

UNITED IN PRAYER

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. ¹

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Marist
ASSOCIATION OF
ST MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT



INTENTIONS

We pray that international organisations, governments and Church leaders work harmoniously to institute measures to combat the spread of the virus.

We pray for political leaders that they make wise and compassionate decisions in transitioning our societies from restrictions.

For what else shall we pray...

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

OPENING PRAYER

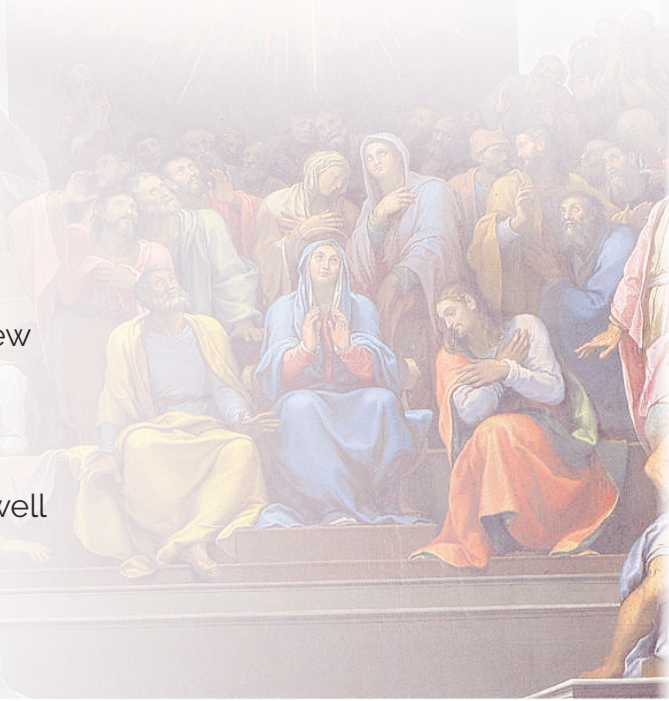
Loving God,
in a world that is in a state of fear and uncertainty in the face of the unseen virus,
we pray that Mary, in her concern and solidarity for our global family,
intercede for us with her Son to bring about deep healing and release from anxiety.
Amen.

WE LISTEN

Speak Lord, your servant is listening...

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1:13-14)

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.



WE REFLECT

The origins of this ancient icon are unclear. One tradition suggests it's a copy of a painting by St Luke. These days it is found in the Redemptorist church of St Alfonso in Rome. Family homes in many countries have an image of the icon where it is a focus of prayer and a symbol of reassurance.

What has the icon to say to us in the turmoil of today? In it, we see a Jesus who is fearful; his face is unsure, concerned. He's turning towards one of the angels, and he's realising in that moment that doing the will of his father is going to involve suffering. Both his hands are clutching his mother; he knows she will look after him, that she is the person he mustn't let go.



*Icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Succour)
CRETAN SCHOOL, BEFORE 1499*

So here is a Jesus who shares our fear right now, and here also is a Jesus showing us what to do. In time, he will break open the tomb, overcome death and rise again. But for now, we must face this suffering as Christ faced it.

It's frightening and it's understandable that we are afraid, but if we hold on to Mary the Mother of God, she will help us through. Suffering will not be the final word - of that, we can be certain.²

WE RESPOND

How conscious are we of the presence of Mary in these times of waiting and uncertainty?
Are we able to be patient and caring in the way Mary is, as she stays among the believers?
Do we learn from her love and understanding as we go about our daily duties?

CLOSING PRAYER³

Mary, Queen of Creation,
Mother who cared for Jesus,
You care for this wounded world with maternal affection.
You treasured the life of Jesus in your heart (cf. Luke 2: 19,51).
Now, you understand the meaning of all things.

Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat
Mary of the Cross MacKillop
Mary Our Good Mother
And let us always remember

Pray for Us
Pray for Us
Pray for Us
To Pray for One Another

¹ Jennifer Wagner, 2020

² Adapted from Vincent Nicholls, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster (*The Tablet* 11 April 2020, p23)

³ Prayer based on Pope Francis, "On Care for Our Common Home," *Laudato Si*, paragraph 241