



The Most Holy Rosary

by Saint Louis de Montfort



ur Lord, Jesus Christ, told us to follow His example and to pray always – because of our endless need of prayer, the darkness of our minds, our ignorance and weakness, and because of the strength and number of our enemies. Anyone who really gives heed to this Our Master’s commandment will surely not be satisfied with saying the Rosary once a year, or once a week, but will say it every day and will never fail in this – even though the only obligation he has is that of saving his own soul.

“We ought always to pray and not to faint.” These are the eternal words of Our Blessed Lord Himself. And we must believe His words and abide by them if we do not want to be damned. You can understand them in any way you like, as long as you do not interpret them as the world does and only observe them in a worldly way.

Our Lord gave us the true explanation of His words – by means of the example He left us. “I have given you an example that as I have done to you, so you do also.” And “He passed the whole night in the prayer of God.” As though His days were not long enough, He used to spend the night in prayer. Over and over again He said to His Apostles: “Watch ye and pray”; the flesh is weak, temptation is everywhere and always around you. If you do not keep up your prayers, you shall fall ... And because some of them evidently thought that these words of Our Lord constituted a counsel only, they completely missed their point. This is why they fell into temptation and sin, even though they were in the company of Jesus Christ.

If you want to lead a fashionable life and belong to the

world – by this I mean if you do not mind falling into mortal sin from time to time and then going to Confession, and if you wish to avoid conspicuous sins which the world considers vile and yet at the same time commit “respectable sins” – then, of course, there is no need for you to say so many prayers and Rosaries. You only need to do very little to be “respectable”: a tiny prayer at night and morning, an occasional Rosary which may be given to you for your penance, a few decades of Hail Marys said on your Rosary (but haphazardly and without concentration) when it suits your fancy to say them – this is quite enough. If you did less, you might be branded as a freethinker or a profligate; if you did more, you would be eccentric and a fanatic. But if you want to lead a true Christian life and genuinely want to save your soul and walk in the saints’ footsteps and never, never, fall into mortal sin – if you wish to break Satan’s traps and divert his flaming darts, you must always pray as Our Lord taught and commanded you to do.



If you really have this wish at heart, then you must at least say your Rosary or the equivalent, every day. I have said “at least” because probably all that you will accomplish through your Rosary will be to avoid mortal sin and to over-

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Under Angel Wings

Sister Maria Antonia

Our Guardian Angels are always with us, acting as protectors and guides, observing our every action. Though we cannot see them or hear them, we should remain confident in their presence. We have as a testament of the existence of Guardian Angels, the accounts of a few privileged souls who were blessed with a more intimate relationship with their Angels, sensing their actual presence and in some miraculous way, seeing and hearing them. One such favored person was a Brazilian girl named Cecy Cony, who later became Sister Maria Antonia. Since her early childhood, this simple and pious girl saw and heard her Guardian Angel, whom she called her "New Friend". Cecy's Angel kept her from lying, stealing, revenge, immodesty and other sins, and guarded her from many dangers. The constant guidance of her Angel helped Cecy to grow in virtue and holiness. In the following account, taken from her autobiography, Sister Maria Antonia describes an instance in which her beloved Angel led her to make a special sacrifice for Our Lady:

"At the beginning of the school year in 1914 Padre Godofredo said to me in my first Confession after the opening of school: 'You must begin at once to prepare yourself to receive the great grace of making your profession as a Child of Mary next December.' I had been received as an aspirant in the Sodality of the Children of Mary in December, 1913. Continuing, he said: 'Do not allow one little sacrifice to pass by without offering it to Our Lady.' On the afternoon of that very day our heavenly Mother asked the first small sacrifice of Her little child.

"On arriving home from school, I found upon my desk a package which my father had bought for me. It was a beautiful student's supply kit, made of varnished wood and containing pencils, a ruler, pen, penknife, erasers, paper, a pen cleaner, extra pen nibs, a supply of pencil leads – in fine, everything that a student would need. Since the previous year I had wished to have such a kit. I had seen several, as some of the other students already owned them. More than once I

had told my father what I wanted.

"How great was my happiness when I finally owned such a student's kit! I spent hours admiring my new treasure. Before the usual time I began to prepare my lessons solely for the pleasure of using my marvelous supply case. My old case now seemed ugly and useless. I did not want to use it any more. I resolved to give it, with everything in it, to Padre Domingos after Mass the following day. He would be glad to get it for the poor students of his night school.

