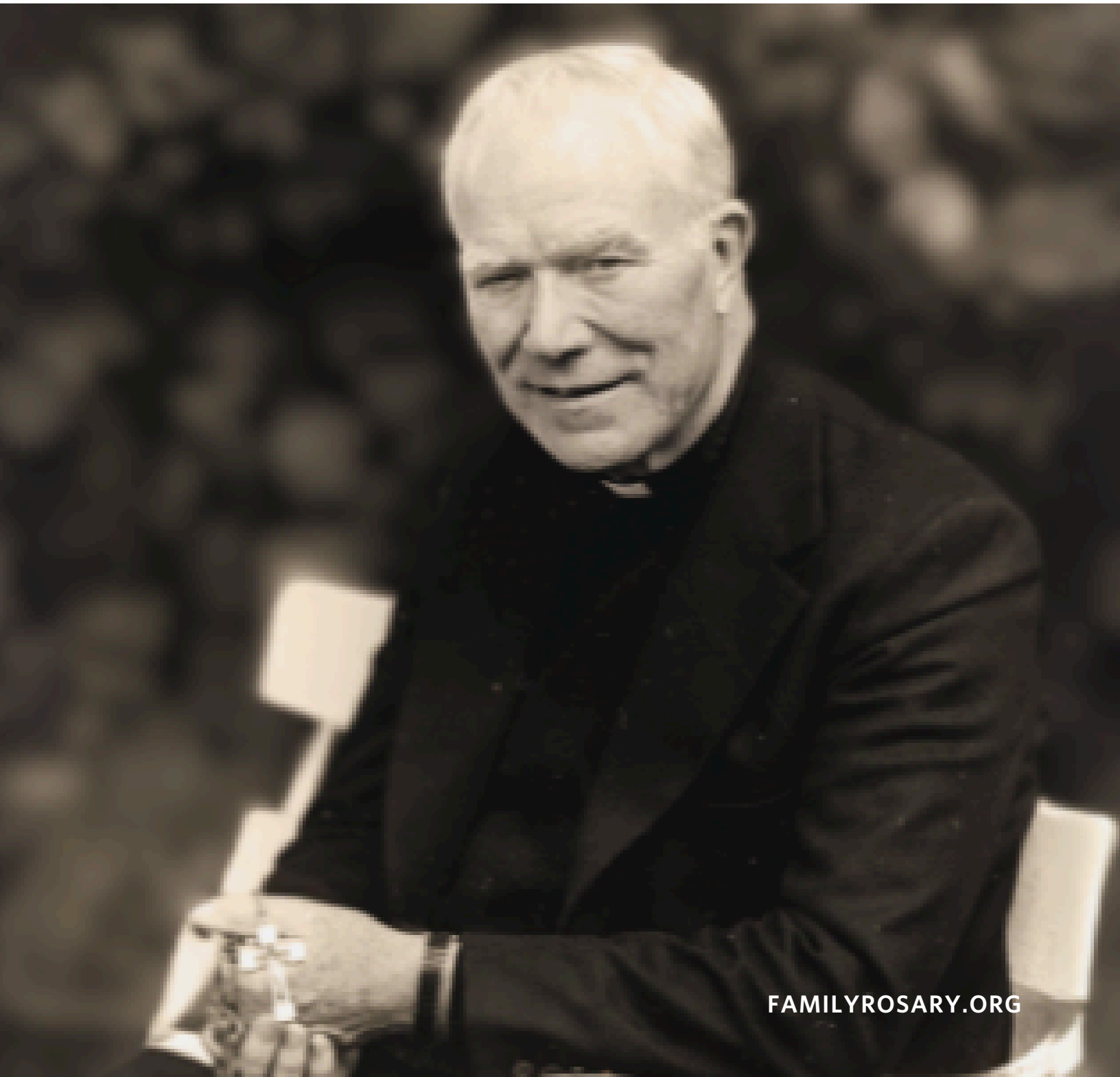


The Rosary in Our Hands



Introduction

How's your prayer life? Is it sporadic, on fire, barely started, or still at the "what is a prayer life?" stage? During a lifetime of practicing the Catholic faith, most people will experience all of the above and everything in between. We know we should pray and are fully aware of the blessings of regular prayer, yet some days, we are just stuck!

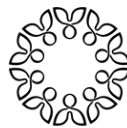
Where do I begin, how long should I pray for, and what's the best way to pray — simply wondering: What does one say to the God of the Universe? First and most importantly, there is no wrong way to pray, and gratefully, God, through the Church, has provided us with a plethora of prayer options.

