

Vatican City, Sep 29, 2018 / 08:23 am (CNA).

Pope Francis has asked **all Catholics to pray the rosary daily** during the month of October, asking Mary and Saint Michael the Archangel to intercede for the protection of the Church in a moment of "spiritual turbulence."

A Sept. 29 statement from the Vatican said that Pope Francis had recently affirmed that prayer "is the weapon against the Great Accuser who 'goes around the world seeking to accuse.' Only prayer can defeat him."

"The Russian mystics and the great saints of all the traditions advised, in moments of spiritual turbulence, to shelter beneath the mantle of the Holy Mother of God," the statement added. The pope said that recitation of the rosary would invoke Mary's intercession, placing the Church under her "protective mantle."

The statement also encouraged the prayer of *Sub Tuum Praesidium*: "*We fly to Thy protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.*"

The pope did not specify the "spiritual turbulence" to which he referred, but did say that prayer could help the Church to become "more aware of the faults, the errors and the abuses committed in the present and in the past, and committed to combating without any hesitation, so that evil may not prevail."

Pope Francis also encouraged that Catholics **end the rosary with the recitation of the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel**, composed by Pope Leo XII:

***"Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen."***