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FAMILY LIGHT

Newsletter of Holy Cross Family Ministries, South India



POPE LEO XIV

(Robert Francis Prevost)

Christ Brings *Resurrection* Life

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

FR. JOHNY THEKKEMALY CSC

Dear Friends in Christ,

Family Light comes to you as a gentle companion on your journey of faith, offering hope, wisdom, and encouragement for every home. In each page, we seek to bring the light of Christ into your family life—where love is nurtured, struggles are shared, and grace is made visible.

As we come together in this season of both sorrow and hope, our hearts are deeply moved by the passing of our beloved Holy Father, Pope Francis. His life was a radiant testimony of compassion, humility, and service. We mourn his death, but we celebrate the Easter joy that reminds us: Christ is Risen! — and in that rising, we too find strength and hope in our journey of faith. 'The world's 1.4 billion Catholics rejoiced to see the new Pope Leo XIV. We have a new Shepherd to lead us as pilgrims of hope.

The mission of Jesus was rooted in love, sacrifice, and service. Though He was in the form of God, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. Born in humble surroundings and first revealing His glory in Cana, Jesus walked among us, proclaiming the Good News, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, and restoring the lame. He taught us that resurrection comes not without the cross—no pain, no gain; no cross, no crown; no Good Friday, no Easter Sunday.

As families of faith, let us reflect on the sorrowful mysteries: Jesus was mocked, persecuted, and in agony, prayed that the cup might pass. Yet, with trust, He surrendered completely and said "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." This is the path of resurrection: through suffering to glory, through self-giving love to new life.

May the Risen Lord walk with our families, filling our homes with peace, courage, and deep joy. Let us continue late Pope Francis' legacy by building homes of compassion, service, and hope.

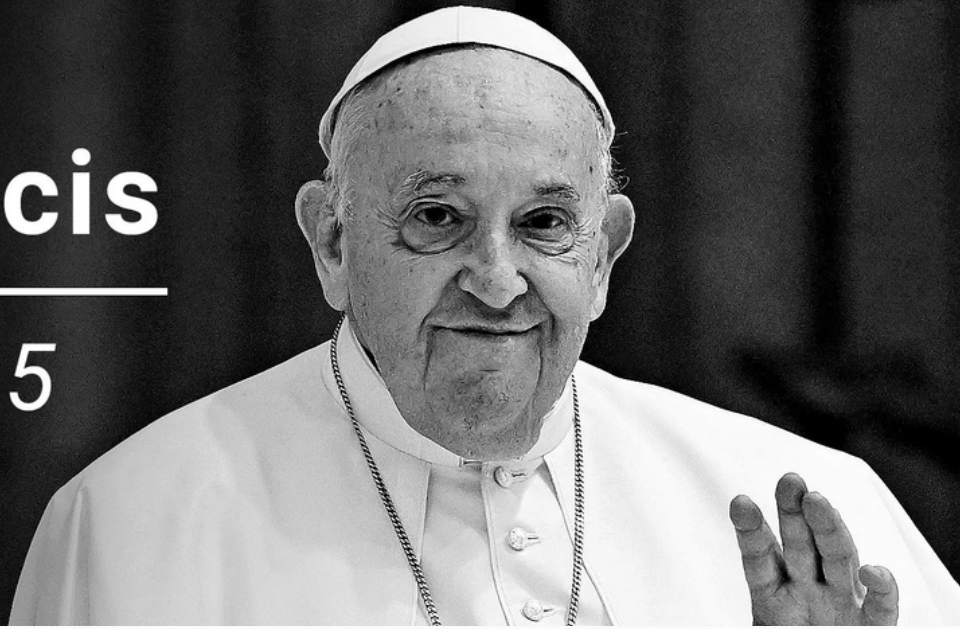


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Pope Francis

1936 - 2025



A Tribute to Pope Francis: A Father to the World, A Light for Every Family

With hearts full of both sorrow and gratitude, we remember Pope Francis—a humble shepherd, a father to the world, and a radiant light for families. Though he is no longer with us, his presence remains deeply alive in the love he preached, the hope he offered, and the mercy he lived.

