



INTERNATIONAL FATIMA ROSARY CRUSADE

Newsletter

HELPING OUR LADY REACH OUT TO MILLIONS OF FAITHFUL SOULS

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Against the Grey Days: Saint Michael

The Christmas holidays are behind us and all the happy excitement over. Now we settle into February and the winter doldrums until the arrival of spring.

Many souls become depressed or discontent these few weeks. A spirit of sadness can descend, a melancholic restlessness. "The weather gets me down," we may say. Or, "I'm discouraged because I can't get outside."

These are the moments when it is the devil hovering over us. In truth, we are sad because he besets us, not because of the grey clouds outside. As the eminent retreat-master Father Barrielle reminds us, Satan is eternally sad and his mere approach — especially after we make confession, or when we try some little mortification, is surrounded by that cloud of sadness.

We must not succumb to the temptation of melancholy, but greet the Great Liar with our spiritual weapons. We must redouble our prayers or penance and persist until Satan is driven away. We can also invoke the spiritual aid of Saint Michael.

Saint Michael was known to the Jews in the Old Testament, especially as a champion of God's people. In the New Testament, Saint Michael continues as champion of God's people, the Catholics; he also has three other offices: to fight against Satan; to rescue souls of the faithful from the power of the devil; to bring departed souls to judgement.

But in the early Church, at least in the West, warriors did not turn to Saint Michael for assistance in battle. The military patrons of their day were such martyrs as Saint George, Saint Theodore, Saint Demetrius and others. To Saint Michael was entrusted the care of the sick, and his reputation as an angelic doctor was great indeed.

The origin of a medicinal spring at Chairotopa, near Denizli, in Turkey, is attributed to Saint Michael, where all bathers who invoked the Blessed Trinity and the holy angel were cured. Elsewhere in the same area is another spring drawn from a rock at Honaz which was created when Saint Michael sent lightning to shatter a pagan attack on the sanctuary of Saint Michael. A new stream bed was created and the waters sanctified. The Greek Church has honored this feast day (September 6) from the First Century to modern times. Shrine churches throughout Constantinople honored this angelic healer.

Elsewhere in Christendom, Saint Michael was esteemed as healer and protector. The early Christians of Egypt placed the Nile under the protection of Saint Mi-

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Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel

Composed by Pope Leo XIII

Most glorious prince of the heavenly hosts, Archangel Saint Michael, defend us in the battle and in the tremendous struggle we carry on against the Principalities and Powers, against the rulers of the world of darkness and all evil spirits. Come to the help of man, whom God created immortal, fashioned to His own image and likeness, and rescued at a great price from the tyranny of the devil. With the great army of the holy angels, fight today the battle of the Lord as thou didst of old fight against Lucifer, the leader of the proud, and his apostate angels, who were powerless against thee, and they had no longer a place in Heaven; and that monster, the old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, that seduces the whole world, was cast into hell with his angels.

But now that first enemy and homicide has regained his insolent boldness. Taking on the appearance of an angel of light, he has invaded the earth, and with his whole train of evil spirits he is prowling about among men, striving to blot out the name of God and of His Christ, to capture, to destroy, to drag to eternal perdition the souls destined to the crown of eternal glory. That malignant dragon is pouring abroad, like a foul stream, into the souls of men of ruined intellect and corrupt heart the poison of his wickedness, the spirit of lying, of impiety and blasphemy, the pestilent breath of impurity and of all vice and iniquity. Most cunning enemies have filled with bitterness and drenched with gall the Church, the Spouse of the Lamb without spot, and have lifted impious hand against all that is most sacred in it. Even in the holy place where the See of Blessed Peter and the chair of truth was set up to enlighten the world, they have raised the abominable throne of their impiety with the iniquitous hope that the Shepherd may be stricken and the flock scattered abroad.

Arise then, unconquerable Prince, defend the people of God against the assaults of the reprobate spirits, and give them the victory. Holy Church reveres thee as its guardian and patron; it glories in thee as its defender against the malignant power of hell; to thee God has committed the souls that are to be conveyed to the seats of the Blessed in eternal happiness. Pray, then, to the God of peace,



that He may put Satan under our feet, so completely vanquished that he may no longer be able to hold men in bondage and work harm to the Church. Offer up our prayers before the Most High, so that the mercies of the Lord may prevent us, and lay hold of the dragon, the old serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and hurl him bound in chains into the abyss where he may no longer seduce the souls of men. Amen.

V. Behold the Cross of the Lord, fly ye hostile ranks.

R. *The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has conquered.*

V. May Thy mercies, O Lord, be fulfilled in us.

R. *As we have hoped in Thee.*

V. Lord, hear my prayer.

R. *And let my cry come unto Thee.*

Let us pray.

O God, and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we call upon Thy holy name and humbly beseech Thy clemency, that through the intercession of the ever-immaculate Virgin and our Mother Mary, and of the glorious Archangel St. Michael, Thou wouldst vouchsafe to help us against Satan and all the other unclean spirits that are prowling about the world to the great peril of the human race and the loss of souls. Amen.

Reprinted from The New Raccolta or Collection of Prayers and Good Works to which the Sovereign Pontiffs have attached Holy Indulgences (1898 edition).

Apostolate News

The international volunteer department sends large quantities of Fatima Literature, Rosaries and Brown Scapulars to priests and lay people around the world. Equatorial and southern hemisphere countries are particularly in need. One diocese wrote to thank our office for rosaries sent, saying, "The little souls are very much worried to pray with the rosaries especially the teeming numbers of first Holy Communicants and the candidates for the sacrament of Confession."

