never abandon us, most tender Mother

Assist us and accompany us on our journey of faith,  
sometimes shaken by the trials of each day.

Trusting in your help, place all our works in your hands.

Always be our advocate and intercede for humanity with the Father.

Amen

22

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy  
Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised  
every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short  
prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of,  
that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help,  
or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore  
with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of  
Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise  
not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear  
and grant my prayer. Amen.







# Mary, model of every Christian

*Mary calls people back to God's perspective, to look upwards, not to be overwhelmed by the illusory pressures of life that empty us of meaning and distance us from opening ourselves to the Mystery.*

*Her journey as a believing Woman ends in glory. In her, assumed in the fullness of her being, the full realisation of the creature renewed by grace is manifested; blessed because she has truly believed and because she has received in the totality of her person the redemption promised and accomplished by Christ for all human beings.*

24

## Rector Major's comment

True devotion to Mary consists in doing what we do with Mary, in Mary, and for Mary. It is not simply an isolated act of devotion, but a daily commitment to make ourselves available like Mary and entrust ourself to her to get to Jesus. As at Cana, where Mary became a mediatrix with Jesus to obtain the good wine, so we too are invited to pass through her to reach our Lord.

“With Mary” means taking Mary as a model for our actions, consulting her before acting, and allowing her to shape our intentions according to Jesus' will. Don Bosco recommended that young people see three Hail Marys every day, asking Mary to guide them in the salvation of their souls.



may 20

“In Mary” implies inner recollection as Mary did, keeping the Word of God in our hearts and making our prayer pass through her, the living tabernacle that carried the Lord Jesus in itself. Our prayer thus becomes more authentic and effective.

Finally, “for Mary” means renouncing our own love in order to give glory to God and honour him. Mary teaches us that this is possible and that we can live for Jesus by following his example of humility and dedication. If we, like the Apostle John, take her into our home, we will learn to live with her, to commit ourselves to her who will tell us how to live for Jesus, how to pray to the Father, how to serve our brothers and sisters.

May these reflections help us to live a more authentic and profound devotion to Mary, mother and model of every Christian.



**Testimony | Ibrahima Diop**  
Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube

25



# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, living Tabernacle,  
who made room in your womb for the Word,  
teach us to welcome and keep the Word in the depths  
of our hearts and put it into practice.

True woman, model of life for believers,  
give us a smile for every gesture of love that we are able to do  
capable of permeating those who live in inner sadness or  
anguished existential loneliness.

Free us from resignation in the face of humanity's suffering,  
false security, and the comforts that dull the soul.

Grant that, looking to you, we may learn to turn away from ourselves,  
to step out of ourselves  
to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need,  
especially the young. Amen

26

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.



# MARIA



Annal Jenge

# 21

Bine Please use  
xi Six Lk a hbi Trebor  
Das Ich Saize lerude d  
B. 1111 incesent' kuen'  
Gua die apbed: n d f  
solles. Das Book 10

# Mary, woman of HERE I AM!

*The “Yes” of Mary’s faith is like an exodus from her security, from her mental schemes so she can entrust herself to God’s action as he points out the way to achieve true freedom, true joy of the heart.*

*To believe is to entrust oneself freely and joyfully to God’s providential plan for history, like Mary of Nazareth.*

*Faith hen becomes an assent with which our mind and heart say their “yes” to God, confessing that Jesus is Lord. And this “yes” transforms life, opens the way to a fullness of meaning, makes it so new, rich in joy and reliable hope.*

28

## Rector Major’s comment

Dear young people and members of the Salesian Family,

Mary’s pure faith is a shining beacon in our life of faith. Her “here I am” was a perpetual commitment, lived in every moment of her life. Mary teaches us that in life there are not only joys and successes, but also apathy, distractions, boredom and aridity. Yet, from her faith we learn the precious “Amen,” the total acceptance of God’s will. Let’s say it together with her and in her!