Pope Francis believed deeply in the family. “The strength of the family lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love,” he once said. For him, families were not just the foundation of society—they were sacred spaces where God’s love is made visible in everyday life. He often reminded us that “no family drops down from heaven perfectly formed,” but through patience, forgiveness, and faith, each home becomes holy ground.

Pope Francis carried the cross of leadership with profound humility, always rooted in prayer, compassion, and truth. He walked with the poor and brought Gospel to life in the streets of our time. He knelt to wash the feet of prisoners, refugees and the marginalized. He led us not from above, but beside us with mercy, simplicity and joy. Now, having finished his race, he rests in the eternal embrace of the Risen Lord. His legacy continues—whenever families forgive, serve, and pray together, the light he kindled shines on.

**Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.
Amen.**

“
I have fought
the good fight, I
have finished the
race, I have kept
the faith.”

— 2 TIMOTHY 4:7





Sufferings in Christian Life

BRO. SANTOSH P.J CSC,
PROVINCAIL, ST. ANDRE PROVINCE

Suffering is often seen as having a deep spiritual value in the life of Christians. In our sufferings we share in the sufferings of Jesus, who endured pain and death for the salvation of humanity (Phil 3:10). Our suffering is certainly transformative and helps in our spiritual growth, deepening our trust in God and fosters empathy and compassion for others. Families today undergo sufferings influenced by social, emotional and economic challenges, i.e. broken relationships, financial stress, illness and loss, parenting challenges, generational gaps, addiction and abuse, loneliness, etc.

Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary

We pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary to meditate on the intense suffering and sacrifice of Jesus during His Passion. These mysteries help us reflect on Jesus' love, uniting our sufferings with His, growing in compassion and strengthen our faith .

1.The Agony in the Garden

Jesus prays in deep anguish, feeling the weight of the world's sins. He undergoes spiritual and emotional distress prior to his arrest and death on the cross. He prays to the Father to remove the cup of suffering, but ultimately, he accepts the will of the Father.

Many families today face anxiety—about finances, health, children, or their future. Like Jesus, families can turn to God in their own “garden moments,” trusting that He hears their cries. Yet not my will, but yours be done.

2. The Scourging at the Pillar

It is a significant moment in the passion of Christ, as he is brutally whipped while bound to a pillar. He suffers physical pain for the sins of each one of us before carrying the cross to Calvary.

Some families endure physical or emotional abuse, illness, or addiction. Others suffer silently, feeling beaten down by life. Jesus understands pain—He took it upon Himself to bring healing.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

Jesus is mocked and humiliated with a crown of thorns. This act symbolized his claim to be the King of Jews and was intended to denigrate and shame him. It was a painful reminder of his suffering and a symbol of the suffering of humanity. It caused an almost indescribable pain as Jesus laboured, with a heavy cross on His back and crown of thorns on His head, through the streets of Jerusalem to the place where he was ultimately crucified.

Families often face ridicule or judgment—from society, from each other, or even self-inflicted shame. Struggles with dignity, mental health, or broken relationships can feel like this “crowning.”

4. The Carrying of the Cross

The soldiers stripped Jesus of his clothes, put a scarlet robe on him, knelt before him and mocked him. They gave him a heavy rugged cross. Jesus carries His heavy cross through the streets to Calvary to the place called Golgotha, to be crucified.

Every family has its cross—daily burdens, chronic challenges, or heartbreaking situations. Like Simon of Cyrene helped Jesus, families can help each other carry their crosses with love.

5. The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

Jesus is pierced to the cross. His hands and feet were hammered with huge nails tearing his flesh apart. He was insulted, laughed and teased. Jesus cried out in agony, pleading to the Father in heaven to forgive them for they do not know what they are doing and gives up His life for the world.

Death, loss and grief are part of every family's story. Yet in Christ's death, there is also resurrection. Suffering is not the end—it can lead to new life and deeper love.

Khalil Gibran says, “You cannot prevent the birds of sorrow from flying over your head, but you can prevent them from building nests in your hair.” Trusting in God's love can certainly sail through our sufferings and pain. Jesus, the one who underwent much sufferings and pain understands our sufferings. And the Rosary is the best prayer that unites the families and help the families face the challenges together. “The Rosary is a chain that binds the family together.” Ven. Patrick Peyton.

