

# Breath of Life

THE PASTORAL CARE NEWSLETTER  
OF MATULAITIS HOME

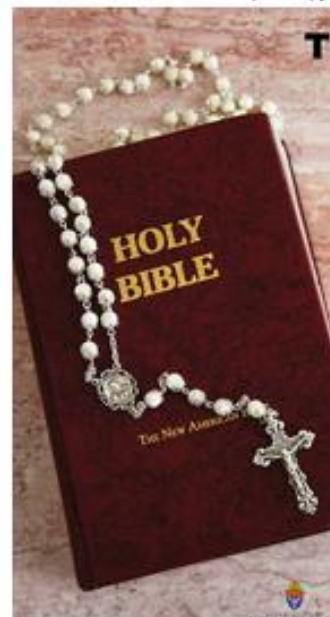
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## Contemplating Christ & His Mother: October, Month of the Holy Rosary



Various holy days and months dedicated to honoring significant events and figures in Scripture and Church history mark special days for worship and celebration in the Church's liturgical calendar. The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary; to honor this, we have Adoration & Benediction accompanied by praying the Rosary every Friday in October at 3:30pm here at Matulaitis Home.

The Rosary is an ancient prayer that calls us to meditate on the life, death, resurrection and glory of Christ. The Rosary honors and contemplates Mary too, as there is no one who followed more closely in Jesus' footsteps than she. The Rosary comprises five cycles of prayer, each referred to as a decade. The repetition creates a rhythm and facilitates meditation on what are referred to as the Mysteries of the Rosary: some of the most profound moments in the lives of Jesus and Mary. The twenty mysteries are divided into four groups: the Joyful, the Luminous, the Sorrowful, and the Glorious Mysteries. With each "Hail Mary," we ask our Blessed Mother to pray for us, and, through our contemplation of the mysteries, she continually points us back to her Son, just as she did at the wedding at Cana (the second Luminous Mystery): "Do whatever He tells you" (John 2:5).



### Tips to Pray the Rosary Daily

1. Carry a rosary in your pocket.
2. Pray it while you wait (for example, at a bus stop).
3. Pray it while doing chores or while you work out.
4. Use images and music. The Rosary is a contemplative prayer.
5. If you are upset, pray for the situation that troubles you.
6. Pray while you walk and think of the people in your life.
7. Use each mystery to pray for a specific intention.
8. If you can't pray the whole Rosary at once, pray it in parts.
9. Pray it in moments of sadness or spiritual drought.
10. Fall asleep praying the Rosary.

Pope Benedict XVI explained, "The Rosary, when it is prayed in an authentic way, not mechanical and superficial but profoundly, it brings, in fact, peace and reconciliation. It contains within itself the healing power of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, invoked with faith and love at the center of each 'Hail Mary.'"<sup>7\*</sup>

This October, as you seek to deepen your prayer life and grow in love for Jesus and His Church, consider giving praying the Rosary daily a try, contemplating Christ through the eyes of Mary.

\*[https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/overview/months/10\\_1.cfm](https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/overview/months/10_1.cfm)

## Worship & Prayer at Matulaitis Home

**Daily:** Holy Mass, 10:30am in the Chapel. Memorial Masses are offered for all residents who have died here, dates are posted at the reception counter, Family Council bulletin board, and at Center Court.

**Weekly:** Hymns & Prayers Group is offered on Tues & Thurs at 2:30pm.

**9.8.22 Feast of Our Lady of Šiluva & Šilinės, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary**  
Holy Mass 10:30am

Pilgrimage to Lourdes  
1:30pm Garden Grotto

**9.9.22** Movie: "The Song of Bernadette"  
3pm A-Lounge

**9.13.22** 13<sup>th</sup> of the Month Rosary Club  
1:30pm Chapel

**10.5.22** Feast of St. Faustina Kowalska  
Movie: "Love & Mercy: Faustina"  
1:30pm A-Lounge

Divine Mercy Chaplet  
3:30pm Chapel

**10.7.22 Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary**  
First Friday Holy Hour &  
October Devotions:  
Month of the Holy Rosary  
Adoration & Benediction  
3:30pm Chapel  
*\*every Friday in October\**

**10.13.22** 13<sup>th</sup> of the Month Rosary Club  
1:30pm Chapel

**10.22.22** Feast of St. John Paul II  
Movie: "Pope John Paul II"  
3pm A-Lounge



## Annual "Pilgrimage to Lourdes" Celebrating the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Early in September each year, Matulaitis residents, staff, and friends gather and process outside in pilgrimage to the garden grotto honoring Our Lady of Lourdes. September 8<sup>th</sup> is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or Šilinės as it is known in Lithuania, the day that the Church celebrates Mary's birthday, expressing our joy and thanksgiving that God would give such a loving and faithful mother to Jesus and His Church – to all of us! Mary's appearance to the people of Lithuania is also honored on this date under the title Our Lady of Šiluva. The Lithuanian custom of celebrating this day is carried on by Matulaitis Home as we make our pilgrimage outside to the statue of the Blessed Mother, singing and praying the Rosary together.

