

May Pilgrimages *in the footsteps of St. Josemaría*

St. Josemaría advised us to give our Lady a gift during the month of May: to visit a shrine dedicated to the Mother of God and pray the Rosary.

The founder of Opus Dei was usually accompanied by just a few people, walking the final stretch to the shrine while praying the Rosary with piety.

He said: “May you learn how to sow peace and joy in the world, through this marvelous Marian devotion and through your refined charity.”

The Sign of the Cross +
JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of our Lord
4. The Presentation
5. The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

SOWERFUL MYSTERIES

1. Agony in the Garden
2. Scourging at the Pillar
3. Crowning with Thorns
4. Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. Descent of Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. Coronation of our Lady

LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

1. Baptism of Christ
2. Wedding Feast at Cana
3. Preaching of Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration
5. Institution of the Eucharist

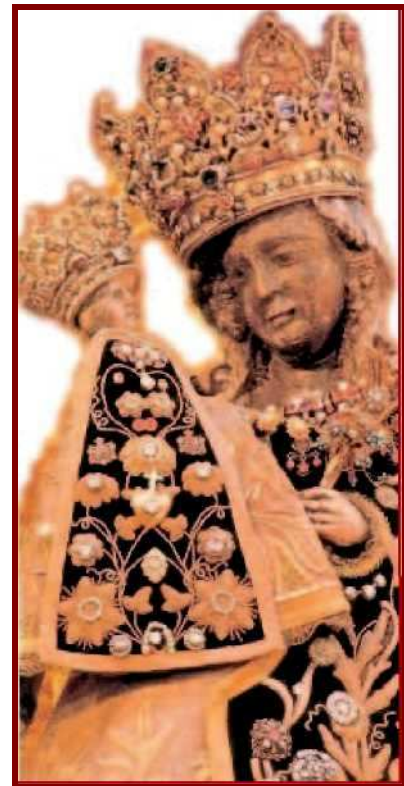
LITANY OF LOURDES

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us,
Christ, hear us.
Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of Heaven,
Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Mary,
(Pray for us.)
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of divine grace,

Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the Covenant,
Gate of Heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into Heaven,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of the family,
Queen of peace,
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.
V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. O God, whose only begotten Son, by his life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant we beseech thee, that by meditating upon these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through Christ our Lord. Amen.



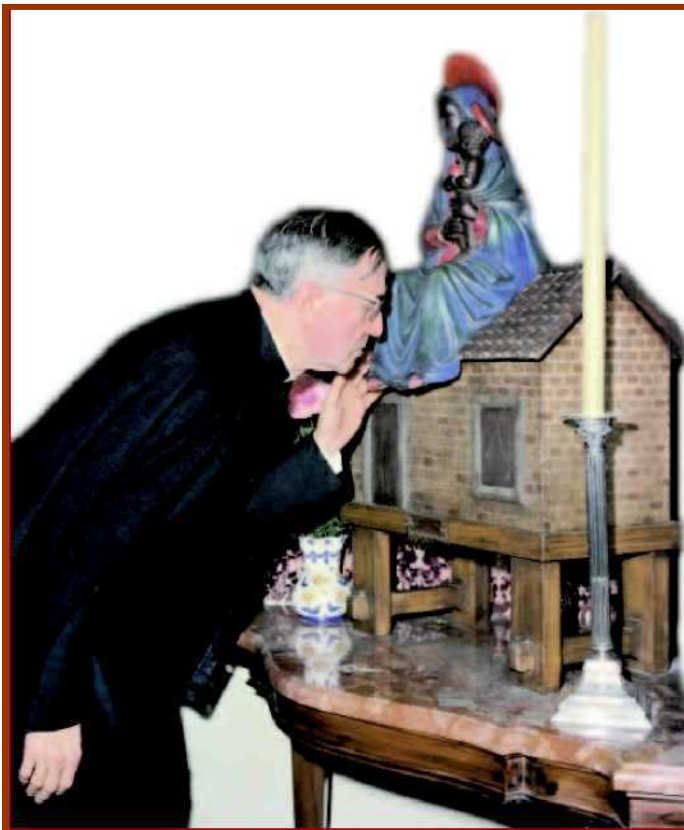
Black Madonna of Altoetting (Germany)

... in the footsteps of St. Josemaría

May 2, 1935. On this date, St. Josemaría began the custom of Marian pilgrimages in Opus Dei. Accompanied by two students, he went to Avila to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Sonsoles. He wanted to give special thanks to Mary for the favors received that year from her hands. Here is an account of that first pilgrimage, a custom that many thousands of people have since followed to venerate our Lady.

“Having decided to go to Sonsoles, I wanted to celebrate Holy Mass before setting out toward Avila. During the Mass, in the Memento of the Living, with a determination that was particularly strong (more than just my own), I asked our Lord Jesus to increase in us—in the Work—our love for Mary, and I asked that this love might be expressed in deeds.

“When we were on the train, my thoughts kept spontaneously returning to the same idea: that our Lady is no doubt pleased with our affection, crystallized as it is in substantial Marian devotions: her image always kept before us; the tender greetings we give her as we enter and leave the room; our Lady’s poor; the Saturday collection; *omnes...ad Iesum per Mariam* [everyone...to Jesus through Mary]; Christ, Mary, the Pope.... But in the month of May, something more was needed. Then I thought of the ‘May Pilgrimage’ as a custom that must be incorporated—and it has been incorporated—into the Work.”



Without going into the walled area of Avila, they headed straight for the road leading to the shrine. From far off they could see the shrine on the top of the hill. They prayed the Joyful mysteries of the Rosary walking up, the Sorrowful mysteries inside, standing before our Lady’s image, which was surrounded by votive candles and other offerings, and the Glorious mysteries on the way back to the train station. Their experiences on this pilgrimage provided Father Josemaría with material for considerations on perseverance:

“As we walked from Avila, we kept our eyes fixed on the shrine, and, naturally, when we reached the foot of the hill, Mary’s house disappeared from view. We talked about how this is what God often does with us. He gives us a clear sight of the end of our journey, and allows us to fix our gaze upon it, in order to set our feet firmly on the path of his most lovable will. And then, when we get near him, he leaves us in darkness, seemingly abandoning us.

“This is the time of temptation: doubts, struggles, obscurity, weariness, the desire to lie down along the way... But no: forward! The time of temptation is also the time of faith and of trusting surrender to our Father-God.

“Away with doubts, vacillations, and indecision! I have seen the way. I set out on it, and I am following it, up the hill—come on, hurry up!—panting, out of breath with the effort, but not stopping to pick the flowers which, to the right and to the left, offer me a moment’s rest and the enchantment of their scent and color...and of their possession. For I know very well, from bitter experience, that if I were to pick them they would instantly start shriveling up and fading, and so there is nothing in them for me—neither color nor scent nor peace.”

In memory of that pilgrimage, Father Josemaría kept a handful of ears of wheat in a small chest. It was a symbol of his hope for great apostolic productiveness in the month of May.