In the digital age, we are often tempted by the idea of having everything immediately. But I urge you not to be discouraged if you do not immediately feel the presence of Mary in your inner life. A





may 21

fundamental Christian virtue is required: perseverance. Like Mary, stand firm under the cross, persist to the end. Your faithfulness even in small gestures will be rewarded with abundant joy and grace, because Mary is a fruitful virgin and makes Christ live in those who are available.

As Saint Paul says to the Galatians: My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you (Gal 4:19). With this beautiful expression he indicates, in the image of the birth of the Church, the generation of the form of Jesus in the believer. It is even more possible to apply this image to the Virgin Mary, who contributes, as she did during the incarnation, to the form of Jesus in each of us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Thus Mary is a Helper for each of us: because she enlightens the spirit with her pure faith, deepens the heart with her humility, expands and inflames it with her charity, purifies it with her purity, ennobles it and makes it great with her motherhood. I can wish each of you with Saint Ambrose: "May the soul of Mary be in each one to magnify the Lord, and may the spirit of Mary be in each one to rejoice in God."  
Mary...Mary ... Mary



**Testimony** | Ledis Tatiana Salazar  
Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube

29

# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, resilient and courageous woman who experienced God's silence, like Christ on Calvary, in docile obedience to the plan of Salvation for humanity, spread your mantle over us and all who suffer and do not turn away from us in our hour of trial and moments of darkness.

Teach us total acceptance of God's will and to carry our daily burdens with serenity, remaining steadfast beneath the Cross, faithful and persevering as you were.

Do not leave us when we feel lost or crushed by worries that we may, like you and with you, say "here I am" even amid life's indifference and moments of barrenness. Amen

30

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of, that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.





22



# Mary Help of Christians, mother of the Salesian Family

*Mary's physical motherhood confers an unlimited spiritual motherhood on her. She paves the way with her feminine ways whenever someone approaches her Son or is engaged in a real search, whether it be about faith, conversion or vocation. Her intervention goes almost unnoticed, taking place in the ways that are typical of a mother, but which are still extremely effective.*

*Don Bosco had no doubt about Mary's caring and boundless love, a love that embraces individual souls and the entire Church.*

32

## Rector Major's comment

We have reached the penultimate day of our novena, and our hearts are almost ready to celebrate the Feast of Mary Help of Christians. Today I would like to share with you some attitudes that can help us to ensure that the entire Salesian Family entrusts itself to Mary Help of Christians as Don Bosco did.

God came into the world the first time through Mary, in humiliation and nothingness. In the creed, which we recite every Sunday, we say that he will come a second time, to reign everywhere and judge the living and the dead. Let us ask the Lord to come into the world with the gift of his Easter Peace!



may 22

It would be nice if every member of the Salesian Family on May 24th gave themselves completely to the Lord Jesus through Mary's hands, receiving Communion and spending time in prayer. In preparation for the feast, everyone could perform an act of offering to the Lord, which could manifest itself in an act of mortification, almsgiving, pilgrimage, prayer, or any other action inspired by the Holy Spirit.

It would be wonderful to join forces with the entire Salesian Family in these days to implore from God, through the intercession of Mary, the gift of a passionate love for Jesus in the Eucharist, the source of all grace, action, change and salvation. Only Jesus can give us peace in the world and sanctify us and the young people who are entrusted to us.

Together we ask to become more aware of the real presence of Jesus in us consecrated persons, educators and in every member of the Salesian Family, because only he can truly speak to our life and transform it.

May these days of preparation for the feast bring us ever closer to the Heart of Jesus through Mary Help of Christians, our Mother and guide.



**Testimony** | Gabriela Vázquez

Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube

33

# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, caring woman with a merciful heart,  
contemplating your natural beauty  
comforted by your Motherly presence  
we, members of the Salesian Family,  
wish to hand ourselves over entirely to you.

Increase in us the passionate love for Jesus in the Eucharist,  
Source of Grace.

Receive and protect under your mantle, as you did at Valdocco,  
the young people entrusted to us,  
especially those trapped in the grip of frenzied pleasure,  
violence, addictions.

Touch their frailties with a Mother's caresses  
and heal their need for love

Support them on the path of life, and make each one  
of us tireless in sowing Love and Hope in their hearts. Amen

34

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy  
Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised  
every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short  
prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of,  
that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help,  
or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore  
with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of  
Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise  
not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear  
and grant my prayer. Amen.