It is normal to cycle through various practices throughout the year, to mix things up, as well as recognize different seasons of life, and the liturgical calendar lends itself to different types of prayer. One prayer devotion you may find not only helps jumpstart making time to pray but also organizes and enhances it—is the Rosary! The Rosary includes a profession of faith (Apostle's Creed), the prayer Jesus gave us (Our Father), intercessory prayers to the Blessed Mother (Hail Mary), prayers of praise (Glory Be), and ongoing catechesis (reflecting on the Mysteries of the Rosary).

To encourage you (and your family) to embrace this powerful prayer devotion, Catholic Mom and Family Rosary shared 31 unique personal accounts of having “the Rosary in our hands.” This eBook shares just a few of our favorites. You can find the remaining stories on FamilyRosary.org. We hope you are inspired to pick up the Rosary more yourself and will also share your own Rosary experiences with us at mission@hcfm.org!

So, Who's the Guy on the Cover?

That would be the founder of Family Rosary (which Catholic Mom is now a part of) and Family Theater: Venerable Patrick Peyton. Father Pat's miraculous recovery from tuberculosis and subsequent quest to do the will of the Blessed Mother, which is always to lead people closer to her Son, Jesus, is a legacy and mission we are proud to share and to continue!



Family Rosary

HOLY CROSS
FAMILY MINISTRIES

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG

Here's the abridged version of his remarkable healing:

As a young seminarian, Patrick Peyton, lay suffering from advanced tuberculosis, the doctors offered two options for treatment: risky surgery or prayer. In early October 1939, Father Cornelius Hagerty, C.S.C., came to visit and offered advice that would change Peyton's life forever: "You have the Faith, Pat, but you're not using it. What she asks for and insists on, she obtains. She has never failed anyone who had recourse to her with faith and perseverance."

Father Hagerty also spoke of the Blessed Mother's intercession:

"If you believe 25%, that's what you will receive. Fifty — that's what you'll get. But if you believe 100% and you give it all to Mary to give to her son Jesus to be healed, that is what you'll receive."

Young Pat, desiring with his whole heart to continue his studies and serve the church as a missionary priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross, turned to prayer. By October 31, Patrick began to feel his health return. From that day forward, he saw the Blessed Mother in a new light: how human, approachable, and sensitive she is to our needs.

"When I needed her and her power and her friendship, she didn't forget that ever since I had been a little child and could open my mouth, I had used that power to say the Rosary; so when I needed her friendship, she was glad to give it to me."

Blessed with a full recovery, Patrick Peyton was ordained on June 15, 1941, at the University of Notre Dame. Of that momentous day, he would say, "That day, I gave my heart and soul in love to Mary."

Father Patrick would come to be known as the "Rosary Priest," traveling extensively across the world organizing Rosary rallies that brought together millions of people. In addition to leading the Rosary, Father Pat would take the opportunity to make impassioned pleas for families to come together every day in prayer, especially Rosary. His message, "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together," encapsulated his belief in the transformative power of prayer. Father Peyton emphasized the importance of family prayer, recognizing that daily prayer strengthened familial bonds and brought them closer to God.



Family Rosary

HOLY CROSS
FAMILY MINISTRIES

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Rosary: My Ugandan Experience

Father Fred Jenga, C.S.C., discusses the importance of the Rosary to the many Catholics in Uganda, where he was born and raised.

Growing up in Uganda, I came to learn early on in life the praying of the Rosary. Our family was active in the Church, and we had regular family prayer. Uganda is 41% Catholic, and it is the land of the Ugandan Martyrs, whose feast day on the universal Church calendar is celebrated as the Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions. The Catholic Church in Uganda is vibrant with full Churches, full seminaries, and full convents. The Catholic Church in Uganda runs some of the top schools and the best healthcare institutions in the country.

The Rosary is an Important Anchor

There is a growing desire among public leaders to publicly identify with Catholicism. Politicians such as the Vice President, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, and the leader of the main Opposition party who are Catholics wear their Rosaries as accessories on top of their suits or dresses!

For a country that has a traumatic political history, the Rosary has been an important anchor in the lives of many Ugandans. It has given hope and meaning amidst extreme human rights violations, encouraged people amidst extreme poverty, and constantly reminded people about the presence of Christ and the maternal care of Our Blessed Mother. The Mysteries of the Rosary speak to every season of our life, whether it be joy, sorrow, mission, or triumphs in life. Hidden deep in the Rosary is a treasure trove that Ugandans have always turned to through every season of their lives.

Having grown up in Uganda, where the Rosary was the go-to prayer, I have turned to the Rosary and its Mysteries when navigating different seasons of my personal and ministerial life. I remember the early mornings and late nights when I turned to the Sorrowful Mysteries, days when I turned to the Joyful Mysteries, times when I turned to the Glorious Mysteries, and times when I turned to the Mysteries of Light.

