

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

A Spiritual Bouquet to Our Blessed Mother

May has traditionally been observed as a month dedicated to Mary, Mother of God. It is also the month in which we celebrate our earthly mothers through the observance of Mother's Day. Mother's Day provides a beautiful opportunity to pray for all mothers, including those who are unexpectedly pregnant in difficult circumstances. It can be a difficult holiday for many, including those struggling with infertility, those who have lost children, and those who have lost their own mothers.

This activity seeks to lift up the many intentions laid on our hearts by the observance of Mother's Day and offer them to Our Blessed Mother during the month honoring her. It also provides a way to give thanks for her maternal love and care for us. On the weekend of Mother's Day, parishioners are invited to write a prayer intention on a slip of paper and offer it, along with a flower if possible, to Our Lady. While there are many options for adapting or carrying out this activity, the purpose is to present a spiritual bouquet to Our Lady, by placing the intentions and flowers beneath a statue, icon, or image of the Blessed Mother.

When the activity is complete, you will have a spiritual and physical bouquet of prayer intentions and thanksgiving offered at the feet of Our Lady. This offering can remain for the next week or two, serving as a visual reminder of the powerful intercession and love of Mary, Our Mother.

While the following directions describe completing this activity within a parish, this can be easily adapted for use in a school, ministry, or family. Some adaptation ideas are included in the following pages.

Materials:

- ◆ *Flowers of various varieties (inexpensive options often include carnations, daisies, and alstroemeria, among others)
- ◆ Buckets to store the flowers in water
- ◆ Small note cards or slips of paper
- ◆ Pens, crayons, or markers
- ◆ Vases of water
- ◆ Basket to hold prayer intentions
- ◆ Designated statue, icon, or image of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- ◆ Copies of the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life* (optional, respectlife.org/action-guides)

Directions:

1. Use the included sample bulletin announcement the weekend before Mother's Day to invite parishioners to participate in the upcoming activity. (Be sure to submit your bulletin announcement request well in advance to ensure space is available in the bulletin.)
2. Gather your materials. Flowers can often be obtained in bulk through a local wholesale florist or wholesale chain. Your parish may have already established connections due to ordering flowers throughout the year. The size of your parish, school, or community will determine how many flowers you need to purchase. To help keep needed quantities lower, ask that each participant use only one flower. You could also consider asking parishioners to bring their own flowers, perhaps supplying only a small number – if any – for those who forget to do so.
3. Pre-cut notecards or small slips of paper.

**If your parish or community is unable to afford flowers, this activity can still be completed without them! Simply have parishioners place their written intentions in a basket before the designated statue of Our Lady. Or, you could consider providing crayons or markers and suggesting participants draw a flower next to their intention. This adaptation cuts costs and encourages participants' creativity! Another option would be to invite parishioners to bring their own flowers. If you do have some access to flowers or money for them, you could provide a limited number on a "first come, first serve" basis for those who forget to bring one.*

4. Place the basket for the intentions and the vases filled with water near the statue, icon, or painting of Our Lady that will serve as the center of the spiritual bouquet.
5. Set up a separate table outside the church or in the vestibule (with the necessary permission obtained). Place the pens and slips of paper on the table. Set the flowers in buckets of water to the sides of the table or behind it. If there is room on the table, provide copies of the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life* for participants to pray together before the image of Our Lady or to take home with them to pray. Or, you could print it directly into the bulletin. In addition to saving space on the table, those who are unable to participate in the spiritual bouquet can use the litany to seek the intercession of Our Lady throughout the month. (The litany can be found at respectlife.org/action-guides.)
6. At the end of each Mass, use one of the sample pulpit announcements to invite parishioners to participate in the spiritual bouquet.
7. Arrange for volunteers to staff the table following each Mass. They can help pass out materials, answer questions, and assist younger participants in writing their intention. Direct participants to where they can present their intentions and flowers to Our Lady.
8. Your bouquet should grow physically and spiritually after each Mass. Allow the flowers to remain for next week or two to serve as a reminder of the intentions entrusted to the intercession of Our Lady and in thanksgiving for her maternal care. Encourage parishioners to also pray for others' intercessions placed under her care.

Ideas for Parish Adaptations

Because each parish varies widely, you may need to adapt or change this activity to fit your specific needs. Think about the layout of your church building, the location of an appropriate Marian image, the schedule of Masses, and any other factors that may affect or be affected by this activity.

