

OUR LADY AND THE ROSARY

Written by Sr. Marie Day and Presented on October 19, 2016

OPENING PRAYER

We are celebrating the month of the Rosary. There are many things that one could say about the Holy Rosary. In this presentation we would like to reflect on **the power of the Rosary**.

The first power: it can change world events. We see this as we review a little of how the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary came about. The feast of the Holy Rosary is a feast of thanksgiving in honor of the Queen of the Rosary.

A little of the history –

When the Turkish forces threatened to invade the Christian West, Pius V appealed to all Christians, especially the Confraternities of the Rosary, to storm Our Lady by praying the Rosary so that she might intervene. The miracle happened. Mary manifested her help. On October 7, 1571, the enemy's fleet was totally destroyed at Lepanto. In gratitude, the Pope decreed that each year on October 7th the event would be commemorated under the title– **Feast of our Lady's Victory**.

Gregory XIII substituted this commemoration in 1573 by instituting the feast in honor of our Lady of the Holy Rosary which was solemnly celebrated on the first Saturday of October.

After another victory of the Christians over the Turks at Peterwardein in Hungary, Clements XI made the feast of the Holy Rosary universal for the whole Church in 1716.

In 1883, Leo XIII, who was himself greatly devoted to the Rosary, added the invocation "Queen of the Rosary, pray for us", to the Litany of Loretto. In 1888 he increased its rank and established a proper Office and Mass for the feast. In 1913, the feast was assigned to October 7th. In the liturgical reform of Vatican II the feast was retained as a memorial.

It seems quite significant that in the modern battle against the threatening danger of unbelief, against Bolshevism, Our Lady of Fatima – in 2017 we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of her appearance and her message – again asked Christians to be zealous in praying the Rosary. And today – would she not say the same to us as we face the situation in our country and world?

Leo XIII actually wrote 10 encyclicals on the Rosary. After reading these encyclicals and seeing his belief in the power of the Rosary, the statement was made:

In numerous immortal encyclicals the great Leo XIII took an informed stand on all modern questions. In them he emphasized and recommended in his own way the use of all possible human means: the power of organization and of the press, of politics and of diplomacy. In fact, he has gone down in modern Church history as a diplomatic genius. Still, he did not place his final hope in such things. Our Blessed Mother was his ultimate hope. She is the one who must

*help the Church to victory over all her enemies. For him the great remedy of modern times, which will influence the events of the world more than all the diplomatic endeavors and which has a greater effect on public life than all organizational ones, is the Rosary. Those who pray the Rosary do more for the benefit of the whole human race than all the orators and deputies, more than all the organizers, secretaries and writers, more than all the capitalists even if they would make their entire wealth available to the Church. For him the Rosary is a sort of **machine gun and atomic bomb, namely a weapon that is far superior to all the weapons of modern warfare in overcoming the enemy of God.***

Isn't that powerful!

The Rosary has another power and that is- it has the power to change us!

This too is very important. When we look at our country and world today, we are saddened by what we see and experience. How can this be changed. One very powerful way is what St. John said: "I sanctify myself for them." The holier we become the holier our world will become.

When we pray the Rosary, when we reflect on the Mysteries of the Rosary, we open ourselves to the Blessed Mother and Our Lord that they can change us. The Blessed Mother wishes to live her life again through us. When she does that, we become holy. We become "another Christ", and "another Mary". Let me explain by looking at some of the Mysteries of the Rosary.

THE ANNUNCIATION

I like to speak of Annunciation mercy. What does the Blessed Mother intercede for us in this mystery? As she did at that moment in her life, she asked and tried to discern the Father's will. For us too she wishes to help us discern the Father's will in our lives. Most surely say: Yes, God, I want to do your will but I do not know what it is! Doing God's will leads us to holiness and gives us deep, inner peace. Here the Blessed Mother will help us to discern what God is asking of us in this or that situation. Then once we discern what His will is, she helps us to say our yes to it. This is not always easy because sometimes His will asks us to hang on the cross! And yet we want to say our Fiat, our yes to anything that God may ask of us because His plan is perfect, born of perfect love. His plan has only one goal for us and that is to lead us to salvation and that we can be instrumental in the salvation of many souls as well.

THE VISITATION

Here the Blessed Mother offers us her Visitation mercy by letting us be filled with joy as she was when she sang her Magnificat and when Jesus and John met in the wombs of their mothers. John leapt for joy!

God wants all of us to be people of joy. It is challenging at times when we see all that is happening around us. Therefore the Blessed Mother wishes to intercede this true joy for us.

When we define joy, we say it is resting in the possession of a “good”. We therefore can have sensual joys – a “good” meal, nice music. Then there are spiritual joys – order in our home, an honest friend – and the highest form of joy is supernatural joy – resting in God Himself and in His will. All these joys she wishes for us.

