

# The Power of an Ejaculatory Prayer

A few days before the feast of Mary Help of Christians, St. John Bosco invited his students to profit from the power and affection with which the Blessed Virgin Mary helps each one of her children. Below are the touching words that the Saint spoke, as found in his biographical memoirs.

St. John Bosco

**W**ith my whole soul and being I recommend that each one of you pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary during this novena. This compassionate Mother readily grants the graces we need, especially the spiritual ones. She is most powerful in Heaven and every grace She requests from her Divine Son is immediately granted.

The Church shows us the power and kindness of Mary in the hymn “*si caeli quaeris ianuas, Mariae nomen invoca* – if it is the gates of Heaven you seek, invoke the name of Mary.” If invoking the name of Mary is all it takes to enter Paradise then we can certainly say She is powerful. Her name is depicted as the gate of Heaven and all those who wish to enter should turn to Mary.

*Always invoke  
Mary Help of Christians*

Let us turn to Her and especially to her assistance at the hour of death. In fact, the Church tells us that Mary alone is terrible as an army in battle array, in combat against the enemies of our soul. And, while in the liter-

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St. John Bosco spreading devotion  
Basilica of Our Lady Help

al sense of Sacred Scripture these words are applied to the enemies of the Church, the spirit of the Church itself also applies them to our particular enemies as regards the soul. The mere name of Mary sends the demons into hurried flight. Thus,



Victor Dominguez

Don Bosco's devotion to Mary among his students -  
Feast of Mary Help of Christians, Turin (Italy)

She is called *Auxilium Christianorum* – Help of Christians, against both external enemies as well as internal ones.

Let us entrust ourselves to Her, especially we who celebrate her feast in a special way, as our own, although

it is a feast of the universal Church. Therefore, I recommend to you as much as is within my ability, to always invoke the name of Mary, especially with this ejaculatory prayer: *Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis* – Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us. It is a short prayer and proven to be very effective. I have already recommended it to many people and everyone, or almost everyone, has told me that they obtained good results. Others, who acquired the custom of praying it on their own, have assured me of the same thing.

We all have miseries, we all need help. Therefore, when you wish to obtain some spiritual grace, make a habit of reciting this ejaculatory prayer. By “spiritual grace” is understood that we will be freed from temptations, spiritual afflictions, lack of fervour, shame in the Confessional, making the confession of sins too heavy a burden. If one of you wishes to resist an obstinate temptation, overcome a passion, escape the many dangers of this life, or acquire some great virtue, invoke Mary Help of Christians. These and other spiritual graces are those that we will obtain in greater quantity and do the most good to souls.

***Prayer must be made with perseverance and faith***

It is not really relevant to cite the many names of those who obtained

*We all have miseries, we all need help; when you wish to obtain a grace, recite this ejaculatory prayer*

special graces by invoking Her with this ejaculatory prayer. We have recommended the ejaculatory prayer *Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis* to so many people. Hundreds, even thousands, from within the Oratory and beyond it, and to all of them I said that if you are not heeded in praying this invocation, come and tell me. And until now no one has come to tell me that they did not obtain the grace. I stand corrected: there was someone who came to me this very day complaining that they were not heard.

But, do you know why? I asked him and he admitted that he had the intention of invoking Mary, but afterwards failed to do so. In this case, it is not the Virgin Mary who failed, but us, by neglecting to pray to Her. It is not Mary who fails to heed us, it is us who do not wish to be heeded. Prayer should be made with insistence, with perseverance, with faith and with an honest desire to be attended.

***A letter to St. Bernard...***

I want all of you to try this and to encourage your relatives and friends to do the same. Tell them on my behalf, if they come to visit you on this feast of Mary Help of Christians, or, if they do not come, write them a letter or send them a message: “Don Bosco guarantees that if you wish to obtain some spiritual grace, you will be attended if you pray to Our Lady using this invocation: *Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro nobis*. It being well understood that it must be prayed with the conditions requisite for all prayer. Anyone who is not heeded, please do Don Bosco the favour of writing him to inform him of this.”

If I were to know that one of you prayed well, but in vain, I would immediately write a letter to St. Bernard, telling him that he erred in affirming: “Remember, O most gra-

cious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided..." However, you can rest assured that I have never thought of writing a letter to St. Bernard. And if it were to occur to me, the Holy Doctor would immediately know how to find some defect in the prayer of the supplicant.

I see that you are laughing at the idea of sending a letter to St. Bernard. However, do we not know where to find St. Bernard? Is he not in Heaven?

Of course, to arrive at St. Bernard's residence, the postal coach would have to travel at high speed and for who knows how long. The telegraph would likewise not solve the problem, for although electric current travels a great distance in an instant, there are no wires to reach there. However, to write to the Saints we have a speedier option than coaches, trains or telegraphs. Therefore, do not fear that they will not receive our letters immediately, even when the courier is late.

In fact, even now, as I speak to you, I soar in celestial space with my thoughts faster than lightning, I ascend above the stars, I travel incomprehensible distances and I arrive at the palace of Saint Bernard, who is one of the greatest Saints of Paradise. Therefore, try what I have suggested, and if by chance you are not



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*The devil will no longer have any power over you, he will not succeed in making you commit a sin, and he will be forced to retreat*

heeded, it will not be difficult to send a letter to St. Bernard.

***The devil will no longer have any power over you***

All jesting aside, I want to insist that you engrave in your heart these words: *Maria Auxilium Christianorum, ora pro me* – Mary, Help of Christians, pray for me; that you always pray it in every danger, at the time of every temptation and in all your needs; and that you even ask Mary Help of Christians for the grace to invoke Her. And I promise you that the devil will be liquidated.

Do you know what this means? It means that the devil will no longer have any power over you, he will not succeed in making you commit a sin, and he will be forced to retreat. For my part, in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in other pious practices, I will commend you all to the Lord, so that He may help you, bless you, protect you

and grant you His graces through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. ✧

*Transcribed, with minor adaptations, from: CERIA, SDB, Eugenio. "Memorie biografiche del Beato Giovanni Bosco". Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1932, v.XIII, p.409-411*





Thiago Tamura Nogueira

Msgr. João Scognamiglio Clá Dias praying before the Statue of Our Lady Help of Christians of Tabor Formation House, Caieiras (São Paulo)

## ***Abandonment to Her Motherly Care***

*Let us turn our gaze to Our Lady, Help of Christians, who at every instant intercedes for us with her Divine Son. All the gifts that we have received were obtained through her mediation. Now, “She cannot be the Lady of unfinished words. She is the Lady of finished constructions, of great works brought to completion,” expressively affirms Prof. Plínio Corrêa*

*de Oliveira. So it befits us to abandon ourselves to the motherly care of Mary Most Holy, certain that She Herself will assume the responsibility of bringing to its fullness this bold undertaking of making us perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect (cf. Mt 5:48).*

*Msgr. João Scognamiglio Clá Dias*