

Feast Day of Our Lady of the Rosary



For Latin Rosary go to: <http://bookofheaven.org/prayers/latin-rosary/>

The feast dedicated to “Our Lady of the Rosary” was instituted by Pope Pius V. It was to commemorate the anniversary of the defeat of the Turkish fleet at the battle of Lepanto on the first Sunday in October 1571. This miraculous defeat broke the back of Muslim domination of the Mediterranean and was attributed to the prayers and processions of the Rosary confraternity in Rome. The Feast was later moved to the fixed date of October 7. In fact, the entire month of October is dedicated to encouraging the praying of the Rosary and reflecting on the mysteries of the Christian faith which it memorializes.

In a few days, we will recall a miraculous event. On October 13, 1917, seventy-thousand pilgrims had found their way to Fatima as a result of the visions three children had begun receiving in the spring of 1916. The anxious crowd, bearing mixed attitudes, uncomfortably stood in ankle-deep mud; many awaited an unheard yet fathomed hope, a silent promise which had touched their craving hearts; others had arrived convinced that their lack of faith would soon be justified on finding the wet, soggy morning uneventful. This latter group would soon adopt a very different outlook on life.



Just prior to noon of that same day, the Lady "more brilliant than the sun" appeared to the three children, saying, "I am the Lady of the Rosary. I have come to warn the faithful to amend their lives and to ask pardon for their sins. They must not offend our Lord any more, for he is already too grievously offended by the sins of men. People must say the Rosary. Let them continue saying it every day."

Nearly nineteen centuries earlier, our Lord Jesus Christ sat at a wedding feast in Cana. The wine had run out, and, showing her constant concern for all, Our Lady simply turned to her Son and said, "They have no wine." Although Jesus responded, "My hour is not yet come," the Mother of our Lord, of course, knew her Son would listen to her, and, in a display of complete confidence, simply advised the servants to "Do whatever he tells you" (see Jn 2:1-5). Those were the final words of Our Lady recorded in the New Testament, which, unarguably, are an everlasting profession of what it means to be Christian.

Yet even before that day on which our Lord worked his first miracle, the birth of the Rosary had, in a sense, already occurred in the Angelic Salutation, when Gabriel the Archangel said to Mary: "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you" (Lk 1:28). St. Gabriel, sensing that Mary was troubled by his message, tells her she has "found favor with God" (1:30). And, upon hearing of the wondrous, unfathomable event of which she was about to partake, the sweet Virgin responded with beautiful simplicity and obedience: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, may it be done to me according to your word" (1:38).

The Handmaid of the Lord, the Virgin Mother of all the faithful, whose entire life is united in perfection and holiness to the Incarnate Word's mission of Salvation, returns again and again to us, exercising her office as motherly intercessor, caring for her children, directing them always and everywhere to her Son. She says of herself: "I am the Lady of the Rosary."

The word Rosary means "crown of roses." St. Louis De Montfort calls the Rosary "the mystical rose tree of Jesus and Mary in life, death, and eternity." He tells us that reciting the Rosary produces spiritual roses which will "never wilt or die, and they will be just as exquisite thousands of years from now as they are today." In regards the worth of saying the Rosary, he professes it to be a "priceless treasure which is inspired by God" (The Secret Of The Rosary, Montfort Publications, 1954).

Pope John Paul II tells us: "The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at the heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety, of which it can be said to

be a compendium. . . . Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer" (Apostolic Letter On The Most Holy Rosary, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, introduction).

Our Lady of the Rosary is the image and beginning of the Church: "In the meantime the Mother of Jesus, in the glory which she possesses in body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise she shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God" (LG 68; cf. 2 Pet 3:10).



Soon we will return again to that day at Fatima less than a century ago, on which Our Lady of the Rosary opened her hands: the rain ceased, clouds parted, light issued forth from her delicate palms and traveled toward the sun as if penetrating the daystar itself, transforming it into a pale disc that could be viewed without harming the eyes. Although the gathered crowd could not see Our Lady, on hearing Lucy shout, "Look at the Sun!" thousands of eyes turned their gaze toward what was a very different sun from anything they had previously known.

United in a bond of love and beauty, Our Lady of the Rosary and the Blessed Trinity reached down upon sinful humanity, leaving those present as well as future generations yet another sign of heaven's constant plea of repentance. On that very day the dancing sun would forever be burned into the intellects of the seventy-thousand onlookers. Those who doubted, doubted no longer; those who believed shook with joy; the children's eyes filled with tears of wonder and love as they, along with all who were present, witnessed the Miracle of the Sun.

Yet in light of all Our Lady has done, in view of all the miracles attributed to her intercession, those of Fatima, Lourdes and Guadalupe and countless others, there are still those numerous, clashing voices of dissent: there are those who are misguidedly ashamed in seeking the help of the Virgin; those who commit grave error in thinking little of the Mother of our Lord, ignoring the teaching of the Catholic Church and the many references to her in Scripture, as if she is but some unimportant figure in the reality of Salvation whose position as Mother of the faithful ought to be ignored; there are those who neglect the Rosary; there are those who purposefully ignore the Rosary; there are even those who despise the Rosary.

