

Our Lady of Dolours

the patron saint of our parish



Our Lady of Dolours' Feast Day is celebrated each year on 15 September

What does Our Lady of Dolours (Sorrows) mean to us today?

There is great suffering in the world: in people's hearts, in families, amidst nations.

Our faith must be able to 'speak' to us in our suffering.

In the Christian tradition, the image of Mary, a young woman bringing forth a child in a dangerous world, and the image of Mary as an older woman, standing before her son crucified on a cross, have spoken to the hearts of generations of believers.

Our Lady of Dolours takes us to the very heart of the gospel: we are saved through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is no accident that the Feast of Our Lady of Dolours (15 Sept) follows the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross (14 Sept).

In reflecting on Mary as sorrowful mother (note: not 'depressed and embittered' mother) we do so in the context of faith, hope and love.

We remember that God's people are a people of unquenchable hope!

We believe that:

- God never abandons us in our pain.
- Love is stronger than death.
- Whatever 'deathly' experiences we endure, God calls us onwards into fullness of life.
- As the first disciple of Jesus, Mary shows us how to face our trials with courage and hope, trusting that God's love will prevail.
- As a Church we are called to stand in solidarity with all who suffer, and to be a healing presence in the world.

Our Lady of Dolours' in church tradition

The 13th century founders of the Servite order developed a practice of meditating on the seven sorrows (dolours) of Mary.

A beautiful prayer evolved, following much the same meditative pattern as the rosary, using seven groups of seven beads. Hence it is known as the Servite Rosary or the Rosary of Seven Sorrows.

The seven sorrows of Mary



The prophecy of Simeon
Lk 2:33-35



The Flight into Egypt
Mt 2:13-15



The loss of the child Jesus in the temple
Lk 2:41-52



Meeting Jesus on the way to Calvary
Jn 19:17



At the foot of the cross
Jn 19:25-30



Taking Jesus down from the cross
Jn 19:31-37



The burial of Jesus
Jn 19:38-42

The power of Marian prayer

Did you know that, during each week, hundreds of people visit the Marian shrine in our church?

In the week of our parish feast day, or anytime:

- Visit the shrine to pray for the gift of healing for someone carrying a heavy burden.
- Meditate on the sorrows of Mary.

With Our Lady of Dolours may we stand at the foot of the cross with people around the world who are struggling under great burdens such as the effects of poverty, disease, homelessness and war.