POPE'S INTENTIONS

May

For working conditions

Let us pray that through work, each person might find fulfillment, families might be sustained in dignity, and that society might be humanized.

June

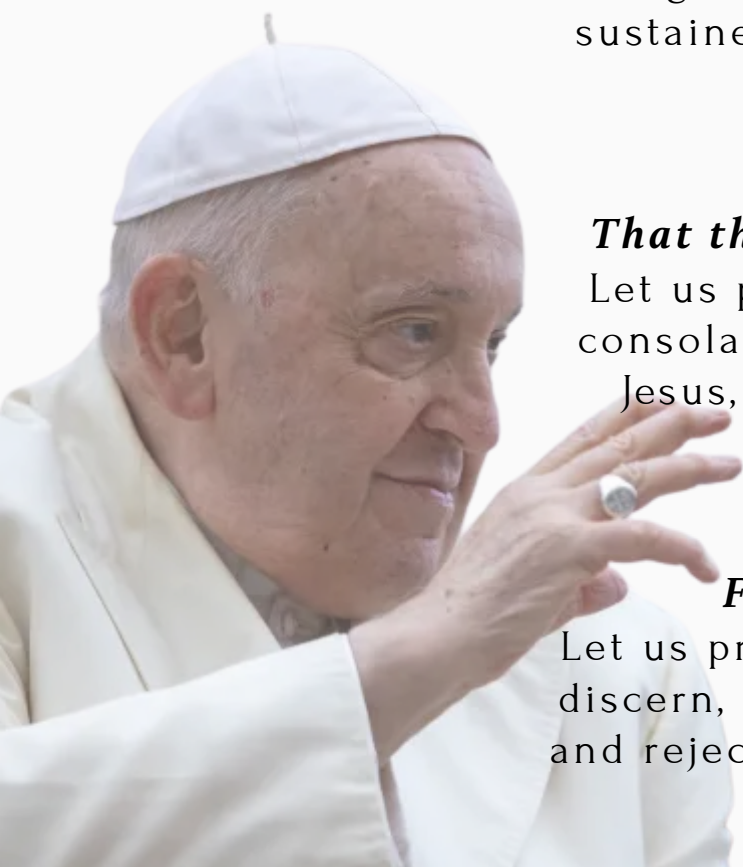
That the world might grow in compassion

Let us pray that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus, and from his Heart, learn to have compassion on the world.

July

For formation in discernment

Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life, and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.



The Sorrowful Mysteries



The Agony in
the Garden



The Scourging
at the Pillar



The Crowning
with Thorns



The Carrying
of the Cross



The Crucifixion and
Death of Our Lord

The Sorrowful Mysteries and My Life

TERESA MARY MATHEW
ST. PATRICK CHURCH, BANGALORE



As I journey through the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, desiring to increase in the knowledge of Jesus and His unconditional love for us, it led me to reflect and ponder on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which He poured out for us the grace to live holy and blameless lives in Him. Each time we look at Jesus on the Cross, we are reminded of the Divine Love that saved us, giving us the grace to overcome evil and sin. For me, it was the love of Jesus that saved me from darkness. He showed me that His love was enough to overcome any difficulty, whether external or internal.

1. The Agony in the Garden: Conquering Self-Will through Jesus

This mystery takes us to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus won the 'battle of the will'. The Lord God, in His unconditional love for us, has given all of us the gift of free will, so that our surrendering to Him might be of our own volition, not a forced decision. Often, this is where I fail in following the Lord – in the submission of my free will to Him. Many times, I find myself struggling with my own desires, which does not always align with God's will. I want things my own way, and that prevents me from living a life that is fully surrendered to God. But, through His prayer in the Garden, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not as I will, but as You will', Jesus conquers this battle between our self-will and God's by choosing His Father's will above His own. This same prayer helps me when I struggle to surrender the desires of my flesh.

