

October the Month of the Most Holy Rosary

"Mary's Psalter."

7th October - the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

In this month of October, let us consider the beautiful prayer of the Rosary as a means that we too can use in order to draw closer to Jesus and Mary by meditating on the great mysteries of our salvation.

The month of October (Overview - Calendar) is dedicated to the Most Holy Rosary. This is primarily due to the fact that the liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated annually on October 7th. It was instituted to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary in gratitude for the protection that she gives the Church in answer to the praying of the Rosary by the faithful.

Since the prayers of the Rosary come from such excellent sources — from Our Lord Himself, from inspired Scripture, and from the Church — it is not surprising that the Rosary is so dear to our Blessed Mother and so powerful with heaven.

The power of the Rosary as seen in its effects, and we find a great abundance of proofs of its wonderful value. Through out history, many great triumphs have been attributed to the Rosary. Many are the favours granted to private individuals through its devout recitation: there are few devoted users of the Rosary who cannot testify to experiencing its power in their own lives.

Current scholarship traces the development of the Rosary back to the High Middle Ages period. According to an account by fifteenth-century Dominican, Alan de la Roch, Mary appeared to St. Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and doing severe penances because of his lack of success in combating the Albigensian heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight against the heretics and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon, explained its uses and efficacy, and told him to preach it to others.

Overtime many Popes have contributed to help increase devotion to the Rosary by their writings. However the practice of dedicating the entire month of October to the Holy Rosary developed toward the end of the last century. Pope Leo XIII (papacy: 1878-1903) strongly promoted the increase of devotion to the Blessed Mother by encouraging the constant use of the Rosary.

The Rosary is primarily a scriptural prayer. It is Christocentric setting forth the entire life of Jesus Christ, the passion, death, resurrection and glory. This can be summarized by the traditional phrase used by Pope Pius XII (papacy: 1939-1958) that the Rosary is "a compendium of the entire Gospel." The Rosary draws its mysteries from the New Testament and is centered on the great events of the Incarnation and Redemption. But the Rosary honours and contemplates Mary too, for the same reason that the Liturgical Year does likewise, because of the mission she received from God, her life is most closely linked with the mysteries of Jesus Christ, and there is no one who has followed in the footsteps of the Incarnate Word more closely and with more merit than she. The authentic Rosary is a happy combination of vocal and mental prayer, each of which is essential to the devotion.

Pope John Paul II called the Rosary his favourite prayer, in which we meditate with Mary upon the mysteries which she as a mother meditated on in her heart.

"The Rosary retains an unaltered value and intact freshness."

Pope Paul VI (papacy: 1963-1978)

"Today, when dangers far greater than those of the ancient Turks threaten not only Christianity but all civilization, we are urged by our Blessed Mother to turn again to the Rosary for help.

If men in sufficient numbers do this, and at the same time carry out the other conditions that she has laid down, we have the greater reason for confidence that we will be delivered from our dangers."

Mary in our Life by Fr. William G. Most

Meditation on this cycle of Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries makes the Rosary not only "a breviary or summary of the Gospel and of Christian life," (*Ingravescentibus malis*) but also a compendium of the Liturgical Year.

Therewith the Rosary stands revealed as a dynamic teacher and nurturer of Christian faith, morality, and spiritual perfection, fostering in various ways faith, hope, charity, and the other virtues, and mediating special graces, all to the end that we may become more and more like unto Christ.

Mariology, Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M.

A Brief History of the Rosary

The traditional story of the Rosary was that Mary herself appeared to Saint Dominic in the twelfth century. At that time, tradition says she gave him the Rosary and promised Dominic that if he spread devotion to the rosary, his religious order would flourish. It is quite true that Dominic was quite devoted to the Blessed Mother, but no one knows for sure if Our Lady herself gave Dominic the Rosary. If she did, it is quite certain that she did not give him a Rosary that looks like the one we have today.

Originally the Rosary had 150 beads, the same number of psalms in the Bible. In the twelfth century, religious orders recited together the 150 Psalms as a way to mark the hours of the day and the days of the week. Those people who didn't know how to read wanted to share in this practice, so praying on a string of 150 beads or knots began as a parallel to praying the psalms. It was a way that the illiterate could remember the Lord and His mother throughout the day.

This first Rosary was prayed as we do today, a person would pass their fingers over each bead and say a prayer, usually the "Our Father".

The "Hail Mary"

The Hail Mary owes its origin to the Rosary. When people said the Rosary in the twelfth century, Gabriel's greeting "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee" was often said along with the Our Father. Later, Elizabeth's greeting "blessed are you among women" was added. It was not until the sixteenth century that the words "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death" were added.