The practice of making pilgrimage to places of spiritual significance is common to many religions; for Catholics and other Christians, visits to the Holy Land, Rome, sites of Marian apparitions, and the tombs of Saints are all meaningful pilgrimage destinations where people go to demonstrate their devotion, plead for some favor, or to offer thanksgiving for blessings and prayers answered. While most of our residents are no longer able to travel to such places as Lourdes in France or Šiluva in Lithuania, this September 8<sup>th</sup>, we will make our gesture of pilgrimage when we process to our very own "Lourdes," giving thanks with song and prayer – family and friends are welcome to join us!



## Our Lady of Šiluva: "Lithuania's Greatest Treasure"

Marian devotion at Šiluva dates back to the beginning of Christianity in Lithuania. A church dedicated to the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was built in Šiluva in 1457. Huge crowds of faithful came, even from great distances, to celebrate the feast of the Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary. After the Protestant Reformation, the population in the vicinity of Šiluva became predominantly Calvinist. Many Catholic churches were confiscated, closed, and the one in Šiluva eventually burned. The last remaining priest, Fr. John Holubka, hid the church documents, liturgical vestments, and vessels in an ironclad chest, and buried it in a nearby field by a large rock where it was forgotten in time.



One day in the summer of 1608, a few children tending their sheep in that very field encountered a beautiful woman holding a baby, standing on the large rock. The children returned the following day, accompanied by many people from the village and their Calvinist minister. The beautiful woman, the Blessed Mother, appeared again, weeping bitterly. When the minister asked why she cried, she responded: "There was a time when my Beloved Son was worshipped by my people here, but now they plough and sow on this very spot." News of the apparition rapidly spread, leading many to return to the Catholic faith. This was the first widely known apparition of the Mother of God in Europe.

As word spread throughout the village and beyond, an elderly blind man who knew of the buried chest recalled its location and led people there. When the chest was unearthed, he immediately regained his eyesight. This was the first miracle attributed to Our Lady of Šiluva. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Apparition Chapel was built on the site of the apparition, and the altar constructed upon the same rock where Mary stood. Many pilgrims who come kiss the rock and pray for their intentions, honoring Our Lady of Šiluva and worshipping her Son.

Where the original church stood, the present Basilica of the Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary was built. A painting of the Bl. Virgin Mary with the Divine Child that hung in the original church was recovered and was placed on the main altar. Many prayers were answered, and fame soon spread, with pilgrims from Lithuania and neighboring countries flocking there in ever greater numbers. For the people's great love and devotion to Mary, through whose prayers of intercession people return to Jesus, Pope Pius XI called Lithuania *Terra Mariana*, the "Land of Mary."

During the Russian, and later the Soviet, occupations of Lithuania, the government hindered pilgrimages to Šiluva. The faithful in Lithuania, however, persisted despite persecutions; they risked losing their jobs and suffering imprisonment and other punishments for defying government orders. Throughout its long history of political shifts and foreign occupations, Šiluva has remained the center of spiritual attraction in Lithuania, and pilgrims continue to come from all over the world. ~Sr. Bernadette



## Our Lady of the Rosary, Our Lady of Sorrows:

*Our Mother Always,  
in Celebration and in Grief*



Various Marian feasts, memorials, and a solemnity are celebrated at this time of year – the Assumption, the Nativity, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Lady of the Rosary, and Our Lady of Šiluva among others. Such celebrations remind us of the gift that Jesus made to the Church when He said to John from the Cross, "Behold, your mother" (John 19:27). As His disciples today, we also receive Mary as our mother, and as such, we receive her as a loving companion throughout our lives who will help lead us always closer to her Son, Our Lord Jesus, through her example of faithful discipleship, her prayers for us to her Son, and her maternal love for us.

Drawing near to Our Lady in times of difficulty or sorrow can be a source of great consolation, knowing that she understands – she too suffered profound grief and loss – and that as our mother, she loves us with the tender compassion of a mother's heart. Sister Joyce Rupp shares a beautiful prayer in her book *Your Sorrow is My Sorrow*:

*Woman of Compassion, Mother of Sorrows,  
I draw inspiration from your journey.  
I, too, can move through the pain of my present situation.  
Your faith and courage lead me to my own strength.*

As mentioned, the month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, and through these prayers we meditate on significant moments in the life of Jesus while asking His mother to pray for us. We pray the Joyful, Glorious, and Luminous mysteries of the Rosary, rejoicing with Our Lady in the Incarnation, Jesus' first miracle at the wedding in Cana, Jesus' gift of Himself in the Holy Eucharist, the Resurrection, and other wonderful and awe-inspiring events in Jesus' life. We also pray the Sorrowful mysteries, joining Our Lady in grief, and allowing her love to penetrate ours, as we reflect on the Passion and death of Our Lord. Mary always points to her Son, and so as we walk more closely with her, she leads us to deeper relationship with Jesus Our Savior. We hope you will join our pilgrimage and October devotions, and that these will be occasions of blessing for you.

May Our Blessed Mother pray for you, and may God bless and keep you always, and give you His peace. †

Check out our website:  
[www.matulaitisnh.org](http://www.matulaitisnh.org)



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