2. The Scourging at the Pillar: The Grace to Conquer Sin through Jesus

In this mystery, we ponder on the inhumane suffering inflicted upon Jesus, which He voluntarily endured for our sake. Though found innocent, Jesus was subject to the worst form of punishment, which not only tore His flesh apart, but made Him almost a 'worm' in the eyes of His accusers (Ps. 22:6). He Who had the angels at His disposition, now lay powerless and exhausted before them – all for the sake of love. In my moments of weakness, when I give in to temptations, I often end up feeling guilty, knowing that I have hurt the Lord by choosing to sin. But, one time, when I was wallowing in my shame, God reminded me that His grace is greater than my sin. So that I could go back to Him and remain in His love. Through His scourging, He took away the pain and afflictions caused by sin, winning for us new graces to live holy lives. And by His stripes, we are healed.

3. The Crowning with Thorns: Overcoming Pride through Jesus' Humiliation

In this mystery, we see Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords, humbling Himself in the face of humiliation. He was beaten, spit upon, slapped and mocked for the very thing that He in fact truly was – a King. The soldiers mockingly paid tribute to Him, not realizing that they stood before the God that created them. He silently displayed His majesty through His meekness. Jesus spoke not a word, seeking neither to avenge nor justify Himself. By taking on the crown of thorns, affixed on Him in mocking tribute to His Kingship, Jesus overcame the wicked sin of pride – the very vice of Satan himself. It is pride that I often struggle with. When I feel misunderstood or unheard, it's almost an automatic reaction to defend myself. But many times, in this attempt to defend myself, I end up hurting the other. The root of this is my pride. Through His silent victory, Jesus also won for us the grace to conquer the various afflictions in our mind, which result from pride and self-will.

4. The Carrying of the Cross: Exchanging the Burden of Sin for a Life of Freedom in Christ

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt.16:24) – these words of our Lord Jesus find its complete meaning in this act of His carrying of the cross. The Lord Jesus carried the weight of our sins, including its shame, guilt and consequences, so that we could live freely and without burden in His love. Thus, He says to us, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-29). In my walk with Jesus, there have been a few occasions when the Lord would ask me to do something that would often displease those around me, because they would want something else. At first, choosing Him seemed difficult – because I wouldn't be able to see the end of this choice. But, in all my life, never once has the Lord failed me. Never once has choosing His will done me harm – in fact, He has showered me with blessings far greater than I could ever have imagined, with every single 'yes'. Choosing God's will has always proven to be the best path to take, whether it was with my choice of education, career or even finding a life partner...His burden is indeed light! In exchange for our sins and its burden, which He took upon Himself, Jesus offers us freedom in His will – a life in Him that is without worry, anxiety, pain and all other burdens that keep us from living a life of joy, peace and love.

5. The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus: The Ultimate Price for Our Life

This mystery invites us to ponder on the price paid by God for the salvation of our souls. Without His death on the Cross, it would have been impossible to enter the Kingdom of God. As Jesus said, none had ascended into Heaven except He who is from God (Jesus). "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.6:23). By His death, the Lord Jesus poured out grace and mercy for our sins, not only redeeming us from them, but also giving us the grace to conquer sin, so that we could have eternal life in Him. "And this is eternal life, that they know You, the Only God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn.17:3). Through Jesus' death on the Cross, God opens to us an invitation to enter into a relationship with the living God, having borne in His body the full consequence of sin. So that we could have life and life in its abundance. It is this truth of the Gospel that saved me. When I was in college, the Lord blessed me with a personal, tangible experience of His love. It was at a time when I was at my lowest, when I genuinely believed I was not worthy of being loved; that my life was of no value. The Lord came for me and saved me out of that darkness. And through this, He also convinced me that His death on the Cross was personal, not general – He died to save ME, so that I could live a life of joy, love and peace in Him. So that you and I can be home with Him, forever caught in His embrace, on earth as it is in Heaven. "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).



Visit To Don Bosco - Karjat

NICOLE MURZELLO
ST LOUIS CHURCH DAHISAR (W), MUMBAI

On the 5th of April 2025, the Youth of St. Louis Church, Dahisar, made a hearty trip to the Don Bosco Yuva Centre at Karjat. After a two-hour journey by bus, where we sang jolly songs and prayed the Rosary enroute, we arrived at the Yuva center and were welcomed with by Fr. Kiran's warm wishes, tea and biscuits.