I am convinced that some devotions in the Church will wane or even disappear at some point, but the Rosary will remain evergreen!

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



An Irish Rosary

Julianne Stanz recalls how her grandmother's example taught her the power that prayer holds to ground and shape our lives through joy and struggle.

Growing up in a small village in Ireland, it was from my Grandmother Hannah, whom we called Nanny, that I observed and learned the power that prayer holds to ground and shape our lives through joy and struggle. She was the first person I saw praying the Rosary. Never far from her gnarled, arthritic hands, the beads moved between her fingers in a fluid rhythm as her lips murmured the familiar words.

Like her ancestors before her, Nanny's day was permeated with prayers—in particular, blessings, that uniquely Irish form of prayer that grounds even our mundane practices in gratitude. Every act she undertook, from making the bed to baking her soda bread, was grounded in the prayers whispered in her breath.

Despite having outlived two husbands and raising a small army of children, all were welcomed to Nanny's home with love, and she had a word of encouragement for the weary, the difficult, and the lost. At her table, she offered her mouthwateringly delicious soda bread and a cup of tea so strong that you could “stand up in it” and dispensed spiritual snippets and practical advice from her chair by her old Aga stove, which she fed generously with wood and coal regularly.

The sound of her Rosary beads jingling in her pocket as she walked was a subtle reminder that she walked, not by sight, but by the faith of her ancestors.

A beautiful Rosary legacy

Today, when I pray the Rosary, I often think of her and use the Irish Penal Rosary, known in our language as An Paidrín Beag. This particular form of the Rosary, a single-decade version, originated during the Penal Times in Ireland — a dark period when the practice of Catholicism and the praying of the Rosary were forbidden. The Penal Rosary is a compact, discreet version that allows the faithful to pray without drawing attention. The crucifix was hidden in the sleeve or palm, while the ring was placed on the thumb to begin the first decade. With each subsequent decade, the ring was moved to the next finger, continuing in this manner until all five decades were recited.

As I pray, I am deeply reminded of the resilience and faith of my ancestors, who, despite facing persecution, death, and despair, held fast to their beliefs through the simple yet profound act of praying the Rosary. A few years ago, my brother Ian gifted my daughter Ava our grandmother's Rosary, and I wept with gratitude. As I hold it in my hands, I think of her faith and the faith of so many women who have passed on their love of the Blessed Mother and the Rosary to future generations.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Rosary: A Focused Devotion

Stephen Driscoll explains how he came to appreciate the Rosary as much more than simply a robotic repetition of prayers.

Prayer has often been a challenge for me. There's too much noise in the world and in my own head. Throughout most of my prayer life, I would start out with good intentions and rather simple prayers. I would try to simply speak to God, but as I did this, I would distract myself: "Oh, did I do my homework? Or what was the score of that hockey game last night? Did my brother give me my five bucks back?" Silly, simple things that really don't matter all that much. But by the time I snapped back into focus on what I was supposed to be doing I would be frustrated and want to simply give up.

Eventually, I started seeking new methods of praying and new strategies to keep my focus. I tried praying with Scripture, images, and more. While these helped, none of them really clicked for me. Soon enough, I stumbled onto the Rosary once more. I had prayed the Rosary a handful of times throughout my life before that point, so it wasn't a totally foreign concept to me, but it was rather daunting. I could hardly keep my prayers together, let alone the Mysteries. As you can imagine, all this confusion did not lead to a good reintroduction, so after a brief stint with it, I quickly let it go as another failed attempt to find a prayer that worked for me.

The Rosary Beckons

But, like a moth to a flame, I was drawn back again. After still struggling with the same issues I had before, I decided to give the Rosary another shot; this time, I would be more intentional and focus on the Mysteries. Gradually, I started to learn the different mysteries, where they fit, the associated Scripture and even quotes from the Catechism. In addition to this, I actively sought to identify places in my life that reflected the Mysteries. If I were dreading something that I had to do, I would pray with the Sorrowful mysteries, specifically the Agony in the Garden. This made the Rosary come to life for me. It became more than just a robotic repetition of prayers.

This newfound appreciation for the Mysteries and the Rosary as a whole started to reshape the way I interacted with prayer, and frustration turned into an opportunity. As I would pray, my mind would still wander. However, this time, I had the decades of the Rosary to keep me grounded. In addition to this, even though I was not always hyper-focused on the Mysteries themselves, I could often find a way to relate wherever my mind drifted to what I was meditating on.

