



## BISHOP'S MONTHLY REFLECTION

August 2026

This summer, let us: "Stay prayed up!"

With this welcomed season of summer vacations, we need to remind ourselves, as we break from our work schedules and routines, that, although, it is a time for rest and relaxation, it is not a time for us to take a vacation - a break - from attending Mass and receiving the Eucharist, nor putting off our daily prayers, especially, the Rosary. Pope Benedict XV, reminds us as he declared: "The prayer of the Rosary is perfect, because of the praises it offers, the lessons it teaches, the grace it obtains, and the victories it achieves."

As we enjoy this summer, we can see that our world has not taken a "vacation" from the chaos created by geopolitical ideologies and misguided leadership present in today's world. Nations have refused to "take a break" from the turmoil of hate and division that is resulting in war.

Our present time begs us not to slack off, but to persevere in our prayer. We need to embrace the truth that prayer has the power to change world events. Throughout the history of this imperfect world with and its presence of evil forces, military arms have been utilized as a means of deterrence and defense. For many, this might be seen as an unfortunate reality, but we must never forget, nor doubt, that prayer serves as our *spiritual* means of defense. The Implementation of *spiritual arms* is needed in order to counteract the darkness which is at the heart of our world's problems.

As Catholics, we have been reminded over and over again to pray the Rosary daily as a means of spiritually arming, especially, the family. We have the assurance of Our Lady of the Rosary, that this spiritual weapon will assist and defend the family, the *Domestic Church*, in the midst of ongoing challenges of life, especially, those threatening to destroy the sanctity of life, marriage and family. The Blessed Virgin repeatedly mentioned to the Three Shepherd Children of Fatima: "Pray the rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary, to obtain peace for the world...because only she can help you."

It is during midsummer that we are reminded that this month of August holds a special place in the heart of the Church in relationship to Our Lady as we acknowledge two special days, August 15th and August 22nd. On August 15th we celebrate the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven, body and soul. Then, on August 22nd, we acknowledge the Queenship of Our Lady.

Jesus, as Our Lord and King, presents His Mother to us as His *Queen Mother* - Queen of Heaven and Earth! And it is this Queen, the Mother of the Lord, and our Mother, who is encouraging us to pray the Rosary daily and to meditate on the mysteries relating to the life, death and resurrection of her Son. These Gospel Truths, these Mysteries of the Rosary, have the power to transform the most-hardened of hearts resulting in conversion of mind and heart - peace!

Our Lady, who is Queen of Peace, *maternally* points us to her Son, the Prince of Peace!

It is Jesus, in his mercy and call to repentance, who will bring his peace into this broken world. In relation to this, I recommend for your summer reading and reflection, the book entitled: *The Power of*

*the Rosary* by Gabriel Castillo. And while we continue to pray the Rosary for peace in our troubled world, let us be reminded of the special prayer that is traditionally recited at the end of each decade of the Rosary. It is the prayer that Our Lady taught the Shepherd Children. I believe this prayer sums it up:

“O my Jesus, forgive us our sins,  
save us from the fires of hell.  
Lead all souls to Heaven, especially,  
those most in need of Thy Mercy.”  
Amen.

Brothers and sisters, as we continue to enjoy our summertime, let us integrate the season with a solid prayer life. In that way, we will be well-armed as we continue to pray for mercy and justice. As the Church reminds us, by accepting *mercy* and becoming living instruments of *justice*, it is only then, that we will experience the manifestation of *true* peace. It is a peace that begins within each individual heart and, then, reaches out to the world in hope, together with Our Lady’s promise - the Triumph of her Immaculate Heart!

Our Lady of the Assumption, pray for us.  
Our Lady Queen of Heaven and Earth, pray for us.  
Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.  
Amen.

Brothers and sisters, have a blessed, enjoyable and *peaceful* summer!

In the Peace of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "+ Michael J. Cotta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Bishop Cotta