

Pope calls on world to unite in ‘Our Father’ prayer this Wednesday

By *Cian Molloy* - 23 March, 2020

“I would like to propose to all Christians that, together, we lift our voices towards Heaven,” said the pope, who will start saying the ‘Our Father’ in Rome on Wednesday at 10am Irish time.



The Pope gave yesterday’s pre-Angelus address from within the confines of the Vatican library.

The pope is to deliver an extraordinary *Urbi et Orbi* address and apostolic blessing on Friday and he also wishes all Christians to unite with him in saying the ‘Our Father’ on Wednesday, Feast of the Annunciation.

Speaking before yesterday’s Angelus prayer in the Vatican, Pope Francis invited “heads of Churches, leaders of every Christian community, together with all Christians of the various confessions” to invoke Almighty God and to recite “the prayer that Jesus, Our Lord, taught us”.

“In these trying days, while humanity trembles due to the thread of the pandemic, I would like to propose to all Christians that together we lift our voices towards Heaven,” said the pope, who is due to start reciting the ‘Our Father’ at 11am, Rome time, which is 10am Irish time.

He said: “May the Lord listen to the united prayer of all of His disciples who are preparing themselves to celebrate the victory of the Risen Christ.”

In these unprecedented times, for the second time, the pope gave his Sunday morning, pre-Angelus address from the Vatican library. Normally, the pontiff would give this weekly address from a balcony overlooking St Peter’s Square, but the square has been closed on the advice of the Italian public authorities.

Italy is now the country worst affected by the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, with more fatalities than China where the pandemic originated. So far, nearly 5,500 Italians have been killed by Covid-19; in Ireland the virus has killed four.

More extraordinary perhaps than Wednesday's worldwide *Pater Noster/Ár nAthair* is the pope's announcement that he will deliver a special *Urbi et Orbi* apostolic blessing and address. This is something that usually only occurs on Christmas Day and on Easter Sunday.

Friday's ceremonies will consist of readings from the Scriptures, prayers of supplication, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, with the pope presiding from the *sagrato* of St Peter's Basilica, the area immediately in front of the church building.

Catholics who obtain the *Urbi et Orbi* blessing via the media receive an indulgence, subject to the conditions that apply to the remission of temporal punishment due to sin.



Archbishop Eamon Martin invites clergy and all the faithful to join with him at the 12.00 noon Angelus on the Feast of the Annunciation, Wednesday 25 March, in consecrating Ireland and her people to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for protection from the coronavirus.

Below is a copy of the **Act of Consecration**. Priests are invited to lead these prayers in their churches or at home and, if possible, to relay them via webcam and/or radio. People are encouraged to participate and unite themselves in prayer in their homes and workplaces.

Act of Consecration of Ireland to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for protection from the Coronavirus

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, 25 March 2020

The Act begins with the recitation of The Angelus

The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,

And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary,

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it done unto me according to Your Word.

Hail Mary,

And the Word was made flesh

And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary,

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech You, O Lord,
Your Grace into our hearts;
that as we have known the incarnation of Christ,
your Son by the message of an angel,

so by His passion and cross
we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection.
Through the same Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

The Apostles Creed

I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
He descended into hell;
on the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

The First Joyful Mystery of the Rosary: The Annunciation of the Lord

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said: "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women". And when she saw Him, she was troubled at His saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest"... And Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word". And the angel departed from her. *(Luk 1,26-38)*

Oh Mary with Your "yes" You have opened heaven's ways, You have achieved the will of the Father. You will be blessed for ever: Your intercession is heard in Heaven, because You have accepted God's plan. Let us pray that we can say "yes" to the Father in every instance He ask it of us. Mary help us to be humble and obedient to God's will.

As we begin this decade of the Rosary we do so in solidarity with Pope Francis who has asked us to join together today in praying the *Our Father* to implore God to rid the world of the coronavirus pandemic:

Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, On earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

- o 10 Hail Marys
- o Glory Be

Prayer of Consecration

Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Health of the Sick,
at this time of great challenge to our country from the coronavirus,
we consecrate to Jesus through your Immaculate Heart:
ourselves, our family, the members of our parish and Diocese, and the people of
Ireland.

O Mary, Queen of Ireland, when you appeared at Knock,
you gave hope to your people in a time of distress,
and brought them comfort in a time of sorrow.

Be with us now as a sign of salvation and hope,
as we entrust ourselves to your loving care.

We renew the promises of our Baptism and Confirmation
and ask your intercession that we may be always faithful to Christ and to His Church.

Bring under your mantle of protection all those who are suffering because of the
coronavirus, and those who care for the sick and minister to their needs,
as your Son implores us to do for one another.

O Loving Mother,
at the foot of the Cross, with steadfast faith,
your Immaculate Heart was pierced by grief at the suffering of your Son.

You know what we need during these difficult days.

Help us, O Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the Father's will
and to do what Jesus tells us –
He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us,
through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.

O Blessed Mother, Our Life, our Sweetness and Our Hope,

we wish that this Consecration be for the glory of God and that it lead us safely to Jesus
your Son.

A Naomh-Mhuire, a Mháthair Dé, guigh orainn na peacaigh, anois agus ar uair ár mbáis.

Amen.

Blessing

May your servants be shielded, O Lord
By the protection of your loving-kindness,
That, doing what is good in this world,
They may reach you, their highest good.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May Almighty God bless you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.