

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary

2019



My dear Sisters:

As we all know very well, the feast of our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated on October 7, a beloved feast throughout the Church and in a special manner in the entire Dominican Order.

Tradition tells us that in the year 1208, the Virgin Mary appeared to Saint Dominic and taught him to pray the Rosary, in order to spread its devotion and obtain abundant blessings. The saint did so and its propagation was such that the Christian troops prayed the Holy Rosary before the Battle of Lepanto (October 7, 1571) and emerged victorious.

Thus Pope St. Pius V, in gratitude to the Blessed Virgin, instituted this date as the Feast of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. According to him it is a pious way of prayer, accessible to all, which consists in repeating the angel's greeting to Mary while trying to meditate on the life of Our Lord.

Prayer is a word of love. It is expressed in human terms for those who seek the most beautiful words. The best prayers use few words, so some are repetitive, like the refrain of some psalms, "...for his love endures forever." Let us look at the prayer of the Rosary, repetitive as life itself, like the heartbeat which is a rhythmic series of repetitions. To speak of our Lady of the Holy Rosary, is a way to value this prayer, born in the ambiance of the Order of Preachers, and later embraced by the whole Church. The "Hail Mary", repeated continuously, is a way of saying to the Blessed Virgin: "I love you".

The Popes have all expressed the value of this prayer: Leo XIII, on September 1, 1883, promulgated the Encyclical "*Supremi apostolatus*" on devotion to the Holy Rosary, considering it as an effective spiritual instrument in the face of the evils of society.

Among the most recent popes, in the conciliar period, St. John XXIII with his encyclical "*Grata recordatio*" and St. Paul VI with the Apostolic Exhortation, "*Marialis cultu*", have distinguished themselves by the promotion of the Rosary, underlining the evangelical character of this prayer and its christological orientation.

The beloved Saint John Paul II was a great apostle of the Rosary. We remember him on his knees with the rosary in his hands, immersed in the contemplation of Christ, as he invited us to do in his Apostolic Letter "*Rosarium Virginis Mariae*". The Rosary is a contemplative and christocentric prayer. It is the

prayer of the Christian who advances in the pilgrimage of faith, in the following of Jesus, preceded by Mary. Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, in the Angelus of the month of October also invited us every year to rediscover the beauty of this prayer, simple yet so deep.

Our present Pope, Francis, also has a special love for the prayer of the Rosary. He has even recorded the mysteries of the Rosary in his own words, being, according to him, our most powerful weapon: A WONDER MACHINE.

Sisters, I would like to invite you not only to be lovers of this very Dominican prayer: the Rosary, but also to be its great propagators.

Let us ask Mary, our mother of the Rosary, to move the hearts of young women to listen to the Lord's call to the Consecrated Life.

Happy Feast day of our Lady of the Rosary!

One with you in prayer,



Sor Mª Asuncion Gonzalez, O.P.
General Prioress