My new devotion to the Rosary has greatly improved my prayer life and encouraged me in moments of struggle or doubt. If I ever start to backslide into my previously fruitless prayers or feel as if I get too distracted, the Rosary gives me comfort in knowing that I am at least praying, even if it isn't always the most focused.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Way of the Cross is the Way of the Rosary

Shannon Wendt ponders the life events that led her to understand why she needed Mary as her Mother.

In my life, I haven't always been close to Our Lady. In fact, even though I was usually all in for pretty much every youth group event, when they began the Consecration to Mary during my junior year of high school, I just sort of hung back ... I didn't get it. I couldn't understand the need for a Mother in Heaven who lived a life so incredibly different from mine. I had a great relationship with my earthly mother, and with Jesus, so I just didn't feel a need to embrace a spiritual one.

I had this image of her in my mind. You probably know the one I'm talking about; it's usually the one we see on Christmas cards. The beautiful 20-something woman with perfect hair and flawless skin, looking so quiet and peaceful, hands delicately folded in prayer. Perfect. It was so far removed from the mess I saw when I looked in the mirror.

Understanding Why I Needed Mary as My Mother

It took another 13+ years for me to really understand why I needed Mary as my Mother. About a year after my fifth child, I entered into a very difficult season of life that sent me into a dark place that left me doubting almost everything I believed. Over the span of 11 months, I lost three little ones right in a row. Each miscarriage was further along, more medically complex, and the recovery more drawn out. The third little one, we lost at 17 weeks, which meant that I had to actually go to the hospital, be induced, and deliver him. These losses left me in a very dark place. I couldn't imagine how a Father who was supposed to love me would ask me to endure such suffering. Wouldn't a loving Father answer the cries of my broken heart?

I wallowed in this darkness for over a year and a half, still believing that God was real and that what He said was generally true, but that for some reason, all those verses about His love and faithfulness just didn't actually apply to me.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG

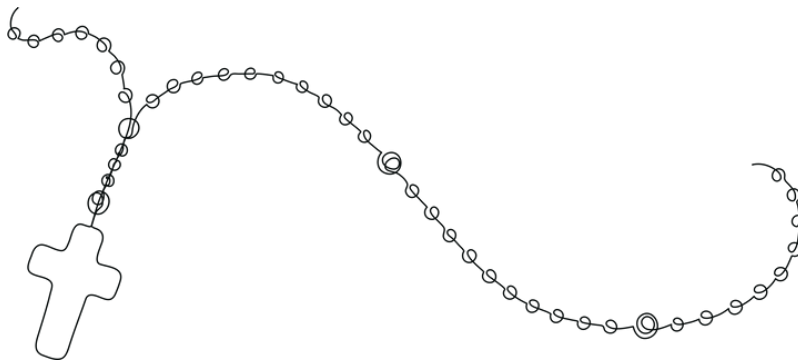
In my anger and depression, I all but gave up prayer completely. I was still going through the motions, praying at meals, attending Mass every Sunday. I bargained that if I kept up my end of this deal, the Lord would have to let me into Heaven and I'd finally get to hold the little ones I ached so deeply for.

An Invitation to Prayer

Eventually, the Lord began to break through my silent treatment. He sent Our Lady into the darkness of my depression to come rescue me. Talking to her was easier than talking to God. She wasn't the one I was angry at. She is a gentle Mother. She didn't demand that I stop giving God the silent treatment and get my act together. When she found me in this wilderness, she simply invited me into the life of her Son through the mysteries of the Rosary.

She invited me to walk the Way of the Cross hand in hand with her through the daily Rosary. And on that road, I found the companions I needed, both saints who have carried their crosses along this road and people in my own life who taught me what it looked like to suffer well, to find Our Lord on this journey, and in doing so, to experience joy even under the weight of a cross.

The Way of the Cross is the Way of the Rosary. As we walk on this road, I found a true Mother. Here, she wasn't that unrelatable 20-something-year-old. She was a road-wearied, dirt-stained, blood-soaked mother! At last, this was a woman who I knew understood me and the mess of my life. Here, under the weight of this cross, I found the Mother I never knew I needed. And through the years that followed, she walked with me, hand in hand, and led me back to the heart of the Father.



The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



Pray the Rosary Anytime

Patrice Fagnant-MacArthur offers encouragement for making the Rosary your go-to prayer at any time of the day.

One of the beautiful things about the Rosary is that once you learn the simple prayers, you can pray it anytime and anywhere. My mother taught me how to pray the Rosary as a young girl. It has been one of my go-to prayers ever since, a prayer I have turned to daily to help me navigate life.

