

## **The Power of the Rosary**

**St. Pope John Paul II** in his 2002 Apostolic Letter, "On the Most Holy Rosary," quotes **Pope Leo XIII's** words, "*The rosary is an effective spiritual weapon against the evils affecting society.*"

**The month of October like May** is dedicated to **Our Lady**, specifically, **to Our Lady of the Rosary!**

In the **Holy Rosary**, we greet **Mary** with "**Ave Maria**"—**Hail Mary** and the numerous **Hail Mary's** offered during **Rosary** can be likened to offering to **Mary** a "**wreath of roses.**"

**The word "rosary"** in Latin is "**Rosarium**" literally meaning a "**wreath or a crown of roses.**"

**Therefore**, every time we **pray** the "rosary" we are actually **offering** to **Mary, Our Heavenly Mother**, a "**wreath of roses.**" That is, a "**beautiful "crown of roses!"**"

According to **Catholic tradition**, the **Rosary** was instituted by the **Blessed Virgin Mary** herself when **She** introduced it to **St. Dominic** in the **13<sup>th</sup> century**.

By the **15<sup>th</sup> century**, the **Rosary** was **declared** as an approved universal **Church prayer**. The **Dominicans** enthusiastically spread the devotion of **praying the Rosary**.

The **Rosary** “focuses” on the **life** of **Jesus** through **Mary!** We find this in the **Gospel of St. Luke.** **Pope St. Pius V** structured the **Rosary** around the **15 mysteries**, and on **October 7, 1571**, he instituted the **Feast of Our Lady of Victory**, which later became known as the **Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary!**

**Why this Feast and why on this particular day, October 7th?**

A little **historical** background is first needed. In **1571**, **Christianity** was **saved** at the **Battle of Lepanto**. **Christian Europe** had been **threatened** with **ruin and slavery** by the **Ottoman Empire**, ruled by an **Islamic Sultan**. **Pope Pius V** arranged a **Crusade** to **battle** with this **Empire** whose **naval fleet** was much **larger** and **stronger**.

**The Pope implored** urgently the **faithful** to pray the **Rosary!** **Our Lady** heard and answered their **fervent prayer**, resulting in a major victory for the smaller and weaker **Christian fleet**.

**Pope Pius V** in **thanksgiving** for this great **victory** **established** on **October 7<sup>th</sup>**, the **Feast of Our Lady Victory**, which later became known as the **Feast of Our Lady of Rosary**. Since **1571** to this very **day**, **Popes** down the **centuries** have **encouraged** the faithful to pray the **Holy Rosary**. For **example**, we have **Pope St. Leo XIII**.

He is known as "**The Rosary pope**," and he once stated: "***I am convinced that the Rosary, if devoutly used, is bound to benefit not only the individual but society at large.***"

**Pope Pius XI** also **encouraged** the praying of the **Rosary**, when in **1937, two years before** the beginning of the **War World II** foresaw the wave of **National Socialism (Nazism)** and the **political ideology** of **Joseph Stalin**, marked by a **mass religious persecution**.

By praying the **Rosary** at home, **Pope Pius** added, "***it will serve to overcome the enemies of God and Religion.***"

Then, in **2002**, **Pope St. John Paul II** added **five new mysteries**, called the **Luminous Mysteries**.

They **completed** the **Public life of Christ Jesus**. These **mysteries** focus on those **three-years** of **Our Savior's Ministry for Salvation of Souls**. **Pope St. John Paul II** once wrote: "***To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ.***"

**Pope Francis**, in our modern times, as the **Church** continues to face ***various and challenges and crises***, asked the **faithful** to pray the **Rosary** daily!

Also, during his **pontificate**, the **Pope** has popularized the powerful **Marian devotion** of **Our Lady of Undoer of Knots**. This call to **pray the Rosary** has been the central theme of **Our Lady** in all her apparitions over the centuries.

But in the unforgettable **apparition at Fatima, Portugal, on October 13, 1917, She** identified **Herself** to the three shepherd children under this title: **"I am the Lady of the Rosary!"**

**She encouraged** them to **pray** and offer **sacrifices** for the **conversion of sinners. Our Heavenly Mother** exhorted them: ***"Recite the rosary every day to obtain the peace for the world and the end of the war."***

Can you imagine that by **praying** this simple **prayer** known as the **Holy Rosary** "peace" will befall on the world bringing the end of **wars and conflicts!** We need to pray the **Rosary** especially in these times of conflicts and wars around the world.

If some of you are **not** in the practice of **praying a daily rosary**, I would **encourage** you to simply begin by praying just **"one decade"** a day. That is, **1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and one Glory Be**, for **three** specific intentions: ***for your needs, for your family needs and for world peace!***

### **How powerful is the prayer of the Rosary?**

Recently I came across a correspondence of an **Italian exorcist** who was praying over a possessed person on the **Feast Day of Our Lady of the Rosary** and **commanded** the **demon** afflicting the person to confess on the power of **Our Lady's Rosary**. Of course, demons have great difficulty to speak about her because she possesses what they lack: **purity, humility, and obedience.**

They cannot even pronounce her name **Mary**, instead they refer to **Our Blessed Mother** as “her” as “she” or “that woman.” Anyway, during the sessions three affirmations emerged which underscore the power of the **HolyRosary**.

**One**, the demon confessed, “**That even when someone just simply holds it (the rosary) in their hand, it bothers me. I cannot stand it!**”

**Two**, headmitted, “**the person that prays the Rosary in the family has a particular protection by Her (Mary) and ‘we cannot enter’ into that house. God does not permit that!**”

**The third confession that the demon was forced to make is the most astounding when he admitted the following:**

*“In that family even if only ONE person prays the Rosary, such a person can save the rest of the family.”*

**This should give each of us the encouragement to keep on praying even if we are praying alone in our family.**

I will close with **two quotes** from **two well-known priests** who **loved** praying the **Rosary** and spreading its **devotion**:

First, ***Fr Patrick Peyton’s, the Rosary priest, who encouraged family prayer, especially the **Rosary**, who often said:***

***“The family that prays together stays together.”***

**Second**, from a great priest and saint who loved **Our Lady** so much that he prayed many, many, rosaries daily, who said:

***“Some people are so foolish that they think they can go through life without the help of the Blessed Mother.***

***Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary,***

***for Her Rosary is the weapon against the evils of the world today. All graces given by God pass through the Blessed Mother.”***

**St. Pio of Pietrelcina, affectionately known as Padre Pio!**