Once we were all charged up for a fresh retreat day, Fr. Kiran instructed us on how to go about with the Way of the Cross on the Mount. We were introduced to an innovative and very personal way of praying that day, where there was a real cross to carry, along with the Crown of Thorns of barbed wires and life-sized nails. Carrying all these three elements we began our journey of the Way of the Cross.

Each of us took turns in bearing the Cross, as we wore the crown, sang hymns on the way and reflected on each station. After a wholesome and prayerful journey, we enjoyed the finger-licking lunch prepared by the Centre. A special mass was celebrated, bringing together parishes from the Pune Diocese, the Vasai Deanery, and members of our parish youth group.

Contemplating over the period of Lent and preparing for Easter, we had confessions organized for us. Post which, we left from Don Bosco's Yuva Centre filled with the Joy of a new heart and the Word of God.





Retreat at St. Joseph Church, Chengalam

FR ARUN CSC
PARISH PRIEST

one-day retreat was conducted at the parish in preparation for Christmas. The intention of the retreat was to make Christmas meaningful in the families and especially to restore the strained relationships of the family members. The resource persons focused on the importance of holy rosary in the families as part of family prayer. Christmas is the time to be together like the Holy Family of Nazareth and so the aspect of reconciliation was given priority. The talks were also activity oriented and so the message of the gospel was conveyed. The confessions and also healing adoration helped the faithful to experience the inner healing. We also had separate sessions for the children. The Parish members were grateful for conducting this retreat because it helped them to prepare well for Christmas this year. They also thanked the Holy Cross family Ministries for their continued support in restoring family and relationships through their Ministries.



Testimony: I attended our parish family retreat in preparation for Christmas. It was a spiritually enriching experience that brought our family closer to God and to one another. The retreat included prayer sessions, reflections on the meaning of Advent, and talks focused on faith, forgiveness, and love within the family. We participated in Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and group activities that encouraged bonding and spiritual growth. The retreat reminded us of the true essence of Christmas — welcoming Christ into our hearts and homes. It was a meaningful time of renewal, peace, and deepening of our faith journey. Our family prayer life has been enriched by attending this retreat as a family.

Alan Babu
St Joseph Chengalam, Kerala



Viveknagar Rosary Group Celebrated St. Joseph's Feast

MR. VIJAT KANT
INFANT JESUS CHURCH, BANGALORE

The Viveknagar Rosary Group was started by a small group of lay people in 2015 which was spiritually mentored by Rev. Fr. Moriesette CSC and Arul Raj CSC; since it aligned with the mission of Holy Cross Family Ministry at its office in Viveknagar This group has been meeting every Friday at the Payton's Centre, Viveknagar. After the Payton Centre was moved from Viveknagar, the members meet at the home of each member in rotation. The Group took the initiative to meet at Holy Cross Student's Home, Museum Road, Bangalore at the present venue of the Payton's Family Centre in celebrating of the feast of St. Joseph Rev. Fr. Lawrence Almeida CSC, Provincial Superior of the Holy Cross Congregation along with Rev. Fr. Johny Thekkamaly CSC, Director of Holy Cross Family Ministry, Rev. Fr. Leo D'Souza CSC, former Provincial Superior of the Congregation and Rev. Fr. Joyson CSC joined the group. Many thanks to Fr. Johny for facilitating the presence of the Provincial Superior and other Priests for the Program. Prior to the Holy mass, the Rosaries were blessed by Rev. Fr. Lawrence and distributes to all the members present. We had a meaningful recitation of the Rosary. At its Conclusion, the fathers present concelebrated the Holy Mass. Rev. Fr. Leo D'Souza gave an inspiring Homily quoting the silent exemplary life of St. Joseph in supporting mother Mary and Jesus. How St. Joseph had accepted Mary and in his entire life silently surrendered to the will of God. Same way men in the family are silent supporters. He quoted many practical examples to highlight the Christian way of life. The group was moved by the homily and dedicated themselves to follow Jesus more faithfully in the precepts of St Joseph. The meeting ended with a high tea and fellowship with the fathers. The group thanked the Holy Cross fathers for their generosity in providing a welcome atmosphere and spiritual ambience for the meeting. The group requested Fr. Johny for his continued guidance and support to the group.