I wear a Rosary bracelet that features a cross, a Miraculous Medal, an Our Father bead, and ten Hail Mary beads. It serves as a reminder of my faith throughout the day, and I often do use it to keep track of the prayers as I pray the Rosary. However, I'm just as likely to count the prayers on my fingers as I pray while going about my daily work.

Pray Whenever You Can

Throughout my life, I have prayed the Rosary at various times and places. There are the more traditional places, such as in church while someone leads the prayers before daily Mass, while at Adoration, or sitting in my living room, praying with my children. And then there are nontraditional places, such as while doing the dishes or taking a shower (one of the few places I could grab some quiet moments when my children were very young.)

I have often prayed the Rosary in bed before going to sleep or in the middle of the night to help relieve my anxiety. The rhythmic prayers help relax my mind. I'm often asleep before I can complete the whole thing. These days, I usually pray one set of five decades in the morning while walking my dog and another one later in the day with my teenage daughter, often in the car when we are driving to one of her activities.

Imperfect Prayers are Still Prayers

No, my Rosaries are not ideal. I announce the Mysteries (and sometimes the fruits), but rarely meditate on them. I've never been able to focus my busy mind enough to meditate. It's like Grand Central Station in my brain! Still, I trust that Mary hears my prayers, knows my heart, and intercedes for me in my needs. Many times, I have been blessed to receive answers to my prayers. And when I don't, I just keep praying.

You don't need to wait for the perfect time and place to pray the Rosary. While it is wonderful if you have that opportunity, you can also take advantage of the little snippets of time you have in your day, even if you can only pray one decade at a time. There is no bad time or place to pray the Rosary.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Fertilizing Rain of the Angelic Salutation

Deacon Pedro Guevarra-Mann shares how a beautiful story forever changed his understanding of the Rosary.

Growing up in Latin America, where there is a huge cultural devotion to Mary, you'd think that I had a devotion to the Mother of God. But I didn't. It seemed a little superstitious to me and didn't make much sense. I thought, "Why should I pray to Mary when I can just go straight to Jesus?" And when it came to the Rosary, I never really had a connection to it. Plus, I found it very hard to meditate on a Mystery of the life of Christ while at the same time focusing on the words of the prayers and adding an intention for someone or something on top of that. Too much! Then, about 10 years ago, I came across a beautiful story that forever changed my understanding of the Rosary.

A New Perspective

Apparently, during the time of the Albigensian Heresy, Saint Dominic spent a lot of time preaching against it, but he was not having much success. Then one day, so the story goes, complaining about this in prayer to Mary, she responded: Wonder not that you have obtained so little fruit by your labors, you have spent them on barren soil, not yet watered with the dew of Divine Grace. When God willed to renew the face of the earth, He began by sending down on it the fertilizing rain of the Angelic Salutation. Therefore, preach my Psalter composed of 150 Angelic Salutations and 15 Our Fathers, and you will obtain an abundant harvest. (quoted in *Champions of the Rosary* by Donald H. Calloway, MIC)

The Psalter of the 150 Angelic Salutations is, of course, the Rosary.

Think about that for a second: When He wanted to renew the earth, God began by sending down upon it the fertilizing rain of the Angelic Salutation. That is the Angel Gabriel's words to Mary: "Hail Mary, full of Grace. The Lord is with you." Just saying those words brings down the fertilizing rain of God's Divine Grace. So that means that it doesn't matter if you mutter them quickly or say them while thinking about supper; they bring down God's Divine Grace!

A Little Discovery Made a Huge Difference

I still find the Rosary difficult, but this little discovery has made a huge difference in my life. I am now constantly saying those words, in good times and in bad—sometimes absentmindedly—but with the firm conviction that there is power in just saying the words.

Why don't you try it? Especially at times when you find that your prayer is not fruitful, try adding a few Hail Marys for the barren soil to be fertilized with some Divine Grace.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



A Decade a Day with Little Ones

Kate Moreland admits to the difficulties of praying a family Rosary with small children, but affirms that it's always worthwhile.

Like many Catholics, I often felt guilty for not praying the Rosary as often as I ought. It was hard to fit in. Having lots of little children in a short time span made sitting down to pray a Rosary seem nearly impossible. Eventually, Catholic Guilt — a blessing, not a curse at all! — caught up with me, so my husband and I instituted a nightly decade with our six wiggly little people.

Learning in Their Own Little Ways

We each take turns saying the Hail Marys, and the kids manage it surprisingly well. They remember whose turn it is to lead as if it were a winning lottery combination. That does not mean that everyone sits nicely and listens prayerfully. Not even close. They squirm and flop and bother everyone frequently, but they still are praying and learning in their own little ways. Sitting nicely for prayer is a skill and we are working on it. Rome was not built in a day, after all. Neither is the family Rosary.

