



APOSTLES THE ROSARY

Newsletter

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The Spread of the Rosary

by John Corbett, S.J.

A mere statement of the nature of the Rosary devotion is sufficient to show its sublime character and at the same time the charming simplicity that makes it suitable for everybody. Even the little child can learn to say the Rosary, and the most learned theologian or greatest saint can never exhaust the profound mysteries of which it is made up. The Rosary is a prayer of Faith, amplifying, as it were, the articles of the Apostles' Creed from which we learn that Jesus Christ was "born of the Virgin Mary," "suffered under Pontius Pilate," and "rose from the dead."

The combination of vocal and mental prayer is most happy. While we have on our lips the words of the *Our Father*, taught to us by Christ the Lord Himself, and the *Hail Mary*, embracing the salutations of the angel and of St. Elizabeth with the Church's touching petition for Our Lady's intercession now and at the last moment of our lives, our minds are engaged in thoughts about the most fruitful, the most instructive and the most beautiful mysteries of Our Lord and Our Lady.

How greatly we need in our lives examples of purity and work and Christian patience! How we long for forgiveness of sin and consolation! All these are in the Rosary, where we behold Our Lord as the lovely Child, or the Lamb slain on the Cross, or the Lord of life and death risen from the grave. These mysteries, too, present Our Lord to us in union with His Mother and by that very fact bring Our Lord closer to us, as the Son of Man, like unto us in everything save sin. Moreover, they help us to see these wonderful events, standing at Mary's side and, as it were, with Her eyes and with some of Her sympathy.

It is not surprising that the Rosary should have proved so efficacious in the history of the Church. First of all, it is a prayer and as such there are attached to it all the promises of our Divine Master. It combines in itself the power of vocal prayer and of meditation, of personal prayer and prayer in common. It calls for a certain length of time and thus wins the blessing of persevering prayer. It is a simple prayer, likely to be disregarded by the proud and the worldly, but all the

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more dear to the Heart of Christ. Finally it is prayer that fills our souls with confidence, because it is approved by Holy Church, Her worldwide prayer for every class of people; and because it is a devotion to Our Blessed Lady, Whom we regard

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Novena to the Immaculate Conception

Each year we ask members of the Apostles of the Rosary to join together in a true community of prayer and sacrifice for all members of Our Lady's Apostolate, praying for one another and for the sanctification of the world under the mantle of Our Lady of Fatima. December 8 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. Let us each pray the following novena, composed by St. Francis of Assisi, in honor of this privilege of Hers. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the solemn declaration of the Immaculate Conception by Blessed Pope Pius IX.

Novena to the Immaculate Conception

Hail, Holy Lady,
Most Holy Queen,
Mary, Mother of God,
Virgin made Church;
Chosen by the most holy Father in Heaven,
consecrated by Him,
with His most holy beloved Son
and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.
On You descended and in You still remains
all the fullness of grace
and every good.
Hail, His Palace.

His Tabernacle.
Hail, His Robe.
Hail, His Handmaid.
Hail, His Mother.
And Hail, all holy Virtues
Who, by the grace
and inspiration of the Holy Spirit,
are poured forth into the hearts of the faithful
so that, faithless no longer,
they may be made faithful servants of God
through You.
Amen.

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as our Protectress and Advocate, the refuge of sinners, the Mother of mercy.

History records how powerful the Rosary was in the days when the Turks threatened the destruction of Christian civilization. We have in the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary a yearly reminder of the great victory at Lepanto in 1571. It is a strong bulwark against the spirit of infidelity and the corruption of morals so widespread today. Faith, prayer and grace are the weapons of God to overcome the enemies of our Christian people. They are all united in the Rosary. Wherever this devotion has been widely practiced, faith and purity are resplendent.

The power of the Rosary is manifested also in individual lives. From it the Christian obtains strength to avoid sin, to resist his evil inclinations, to practice virtue in the fulfillment of daily duties and to grow in Christian perfection. The recollection necessary to say it well is an antidote against the spirit of levity and worldly distraction.

