

ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI'S PRAYER TO OUR LADY AFTER EACH VISIT TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

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This prayer to Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, was written by the eminent theologian St. Alphonsus Liguori. It first appeared in his book *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament* in 1745. St. Alphonsus wrote it to be recited after each visit to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament “to obtain the most powerful patronage of Mary,” as he put it. The prayer to Our Lady makes a stirring complement to the saint’s prayer before each visit.

Most holy Virgin Immaculate, my Mother Mary, it is to you, who are the Mother of my Lord, the Queen of the world, the advocate, the hope and the refuge of sinners, that I have recourse today, I, who most of all am deserving of pity. Most humbly do I offer you my homage, O great Queen, and I thank you for all the graces you have obtained for me until now, and particularly for having saved me from Hell, which, by my sins, I have so often deserved.

I love you, O most lovable Lady, and because of my love for you, I promise to serve you always and to do all in my power to win others to love you also. In your hands I place all my hopes; I entrust the salvation of my soul to your care. Accept me as your servant, O Mother of Mercy; receive me under your mantle. And since you have such power with God, deliver me from all temptations, or rather, obtain for me the strength to triumph over them until death. Of you I ask the grace of perfect love for Jesus Christ. Through your help I hope to die a happy death. O my Mother I beg you, by the love you bear my God, to help me at all times, but especially at the last moment of my life. Do not leave me, I beseech you, until you see me safe in Heaven, blessing you and singing your mercies for all eternity, amen. So I hope, so may it be.

We can see some wonderful resonant echoes of another great prayer to our Lady, the Hail Mary, at work here. (The Memorare comes to mind as well.) In each prayer we implore our Blessed Mother (pictured at left in this painting by the Italian painter Taddeo Gaddi) to assist us with the graces and intercession we need in securing our salvation.



Keep in mind that, contrary to a tragically mistaken notion among some Christians, we are not showing idolatry towards Mary in these prayers. She as our Blessed Mother is also our Blessed Mediator with her divine Son. We pray not just to Mary but through her as well, to Jesus.

Two great lines in scripture help sum up her essential role in salvation history: The first comes during the wedding feast at Cana when she instructs the waiters right before her Son turns water into wine to “do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5). (These words before our Lord’s first public miracle are, as Bishop Fulton Sheen once pointed out, her last spoken words in the Gospels. They make a fitting motto for her.)

The second occurs when our Lord tells His beloved disciple John standing at the foot of the Cross with Mary to “behold your mother.” (John 19:27). With these words Mary became not only John’s mother, but by extension, the mother of the Church and all of us as well.

In addition, as Liguori wrote in another famous work, *The Glories of Mary*, “Our Blessed Lady once told St. Bridget that she was the mother not only of the just and innocent, but also of sinners, provided they were willing to repent.” This prayer to our Lady can help us to approach her with a contrite, loving heart. As St. Alphonsus said “if you do this with tender affection and confidence, you may hope to receive great things from this most gracious Lady.”

When she sees our humility, the “treasurer of graces,” as Mary has been called, is more than happy to give us the help we need to overcome temptations on the road to Eternal Life in Heaven with her and her divine Son.

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