For example, depending on the space available in your parish vestibule, you may want to conduct the activity outside to help with the flow of foot traffic after Mass. If your parish has a Marian statue outside, consider offering the spiritual bouquet there. This will eliminate the need for parishioners to exit and re-enter the Church. Some parishes have Masses scheduled very close together, so moving outside can also help ensure the next Mass is not disrupted or delayed.

You could also consider integrating this activity into regularly scheduled events like a May Crowning, or adapting it into a longer service by including a Eucharistic procession. You might ask participants to form a line to present their prayer intentions and flowers to Our Lady one by one. Or, you could encourage people to pray a moment before approaching and let the foot traffic flow organically.

The purpose of this activity is to seek the intercession of Our Blessed Mother for all the intentions brought to our hearts by the observance of Mother's Day, as well as to thank her for her motherly love for us. Assess what works best for your circumstances, and make adaptations or changes as needed!



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Sample Announcements for At-Home Modification

◆ Bulletin Announcement

(Suggested Weekends: The Two Weekends Before Mother's Day)

This Mother's Day weekend, we invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother, seeking her intercession and thanking her for her maternal, loving care. We invite you to share with us your prayer intentions to be entrusted to Our Lady. We also encourage you to offer a spiritual bouquet to Our Lady in your own homes, using or adapting the suggestions in [this sample activity guide](#). If you participate from home, please consider sharing pictures with our parish family. We would love to see them! **[Explain how parishioners can share pictures – for example, by emailing them to parish staff to be shared publicly or by posting directly in the comments under a specific post on one of the parish's social media accounts.]**

As we celebrate the gift of mothers and honor Our Blessed Mother, we also recognize that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by Mother's Day.

◆ Pulpit Announcements

Option 1

(Suggested Weekends: The two weekends before Mother's Day)

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother for Mother's Day. Please see the parish website for more information.

Option 2

(Suggested Weekends: The two weekends before Mother's Day)

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother for Mother's Day. Simple suggestions for families to participate from home are available on the parish website.

As we celebrate the gift of mothers and honor Our Blessed Mother, we also recognize that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by Mother's Day.

◆ Social Media Post

We invite you to join us in offering a spiritual bouquet to Our Blessed Mother for Mother's Day. We invite you to comment with prayer intentions you'd like to be entrusted to Our Lady. We also encourage you to participate from home with these simple suggestions: uscgb.org/home-spiritual-bouquet.

As we celebrate the gift of mothers and honor Our Blessed Mother, we also recognize that Mother's Day can be a difficult holiday for many. We hope this spiritual bouquet provides an opportunity to pray for the intentions brought to your heart by Mother's Day.



Spiritual Bouquet to Our Blessed Mother

Option for At-Home Adaptation

Materials:

- ◆ *Flowers, greenery, or some other type of small gift like hearts or flowers cut out of colored construction paper
- ◆ Small note cards or slips of paper
- ◆ Pens, crayons, or markers
- ◆ Small basket or other container to hold the prayer intentions
- ◆ Vase of water (if using fresh flowers or greenery)
- ◆ **Statue, icon, or image of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- ◆ Copies of the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life* (optional, [respectlife.org/action-guides](https://www.respectlife.org/action-guides))

**This activity can also be completed without flowers or any other type of gift. Simply place your written intentions in a basket before the designated statue or image of Our Lady. Or, you could draw a flower or another image next to your prayer intention on the paper.*

***If you don't have any of these in your home, find an image online to display on a computer or other type of screen.*

Directions:

1. Gather your materials. Look around your own yard for flowers or greenery that might be available, or pick some up at the store.
2. Set up a small table for your Marian spiritual bouquet. Place on the table your statue or image of Our Lady with a small basket for prayer intentions and a vase with water or other receptacle for your little gifts. Put writing utensils and something to write on nearby.
3. Pre-cut notecards or small slips of paper.
4. Invite household family members to participate in the spiritual bouquet. Participants can write down on the notecards or slips of paper what they would like to ask Our Blessed Mother to intercede for. They can then be invited to place their prayer intentions in the basket, as well as to place their flowers or other gifts in the vase or other receptacle in thanks for Our Lady's maternal love and care.
5. When all participants have presented their prayer intentions and gifts to Our Lady, offer a closing prayer of your choosing. Some options include [A Prayer for Pregnant Mothers](#) or the [Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life](#).
6. Encourage family members to pray throughout the week for all the intercessions placed under the care of Our Blessed Mother.

The purpose of this activity is to seek the intercession of Our Blessed Mother for all the intentions of our hearts related to the observance of Mother's Day, as well as to thank her for her motherly love for us. Assess what works best for your circumstances and make adaptations or changes as needed!

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