

Advantages of Joining the Confraternity

One of the special advantages in membership is the actual presence of our Divine Lord with His graces. For this we have His own sacred promise: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

Hence flow innumerable graces to the members; for where Jesus tarries, there does He dispense His favors, and wherever He is present by special invitation His graces are more profusely lavished.

These many and powerful graces will descend chiefly upon the prayers and good works performed by the Members in obedience to the rules of the Confraternity and the guidance of its Director. For this, too, we have our Savior's own words. He says: "If two of you shall agree upon earth concerning anything, whatsoever they shall ask, it shall be done for them by My Father Who is in heaven."

To the preceding advantages must be added:

1. The special protection of the heavenly patrons of the Confraternity. Our Blessed Mother cannot be far distant from her Divine Son. The confidence of the mothers in choosing Mary, Most Sorrowful, as their chief Patroness, and the blessed parents and children of heaven as their special helpers, will obtain, as it deserves, their very particular protection and powerful intercession.
2. Membership in a Confraternity, one of the most useful in existence.
3. The particular favor, approbation, and hearty blessing of the Holy Father and the Bishops.
4. The instructions, prayers, and care of the spiritual director and the prefects or officers.
5. *Participation* in all the holy Masses which are offered for the Members of the Confraternity.
6. *Participation* in the daily prayers and the good example of the other Members of the Confraternity.
7. *The special communion of prayers and merits of the whole Confraternity.* Wherever a Member of the Confraternity prays for herself and for her children, *she includes also*, in a particular manner, all the other Confraternities of Christian mothers and their children, *all the other Members and their children partake of the fruit of her petition.* The same holds true with regard to the good works. Every Member has as much share in the merit of the good performed by others *as if it were, to a certain extent, her own individual work*; and this union of love, prayer, and merit follows the departed Christian Mothers beyond the grave.
8. Special plenary and partial indulgences offered only to members of the Confraternity (*see below*).

So many and so great are the spiritual benefits which a woman may obtain upon joining a Confraternity of Christian Mothers! As a zealous Member, she will lead a life full of merits; and, consoled and encouraged by the thought of having so many prayers offered up for her, and by the merits of the other Members of the Confraternity, she will at last leave this world having obtained the plenary indulgences granted to the Members of the Confraternity. In heaven she will find the Members of the Confraternity, who preceded her, who, with the love of sisters, will welcome her; she will there find also her children, for whom she has secured eternal happiness by her common sacrifices, sufferings, and prayers, and all, united intimately in love and friendship, will enjoy together for eternity the exceeding great reward of so many good actions.

Special Indulgences for Members of the Confraternity of Christian Mothers

All the Confraternities of Christian Mothers that have been canonically erected and affiliated with Archconfraternity have been granted various Plenary and numerous Partial Indulgences.

Plenary Indulgences

A Christian Mother duly admitted into the Confraternity of Christian Mothers may obtain a plenary indulgence provided she fulfills the usual conditions and makes or renews (at least privately) her promises to observe faithfully the rules of the Confraternity:

1. On the day of her reception,
2. On the feasts of the Holy Family, the Annunciation, the Queenship of Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Gerard Majella, St. Elizabeth and Christ the King.

Partial Indulgences

Christian Mothers duly admitted into the Confraternity of Christian Mothers may obtain a partial indulgence:

1. Four times a year, on days established by her local Confraternity, or on the next Sunday, after having visited the church of the Confraternity and there prayed for the intention of the Pope.
2. As often as she attends a Confraternity conference or lecture.
3. Each time she recites, with a contrite heart, the Christian Mother's Daily Prayer for the Children.
4. For every good work performed according to the intention and rules of the Confraternity or on its behalf.

This last indulgence is, on account of its greatness, worthy of special attention. Every good work performed by a Member of the Confraternity, for the Confraternity in general, or for its Members, for the education and the benefit of her own children, or for the children of one of the Members, obtains for herself, if she performs it in the state of grace and with a pious intention, a remission of part of the temporal punishment due to sin. While the former custom of assigning a time value to partial indulgences is no longer in effect, it may be helpful to Christian Mothers to know that in ages past, the Church assigned these good works the equivalence of sixty days of severe penance!