While we are engaged in conversation with the Blessed Virgin, Her beautiful example passes before our eyes in those very circumstances of Her life that correspond so well to our own lives of work and prayer and suffering and future reward. The sweet fragrance of Her virtues must exert an influence upon us and make us pure and pious, diligent and patient. As we pray, She

turns upon us Her eyes of compassion and obtains for us the grace to imitate what we see in Her life. As mother and teacher, She molds our hearts, just as we were taught by our earthly mothers in childhood.

We often envy the early Christians the privilege they had of hearing from Our Blessed Lady's lips the account of Our Lord's infancy and the years at Nazareth, and the bitter hours of His Passion. We have a similar privilege in the Rosary, and experience teaches that no one can persevere in the regular recitation without becoming better, without growing in grace and merit.

A further motive to urge us to pray for the spread of the Rosary is the honor and glory it brings to Our Lady. It is a continuous acknowledgment of Her holiness and virtues. Over and over again we say: "Hail, full of grace" and "Holy Mary." It is a measure of our esteem for Her great prerogative as Mother of God. As there is only one God-man, so there is only one Mother of God and we repeat with joy this glorious title as we recall the events that proved Her to be God's Mother, when She gave birth to Him and offered Him in the Temple and on Mount Calvary. As our Divine Redeemer would not die without Mary at His side, He wished also to have Her with Him, to reign as Queen in Heaven. The Rosary is likewise an eloquent expression of our gratitude for Her share in the work of Redemption.

We ponder on all that She has done and suffered for

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The Power of the Rosary

Many of us do not realize the worth of the holy Rosary. We do not attempt to comprehend the power of this simple yet profound prayer. It is easy to underestimate the power of the Rosary. After all, its immense value is hidden behind the simplicity of the devotion. On the surface, it is a repetition of a few prayers, accompanied by meditation on mysteries, or scenes from the life of Our Lord and Our Lady. Yet the depths of those mysteries are unfathomable and inexhaustible!

So many pray the Rosary out of a sense of duty or habit. How many pray it with the utmost fervor, recalling that the Rosary is the greatest prayer after the holy Sacrifice of the Mass? If we would only remind ourselves that the Rosary is so powerful and so dear to Our Blessed Mother's Heart that She repeated again and again, in each of Her apparitions at Fatima, the request that we pray it every day.

Sister Lucy said that "God is giving two last remedies to the world. These are the holy Rosary and devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary."

She also explained that "the most holy Virgin, in these last times in which we live, has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or above all spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of

the world, or of the religious communities, or even of the lives of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the holy Rosary.

With the Rosary we will save ourselves. We

will sanctify ourselves.

We will console Our Lord and obtain the salvation of many souls."

Speaking of the tremendous power of this prayer, Pope St. Pius X said, "Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world." Many times throughout history the Rosary has been used as a spiritual weapon in battle. The Christian victory at Lepanto is one example.

In the Sixteenth Century the Muslim Turks were threatening to overrun all of Europe, from the East. They seemed to be on the verge of seizing Christendom and wiping out Christianity. The response to this threat was both temporal and spiritual. Don John of Austria organized a naval fleet to confront the renowned Turkish fleet. Pope St. Pius V organized a Rosary Crusade. He asked Catholics everywhere to pray the Rosary, particularly on the first Sunday in October of that year, 1571, to aid the Christian forces and deliver Europe from the threat.

On Sunday, October 7, the two opposing fleets met in Lepanto Gulf, which is off of the coast of Greece. The Christian soldiers literally went into battle with swords in one hand and Rosaries in the other. After a battle that lasted all afternoon, the Christians emerged with a brilliant victory. At the same time in Rome, St. Pius V was graced with a clear knowledge of the success.

Almost 8,000 of Don John's men were killed, and another 16,000 were wounded. Yet 12,000 Christian galley slaves, who had been captured by the Turks, were released. The adversaries suffered a much greater loss, losing at least 25,000 men.