Mother Mary the Mediator of Families

FR. BIJU LAWRENCE CSC
DIRECTOR
NAVADHVANI, KOTTAYAM, KERALA.

One day pilgrimage was conducted for the deaf community. We gathered at St. Mary's church Athirampuzha Kottayam, Kerala and started the day with praying the Rosary in sign language. It was a day of recollection for deaf Catholics. There were sessions on the work of Holy Cross Family Ministry and about Ven. Patrick Peyton. They shared their experience of reciting rosary in sign language. They believe that Mother Mary interceded for them on many occasions, and they have received many blessings. And it was Holy Mass at St. Mary's church Fort Kochi that provided an opportunity to experience God's unconditional love and care for each one of us.





Graduation Day at Peyton Institute for Families

FR. SHIJU JOSEPH CSC, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Peyton Institute for Families, Bengaluru, successfully conducted its Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, 26 April 2025, at the Institute, Off Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru. The event marked the successful completion of specialized training for a total of 22 students.

Out of these, 14 students completed a 10-month residential course in "Post Graduate Level Training in Family Therapy", and 8 students completed 72 hours certificate course in "Basic Counselling Skills".

The celebrations began at 11am. Dr. Elizabeth Jasmine, Ph.D., Principal of IIPR Bangalore, was the Chief Guest, and Fr. Lawrence D'Almeida, CSC, Chairman of the Peyton Institute for Families, was the Guest of Honour. Fr. Lawrence presided over the Eucharist and prayed for the new graduates. Both dignitaries addressed the graduates, encouraging them to live out their calling as healers and builders of strong, healthy families.

The event emphasized the critical mission entrusted to the graduates: to become healers of relationships, offering both professional expertise and compassionate presence. The training they received is closely aligned with the vision of Holy Cross Family Ministries — to promote the vital truth that "the family that prays together stays together."

Dr. MC Abraham, the Director of Training at the Institute, emphasized the importance of the person of the counsellor in assisting others to grow towards wholeness, and thanked the faculty members and visiting faculty for their contribution to the training of the new graduates.

Dr. Elizabeth Jasmine passionately outlined the challenges that await the new graduates and the fulfillment of bringing healing and wholeness to individuals and families. While complimenting the Institute for the excellent ambience, facilities, and faculty, she called for more programs and collaborative efforts to maximise the reach of the Institute to the masses. The ceremony concluded with a festive lunch, celebrating the achievements of the graduates and reinforcing the bonds of community and shared mission.

The Graduation Ceremony was a joyful occasion, reaffirming the commitment of the Peyton Institute for Families to form leaders who will serve families with faith, empathy, and professional excellence.



SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

WORD SEARCH

J	W	I	F	C	H	I	A	S	Y	F	B	M	I	S
O	N	H	A	W	D	N	C	Q	Z	Y	W	A	G	P
G	Y	S	U	U	U	O	W	H	D	H	J	N	L	B
P	I	H	W	C	U	B	V	O	H	S	T	E	J	L
K	X	E	L	R	H	U	P	S	R	J	I	A	Q	O
N	E	F	G	S	Z	I	S	I	R	C	F	E	E	O
R	N	I	C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	I	O	N	D
B	N	D	M	F	B	E	Y	B	D	P	Y	Z	I	J
G	K	X	B	O	Y	K	B	E	W	U	H	T	R	T

Agony, Blood, Cross, Crown, Crucifixion, Death, Gethsemane, Jesus, Love, Pilar, Sacrifice, Scourging, Suffering, Thorns, Whip

Introduction:

The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary invite us to reflect deeply on the immense love and sacrifice of Jesus during His Passion. These five mysteries—the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging at the Pillar, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, and the Crucifixion—help us unite our own sufferings with His and grow closer to the heart of God.

