

Before October ends, take up your rosary



If you've been Catholic for at least a day, you're familiar with the Rosary. Enter any vibrant parish on a Saturday morning before Mass and it's likely that you will find a group of dedicated churchgoers reciting the litany of Hail Mary's, especially if it is the first Saturday of the month – a day dedicated to Mary. And while we have centuries' worth of [Marian art](#), as well as devotions to specific apparitions of Our Lady herself, no Marian devotion is as popular as the Rosary. In fact, after reception of the Eucharist and Eucharistic adoration, it might be the most popular Catholic practice, and for good reason.

Time and again throughout history, the power of the Rosary has been reinforced. "Give me an army saying the Rosary and I will conquer the world," said Pope Blessed Pius IX. And while the whole world might not have been converted, we do remember how Christians across Europe committed themselves to praying the Rosary leading up to the [Battle of Lepanto](#), where the Christian fleet defeated the Ottoman Turk navy in 1571. After this victory, Pope Pius V established the feast day of Our Lady of Victory, which later became Our Lady of the Rosary, celebrated on Oct. 7.

Other saints have spoken out about the power of the Rosary. St. Pio of Pietrelcina is known for his love for the Blessed Mother, and he claimed that, "Our Lady has never refused me a grace through the recitation of the Rosary." He also is well-known for saying, "The Rosary is the weapon for these times." And this is coming from a saint who battled with the devil.

Sister Lucia, one of the children to whom Mary appeared at Fátima, reiterated this point: "There is no problem, I tell

you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot solve by the prayer of the holy Rosary.”

St. Louis de Montfort, who penned the popular Marian consecration “True Devotion to Mary,” said of the Rosary, “Even if you are on the brink of damnation, even if you have one foot in hell, even if you have sold your soul to the devil as sorcerers do who practice black magic, and even if you are a heretic as obstinate as a devil, sooner or later you will be converted and will amend your life and will save your soul, if – and mark well what I say – if you say the holy Rosary devoutly every day until death for the purpose of knowing the truth and obtaining contrition and pardon for your sins.” Strong words, but hopeful.

Soon to be Blessed Archbishop Fulton Sheen, in his traditional humor, said: “If you wish to convert anyone to the fullness of the knowledge of Our Lord and of his Mystical Body, then teach him the Rosary. One of two things will happen. Either he will stop saying the Rosary – or he will get the gift of faith.”

These quotes are just skimming the surface of the long tradition of Marian devotion through the Rosary and the fruit it has borne in the Church.

Yet, what would it look like if every Catholic resolved to pray the Rosary more often? While every day would be ideal, what about once a month? Once a week?

On this year’s feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, a group of us at OSV prayed the Joyful Mysteries and shared it across our social media platforms, inviting followers to join in. Certain ministries have sprung up in recent years offering this every day, and numerous books (including two by our own editorial director, Gretchen Crowe) have been written encouraging Catholics of all backgrounds to pick up this weapon of prayer.

Our world is divided and broken. Our Church is not exempt from this fact. And often we as the laity and those not in the

hierarchy of the Church feel that we have no way to bring about healing and make an impact at an individual level. Most of us will not have ministries that convert the world, and we may not be renowned as saints such as those mentioned earlier. But we can pray. More specifically, we can ask our Blessed Mother to intercede for us and our Church. And just as our heavenly Father does not fail us, neither will our heavenly mother. So this October, and every month afterward, I encourage you to pick up your rosary and be an instrument of good for the Church. Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.

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