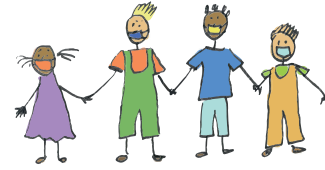


„A Million Children Praying the Rosary“

18 October 2020



Letter to the children



Hello, dear friends!

No doubt you will always remember this strange time, when you couldn't go to school, or even visit your friends or play with them... The time when a dangerous virus spread across the whole world, causing a serious illness. Millions of people have caught the virus and fallen ill, and thousands have even died from it. All kinds of measures were introduced to stop it spreading – social distancing, wearing masks, not going out on trips or journeys...

Shops were also closed, and many people lost their jobs as a result and are suffering, because they can't even feed their families.

In difficult situations like these it's very important for us all to work together and help one another.

But we must also not forget that the biggest help of all comes from God. He wants us to be safe, and whenever people fall ill or are suffering, He can give them the strength and consolation they need. God wishes – with our help – to overcome all evil, all sickness and all suffering and bring us all to Heaven. And so we must learn to trust Him completely, to love Him greatly, and each other too, and – with His help – to avoid all sin. Because sin is the worst disease of all. To help us in this task, God has given us a very special helper, His very own Mother.

She longs to take us by the hand, to protect us from all evil and help us, day by day, to live as Jesus lived.

We are especially close to her when we pray the Rosary. For the Rosary is like a spiritual „medicine“ against evil. And through our prayers Our Lady also wants to help all people, all over the world, especially the poor and suffering. God sends His Mother directly to us; she is appearing in many different places around the world to help us and tell us what to do.

Back in the year 1830, nearly 200 years ago, in Paris, France, she appeared to a young nun by the name of Catherine Labouré. When Catherine was just nine years old, her mother died, leaving her alone with her father and 10 brothers and sisters. She was very sad. One day, she climbed on a chair in her parents' bedroom to hug the statue of Our Lady which stood on a cupboard. Putting her arms round the statue, she said out loud,

„From now on, dear Blessed Mother, you must be my Mother.“ Although she was still very young, Catherine had to work really hard in order to help her father and feed her little brothers and sisters. She often prayed to Our Lady, who always helped her in her problems. She longed one day to be able to see the Blessed Mother,

even just once. When she was 24 she entered the convent of the Sisters of Mercy, on a street called Rue du Bac in Paris. She wanted to devote her life as a nun especially to caring for the sick and elderly, and began as a novice to prepare for her religious vows and her future task. Then, one night on 18-19 July 1830,

something extraordinary happened. Catherine herself described it like this:

„It was 11:30 at night when I heard someone calling my name: 'Sister! Sister!' I woke up and saw a beautiful little child standing in front of me, dressed in a white robe and shining brightly. He was about four or five years old, and he said to me, 'Get up quickly and go into the chapel; the Blessed Virgin is waiting for you!' Immediately, I thought, 'But people will hear me...' But the child answered, 'Don't worry, it is 11:30 and everybody is sleeping. I'll come with you.' I believe now that this child was my guardian angel, who was permitted to appear to me to lead me to the Virgin Mary. I got dressed quickly and followed the child. I was astonished to see that everywhere we went, the lights were already lit. And I was still more astonished when we arrived to the chapel and the door opened by itself. But what astonished me most of all was the fact that inside the chapel all the candles and lamps were already lit. It reminded me of Christmas time. But I didn't see the Blessed Virgin. The child led me up to the altar and I knelt there next to the priest's chair and waited. At around midnight I heard something like the rustling of a silk dress. At the same moment my little guide alerted me, saying 'Look, the Blessed Virgin!' Our Lady came in and sat down in the armchair, but I hesitated to believe that it was really the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Then my companion repeated again, but not in a child's voice this time but in a man's voice, loudly and unmistakably, 'Look, here is the Blessed Virgin!' I looked up at the Virgin Mary and with one big step I was beside her. I sank onto my knees in front of the Mother of God and quite trustfully placed my folded hands in her lap. There I spent the most beautiful moments of my life. It is impossible for me to describe what I felt at that moment."



Our Lady explained to Catherine that she had a mission to fulfil, which she would later come to understand in prayer. She showed Catherine many painful things – wars, hunger, disease – that would come upon the whole world. But at the same time she promised to protect the world, provided that we trust in God, pray much and are kind to one another.

A few months later, Our Lady appeared to Catherine again as she was praying. Mary was standing on the globe, with outstretched arms, a serpent crushed beneath her feet. On her fingers were rings with precious jewels from which glowing beams of light radiated. Catherine heard a voice say: „These rays are the graces Our Lady has won for humanity.“ But she noticed that some of the jewels did not radiate any light. She asked why this was, and Our Lady replied: „These are the graces you forget to ask of me!“ Over Our Lady's head there was a prayer in gold letters: „O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee“. Then the image turned round, and on the other side she saw twelve stars and the letter M, interwoven with the Cross. Beneath this were two wounded hearts, with flames coming out of them. One of the hearts was surrounded with thorns and the other pierced through by a sword. They represented the hearts of Jesus and Mary, united in love for humanity. Then Catherine heard these words: „Have a medal struck according to this image.

Those who wear it constantly and who prayerfully repeat this short prayer will experience the special protection of the Mother of God and receive great graces.

These graces will be abundant for those who wear this medal with faith.“

The first 2,000 of these medals were finally struck in the year 1832, exactly at the time when France was struck by a deadly virus, cholera. In Paris alone 20,000 people died of cholera. The Sisters of Mercy gave these medals out to the sick in the hospitals, and there were so many miraculous healings and conversions that the medal quickly became known as the „Miraculous Medal“. Three years later over a million medals had been distributed. And by the time Catherine Labouré died in the year 1876, more than a billion medals had been distributed throughout the world.

You can also wear this medal yourselves – on a chain around your neck, on a wristband, a keyring or on your school bag. Ask your parents, or a priest or a sister or catechist, to give you Our Lady's „Miraculous Medal“. It will remind you that Our Lady is always with you to protect you. Speak to her, frequently repeat a short prayer to her like the one on the medal and ask her to protect you, your family and all the world from evil and to fill all hearts with love and peace.

And so, because Our Mother Mary asks this of us, we want to pray the Rosary for this unity in love and for peace in the world. We are going to do this on the 18th October – (or else on Monday 19th October so that you can do it with your school) together with a million children all around the world. For through this prayer we can gain many graces for the whole world.

