



Pick Up: THE ROSARY

Many of us were never really taught how to pray, only how to repeat! We tend to view prayer, whether at Mass or at home, as a mindless recitation of someone else's words. It's external, memorized, and repeated, which may become robotic and certainly is not very life-giving. Also, today we put a lot of value only on things "authentic" and "spontaneous" and tend to see traditional things as merely old or outdated. So memorized prayers are an inauthentic drudgery. Furthermore, Jesus is clear that prayer filled with "vain repetitions" is pagan, not Christian. It is born from the idea that the gods or goddesses do not care about us unless we badger them with our many words. Jesus tells us that our Father is not like these false gods, so don't do this when praying to Him!

And then we got the Rosary: the crucifix, a Mary medal, and those string of beads swinging from the rearview mirror. But isn't this just more "external, memorized, and repeated" prayers, dangerously close to the "vain repetitions" of pagan prayer, and certainly inauthentic and outmoded? Nope!

Memorized and traditional prayers can be lifeless or life-giving, depending on your approach. Jesus tells us not to pray like pagans, because God is a Father who knows you better than you know yourself. If you truly believe that, then repetitious prayer isn't badgering a deity, but is a (very Christian) prayer of persistence, crying out to God day and night (Cf. Luke 18:1-8) because we trust in His fatherhood. Also, prayers are memorized and repeated so that they can be shared. We say things like the Mass parts or the Rosary so that we do so with one voice crying out to God. The problem is when we keep it "external" and don't let realities behind the words seep into our hearts. But when it does, the words of the Church, of Scripture, and of those around you becomes the cry of your heart.

The Rosary is a biblical prayer and was profoundly shaped by honest Christian devotion. The three major prayers - the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be - are all biblical. The Hail Mary combines the greeting of the Archangel Gabriel at the Annunciation with Elizabeth's cry of praise when Mary arrives at her doorstep. Note that in the Hail Mary we never call her a goddess or pretend that she is anything other than a saint of God in Christ. We honor those whom God Himself honors. Her biblical titles are repeated by us: "full of grace," "blessed," "holy" and the "Mother" of God. The prayer culminates with us asking for her intercession to pray for us "now and at the hour of our death." Mary is not a shortcut that bypasses Christ. Always and everywhere, she points us to her Son. That's her role in the Kingdom. She reminds us, his servants, to "do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5).

How to Pray the Rosary:

If you've never prayed it before, get a guide that walks you through the prayers and suggests points of meditation: Bible quotes, the 10 virtues of Mary, etc. You set your own pace, but it should be nothing less than a decade a day. We would recommend praying a whole Mystery, which is five decades, a day. This gives you time to reign in your wandering thoughts, taking the words of the Rosary and making them your own words. Pray the Rosary for seven days with the Offer Up intention for God's blessing on your neighbors.

[Click here for a basic guide](#)

Give Up

Offer Up

Entertainment

Your favorite show, YouTube fixation, sports - whatever it might be let this week's give up create more space for you to meditate on what Christ has done for each one of us as you reflect on each mystery of the rosary.

My Neighbor

Jesus commands that we love our neighbor as ourselves. Imagine how relationships could transform, heal, and grow if our entire parish prayed intentionally for our neighbors as we pray the rosary daily!

