

**May 24 – Day of Prayer for the Catholic Church in China**

## **Holy Rosary with passages from the Message of Pope Francis to the Catholics of China and to the Universal Church (26.09.2018)**

✠ *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen*

✠ *The Creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty..."*

✠ **We pray for the special intention of the Holy Father Pope Francis:**

"Dear brothers and sisters of the universal Church, all of us are called to recognize as one of the signs of our times everything that is happening today in the life of the Church in China. We have an important duty: to accompany our brothers and sisters in China with fervent prayer and fraternal friendship. Indeed, they need to feel that in the journey that now lies ahead, they are not alone. They need to be accepted and supported as a vital part of the Church. "How good and pleasant it is, when brothers dwell together in unity!" (Ps 133:1). Each local Catholic community in every part of the world should make an effort to appreciate and integrate the spiritual and cultural treasures proper to Chinese Catholics. The time has come to taste together the genuine fruits of the Gospel sown in the ancient "Middle Kingdom" and to raise to the Lord Jesus Christ a hymn of faith and thanksgiving, enriched by authentically Chinese notes". (Pope Francis)

✠ *Our Father, three Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father.*

### **First Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**

✠ *"You need not be amazed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, the one who was crucified. He has been raised up; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him". (Mark 16:6)*

"I have always looked upon China as a land of great opportunities and the Chinese people as the creators and guardians of an inestimable patrimony of culture and wisdom, refined by resisting adversity and embracing diversity, and which, not by chance, entered into contact from early times with the Christian message. As Father Matteo Ricci, S.J., perceptively noted in challenging us to the virtue of trust, "before entering into friendship, one must observe; after becoming friends, one must trust" (De Amicitia, 7). I too am convinced that encounter can be authentic and fruitful only if it occurs through the practice of dialogue, which involves coming to know one another, to respect one another and to "walk together" for the sake of a common future of sublime harmony. (Pope Francis)

### **Second Glorious Mystery: The Ascension of Jesus to Heaven**

✠ *"Then, after speaking to them, the Lord Jesus was taken up into Heaven and took His seat at God's right hand". (Mark 16:19)*

"Through the lengthy and complex institutional dialogue between the Holy See and the Chinese authorities initiated by Saint John Paul II and continued by Pope Benedict XV, the Holy See has desired – and continues to desire – only to attain the Church's specific spiritual and pastoral aims, namely, to support and advance the preaching of the Gospel, and to reestablish and preserve the full and visible unity of the Catholic community in China. It is a journey that, as in its earlier stages, "requires time and presupposes the good will of both parties" (Benedict XVI, 2007). But for the Church, within and outside of China, this involves more than simply respecting human values. It is also a spiritual calling: to go out from herself to embrace "the joys and the hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or afflicted" (Gaudium et Spes) and the challenges of the present that God entrusts to us. It is thus an ecclesial summons to become pilgrims along the paths of history, trusting before all else in God and in his promises, as did Abraham and our fathers in the faith. (Pope Francis)

### **Third Glorious Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Spirit**

✠ *"All were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to express themselves in foreign tongues and make bold proclamation as the Spirit prompted them". (Acts 2:4)*

"On the pastoral level, the Catholic community in China is called to be united, so as to overcome the divisions of the past that have caused, and continue to cause great suffering in the hearts of many pastors and faithful. All Christians, none excluded, must now offer gestures of reconciliation and communion. In this regard, let us keep in mind the admonition of Saint John of the Cross: "In the evening of life, we will be judged on love". On the civil and political level, Chinese Catholics must be good citizens, loving their homeland and serving their country with diligence and honesty, to the best of their ability. On the ethical level, they should be aware that many of their fellow citizens expect from them a greater commitment to the service of the common good and the harmonious growth of society as a whole. In particular, Catholics ought to make a prophetic and constructive contribution born of their faith in the kingdom of God. At times, this may also require of them the effort to offer a word of criticism, not out of sterile opposition, but for the sake of building a society that is more just, humane and respectful of the dignity of each person". (Pope Francis)



## Fourth Glorious Mystery: The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven

✠ “You are the glory of Jerusalem ... you are the splendid boast of our people ... God is pleased with what you have wrought. May you be blessed by the Lord Almighty forever and ever”. (Judith 15:9-10)

“To everyone, I say once more with great affection: Let us be inspired to act by the example of all those priests, religious, and laity who devote themselves to proclamation and to serving others with great fidelity, often at the risk of their lives and certainly at the cost of their comfort. Their testimony reminds us that, more than bureaucrats and functionaries, the Church needs passionate missionaries, enthusiastic about sharing true life. The saints surprise us; they confound us, because by their lives they urge us to abandon a dull and dreary mediocrity. I ask you wholeheartedly to beg for the grace not to hesitate when the Spirit calls us to take a step forward: Let us ask for the apostolic courage to share the Gospel with others and to stop trying to make our Christian life a museum of memories. In every situation, may the Holy Spirit cause us to contemplate history in the light of the risen Jesus. In this way, the Church will not stand still, but constantly welcome the Lord’s surprises”. (Pope Francis)

## Fifth Glorious Mystery: The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth

✠ “A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars”. (Revelation 12:1)

Mother of Heaven, hear the plea of your children as we humbly call upon your name! Virgin of Hope, we entrust to you the journey of the faithful in the noble land of China. We ask you to present to the Lord of history the trials and tribulations, the petitions and the hopes of all those who pray to you, O Queen of Heaven! Mother of the Church, we consecrate to you the present and the future of our families and our communities. Protect and sustain them in fraternal reconciliation and in service to the poor who bless your name, O Queen of Heaven! Consolation of the Afflicted, we turn to you, for you are the refuge of all who weep amid their trials. Watch over your sons and daughters who praise your name; make them one in bringing the proclamation of the Gospel. Accompany their efforts to build a more fraternal world. Grant that they may bring the joy of forgiveness to all whom they meet, O Queen of Heaven! Mary, Help of Christians, for China we implore days of blessing and of peace. Amen! (Pope Francis)

## PRAYER OF BENEDICT XVI TO OUR LADY OF SHESHAN

Virgin Most Holy, Mother of the Incarnate Word and our Mother, venerated in the Shrine of Sheshan under the title "Help of Christians", the entire Church in China looks to you with devout affection.

We come before you today to implore your protection.

Look upon the People of God and, with a mother’s care, guide them along the paths of truth and love, so that they may always be a leaven of harmonious coexistence among all citizens.

When you obediently said "yes" in the house of Nazareth, you allowed God’s eternal Son to take flesh in your virginal womb and thus to begin in history the work of our redemption.

You willingly and generously cooperated in that work, allowing the sword of pain to pierce your soul, until the supreme hour of the Cross, when you kept watch on Calvary, standing beside your Son, who died that we might live.

From that moment, you became, in a new way, the Mother of all those who receive your Son Jesus in faith and choose to follow in his footsteps by taking up his Cross.

Mother of hope, in the darkness of Holy Saturday you journeyed with unflinching trust towards the dawn of Easter.

Grant that your children may discern at all times, even those that are darkest, the signs of God’s loving presence.

Our Lady of Sheshan, sustain all those in China, who, amid their daily trials, continue to believe, to hope, to love. May they never be afraid to speak of Jesus to the world, and of the world to Jesus.

In the statue overlooking the Shrine you lift your Son on high, offering him to the world with open arms in a gesture of love. Help Catholics always to be credible witnesses to this love, ever clinging to the rock of Peter on which the Church is built. Mother of China and all Asia, pray for us, now and for ever. Amen!