"I had finished my lessons for the following day. Still overflowing with happiness, I began to clean and arrange the old case. Then I wrapped it up neatly, so that it was ready to be taken to Padre Domingos. When it was wrapped up in the very same paper that I had taken off the new case, and tied with the very same twine, I placed it on my desk. Then I was suddenly assaulted by a heart-rending thought: 'Instead of giving the old case to Padre Domingos, why should I not give him the new one?' This daring and sickening idea was immediately succeeded by another thought, which tried to stifle the first one: 'No! I cannot do that. Padre Domingos always asks for schoolbooks and school supplies for which we have no further use.'

"Now my mind began to wage a bitter battle. I was completely opposed to the first idea. I thought of another objection to it: 'I need this new student's supply case, as I am now in a higher class and nearly all the students have similar school sets.' My mind was made up. I would take the old case to Padre Domingos. I picked it up to take it to my room, as if I wanted to add assurance to my decision.

"I had not reached the threshold of the door when the holy hand of my new Friend descended gently on my shoulder and a new thought entered my mind: 'This could be the first small sacrifice made in honor of my heavenly Mother, that I might deserve to be professed as a child of Mary.' My mind ceased

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come temptation. This is because you are exposed to the strong current of the world's wickedness by which many a strong soul is swept away; you are in the midst of the thick, clinging darkness which often blinds even the most enlightened souls; you are surrounded by evil spirits who, being more experienced than ever and knowing that their time is short, are more cunning and more effective in tempting you.

It will indeed be a marvel of grace wrought by the Most

Holy Rosary if you manage to keep out of the clutches of the world, the devil and the flesh, and avoid mortal sin and gain Heaven! If you do not want to believe me, at least learn from your own experience. I should like to ask you if, when you were in the habit of saying no more prayers than people usually say in the world and saying them the way they usually say them, you were able to avoid serious faults and sins that were grievous but which seemed nothing much to you in your blindness. Now at last you must wake up, and if you want to live and die without sin, at least mortal sin, pray unceasingly; say your Rosary every day. ■

Mary's Spirit of Prayer

by St. Alphonsus de Liguori

No other soul on earth ever practiced so perfectly as the Blessed Virgin the great lesson taught by our Savior that *we must always pray, and not lose heart* (Lk. 18:1). No one can give us a better example, says St. Bonaventure, of how necessary it is to persevere in prayer. St. Albert the Great asserts that, after Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Lady excelled all souls who ever existed or ever will exist in Her spirit of prayer. Her prayer was continual and persevering. From the very first moment that She had use of reason (which was, as we have said in the discourse on Her Nativity, the first moment of Her existence) She began to pray. So that She could devote Herself still more to this pious practice, She retired into the solitude of the Temple when She was only three years old. There, as She revealed to St. Elizabeth of Hungary, in addition to the other hours set aside for prayer She always rose at midnight and went before the altar with Her petitions to God. Later in life (as we learn from Odilo), so as to meditate more fervently on the sufferings of Jesus, She frequently visited the places of Our Lord's nativity, passion, and burial. Moreover, She prayed with the most complete recollection of spirit, free from every distraction and inordinate affection. Nor did any exterior occupation ever interfere with the light of Her unceasing contemplation, as Denis the Carthusian assures us. Because of Her love of prayer, Mary was so enamored of solitude that, as She told St. Bridget, when She lived in the Temple She avoided association even with Her own parents. St. Jerome comments on the words of the prophet Isaias: *The Virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and shall name Him Emmanuel* (Isa. 7:14). He says that in Hebrew the word "virgin" properly means a "retired virgin." So we see that the prophet even foretold the love Mary would have for solitude. Richard of St. Lawrence says that the angel addressed Her in these words: *The Lord is with Thee*, because of Her great love for seclusion. That is why St. Vincent Ferrer maintains that Mary "left Her house only to go to the Temple, and that when She did so Her demeanor was modest and She

kept Her eyes cast down." For the same reason, when She went to visit St. Elizabeth She went with haste. This prompted St. Ambrose to admonish virgins to avoid the world and public appearances as much as possible. St. Bernard claims that it was Mary's love of prayer and solitude that prompted Her to "avoid the society of men and useless conversation with them." The Holy Spirit called Her a turtle-dove: *Thy cheeks are as beautiful as the turtle-dove's* (Cant. 1:9). According to Vergello, this is a reference to Mary's love of seclusion and Her spirit of recollection. Turtle-doves were known to seek solitude and to flee from association with other birds. Mary lived such a retired life in the world that the words of the Canticles

