

New Brighton, Sunday 1st October 2023

Our Lady of the Rosary

18th Sunday after Pentecost

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

Across the ages of the History of the Church, since Our Lady gave it to St Dominique to help him in his work of conversion against the cathar heresy, the popes, following the urging request of Our Lady Herself, highly recommended the prayer of the Rosary, and chose the month of October to be consecrated to its devotion.

“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; showing that the Catholic Church has always, and with justice, put all her hope and trust in the Mother of God. And truly the Immaculate Virgin, chosen to be the Mother of God and thereby associated with Him in the work of man's salvation, has a favour 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.”¹

So speaks Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical letter *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, released in 1883, to request the prayer of the Rosary being said every day before the Blessed Sacrament during the Month of October.

Recalling to our failing memory all the personal spiritual benefits and the special graces obtained for the conversion and the salvation of the world, the pope tried to federate the Catholic Church down on their knees at the feet of our Queen in Heaven.

“Nor are you only spectators of the difficulty of the situation, but your charity, like Ours, is keenly wounded; for it is one of the most painful and grievous sights to see so many souls, redeemed by the blood of Christ, snatched from salvation by the whirlwind of an age of error, precipitated into the abyss of eternal death. Our need of divine help is as great today as when the great Dominic introduced the use of the Rosary of Mary as a balm for the wounds of his contemporaries.”²

Each times during Her apparitions on earth, Our Lady repeated the same invitation to daily say the rosary. But where does its power come from?

¹ Leo XIII, encyclical letter *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, 1883, nb2.

² Leo XIII, encyclical letter *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, 1883, nb7.

All the prayers we are reciting are coming from Heaven: the Our Father was given to us by Our Lord himself; the Hail Mary by St Gabriel the Archangel, and the Glory be is the brief version of the angelic hymn of the Gloria, sung for the first time for the Birth of Jesus Christ.

This divine origin gave them a very special influence and power. United in one same prayer, it seems that the whole heavenly court is gathering with the Church on Earth to unceasingly repeat and praise the Glory of God and asking the defeat of his enemy.

These prayers are the first we learn when we are a child, or when we are starting our path of conversion. They are simple to make them easy to remember by heart, to be said anywhere, anytime. They are simple, because they are humble, and there is nothing more pleasant to God than to see us humbling ourselves to praise Him.

Humility is definitely the key to the power of this prayer of the Rosary. With this virtue, and by this prayer, the Church united all her flock around Our Lady and the Divine Shepherd, begging for their protection and intercession, which was granted so many times. As long as the rosary is recited, God will not abandon the world, so powerful is this prayer upon His heart. It is like the leaven that regenerates the earth. The sweet Queen of Heaven cannot forget her children, who never cease to sing her praises.

“The decadence that exists in the world is undoubtedly the consequence of a lack of prayer. It was in anticipation of this disorientation that Our Lady so insistently recommended the recitation of the rosary. And as the rosary is, after the holy liturgy of the Eucharist, the prayer best suited to preserving faith in souls, the devil has unleashed his fight against it. Unfortunately, we can see the disasters he has caused. (...) We cannot and we must not stop, nor allow, as Our Lord says, the children of darkness to be wiser than the children of light. The Rosary is the most powerful weapon with which to defend ourselves on the battlefield.”³

Meditate therefore with great care on the Mysteries of the Rosary, wrote a fervent Dominican friar several centuries ago. For this meditation is to vocal prayer what the heart is to the living body, the salt to the food, the precious stone to the ring, the flowers to the garden, the fruit to the orchard, the waters to the pastures, the rivers to the valleys, the morning dew to the meadows, the sun to the day, the moon to the night, the star to the navigator, the water to the thirsty mouth, the rest to the tired limbs, the sword to the warrior.

“Notice, that the Blessed Virgin, in these last times in which we live, has given a new effectiveness to the recitation of the Rosary. And it has given us this effectiveness in such a way that there is no problem, temporal or spiritual, however difficult it may be, in the personal life of each one of us, our families, the families of the world or religious communities, or even the lives of peoples and nations, that cannot be resolved by the Rosary. With the Rosary, we will be saved. We will be sanctified. We will console our Lord and obtain the salvation of many souls.”⁴

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

³ Letter from Sister Lucia of Fatima to a priest. 26th November 1970.

⁴ Father Fuentes, Interview with Sister Lúcia on 26th December 1957.