Staff who visited a number of South American bishops last spring, have been pleased to receive several requests from those same bishops for more literature on the Message of Fatima. These pamphlets, books and prayer cards we have sent them are being distributed in Spanish, Portuguese and English; rosaries and Brown Scapulars have been sent, too, for these bishops have begun to realize the importance of the Fatima Message for the salvation of souls.

The pamphlet "Heaven Opened by the Practice of The Three Hail Marys" has been enormously popular. An African bishop wrote thanking us for the pamphlet and requested 5000. These were shipped to him, but he is hoping for more. Another bishop wrote to request 30,000! We sent him 1000 right away. But the cost of shipping so many pieces of literature is in the thousands of dollars. Can you help?

The British Isles has a growing list of volunteers for the Apostolate, especially since the Pilgrim Virgin visit last spring. One enthusiastic volunteer who lives near the Ireland-North Ireland border, regularly mails Fatima literature in his own country then, to save on transborder postage, drives a few miles to the other side of the border to mail Fatima literature throughout his neighboring country. Another new English volunteer who had not come to the Pilgrim Virgin visits, subsequently received a Fatima Center publication from a Scottish volunteer. When she contacted our offices, her first words were, "Why have I never heard about you before now?" She is now working to establish a distribution center in Britain. She has also put us in touch with an Australian colleague who is working to do the same.

Internet news: Our 24 hour/day, seven-day/week web radio is being fine-tuned before its official launch. But you can join others in praying the Rosary every day now at 8 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Link to "fatimaradio.org" and click on "ListenLive"; or download it to your i-pod for listening at another time. †



Editor's Note: Many readers write in to tell the Fatima Center of prayers answered. Here are some extracts from one reader who lives in the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina. He wrote just a few days after the catastrophe:

“We live 40 miles north of New Orleans. There is 12-18 feet of water in many areas.

“We stayed in a friend’s log cabin by their pond. We watched huge oaks snap like twigs. It was very frightful. At the height of the storm I went to a room by myself and prayed the Rosary. I am not fearful but this time was different. I was scared, as [were] my wife, one of my daughters, my two grandchildren. ...

“Everyone in my family is O.K. But my oldest daughter who lives in Mississippi, she lost her house. The incoming 30 feet high [water] washed it off the foundations.

“But we are the fortunate ones. God spared my family and we said a Rosary of thanksgiving.”

Please remember in your prayers all those suffering the effects of Hurricane Katrina, especially our devoted members.

chael. Traditionally, they honored him on the twelfth of each month; but June 12, when the Nile begins to rise, was held as a holyday of obligation.

In 950, Saint Gregory led a procession against a pestilence that was oppressing Rome. Saint Michael is said to have appeared over the Castel di Saint Angelo and eliminated the plague.

In France, Saint Michael is the patron of mariners, especially honored at Mont Saint-Michel, where he is said to have appeared to Saint Aubert, in 708.

But his warrior status also was honored in Italy and Germany. About the year 500, he appeared at the Monte Gargano sanctuary named for him. One hundred and fifty years later, it was to Saint Michael that the Lombards attributed their victory over invading Greek Neopolitans. This victory of May 8, 663, was commemorated by an annual feast that spread throughout the Church, later being called the "Apparition of Saint Michael."

When Germany was Christianized, Saint Michael replaced the pagan god of war, Wotan, who was honored on many mountains throughout Germany. Thus, the mountain chapels were rechristened in honor of Saint Michael.

Thus it is seen that Saint Michael has been long regarded as a powerful agent of God. Whether for victory against enemies, or healing of maladies, or calming of waters, faithful Christians have had their prayers rewarded with dramatic victories.

More recently we have turned to Saint Michael to defend us against all snares of Satan. One day, after he had said Holy Mass, Pope Leo XIII heard a conversation coming from the tabernacle. The discussion between Satan and Our Lord so frightened him as to the future of the Church that he fell to his knees and composed a fervent and lengthy prayer to Saint Michael to defend "... the Church, the Spouse of the Lamb without spot, for [most cunning enemies] ... have lifted impious hands against all that is most sacred in it."

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His original prayer (included in this newsletter) is not usually disseminated now, a shorter one being commonly in use. But the short prayer, lacking in the fervency,

still has the virtues of being a minor exorcism one can pray for oneself. It is a good prayer to say in personal moments of confusion, despondency, or sadness. Saint Michael is the first warrior against Satan, and will deal him the final blow in Our Lady's ultimate victory. Our prayers to St. Michael throughout our daily duties, delights, and struggles to serve God, give weapons now to St. Michael and train ourselves to resist the Evil One.

Recalling that the first sign of Satan's presence is sadness, one can begin both to prepare for the Tempter's attack, and to fight him off by praying to Saint Michael for assistance, and perhaps by doing a small penance such as kneeling on one's fingers for the space of three 'Hail Mary's.' We advance in virtue when we fight the temptation and the Tempter. If we let Satan drive a wedge of discouragement between us and Our Lady, he will leverage it into greater despondency. But we will not let this happen!

Saint Michael renders his angelic aid to those who ask for it, and will come as if with a water cannon to blast the miserable demons. Our Lady delights when we pray to him, for each of our prayers becomes another arrow in Saint Michael's quiver, another weapon in his arsenal. We arm him with our prayers. Our prayers are his 'supply line'. And we must persist to supply him with our prayers and penitential acts!

Rather than sulking and blaming the dull days of waiting until spring, we must resist the grey cloud of sad Satan. We have to get up and fight! Fortunately for us, God has given us the particular weapons against him: we supernaturalize our personal battles by consecrating each one of them to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. And we urge Saint Michael to lead us to victory for the sake of Our Lady's honor and the glory of the Lord. †

