

For the Weekend of May 22, 2022

Dear People of God,

Today we celebrate the Feast of Mary help of Christians. For ninety-four years the Mother of Jesus has been namesake and protectress of the Salesian presence here in Tampa under that title. Since 2008 she has been the namesake and patroness of our parish Church. So, it is right and fitting that we take time to honor her and her Son, Jesus as a Faith Family on this occasion.

During the five years of captivity that Pius VII had when he was imprisoned by Napoleon, the pope appealed to Mary under the invocation of "Help of Christians." From 1809 -1812 Pope Pius was imprisoned in the Italian city of Savona, and from 1812-1814 in Paris where further indignities were heaped upon him. Pius VII then made a vow to crown an image of the Mother of Mercy should he be granted his freedom.

On May 24, 1814 weakened by losses suffered on several fronts and pressured by public opinion, Napoleon permitted his prisoner to return to Rome. Attributing his release as a great victory of the Church over the French Revolution to the powerful intercession of Mary, he wanted to show his gratitude by establishing a feast day for the universal Church dedicated to the beautiful Marian invocation "Our Lady Help of Christians." Therefore May 24th became her feast day in thanksgiving for the Holy Father's return to Rome.

Prayer: "To the Virgin Most Holy whom we desire to honor with the title of "Help of Christians", the times we are in are so sad that we truly need the Most Holy Virgin to help us in preserving and defending the Christian Faith as in Lepanto, as in Vienna, as in Savona and Rome . . . and it will be the center from where all our works will radiate in behalf of the young." St. John Bosco

Prayers and blessings to the administration, staff and students of Cristo Rey Tampa High School who are finishing another successful year of studies. Make sure that our prayers go with them and for them and their families as they prepare for a summer of rest, work, grace and joy.

As usual please remember to pray for all the Salesians in our presence here at MHC . . . especially those at St. Philip Residence. Be assured we will be doing the same for you.

Peace Always!



Fr. Steve Dumais, SDB
Pastor