By praying a decade each night, and hopefully increasing as attention spans allow, we can model good behavior and they get to learn the basic prayers. Even the 3-year-old can pray the Hail Mary, Our Father, and Glory Be in his own way. When they hear those prayers in Mass, it gives them a way to participate like the big kids do.

A Work in Progress

The other mom hack I have found to help fit in a full Rosary is to do it in the car. A Rosary app is great for this, as it can be piped through the car's speakers and turned up or down as needed. I do not require that all little kids participate in the car, but they do have to be quiet. Prayer or quiet gets the job done, even if it is still a work in progress.

As much as I sometimes want nothing more than to listen to the news and mentally shut down, I never regret praying a Rosary. It is especially worthwhile on those tough days where the whining level is high and the peace low. The grace from praying at least a decade with our family and Our Lady is never wasted.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Rosary: A Growing Rhythm in My Life

Andrew Lichtenwalner describes how he grew up learning to ask the Blessed Mother's intercession through praying the Rosary.

Recognizing the place of the Blessed Mother in my life and the importance of the Rosary was a gradual process for me. I was blessed to be raised in a Catholic home, the youngest of seven siblings, and was fortified by the love of my mom and dad (60+ years) as well as an aunt who lived with us while growing up. The Catholic faith and the Mass were always important to my family. I was in rich soil.

Mary Had a Special Role in Hearing Our Requests

While I do not remember praying the Rosary on a regular basis during those early years, I do recall that we would go to Mary and pray the Rosary together when people in the family needed significant intercession. We trusted that Mary had a special role in hearing our requests and praying for us, presenting our petitions to her Son. One memory of praying together as a family was in early college. My sister-in-law was hemorrhaging after giving birth to my nephew, and we prayed the Rosary as a family, receiving a call shortly afterward that she would be okay (a doctor who was pioneering a way to help women in these situations just happened to be in town for a presentation and was called to help).

A pivotal Eucharistic conversion moment happened for me while on retreat during my senior year of high school. After that time and into college, I began to appreciate more the power of Mary's prayers for us. One of my brothers was deeply influenced by Mary in his own ongoing conversion and vocational discernment, which made an impact on me. I also began to recognize the "little signs" showing Mary's closeness and prayer for me during my life, whether during grade school (Our Lady of the Assumption was the patroness) or while I was on my high school senior retreat at a location named after Mary.

Praying the Rosary Regularly

In college, my mom encouraged me to treat my then-girlfriend (now my wife) as I would the Blessed Mother, which supported a path of chastity. I began praying the Rosary more regularly in college, including during runs or walks. My aunt gave me a "dashboard Rosary" one Christmas, which jumpstarted a regular practice of praying the Rosary in the car to and from college and later, on the way to work, going to Sunday Mass, and on family trips — a practice that has continued to this day.

Today, our daily family prayer often consists of praying a decade of the Rosary for particular intentions often voiced by our kids, and we pray a Hail Mary at dinner for all the intentions of our extended family — a practice requested by our mom and dad several years ago. Praying with Mary and asking for her intercession is a regular rhythm of our lives. Much room for growth, of course, but we seek to follow, in our little and imperfect ways, Jesus Himself, who gave His mother to us as our own. Mother Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us!

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together
FAMILYROSARY.ORG



Road-Trip Rosaries

When her family is trapped together for hours on end during road trips, Maria Riley uses the time to pray together.

We are a family of six with no family living in the same state as us, which means we are a road-tripping family! Every year, we take at least two road trips, and sometimes more, depending on holiday schedules. Visiting extended family is a priority, and driving is the only way to keep it affordable. Each day we spend in the car traversing this beautiful country is not complete until we've prayed a Rosary.

Life is hectic, and we don't regularly pray a Rosary together as a family. But during road trips, we never miss. Once we've finished lunch, it's Rosary time. Sometimes we leave after breakfast and sometimes we arrive before dinner, but we're almost always eating lunch on the go. Having a designated time to pray rather than just hoping that we get to it has made it easy to remember and actually pray it. Since we've been so consistent with our Rosary schedule, at least half the time it's my kids reminding me that it's time for the Rosary!

Encountering Christ in the Rosary

We always take turns leading each decade, and this helps keep the kids actively participating while we pray. I also take a minute or two to explain the upcoming Mystery so they know what they should be meditating on while we pray. I'm not sure if they consistently think about the Mystery the whole time (gosh, even my mind wanders and I have to consciously bring it back to the Mystery of the decade), but I believe an important part of overcoming the objection that the Rosary is boring is by teaching my kids that the prayer is so much more than just saying the same thing over and over. It's an encounter with the life of Christ.