apply to Her: *Who is She that goeth up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke?* (Cant. 3:6). Commenting on these words, the Abbot Rupert says: "You came up as from a desert, because You had a soul that loved solitude." Philo assures us that "God only speaks to souls in solitude." Holy Writ says the same thing in the prophecy of Osee: *I will lead Her into the desert and speak to Her heart.* (Osee 2:16). "Happy solitude!" exclaims St. Jerome, "where God converses familiarly with His own." "Yes," says St. Bernard, "solitude and silence force the soul to leave the thought of earth behind and to meditate in heavenly things." Most holy

Virgin, help us to love prayer and retirement, so that we may detach ourselves from the love of creatures and may aspire only to God and Heaven where we hope one day to see You, to praise You, and to love You, together with Jesus, Your Son, for ever and ever. ■

Amen.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to Thee, and to show my devotion to Thee, I consecrate to Thee this day, my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Wherefore good Mother as I am Thine own, keep me, guard me, as Thy property and possession.

Amen.

We'd like to hear from YOU! Write or call:

The Editor,

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Dear Father Gruner:

Thank you for all the letters you have written to me. I have read them all. Forgive me for not responding. You see I am not a good writer of letters, that is because I do not know what to write.

I would like to let you know I really appreciate everything you and the Apostolate are doing. I am truly grateful to you because I have learned a lot about Our Dear Lady and about praying the Rosary. I am praying that you can continue with your hard work.

Sincerely,

Sonya B., ON

Dear Father Gruner,

Enclosed is a letter I wrote to Pope John Paul II. If it is answered with a reply to my question, I will mail it to you. Keep up the good work.

Dear Pontiff:

It was reported by the news media in the United States of America that you appealed for world prayer to avert war. It quoted you as saying, "At this hour of international worry we all feel the need to look to God and beg Him to grant us the great gift of peace."

If every man, woman and child on planet earth prayed to God to grant peace to the world it will be to no avail. God told you through the Blessed Virgin Mary to command and order all the Roman Catholic bishops of the world in their cathedrals to publicly join you, on a day of your choice, to consecrate Russia to

the Immaculate Heart of Mary. When you do this Russia will be converted to Catholicism and there will be a period of peace.

No man or men, with all the armed forces of the universe, can bring peace to the world. Only you can by implementing God's plan for peace.

With all due respect and reverence for Your exalted office as vicar of Christ there is a clear and present danger to the Church and the world which only Your Holiness can address.

Question: If you sincerely want peace why don't you follow Heaven's Peace Plan?

Our Lady of Peace, Pray for Us.

Walter M., TX

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to be troubled by conflicting thoughts. I looked at the holy face of my new Friend, which presented that aspect of severity customary when my Guardian Angel was awaiting some generous decision from his little friend. I understood and made my decision accordingly. I resolved to take the new school supply kit to Padre Domingos. He could use it as a prize for the best student in his night school. I returned to my desk and seated myself. In a few moments I had wrapped and tied the new school set just as I had received it. Before I took it to my room, I looked at the holy face of my new Friend. The 'sweetness' I saw thereon repaid me a hundred-fold for my small sacrifice. On the following day at the end of Holy Mass I did not return to school with the other children, as I had to speak to Padre Domingos. He seemed to have expected my small gift, for he gave me a beautiful holy picture of the Blessed Virgin. This made me very happy, for Our Lady seemed to say that She had accepted with great joy the small sacrifice I had offered to Her." ■

"The final battle is where one side will be victorious and the other side will suffer defeat. Hence from now on we must choose sides. Either we are for God or we are for the devil. There is no other possibility."

... Sister Lucy

The Devil's Final Battle is taking place right now and Father Paul Kramer and other authors reaffirm Sister Lucy's warning in this hard-hitting, masterful style. First, the authors take us back to 1917, and the great Miracle of the Sun, so that all may believe in the messengers and the Message.

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Because of the thorough research and inherent ability to see through the smoke of Satan, Father Kramer and the other authors do not hesitate to put names to the powerful men who are trying to destroy the devil's greatest foe, the Catholic Church.

The Devil's Final Battle must be read as a warning, and the information it contains passed on to alert other, less-informed Catholics. And it must be used as a weapon in this, the final battle.



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