

Morning Prayer
Feast of Mary Help of
Christians
Patroness of Australia
24th May



Background to the Feast

The feast of Our Lady Help of Christians was instituted by Pope Pius VII in 1915, in thanksgiving for the deliverance of the Holy See and the Papal States from the tyranny of Napoleon. What was really being celebrated was the emergence of the Church from the 'darkness' of the 18th Century and the very troubled years of the 19th Century in the Church's history.

In this restoration Pope Pius VII did much to promote Marian piety among all. Mary, our Mother, has been venerated in the Litany under the title *Help of Christians* since at least the 16th Century. However, she was hailed as 'advocate' and 'intercessor' for many years before.

By 1844, there were only three Bishops in Australia. At their very first Synod in that year, they requested the Pope to declare, as Australia's special patron, the Mother of God under the title of Mary Help of Christians with her feast to be celebrated on May 24th.

The feast was celebrated from 1844, even though it was not officially approved by Rome until 1852. The infant Church in Australia had a special reason for turning to Mary. In those early and mostly priestless days, it was largely the Rosary that kept the faith alive. Catholic Australia remained faithful to Mary, and was the first nation to choose her, under the title of Help of Christians, as principal Patroness.



Call to Worship

PRESIDER: This is the day our God has made.

ALL: Let us be glad and rejoice.

PRESIDER: Praise the Name of our God.

ALL: Who made heaven and earth.

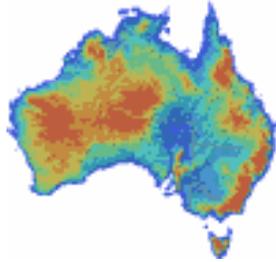
PRESIDER: God has done great things for Mary.

ALL: Praise the name of our God.

HYMN: Help of Christians, Guard our Nation

(Tune: Ode to Joy – Beethoven)

Help of Christians, guard our nation,
That it be a place of peace,
Where the love of Christ unites us
And all racial tensions cease.
Help of Christians, lead us forward,
With this dream in ev'ry heart:
To create a place of welcome
Where injustice has no part.



Help of Christians, chosen patron,
Of this fair Australian land,
You have shown a way to follow,
True to all that God has planned.
May our lives like yours be faithful,
May our loving be as true,
Till we see our God for ever,
Who has done great things for you.

PSALM Ps 34:2-7

Antiphon: My soul proclaims the greatness of God.

I will never stop thanking God,
with constant words of praise.
My soul will boast of God;
the poor will hear me and be glad.

Join me in praising the Lord,
together tell of God's name.
I asked and the Lord responded,
freed me from all my fears.

Turn to God, be bright with joy;
you shall never be let down.
I begged and God heard,
took my burdens from me.

Glory to you, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. (chant from Beatification 10th anniversary may be used)

Antiphon: My soul proclaims the greatness of God.

Acknowledgements

- ◆ Canticle of Zechariah ©1995 [Proclaim Praise. Daily Prayer for Parish and Home.](#)
LTP Chicago.
- ◆ Psalm 34:2-7 ; 148:1-7 [The Psalter.](#) © 1994. [A faithful and inclusive rendering from the Hebrew into contemporary English.](#) ICEL . Liturgy Training Publications.
- ◆ Hymn (words) *Help of Christians, Guard our Nation.* Author unknown.
- ◆ Other Prayers (Lyn Sparling rsj)
- ◆ Graphics (clipart and internet sites)
- ◆ Background to Feast (article on Mary Help of Christians by Fr John Martin C.Ss.R
'The Record' May 1995)
- ◆ Scripture – NRSV Catholic Edition. Catholic Bible Press © 1990 Tennessee.

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Litany of Praise

READER 1: *For Mary, who is a sign of hope and source of unity in Christ for all Australians.*

ALL: **We praise you God.**

READER 2: *For Mary, who is woman, wife, mother, a person for us today.*

ALL: **We praise you God.**

READER 3: *For Mary, who, as our Patroness, shows love and care towards our land and its multicultural people.*

ALL: **We praise you God.**

READER 4: *For Mary, who is model and bearer of the Truth and Light of the Gospel*

ALL: **We praise you God.**

PRESIDER: *Trusting in God who cares for all our needs we pray together...
Our Father.....*

PRESIDER: *May we continue to journey with Mary and all those who love God and seek truth.*

ALL: **Amen.**

Final Prayer

Loving God, you place deep in our hearts the love of Mary, Help of Christians. Through her prayers grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens. Under her protection may Australia be granted harmony, justice and peace. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



N.B. The *Te Deum* may be prayed on this day

Reading Sirach 4:11-13



Wisdom teaches her children and gives help to those who seek her. Whoever loves her loves life, and those who seek her from early morning are filled with joy. Whoever holds her fast inherits glory, and the Lord blesses the place she enters.