For her first Communion, one of my daughters received a stuffed Saint Raphael. He's the patron saint of travelers, so she graciously donated him to our minivan. He's with us everywhere we travel, and while we pray the Rosary, the person who is leading the decade gets to hold Saint Raphael. Snuggling with Saint Raphael is another great way to keep the kids engaged and excited about praying.

I love our tradition of praying a Rosary in the car. Not only does it teach my kids a beautiful prayer, but it helps pass the hours as we travel down this road called life.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



The Rosary: Mary Walks With Us

Roxane Salonen shares how she found a way into the Rosary after years of struggle by bringing Mary with her on her daily nature walks.

I grew up on a Lakota reservation in northeast Montana, worshipping at a mission church in the 1970s and 80s when the Catholic Church was in flux. Our family didn't recite the Rosary, and I'd never seen this practiced by any of my peers. The Rosary, with its many mysteries, was itself a mystery to me. But I did have a love for Mary, and as I pondered that she shared a name with my paternal grandmother, Mary Beauclair, who died before I was born, I felt a connection to Grandma through Our Blessed Mother. Being asked one May, as a child, to crown Mary on the grounds outside our parish further pulled me in. And when we watched *The Song of Bernadette* together one afternoon, I began to yearn to seek a life of holiness through Mary's help.

I only once recall my mother bringing out her Rosary beads, however. I'd experienced my first heartbreak as a teenager — and seeing my sadness, Mom led me through the Rosary on the living-room couch. I realized the Rosary can be a comfort when words fail.

Drawn to the Rosary

I became more drawn to the Rosary then, reciting it at bedtime, but with my short attention span, I would often fall asleep before finishing. As an adult, I felt pressured by some who seemed to indicate a daily Rosary recitation was a requirement for holiness. I tend to resist this kind of pressure, however, and it sets me back. Agreeing to do a Marian consecration in 2014 finally opened my heart more widely to Our Lady. I began noticing her all around me, including that my middle name, Marie, linked me to her. We'd also given this middle name to our oldest daughter, who was born on October 7, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

Answering Mary's Call to Pray

Mary had been calling me my whole life, and I could no longer resist her, nor the prayer devotion she gave us to draw us into a deeper relationship with her Son. But it all really came together when someone mentioned that praying the Rosary is like Mary holding our hand. I try to go on daily walks that usually last around 90 minutes — a long time to be in one's head. I can become bored along the way. But when I pray my Rosary on those walks, imagining Mary beside me, everything changes. I have a friend with me, and not just a friend but a mother, a worthy mother. Her role in my salvation is key, and walking with Mary in this way has become a precious routine.

Sometimes, it's more effective if, instead of coercion or being made to feel guilty, we are presented with something in a way that allows us to grasp it naturally. At the end of the day, we are all just children: children comforted by holding the hands of those who can guide us safely through this life and into the next.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG



Grandma's Rosary Tradition

Kelly Guest realizes how right Father Peyton was as she continues her grandparents' practice of praying the Rosary with her own family and granddaughter.

In January 1991, my cousin was sitting in a tank in a hot desert, awaiting orders to go into Kuwait. The newspapers were filled with troubling stories, and the world felt like a sea of uncertainty. Every Saturday for months, my family — aunts, uncles, and cousins included — gathered at my grandparents' house to pray the Rosary for protection over my cousin and the success of the mission.

Prayer is Powerful

Praying the Rosary together is among the mightiest.

When the orders finally came, my cousin and his fellow Marines rolled into Kuwait with hardly a fight. Whereas we were concerned about chemical weapons, their biggest problem became what to do with all the surrendering Iraqi soldiers. It was as if they were surrounded by an army of guardian angels.

Our prayers were answered! By July, my cousin was home celebrating the Fourth of July with us!

My family, however, continued to pray the Rosary every first Saturday at my grandparents' house. Grandma would make chocolate-chip cookies, along with cream cheese and celery, and always had cheese puffs for us to munch on after the Rosary. Those Rosary Saturdays are a blessed family memory that I have.

Not only is it a cherished memory of mine, but my oldest children also remember going to Great-grandma's to pray the Rosary. Sitting in the living room, the little ones would play with their large wooden children's Rosaries. Perhaps they would make it through a decade before wandering off to pull toys out of their diaper bags. They would come back when they heard the Hail Holy Queen prayer, knowing that the prayer was almost over, and they soon would be able to have the snacks!

