



William Bouguereau, the artist, was a grieving father mourning the death of his eldest son, Georges, when he painted this masterpiece in 1876. In his lifetime, he lost four of his five children.

## **WHY WOULD PEOPLE COME TO A MASS AT 7PM ON A MONDAY NIGHT?**

### *To Honor Our Lady of Sorrows and Receive Her Comfort!*

On September 15, 2025 more than 28 Masses were celebrated in the Archdiocese of Boston, including one at each of its pilgrimage churches, to honor Our Lady of Sorrows for the intention of all needing consolation, especially grieving parents.

More than 40 additional Masses for this intention were offered all over the United States and in three countries, including Colombia, Nigeria, and Canada. During the Masses, parishes distributed more than 2000 complimentary Seven Sorrows Devotion cards, provided by the Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents.

Several parishes fully embraced the idea of spiritually serving those in need of consolation on this Feast Day by offering additional programs. St. Raphael in Medford, MA, for example, under the direction of Fr. Paul Coughlin, formed a committee, offered a special Music Mass when none was scheduled, and beautifully decorated the church expressly for this program. More than 100 people came to this atypical Mass at 7pm on a Monday night!



As people entered the church, they received an Our Lady of Sorrows Mass Program. On their way out, they received a Seven Sorrows Devotion card and a beautiful handheld comfort cross with the inscription, *"Blest are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."*

Worshippers were invited to write their deceased loved ones' names on cards, which were presented during the Offertory. Fr. Paul's homily was very moving as he challenged each of us to find comfort in Mary's strength at the foot of the cross and to follow her example. He reminded us that she is mother to us all.

Different groups of people needing consolation, including grieving parents, were remembered during the Prayers of the Faithful. After Communion, Fr. Paul invited Diane Monaghan of the Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents, a cooperating sponsor, to give an overview of the ministry and how it has been serving the spiritual needs of grieving parents whose children of any age who have died by any cause, no matter how long ago, since 2009.



After the Mass, the committee offered a wonderful reception in the Parish Center with lots of good food and compassionate conversations. People enjoyed just being with other people who understood and shared their pain. *"It is in consoling that we are consoled"* is the Emmaus Ministry's mantra.

Our Lady, Help of Christians in Waldorf, MD offered a similar bilingual Mass and reception, with more than a hundred people attending. Before Mass, they gathered to pray the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary for all in need of consolation, especially grieving parents.



In Livingston, NJ a small group of parents joined together that day in their nursing home to participate in a Mass broadcast on Direct TV and pray to Our Lady of Sorrows for their fellow grieving parents.

Corpus Christi Parish in Round Lake, NY, started with light refreshments; parents had time to talk and reflect as soft music played. They received a Mass program and were invited to light a candle and write messages to their children. After Mass, everyone gathered around the parish firepit to burn their messages, sending them in prayer with the smoke, to heaven. They received the Seven Sorrows Devotion card on their way out.

A group of grieving parents in the Archdiocese of Boston decided to come together to honor Our Lady of Sorrows and support each other in a unique way. They hosted a Home Mass in a beautiful backyard, celebrated by Emmaus Ministry Chaplain, Fr. Jurgen Liias, followed by a pizza party. Instead of grace, the group prayed the Seven Sorrows of Mary Devotion and remembered their fellow brothers and sisters grieving the death of a child.

If your parish also embraced this Mass in a special way, please let us know what you did by emailing [diane@emfgp.org](mailto:diane@emfgp.org)

To increase devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows, its Patron Saint, the Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents has developed ["Draw Closer to Our Lady of Sorrows,"](#) a comprehensive list of online resources. We invite you to send additions to this list to [diane@emfgp.org](mailto:diane@emfgp.org).

This special program as part of the Jubilee Year of Hope has given each of us a new way to become Pilgrims of Hope by supporting grieving parents and all who are in need of consolation. A new way honoring Our Lady of Sorrows, based on the companionship of others and the most powerful prayer of all... the Mass. Join us in 2026 as we continue to establish this new tradition all over the world by [learning more](#) and [signing up](#).

