

The Blue Rosary Guild: Praying for those who protect us

“St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle”

The familiar, powerful words of the St. Michael Prayer, composed by Pope Leo XIII, achieved heightened significance for me over the course of this past summer, during a time of much violence and unrest in our nation. St. Michael is particularly invoked in matters of spiritual warfare and is the patron of law enforcement, military personnel, first responders and paratroopers.

As someone with a close family member in law enforcement, I watched news reports with a growing sadness. I bore in mind the grueling selection process and training undergone by so many, the tiring work, the countless, unseen sacrifices made daily to ensure our safety. Most particularly, I empathized with the men and women who answered the call to serve and protect, only to encounter sentiments of suspicion, at best, and ill-will, at worst. I took this to prayer. As someone serving the Church as the director of the Office of Family Life Ministry in the Diocese of Metuchen, New Jersey, I began envisioning ways to offer support for law enforcement on behalf of our Catholic community and started the Blue Rosary Guild, a new initiative to offer prayer and support for our protectors.

One day while praying the Rosary, I felt the Holy Spirit encouraging me to make rosaries for law enforcement officers. My husband is adept at crafting Rosaries, and he makes them often. However, the scope and scale of such an undertaking seemed daunting for one individual. A few days later, upon mentioning the idea to my co-workers, I learned that there was

another woman in New Jersey who had been making rosaries for law enforcement in her parish and for Blue Masses throughout the state. In fact, to my surprise, I soon learned that she had made these Rosaries for our Blue Masses in Metuchen in the past, and we still had hundreds at our pastoral center! Her method was to make pocket decade rosaries out of blue twine and to put them into small bags with a St. Michael holy card.

Upon contacting her, I found her willing to share her resources with me, and I began purchasing the materials needed. This method seemed far more manageable, and I marveled at the workings of Our Lady, who was clearly demonstrating that "nothing will be impossible for God" (Lk 1:37). I then began soliciting volunteers through bulletin and social media announcements. At the same time, I contacted the members of our Blue Mass Committee to notify them of the initiative and to ascertain their interest in receiving rosaries for their respective departments. Quickly, I found myself overwhelmed with responses from potential volunteers within the diocesan community (and beyond) and scheduled a Zoom training session after mailing the necessary materials directly to each participant.

Currently, we are on pace to make more than 700 rosaries with individuals, families, schools, youth groups and CCD programs contacting me daily. When an individual comes forth expressing interest in assisting our team, they are sent training videos and, if the procedure seems manageable to that person, the necessary materials are mailed to him or her. When they are finished, the completed rosaries are mailed back to me, and I prepare them to be sent to police departments. All members of the Blue Rosary Guild are asked to pray for those to whom the rosaries are sent (and for all law enforcement officers). Our goal is for rosaries to reach each department within the state and for the guild to spread to other communities throughout the country during this difficult time.

Our Lady has consistently urged us to pray the Rosary daily,

and we are cognizant of the miracles that have been performed as a result. Truly, it is devotion to the Rosary that will have a powerful effect on our world. I call to mind, especially, a schoolteacher recently relating to me that her students enjoyed making the pocket rosaries so much that they intend to form a Rosary Club next year at their school!

In the midst of enormous spiritual warfare, we believe with certainty that through Our Mother's intercession and the invocation of St. Michael, we may all be guarded against the Evil One – most especially, those who protect us. Here I conclude with the words of the anonymous "Policeman's Prayer to St. Michael" as cited in James F. Day's (2020) recent book, ["Saint Michael the Archangel" \(OSV, \\$14.95\)](#): "You know, Saint Michael, from your own experiences with the devil, that the policeman's lot on earth is not always a happy one; but your sense of duty that so pleased God, your hard knocks that so surprised the devil, and your angelic self-control give us inspiration."

May our own "hard knocks" and "self-control" also surprise the devil, such that we become agents of the Lord's hope for a world in need of healing. St. Michael, pray for us!

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