When the Blessed Mother went to the home of her cousin Elizabeth she also worked. She wishes to do the same for us. What tasks can we give her? How does she work for us? In four ways:

- *She can inspire as to how to accomplish a task
- *She can change our attitude to a task – a negative attitude makes everything harder
- *She can intercede the grace we may need
- *She can send someone along to help us.

Explain the work list (Verbal explanation of creating a list of tasks we want Mary to accomplish for us and our amazement at how Mary accomplishes these tasks!)

What a gift – this Visitation mercy! We all have more work to do than we will ever be able to get done. She can take over and direct and guide us.

BETHLEHEM

The Bethlehem mercy that she intercedes for us is that Christ may be born anew in each one of us, that the words of St. Paul become true in each of our lives: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.*

Then by our very being we bring Jesus to all we encounter – shepherds as well as kings – everyone.

Then we become the face of the Father’s mercy as Jesus has taught us during this Year of Mercy through our Holy Father.

What a great “power” she has to help that her Son is born in us and we become the image of her Son.

CANA

In her Cana mercy the Blessed Mother shows herself as our powerful intercessor at the throne of her Son. We bring to her all our needs, worries, desires, fears and anxieties and she goes to her Son and tells Him: They have no more wine! They have no more strength, they have no more peace, and they have no more money to pay the bills.... And Jesus takes care. He listens to his mother.

In the Jewish culture at that time, the mother of the King was the Queen-Mother. Since the King had many wives it would have been difficult to take one as the Queen so the Mother of the

King took on that role. She was very powerful. She was the King's advisor. When she walked into the room, even the King stood up. Mary as Queen Mother is very powerful at the throne of her Son, the King of the Universe on our behalf! She offers us this mercy when we ask for it – Cana mercy in our many needs.

Then the Blessed Mother tells us: Do whatever He tells you. She helps us to follow Jesus, to do the Father's will as He did, to live out of the words: "I always do what pleases the Father."

CALVARY

Calvary mercy helps us see the value behind every suffering – our transformation, our growing in holiness, our finding our way closer to God as our Father, our helping in the salvation of souls.

The Blessed Mother helps us to change our attitude toward the sufferings in our lives – that we see suffering as a gift because of what comes as a result of the suffering.

She helps us to embrace our sufferings, to be thankful for them, to find joy in them and to unite them with the suffering of her Son so that they become redemptive.

This is a great gift of mercy because we all have difficulty with suffering. As a consequence of Original Sin we have a negative pre-disposition toward suffering and our culture tells us there should be no suffering. And yet through suffering we are changed, we become saints, holy people. Look at the lives of any of the saints!

The Blessed Mother wants to take us by the hand into the school of suffering God has in His plan for us and walk with us. We are not alone.

PENTECOST

In her Pentecost mercy, the Blessed Mother wishes to draw down the virtues, the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit into our lives. Just recall them – **read some of them from the booklet** (Theological virtues: faith, hope and charity; cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance; seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord; and the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, modesty, continency and chastity).

How much we need the Holy Spirit! She helps us that He becomes our very best Friend!

CORONATION

Here the Blessed Mother offers us her coronation mercy that we realize our dignity as a child of God created in the image and likeness of God. With this she assists us in being queenly, kingly in all aspects of our lives;

*Our speech – are my words kind, uplifting, not judging another? No gossiping?

*Our posture – at prayer, when sitting, when standing,

*Our thoughts – what do we fill our minds with? Then what are our thoughts? What do we read? What do we watch on TV?

*Our dress – is it noble, is it fine, is it fitting for a child of God. Do I dress appropriately for Church? For other occasions?

*Our action – do they proclaim that I am a child of God? Do I treat others with respect? Do I show mercy toward others?

In all these areas the Blessed Mother will help us by giving us her coronation mercy.

Imagine her power when she brings about all of this in each one of us as she lives her life anew in us! I will be changed and because of me being changed the world will be better!

Let us often prayer the Rosary and ask for these many mercies for ourselves and for others as well. This is a powerful weapon indeed!

In summary:

We human beings are always busy. We often have little time to be interiorly recollected. This is a reason why we do not know at all what we possess in Mary {as we have just seen}. Let us take the time to pray the Rosary. By reciting the Rosary, we meditate on the wondrous greatness and glory of Mary and the mercies she wishes to intercede for us. In this meditation, we never forget the miracle which we see before us in the mysteries of the Rosary; nor do we forget that the Rosary wants and is able to form each one of us into a small miracle of miracles through her gifts of mercy.

Let us pray the Rosary with devotion. Let us not pray it with our lips alone but with our hearts. The Rosary is a help to make our lives more Marian, to make us apparitions of Mary, and to make an encounter with us an encounter with Mary. Let us pray for these miracles of mercy!

Therefore let's take our weapon out of our pocket and make good use of it! It can change the world and it can change us!