This word search puzzle is a fun and meaningful way to meditate on these sacred events while engaging your mind and heart. As you find each word, take a moment to reflect on its significance in the Passion of Christ.

How to Engage:

Find the List of Words: All the words hidden in the puzzle are related to the Sorrowful Mysteries. You'll find the full list below the puzzle.

Search in All Directions: Words may be hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and even backwards.

Circle or Highlight: As you find each word, circle it or highlight it in the puzzle grid.

Reflect as You Go: Pause briefly on each word. Think about its connection to Jesus' suffering and your own faith journey.

The Celebration and the Meaning of Easter FAMILY THEATER PRODUCTIONS

By Kate O'Hare, Social Media Content Manager

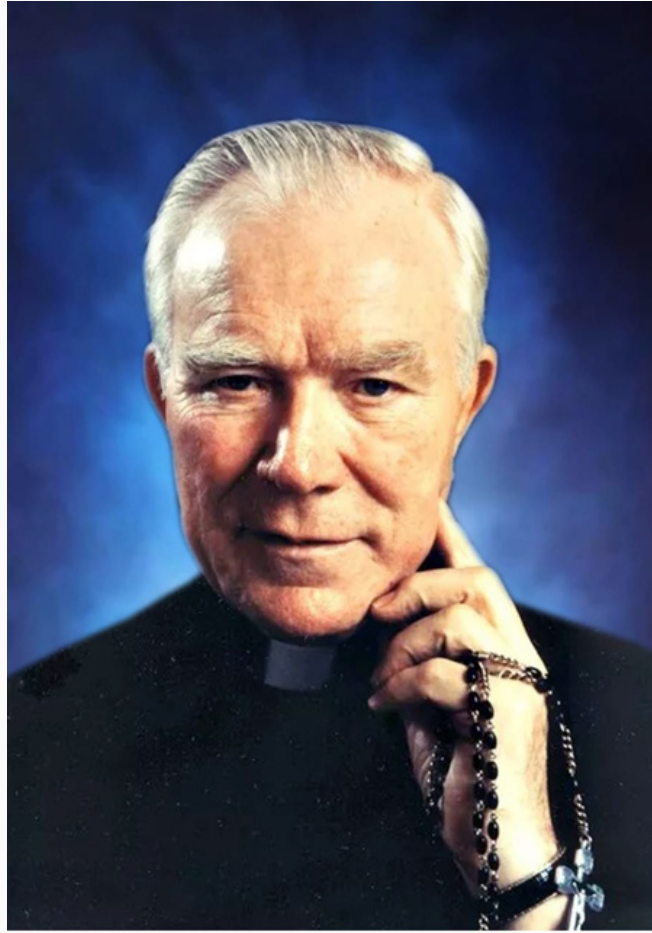
Easter has a dual meaning for many, including Catholics. It's a Spring holiday in the Northern Hemisphere when baby animals (like lambs and bunnies) are born and nature emerges from winter into an explosion of new life. At the same time, during Holy Week, the Passion narrative leads us through Christ's sacrifice, culminating in the Resurrection, Jesus' triumph over death itself.

These two short videos from Family Theater Productions' Catholic Central, featuring hosts Nick and Gabby, illustrate this. "Who Is Really the King of Easter?" emphasizes that, while the Lamb is the true King of Easter, we can also embrace the joyful symbolism of the Easter Bunny. "Welcome to Holy Week" acknowledges that chocolate and Easter-egg hunts are fun, while reminding us of what happened during that fateful week in Jerusalem.

COLOURING PAGE



Prayer for Beatification of Venerable Fr. Patrick Peyton - the Rosary Priest.



Venerable Patrick Peyton

Dear Jesus,

Father Peyton devoted his priestly life, to strengthening the families of the world
by calling them to pray together every day, especially the Rosary.

His message is as important for us now as it was during his life on earth.

We beg you, therefore, to hasten the day of his beatification,
so that your faithful people everywhere, will remember his message
that **The Family That Prays Together Stays Together**,
will imitate him in his devotion to your Mother and ours,
and will be inspired by his holy life, to draw ever closer to you
with childlike confidence and love. Amen.

(For Private Circulation only)

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