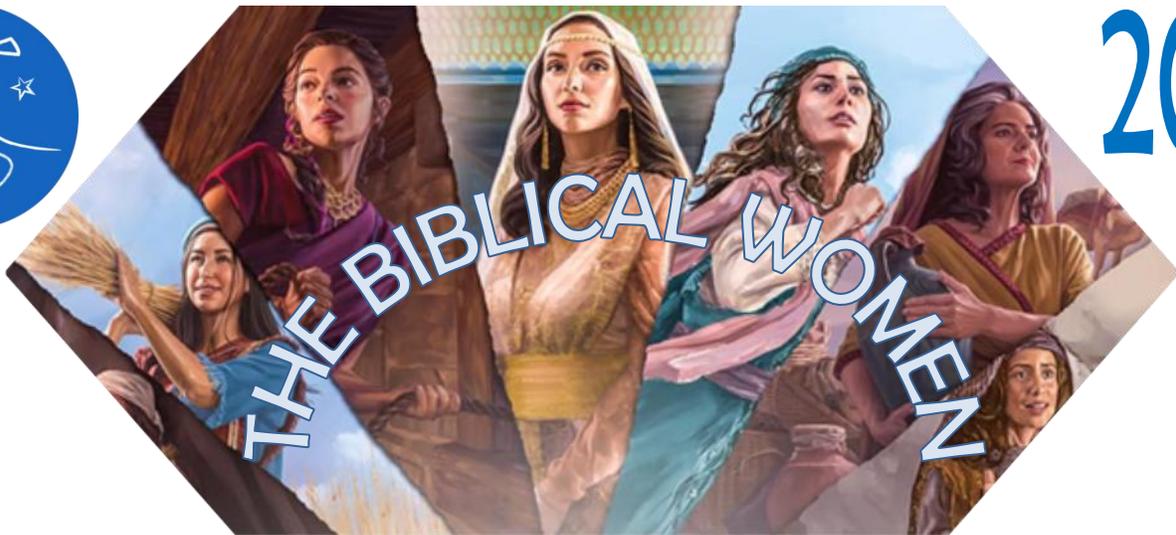


2021



Novena in preparation for the feast of Blessed Francisco Palau, OCD

God throughout the ages chooses women. strong and weak. great and small. Jewish and foreigner. to continue weaving his history of salvation together with them. from the beginning. a woman was the only worthy companion for a man. the one who generates and sustains life. the one who works with a man in the difficult task of transforming the world in a home. a place more and more human. That was the case of Eve. and also of every single woman that appears on the pages of the Bible. No wonder then. when that Francisco Palau looked for the ultimate object of his love. his heart was restless until he found it in a woman. the most beautiful and worthy of love: the Church.

Each one of us is a woman chosen by God. Strong or weak, great or small, of so many countries and different cultures, we are called by God because he needs us to continue weaving the history of salvation. In the biblical women that appear in the writings of Francisco Palau, we can discover inspiration for living our femininity on the level that God dreamt for us. Not only following the trends of the time but listening to what God wants to tell us about our vocation as women. But there is something more in that. In the women of Bible, we can discover, the way Francisco Palau did, the image of the Church which we are called to construct among all, men and women, today. To Palau, each of these figures shows something peculiar which helps him to decipher the ecclesial mystery.

May these days of preparation for his feast be also for us a time of welcoming and appreciating our being women and an inspiration to put all of us. the best and the worst. at the service of this world that continues to wait to give its fruit.

Judith, Esther, Rebecca, Rachel, Deborah, Sara, Mary, and the Woman of the Lamb... They will guide us, accompany us, teach us about who the Church is and who are we as women who live their consecration in the Church and for the Church. And hopefully their example will push us also to continue searching for the new images of the Church that would speak to

contemporary people about those realities that sometimes are really hard to understand. Because the mystery of the Church is inexhaustible, and neither Palau pretended to present some kind of definitive and closed doctrine. He left for us in legacy a very intimate and personal experience of relationship with the One whom he loved above all. May his love and his experience of relationship of love and friendship also sustain our struggles and searching for the new relationships capable of giving meaning to our lives and the lives of those who together with us, from different positions and perspectives, continue constructing the universal fraternity.

There is a prayer that the Jews say the night of Sabath. It is the blessing they ask for their daughters. Listen to it feeling being blessed by the God of life:

May the Lord make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

May the Holy One bless and keep you.

May the Holy One illumine you and have mercy on you.

May the Holy One turn His face on you and give you peace. Amen.