This victory was a decisive blow to the momentum the Turks had been amassing in their assault on Europe. Attributing the victory to the Rosary more than the naval force, St. Pius V ordered that the invocation "Help of Christians, pray for us" be added to the Litany of Loreto. In addition, he established the Feast of the Holy Rosary, to be celebrated on October 7 every year.

Thus, through this example we see that the Rosary can aid us in any problem. As Sister Lucy said, "There is *no problem* I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the holy Rosary." Let us renew our fervor when we pray our daily Rosary, recalling the great power we have been granted to affect the fate of souls and the state of the world. †



Apostles of the Rosary



Dear Father Gruner,

Thank you, Father, I owe so much to you. The latest *Fatima Crusader* was wonderful. I am 83 years old and live alone, so I do not fill in forms regarding the recitation of the Rosary. But I am faithful to my daily Rosary and attendance at the Tridentine Mass.

M.B., ON

Fatima Center,

Please tell Father Gruner that this last issue of *The Fatima Crusader* is a winner. I am unable to send more money than this small check. I pray Rosaries every day for Father Gruner and the Fatima Center. I thank God and the Blessed Virgin Mary for the guidance I receive through *The Fatima Crusader*.

E.F., NY

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us and strive to share in the treasures merited by Her Divine Son. We are convinced that thus we are giving our Mother great joy. The mysteries enacted in Palestine many centuries ago brought Our Lady little joy and little honor in the sight of men. By our Rosary we may make some compensation. Thousands travel in spirit every day to the Holy Land with the Rosary in their hands and walk as pilgrims from spot to spot, hallowed by the presence of Our Lord and His Mother. Let us join this favored band of pilgrims and bring Our Lady some of the sympathy and devotion we should wish to have manifested, had we been on earth with Her twenty centuries ago.

It may not be amiss to add a few hints about the proper recitation of the Rosary, that we may not miss the graces it contains. First of all, we should not forget the hint of St. Ignatius to pause before we begin our prayer and ask ourselves what we are going to do. It must not be a mere mechanical repetition of words, but a heartfelt communication with God. It is well to choose a time and place in which we shall be free from external distractions during the recitation, thereby showing our reverence for God. Finally, we must remember that the Rosary calls for some meditation on the mysteries, as a combination of vocal and mental prayer. †

Apostolate News

From September 24-26, 2004 the Fatima Center held its first ever Ambassador Seminar. This seminar, which was held in Glendale, California, was attended by over 200 devotees of Our Lady of Fatima. The conference hosted some excellent speakers who addressed topics pertaining to Fatima, as well as the importance of taking action to spread and promote Our Lady's Fatima Message.

One of the conference's sessions consisted of a panel in which seven speakers discussed "The Obligation to Believe, Obey and Promote the Message of Fatima" for ten minutes each. These brief speeches touched upon many various aspects of our obligations, and the information contained therein is very helpful to anyone wishing to understand what God expects from him or her regarding the Message of Fatima.

With this in mind, the latest issue of *The Fatima Crusader* magazine, issue #78, contains the edited transcripts of these speeches, so that though you may not have been able to attend the Ambassador Seminar, you can still benefit from the enlightening and inspiring information that was shared there.

Issue 78 also contains other pertinent articles, as well as edited transcripts from workshops given by Apostolate employees, in which they explained how you can use your resources to become an ambassador of Jesus, Mary and the Catholic Faith.

If you missed our Ambassador Seminar, be sure to read our latest *Fatima Crusader* to catch up on what you missed! For your free copy of issue 78, call toll-free at 1-800-263-8160 or write to the address below. †

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

The Editor,

Apostles of the Rosary

IN U.S.A. – 17000 State Route 30, Constable, NY 12926

IN CANADA – 452 Kraft Rd., Fort Erie, ON L2A 4M7

Call us toll-free at: 1-800-263-8160

or fax us at: (905) 871-3646

Visit Our Lady's Web Site at: www.fatima.org

or e-mail us at: info@fatima.org