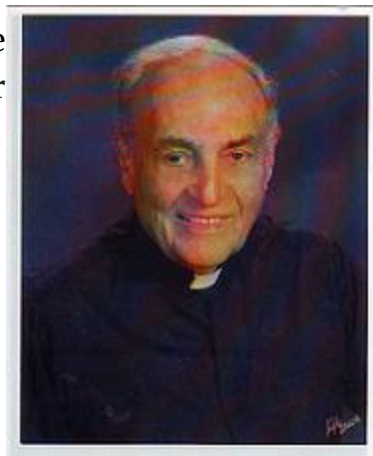


Acies 2011

Annual Acies Ceremony 2011

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Spritual Director



Homily by Fr. Richard Soulliere

A primary devotion of the Legion of Mary is the recitation of the Holy Rosary and so, we offer some thoughts about the Rosary..

First, the beads - the use of beads:

An old catechism of the Catholic Church states that many of the hermits of the first centuries were unable to read and write. Evidently, compulsory education had not yet arrived. One of their devotions was to recite one Our Father (the perfect prayer given by our Lord during the course of His earthly life) in honor of every Psalm. If you look in the Psalm section of the Old Testament of your Catholic Bible, you will see that there are 150 Psalms, without name, each one numbered, as Psalm #1, Psalm #2, etc. In order to note the number of Our Fathers they had said, they made use of a cord or string, along which they strung 150 small stones, twigs or seeds.

The Third Council of the Church took place at Ephesus, in the year 431 AD. Here, Mary was declared to be the Mother of God and the Hail Mary prayer was formulated. The Council took the Angel Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the [Annunciation](#), "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" and added the name Mary (Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you), then it took Elizabeth's greeting, inspired by the Holy Spirit to Mary at the time of the [Visitation](#), "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus). The concluding sentence, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen" was added by the Council. The use of the cord with 150 stones, twigs or seeds continued, in honor of the 150 Psalms in the devotional life of the Church. St. Dominic founder of the Dominican Order in 1216 was the first to say 150 Hail Marys, in honor of 150 psalms, hence the [Rosary](#) used to be called the Psalter of Mary.

During the course of the 12th century, a great heresy (a false belief or doctrine) appeared in the Church in southern France, at a town named Alba. It became known as the Albigensian Heresy. Among its tenets was, that all matter is evil and only things of the spirit are good: that the spiritual world was created by God and that the material world was created by the devil. This meant that Christ did not have a material body, thus, He was not formed in Mary's womb and, thus, Mary was not the Mother of God. This heresy gained a large following in southern France. Pope Innocent III commissioned St. Dominic to lead those preaching against this heresy.

It was at this time that the Blessed Mother either appeared to or inspired (Catholic history books vary) St. Dominic in the formulation of the Rosary and he and his companions introduced it everywhere. The people, meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, soon realized that the Albigensian Heresy was false. Before long, it had brought about the return to the faith of more than 100,000. Its use continued to spread throughout the Catholic Church and it became a tremendously popular devotion.

Secondly: the Prayers of the Rosary (1) The Apostles formulated the [Apostles Creed](#) to ensure that they would always be teaching the same thing wherever they went. It briefly contains the 12 Articles of the Catholic faith that all Catholics must know and believe. Did our Lord choose 12 Apostles because there are 12 Articles of Faith? (2) The [Our Father](#) - the perfect prayer, given to us by Christ Himself. (3) The [Hail Mary](#), from the Council of Ephesus, discussed previously. (4) The [Glory Be](#) - believed to be authored by Mary or St. Dominic.

Thirdly: Why is meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary so important? Because the degree or the amount that you imitate Christ in your personal life, determines the degree or amount of holiness or sanctity that you have, which determines the amount of happiness you will have in Heaven. Though Pope John Paul II gave us 5 Luminous Mysteries, a complete Rosary remains at 15 mysteries, despite the fact that we now have 20 individual mysteries (Joyful - 5, Sorrowful - 5, Glorious - 5 and Luminous - 5). Each mystery is a window or picture of some happening in the life of Our Lord and /or His Mother. Each happening presents to us one or more of their virtues. By meditating on these virtues and incorporating them into our own life, we become more like them and thus attain a higher degree of sanctity and holiness. The Saints, by studying the life of Jesus, attained sainthood by these studies.

Some things to remember:

(a) After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the [Rosary](#) is, perhaps, our finest devotion.

(b) Our Lady told Father Gobbi, of the Marian Movement of Priests: "When you invite me to pray for you, I accede to your request and mingle my voice with yours, I unite my prayer to yours. Consequently, it becomes more and more efficacious, because your heavenly Mother is suppliant omnipotence (the all-powerful petitioner). What I ask for, I always obtain, because Jesus can never say "no" to what his Mother requests of Him." Therefore, when praying your rosary, always ask Mary to pray for you. (MMP book, message #275, j-l, p. 370.

(c) "Frequently recite the [holy Rosary](#)! Then the powerful Red Dragon will be shackled by this chain (the [Rosary](#)) and his margin of action will become ever more restricted. In the end, he will be left impotent and harmless." (MMP book, Message #275 t, p. 271.)

(d) The recitation of 5 continuous decades of the Rosary, at a Legion praesidium, curia or council meeting, can be used to gain a plenary indulgence. (Appendix 7, Paragraphs 5 & 6, p. 346 of the Legion Handbook). A plenary indulgence removes all of a person's temporal or temporary punishment due to forgiven sin and can be applied to a soul in purgatory. Thus, if a plenary indulgence is applied to a soul in Purgatory and all of his/her punishment is removed, then that person must go straight to Heaven. Be sure

(1) to have the intention of your Rosary to be that of gaining a plenary indulgence and

(2) to say the Act of Contrition prior to the Rosary recitation, since a disposition of mind and heart, in which all attachment to sin, even venial sin, is absent. the Act of Contrition frees one from any attachment to sin and to venial sins.

Read the Gospel of St. John 21:2-13. Peter and some of the apostles and disciples had been fishing all night and had caught nothing. Jesus, standing on the shore, asks them what they had caught. They responded "nothing". Then Jesus tells them "to cast their net on the right side of the ship and they will catch something". They do this and they make a huge catch of 153 fishes. Why does the Gospel say, "the right side of the ship" and enunciate the catch of "153 fish"? What is Our Lord trying to tell us? There are 153 Hail Marys in a complete Rosary (15 decades). Is He telling us that if we want success in our petitions, "the right" way is to say a complete Rosary - "153 Hail Marys" - and we will have success?

How blessed we are to be in the Legion of Mary! I dare to say that we would not have the affection for the Rosary that we now have, nor would we say as many Rosaries as we now do, if we were not in that Legion of Mary!

Thus, the obvious and proper conclusion:

Never, never, never leave the Legion of Mary