As they got older, they would sit through more and more of the Rosary until they could recite the whole prayer with us. Still, they mostly enjoyed the snacks afterward. Before we would leave, orange fingerprints from cheese-puff dust covered Grandma's table and chairs. She never minded.

A Family Rosary Tradition

Recently, my oldest son, who is now married and has a baby, asked if we could rekindle the family Rosary "as we had at Great-grandma's house." My mama's heart could not have been happier or prouder.

We have had to make the tradition our own. The last Saturdays of the month have worked better for us than the first. Instead of cheese balls and celery sticks, we have pizza. After the Rosary and pizza, we play a game or watch a movie together. Nonetheless, my children and granddaughter gather in the living room and pray the Rosary together, just as, once upon a time, my grandparents' children and grandchildren gathered in their living room to do the same.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG

Stay Connected:

Family Rosary @ www.familyrosary.org

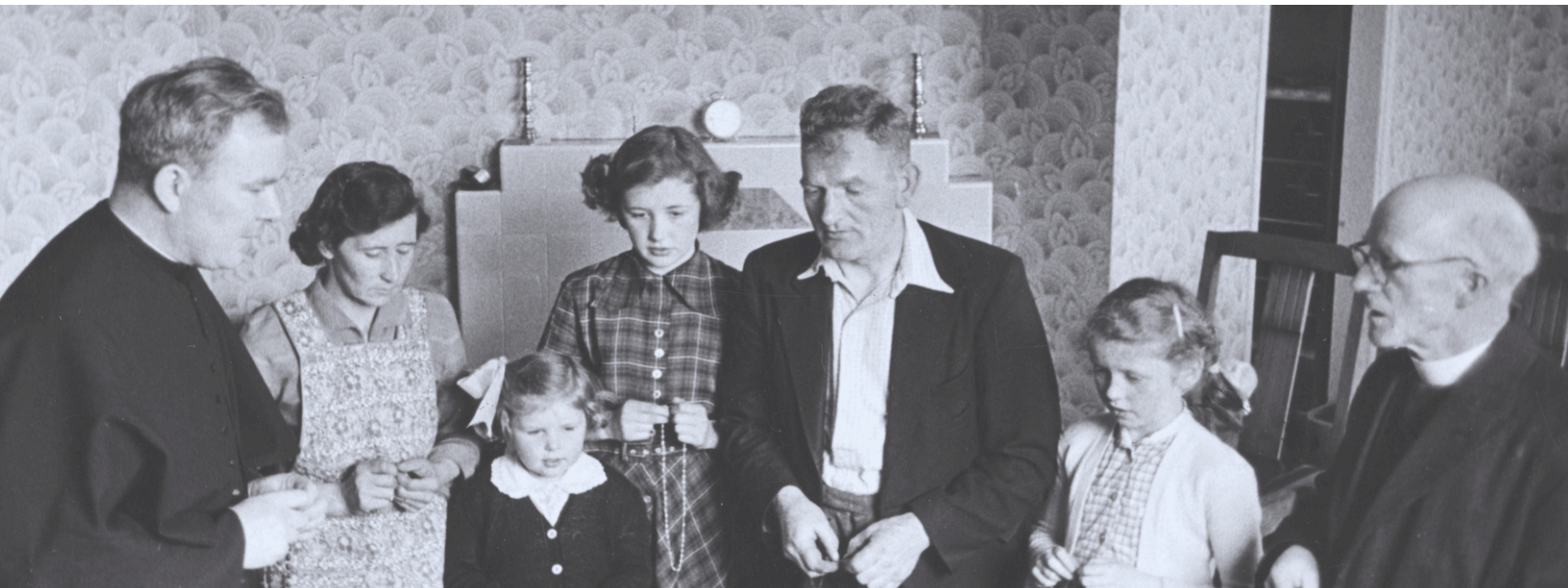
Catholic Mom @ www.catholicmom.com

The Father Peyton Center @ www.museumoffamilyprayer.com

On our Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube sites too!

#WeHelpFamiliesPray #FamilyPrayer

#FamilyRosary #SupportingtheVocationofMotherhood



Bringing Families Together In Prayer

We hope that your reflection on this material has been enriching. Continue to pray with your family every day, wherever you are. Join us live on in-person for the Rosary and Mass Monday - Friday starting at 11:30 am ET on Family Rosary Facebook or YouTube.

For additional online prayer and inspirational resources for families, including additional e-books, articles, and the mobile Rosary App, please visit our website at FamilyRosary.org.

Catholic Mom and Family Rosary are ministries of Holy Cross Family Ministries, an apostolate of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Our Mission is to inspire, promote, and foster the spiritual well-being of families throughout the world.

The Family That Prays Together Stays Together

FAMILYROSARY.ORG