St. Louis De Montfort has something to say of such an unfortunate situation: "Even though God has set his seal of approval on the holy Rosary by many miracles, and in spite of the Papal Bulls that have been written approving it, there are only too many people who are against the holy Rosary today. These "freethinkers" and those who

scorn religion either condemn the Rosary or they turn others away from it. . . . It is easy to see they have absorbed the poison of hell and that they are inspired by the devil – for nobody can condemn devotion to the holy Rosary without condemning all that is most holy in the Catholic Faith, such as the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation and the mysteries of the life, death and glory of Jesus Christ and of his holy Mother" (Ibid.).

There were "freethinkers" then as there are now; freethinking their way into the slavery of sin; making of themselves enemies of the Mother of God; forsaking the truly beautiful.



Pope Leo XIII proposed, on September 1, 1883, in his encyclical "*Supremi Apostolatus Officio*," that the Rosary is an effective spiritual weapon against the evils of an ill society. Rightly noting that there have been many "exceedingly great favors obtained" through the ages by the Christian peoples' devotion to the Rosary, he tells us: "We desire that that same devotion [to the Rosary] should be offered by the whole Catholic world with the greatest earnestness to the Blessed Virgin, that by her intercession her Divine Son may be appeased and softened in the evils which afflict us" (SAO, introduction).

The diamond-hard weapon with which to combat our greatest evils – specifically the barbaric practices of legalized abortion, an "intolerable moral corruption" in which the intentional killing of our youngest children is engaged in a manner of blatant, deplorable openness, as if ending the life of the innocent is an entirely innocuous choice which people are "free" to make – is found in devoutly praying the Rosary. It is necessary that, in order to realize abortion's defeat, the Catholic faithful, the universal Church founded by our Lord Jesus Christ, return all the more to the Rosary.

Pope Leo XIII continues: "It has always been the habit of Catholics in danger and in troublous times to fly for refuge to Mary, and to seek for peace in her maternal goodness; . . . [the Immaculate Virgin] has a favor and power with her Son greater than any human or angelic creature has ever obtained, or ever can gain. And, as it is her greatest pleasure to grant her help and comfort to those who seek her, it cannot be doubted that she would deign, and even be anxious, to receive the aspirations of the universal Church (Ibid., 2).

"This devotion, so great and so confident, to the august Queen of Heaven, has never shone forth with such brilliancy as when the militant Church of God has seemed to be endangered by the violence of heresy spread abroad, or by an intolerable moral corruption, . . ." (Ibid., 3).

It is certain that devotion to the Rosary, a powerful weapon which efficaciously destroys vice, evil and sin, is the answer to the "intolerable moral corruption" so prevalent in our secularist society.

Further, to be truly Christian is to worship as Christians ought; in the fullness of truth as whole and complete Christians. Therefore Catholics in communion with the Church necessarily include veneration to the Mother of God in their life as Christians:

Pope Paul VI, in his Apostolic Exhortation, "*Marialis Cultus*" (1974), reminds us devotion to the Virgin Mary is an integral aspect of Christian worship: "This devotion [to the Blessed Virgin Mary] fits--as we have indicated above--into the only worship that is rightly called "Christian," because it takes its origin and effectiveness from Christ, finds its complete expression in Christ, and leads through Christ in the Spirit to the Father. . . . And the increased knowledge of Mary's mission has become joyful veneration of her and adoring respect for the wise plan of God, who has placed within His family (the Church), as in every home, the figure of a Woman, who in a hidden manner and in a spirit of service watches over that family 'and carefully looks after it until the glorious day of the Lord'" (MC, introduction).

On December 10, 1925, Our Lady with the Christ Child appeared to Lucia, who at this time was a nun at the Dorothean convent in Pontevedra, Spain. She was eighteen years old. The Christ Child first spoke, saying: "Have compassion on the heart of your Most Holy Mother, covered with thorns, with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to make an act of reparation to remove them."

Lucy's thoughts certainly must have cast back upon that day at Fatima, when soggy ground suddenly turned dry, when wet clothes instantly became once more warm, when the Miracle of the Sun was forever recorded in history, when the Lady "more brilliant than the sun" announced to the entire world:

"I am the Lady of the Rosary. I have come to warn the faithful to amend their lives and to ask pardon for their sins. They must not offend our Lord any more, for he is already too grievously offended by the sins of men. People must say the Rosary. Let them continue saying it every day."



*From the Letters of the Servant of God
Luisa Piccarreta*



[35. To Mr. Vincenzo Messina, imprisoned in the jail of Favignana, Trapani]

Fiat

Dearest brother in Jesus Christ, I was immensely pleased by your request for the book of the Queen of Heaven, thinking that the Celestial Mama comes also to the prison to visit you and to be your Mother, Teacher, consoler; and also to give you her sweet company in order to teach you how to live from the Divine Will, and form, in prison too, the Kingdom of the Divine Volition.]

