



May Toolkit – *Homily Helps*

1. Our Lady of Fatima — May 13

- The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children — Lucia dos Santo and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta Marto — in Fatima, Portugal, on six different occasions from May 13 to Oct. 13, 1917. Our Lady asked the children to pray the rosary daily and to make sacrifices for the conversion of souls.
- Our Lady of Fatima warned us of what was to come. She revealed this through several signs:
 - The first sign to the children was a vision of hell.
 - The second was a prophecy about the outbreak of World War II.
 - Although it remains a mystery, Pope Benedict XVI said of the third: "In the vision we can recognize the last century as a century of martyrs, a century of suffering and persecution for the Church, a century of world wars and the many local wars which filled the last 50 years and have inflicted unprecedented forms of cruelty." The vision is coupled with Mary's plea for prayer and penance.
- Her message still applies today. Amid the chaos of the world and the increasing disorder our culture promotes, we must never fail to defend truth, strive to grow in virtue, and rely on our faith and Our Lady for guidance.
- Sister Lucia dos Santos said that it appeared ever more clearly to her that the purpose of all the apparitions was to help people to grow more in faith, hope and love — everything else was intended to lead to this.
- Taken as a whole, the Fatima message is a strong reminder that the crises of the world will finally be resolved not through armed force but through prayer and reliance on God's grace.
- Despite its violent imagery and strong warnings, the Fatima message concludes with a note of confidence: "my Immaculate Heart will triumph." Let us unite ourselves to that same heart, calling on our Mother daily, that we might be assured of her faithfulness and protection.

2. Pentecost Sunday — May 28

- On the feast of Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the birth of our Church. Over 2,000 years ago, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles to send them among the nations preaching the Good News — the Word of God.
- At that time, the men were locked in the upper room fearing the persecution and suffering that surrounded them. Enlightened by the tongues of fire, filled with the Holy Spirit, their fears dissipated.
- As members of the Church, we are inheritors of this fulfillment of the Holy Spirit and the mission of Christ Jesus. By taking this on, we accept that suffering, persecution and ultimately death are inevitable. But we are assured through his resurrection that the Lord has triumphed, and with the strength of the Holy Spirit we too can spread the Good News.
- As confirmed Catholics, let us never forget the abundance of gifts poured out on us by the Holy Spirit. In a world permeated by sin and death, let us use these gifts to promote the common good and raise Christ's banner.

3. Mary, Our Mother — May

- As we honor Mary this month, we recognize that she is not only the Mother of Jesus, but also our mother. We belong to her as adopted sons and daughters of God.
- She also accepted the role of mother to all Christians when Jesus entrusted her to John at the foot of the cross — “Behold your mother” (Jn 19:26-27).
- Mary's motherhood is not limited to a particular time and space. Her love and concern for us extend beyond her earthly life, and she intercedes for us continually in heaven. We can turn to her in times of sorrow and joy, and she will always be there to comfort and guide us.
- Mary is our model of faith and trust in God. She accepted his plan for her life, even though it meant suffering and heartache. She placed all her trust in the Lord and was obedient to his will. We learn from her example, especially when we face challenges and uncertainties in our own lives.
- As our mother, Mary desires only our happiness and salvation by drawing ever closer to her son, our Lord. She wants us to follow and become more like Jesus, reminding us of our need for God and encouraging us to turn to him in prayer and worship.
- Let us pray for the grace to imitate our mother Mary's faith and surrender to God's will in our lives. May we always turn to her as our loving intercessor and seek her help in our times of need.
- Mary, Mother of God and our mother, pray for us!