



BISHOP'S REFLECTION
May 2020

There is no one who is too self-sufficient, tough or powerful that, sometime in their life, they didn't need a mother, a mom. Even the Son of God needed the love of a mother! The love of a mother is love that is nourishing, protecting & unconditional. It's a love which impacts & influences the formation of the life of her child.

This year, as we acknowledge our mothers on Mothers' Day, let us not forget to thank God for our "Blessed" Mother. On Mount Calvary, Jesus entrusted his beloved mother to St. John as he proclaims from the cross: "Behold, your mother;" so, too, he says to us during this Easter season. Just as John took Mary into his home, let us imitate him and welcome her into our home and hearts.

The Church reminds us that this month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Together, as a family, create a sacred space in your home, a prayer corner. Within that space, set up a Marian shrine. Place a statue, picture or icon of Mary and decorate it with candles and flowers. Let it be an area where you, and your children, can gather to pray the Rosary along with other special devotions. Let it be for you a sanctuary of peace & consolation during this time of "sheltering-in-place."

As we pray the Rosary during the month of May, let us revisit and take to heart the message of Mary given to the Three Shepherd Children of Fátima. Her message to us, and to the world, is a plea for prayer, penance and self-sacrifice for the sake of "poor sinners." It is a message more relevant, now, than ever.

Our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of the Rosary, is concerned for us, her children. She wants us to grow closer to her Son, Jesus, by growing in holiness. She asks us to be concerned, as she is, for her children, our brothers and sisters, who do not know her Son. She is concerned for their eternal souls. She intercedes on their behalf as she prays: "Jesus, lead all souls to heaven, especially, those in most need of your mercy."

During this time of trial, Pope Francis re-echoes the call of the Third Message of Fátima: "Penance, Penance, Penance!" His Holiness reminds us that it isn't so much that God is judging us at this time, but we are to judge ourselves; for this is the time for us "to choose." This pandemic has placed before us an opportunity to choose and reflect on the direction of our lives; to prioritize the areas of our lives; to let go of sin – repent – in order to be alive in the Risen Lord, Jesus.

As we anticipate May 13th, the anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady at Fátima, I conclude with a prayer taught to the Shepherd Children by the Angel of Peace: "My God, I believe, I adore, I hope and I love you. I ask pardon of You, for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not hope and do not love You."

May the prayers of Our Lady of Fátima, Our Blessed Mother, grace us during this month of May. Let us remember: "There comes a time in everyone's life, when one is in need of a mother – a "blessed" Mother – now, is that time!

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!

Grace and Mercy,

Bishop Cotta