Therefore, my brother, courage, trust, for you have a Celestial Mama who loves you very much, who will never leave you, and if you listen to Her, will make a sanctuary of the prison. And if human weakness took you to prison, the Sovereign Queen comes with the strength of the Divine Will to take you to Heaven and render your days less sad; even more, She will turn pains, privations, loneliness, into ransoms and eternal conquests; She will make you feel the peace that, even in the world, cannot be enjoyed. The Divine Will will transform you, and you will feel the new life that the Celestial Lady brings you.

Know that I am your sister in prison. For more than fifty years the Supreme Fiat has kept me imprisoned in a bed. Yet, I am glad - I am happy; but what makes me happy? The Divine Will, Which I try to do always. You too can be happy, if you do the Divine Will. Oh, how It will change your bitterness! You will feel a true divine strength that will ease your painful state. *Never neglect the Rosary to the Celestial Mother,* and if you can, be a missionary in the prison, by making known that the Queen of Heaven wants to visit all the prisoners to give them the gift of the Divine Will. And if you need some more copies and you cannot pay, I am willing to send them for free.

I leave you under the mantle of the Celestial Mother, listening to Her lessons of Heaven – and with a thousand regards, I say, your most affectionate sister, the little daughter of the Divine Will.

From the Book of Heaven

Volume 1 - 1900 - After this, blessed Jesus pulled me away from those people, and as He became a baby, I carried Him in my arms to let Him rest. Asking me for a refreshment, He wanted to suckle from me; fearing that it might

be the devil, I signed Him with the cross several times, and then I said to Him: ‘If You really are Jesus, let us recite the Hail Mary to our Queen Mama together.’ And Jesus recited the first part, and I the Holy Mary. Then, He Himself wanted to recite the Our Father. Oh, how touching His praying was! It was so moving that my heart seemed to liquefy. Then He added: “Daughter, unlike others, I had my life from the Heart, and this is one reason why I am all Heart for souls and I am inclined to want the heart, and I tolerate not even a shadow of what is not mine. So, between you and Me I want everything distinctly for Myself; and that which you will concede to creatures, will be nothing but the overflow of our love.”

Volume 6 – April 26, 1904 - “My beloved, oh! how defrauded I feel of the glory which the creature owes Me, and which I am denied with so much cheek, and even by persons who are said to be devout!”

On hearing this I said: ‘Dear little One of my heart, let us recite three Glory Be’s, placing the intention of giving to your Divinity all the glory that the creature owes It, so You will receive at least a reparation.’ And He: “Yes, yes, let us recite them.” So we recited them together. Then we recited one Hail Mary, placing the intention of giving the Queen Mother also all the glory that creatures owe Her. Oh, how beautiful it was to pray with blessed Jesus! I felt so much at ease that I said: ‘My beloved, how I would like to make the profession of faith in your hands by reciting the Creed together with You.’ And He: “The Creed you will recite by yourself, because that is for you, not for Me, and you will say it in the name of all creatures so as to give Me more glory and honor.” So I placed my hands in His and I recited the Creed.

From the Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will

Day 19



(Virgin Mary to Luisa): Now, child of my Heart, pay attention to Me and listen: several days before the descent of the Eternal Word upon earth, I could see Heaven opened and the Sun of the Divine Word at Its doors, as though to look out for the one upon whom He was to take His flight, to render Himself Celestial Prisoner of one creature. Oh, how beautiful it was to see Him at the doors of Heaven, as though on the lookout to spy the fortunate creature who was to host her Creator! The Sacrosanct Trinity no longer looked at the earth as alien to It, because there was little Mary who, by possessing the Divine Will, had formed Its Divine Kingdom in which the Word could safely descend, as in His own residence, in which He would find Heaven and the many suns of the many acts of Divine Will done within my soul. The Divinity overflowed with love, and removing the mantle of Justice which It had worn with the creatures for so many centuries, It covered Itself with the mantle of infinite mercy, and decreed the descent of the Word... and It was now in the act of sounding the hour of fulfillment! At this sound, Heaven and

earth were astounded, and all stood at attention, to be spectators of such a great excess of love, and a prodigy so unheard-of.

Your Mama felt ignited with love, and echoing the love of my Creator, I wanted to form one single sea of love, so that the Word might descend upon earth within it. My prayers were incessant, and while I was praying in my little room, an Angel came, sent from Heaven as messenger of the great King. He came before Me, and bowing, he hailed Me: "Hail, O Mary, our Queen; the Divine Fiat has filled You with grace. He has already pronounced His Fiat, for He wants to descend; He is just behind my shoulders, but He wants your Fiat to form the fulfillment of His Fiat."

On October 7, 1990 Saint Annibale Maria Di Francia was declared "Blessed" by Pope John Paul II and was canonized on May 16, 2004, by Pope John Paul II.