Various people have added other things to the Rosary over the centuries. In the fifteenth century, the Rosary was divided into fifteen brackets (or decades) and a Dominican monk assigned mysteries to each of the decades. These mysteries were events in the Life of Jesus as written in the Gospels. By meditating on these events even the illiterate could know the stories in the Bible. These decades were the same as ours except for the last two Glorious mysteries. In those two, the Coronation and the Assumption together made up the fourteenth decade and the fifteenth decade was the Last Judgment.

On October 16, 2002, Pope John Paul II, declared that the following year would be the "Year of the Rosary". For the first time in centuries a change was made in the Rosary. The Pope added and defined 5 new mysteries that concerned events in the public life of Jesus. These new mysteries were called the "Luminous Mysteries" or "Mysteries of Light". Today's complete rosary is now made up of twenty decades of the Hail Mary, separated by an Our Father and a Glory Be and sometimes the Fatima prayer. Evidence again that the Rosary is a living prayer that grows with the Church. We usually break the Rosary into four sets. The four sets are The Joyful Mysteries, The Sorrowful Mysteries, The Glorious Mysteries, and the Luminous Mysteries. One set is prayed on a Rosary that has five decades. Each set is prayed on designated days of the week.

Despite all the additions and changes, the important core of the Rosary has always remained the same. It is a way for God's people to make holy the day, and to remember the life of Jesus and His mother. May these humble origins always be with us each time we pray the Rosary.

Praying The Rosary - Mary's Prayer

Why say the Rosary?

Through the meditations of the complete Rosary one recalls and has impressed on his mind, the Popes tell us, "the chief mysteries of the Christian religion," "the mysteries of our Redemption," "the great mysteries of Jesus and His Mother united in joys, sorrows, and triumphs." The twenty mysteries are divided into four equal groups, known as "The Joyful," "The Sorrowful," "The Glorious," and "The Luminous Mysteries."

We learn our prayers. One of the coolest things about the rosary is that you knock out six prayers in one. The prayers in the Rosary are, the Apostles Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be, the Fatima prayer, and the Hail Holy Queen (not to mention the Sign of the Cross). Learning these prayers will help us in personal prayer and prayers in Church.

It is an opportunity to build community. We share intentions before praying. This establishes a purpose to praying the rosary giving us something to think about.

It teaches us to be quiet. Saying the rosary can be an opportunity to slow down, be quiet and focus on God. Repetitive prayer can be a very effective way to centre oneself.

It helps us to become comfortable with intercessions to Mary. To put this simply: we ask Mary for prayers just as we ask each other for prayers. The difference is that Mary has a special link to her Son through whom all prayers are offered and also Mary is our mother.

It teaches us about the Scriptures. Many people do not realise that praying the rosary is meant to be a meditation upon the life of Christ and Mary in the Scriptures. Although not every mystery of the rosary can be found specifically in the Bible, the rosary can be an effective way to explore the stories from the Bible.



Pray the Rosary



How do we pray the Rosary?

Each day people pray 5 decades of the Rosary and each decade represents an event in the life of Jesus and His mother. The five decades prayed each day make up a mystery. There are four sets of mysteries on the Rosary

On Monday and Saturday, meditate on the "Joyful Mysteries"
 On Thursday, meditate on the "Luminous Mysteries"
 On Tuesday and Friday, meditate on the "Sorrowful Mysteries"
 On Wednesday and Sunday, meditate on the "Glorious Mysteries"

The Joyful Mysteries	The Luminous Mysteries	The Sorrowful Mysteries	The Glorious Mysteries
The Annunciation of the Coming of the Lord to Mary	The Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist	The Agony of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane	The Resurrection of Jesus from Death
The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth	The Miracle of the Churning of Water into Wine at Cana	The Scourging of Jesus at the Pillar	The Ascension of Jesus to His Father in Heaven
The Nativity of the Lord	The Preaching of the Gospel by Jesus	The Crowning of Jesus with Thorns	The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on Pentecost
The Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple	The Transfiguration of Jesus	The Carrying of the Cross to the Place of Execution	The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven
The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple	The Institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper	The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus	The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

The Rosary each day is broken up into the following

An Introduction

Bless yourself with the Sign of the Cross, recite the Creed, recite the Our Father, three Hail Marys, Glory be, Fatima prayer.

Five decades of the Rosary

Each made up of an Our Father, ten Hail Marys, Glory be Fatima prayer.

Conclusion

Hail Holy Queen

O God, whose ...

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory be (for the Pope)

Memorare

Sign of the Cross

"Mission Together"



"A Weapon for World Peace"

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of Heaven and Earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell;
the third day He arose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God, the Father
Almighty;

from thence He shall come to judge the
living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic
Church,

the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life
everlasting.

Amen.



Our Father

Our Father, who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace.
The Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.



Glory be

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.

Amen

Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus,
forgive us our sins;
save us from the fires of hell
and bring all souls to Heaven,
especially those who most need thy mercy.
Amen