A period of silence

Responsory

PRESIDER: *With the help of Mary, may we live in the hope of your kingdom.*

ALL: *With the help of Mary.....*

PRESIDER: *With our nation under the patronage of Mary.*

ALL: *May we live in the hope of your kingdom.*

PRESIDER: *Glory to you.....*

ALL: *May we live in the hope of your kingdom.*

Gospel Cantic

Antiphon: Mary's faith, hope and love models true discipleship through all ages.

Praise the Lord, the God of Israel,
Who shepherds the people and sets them free.

God raises from David's house a child with power to save.
Through the holy prophets God promised in ages past
to save us from our enemies' hands, from the grip of all who hate us.

The Lord favoured our ancestors, recalling the sacred covenant,
the pledge to our ancestor Abraham, to free us from our enemies,
so we might worship without fear and be holy and just all our days.

And you, child, will be called Prophet of the Most High.
For you will come to prepare a pathway for our God
by teaching the people salvation through forgiveness of their sin.

Out of God's deepest mercy a dawn will come from on high.
Light for those shadowed by death, a guide for our feet on the way to peace.
(Luke 1:68-79)

Glory to you Source of all Being.....

Antiphon: Mary's faith, hope and love model true discipleship through all ages



Intercessions

PRESIDER: *We praise and thank God, through Mary, for the many gifts we have and appreciate as Australians.*

For peace in our country (Pause)
The beauty of our country and its weather (Pause)
Our standard of living (Pause)
Freedom of religion (Pause)
Our youth (Pause)
Our parents and families and the values we inherited (Pause)
For our multicultural nation (Pause)
For our indigenous brothers and sisters (Pause)
For all that Mary MacKillop inspires in us (Pause)

PRESIDER: *Help us to grow in our gratefulness and keep calling us back to the living out of these Christian values which we treasure.*

PRESIDER: *Let us pause now to open our hearts to receive and embrace what today will bring....*

PRESIDER: *Trusting in God who cares for all our needs we pray together, Our Father....*

Final Prayer

Mary, Help of Christians, watch over us with love.
Intercede for us with your Son, to bless Australia,
so that we can be people of peace –
people who love and respect each other,
and people who love and respect our land, Australia.
We make this prayer through Jesus, your Son. **Amen.**

Evening Prayer

(Have ready a candle to light before prayer begins)

The Church gathers in the evening to give thanks for the day that is ending. In the earliest tradition this began with the lighting of the lamps as darkness fell and the hymn of praise of Christ who is our 'radiant light'.

Proclamation of Light

As the evening lights are lit the preside says

PRESIDER: *Light and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

ALL: *Thanks be to God.*



Invitation to Worship

PRESIDER: *O God, come to our aid*

ALL: *O God, make haste to help us.*

PRESIDER: *Let us pause for a moment and hold with gratitude the events of this day....*

HYMN: as for Morning Prayer

PSALM Ps 148:1-7 (or from Morning Prayer)

Antiphon: My soul proclaims the greatness of God.

Praise the Lord!
Across the heavens, from the heights,
all you angels, heavenly beings,
sing praise, sing praise!

Sun and moon, glittering stars,
sing praise, sing praise.
Highest heavens, rain clouds,
sing praise, sing praise.

Praise God's name,
whose word called you forth
and fixed you in place for ever
by eternal decree.

Let there be praise:
from depths of the earth,
from creatures of the deep.

Glory to you, Source of all Being.....

Antiphon: My soul proclaims the greatness of God.

Responsory as for MORNING PRAYER

Reading John 19:25-27

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

A period of silence

Canticle



Antiphon: as for Morning Prayer

*Any sung/spoken version of the **MAGNIFICAT***

(Gelineau, Peter Kearney, Bernadette Farrell, Frank Andersen, Tell Out My Soul from Gather Australia)