23

นนา ท

# Mary, teacher of our life

*The importance of Mary as a teacher in Salesian spirituality is manifested in a very particular way in the story of the Saint John Bosco's dream at 9 years of age, that deeply marked him and guided him on his spiritual and pastoral journey throughout his life. It is Jesus who gives Don Bosco his Mother in the dream as an infallible Teacher and Guide. Mary Help of Christians continues to be a true Mother and Teacher for the entire Salesian Family and in all those circumstances where the charism of our Father Don Bosco, a gift of the Spirit, has taken root.*

36

## Rector Major's comment

We have come to the end of our novena, and it is time to reflect on the deep meaning of the Feast we are about to celebrate. The title of Mary Help of Christians, as Don Bosco taught us, finds its biblical foundation in the episode of Mary beneath Jesus' Cross. At that crucial moment, as Jesus offered his life to the Father for us, he entrusted Mary to the beloved disciple for help and, at the same time, asked the beloved disciple to take Mary with him.

This is what Helper means: she is our help in the most painful moments, she is a travel companion in life, she is the hidden treasure, she is the precious pearl. If the Holy Spirit has planted in our Salesian Family the true tree of life, that is, the presence of Mary in the life of Don Bosco and in ours, each of us is called to take every care to cultivate it so that it can bear fruit at the proper time.



may 23

The presence of Mary is the mustard seed that the Gospel speaks of: it seems to be the smallest of all the seeds, and yet it becomes very large and pushes the stem so high that the birds of the air make a nest in it. In all the groups of our Salesian Family, in the lives of young people, in each of us Mary Help of Christians is present, at work, is leading us to Jesus and allows us to bear much fruit.

We are in the bicentenary of the dream at nine years of age that Don Bosco understood when he celebrated the Eucharist at the altar in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Our life can only be understood by celebrating the Eucharist, offering Jesus to the Father and offering ourselves with him. John Bosco offered his body as a priest many times on the altar. Many times during his life he said: "This is my body offered as a sacrifice for you".

At the moment of understanding the dream, on 16 May 1887, his body was not that of a nine-year-old boy, not even that of a young priest. It was the body of an old man who could barely walk.

And at the moment of understanding the dream, his consumed body became the symbol of a total offering, addressed to all of us, young people and members of the Salesian Family.

To Mary Help of Christians, who guides us to Jesus and inspires us through the example of Don Bosco, we say thank you and entrust our whole lives to her.



**Testimony | Santino Niz Luciano**

Frame the QRcode and watch it on YouTube



# Entrustment to Mary

Virgin Mary, woman of integrity and strength  
who at the foot of the cross witnessed the love and obedience of your  
Son to the Father's will,  
teach us to accept pain with faith, as deeply believing women and men.  
Mary Help of Christians, teacher of our hearts, our help in painful  
and difficult moments,  
we entrust to you the desolation of suffering humanity.  
Help us to transform situations of death into new and fruitful Life  
and accompany us to the encounter  
with the LIVING Jesus in the Eucharist,  
sustaining our faith with enthusiasm and Hope  
to witness to all the power of Love  
"Ad Jesum per Mariam". Amen

38

Three times: Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be... to the Holy  
Eucharist followed each time by the short prayer: **Blessed and praised  
every moment be the Most Holy and Divine Sacrament.**

Three times: Hail Holy Queen... followed each time by the short  
prayer: **Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.**

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that it is a thing unheard of,  
that anyone ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help,  
or sought your intercession, and was left forsaken. Filled therefore  
with confidence in your goodness, I fly to you, O Mother, Virgin of  
Virgins. To you I come, before you I stand, a sorrowful sinner. Despise  
not my poor words, O Mother of the Word of God, but graciously hear  
and grant my prayer. Amen.







SALESIAN OF DON BOSCO  
EDIZIONE EXTRA COMMERCIALE

**Sede Centrale Salesiana**  
via Marsala, 42 - 00185 ROMA