



The Marianists

The Month of the Rosary

By Bro. David Betz

During the month of October, the Church celebrates Our Lady of the Rosary. The feast was established by Pius V in 1573 on October 7 to thank God for a victory over the Turks at Lepanto, Greece since it was believed that praying the rosary contributed to the victory. In 1884 Pius XII established the entire month of October to be dedicated to the devotion of the rosary. The rosary was a strong devotion until Vatican II where the practice waned but there has been a resurgence including John Paul II adding a Fourth set of mysteries called the Luminous Mysteries. (see: <https://catholicexchange.com/a-brief-history-of-the-rosary>).

The term, rosary, comes from the Latin “rosarium” which means “rose garden” and it is considered a gift of roses given to our Blessed Mary and it is this reference that Blessed Chaminade wrote about the rosary. (Note: According to Fr. David Fleming, SM, Fr. Chaminade had little to say about popular devotion such as the rosary, litanies and other devotions. He did practice them during his lifetime, promoted them to his disciples and assumed that they were practicing them as he did. See Chapter 5, *Prayer: Chaminade’s Teaching and Today’s Life*, A New Fulcrum, North American Center for Marianist Studies, Dayton, OH 2014).

The Mystery of the Rosary:

I have grown tall as the rose bushes of Jericho” (Si 24:18). Mary is this mystical rose which attracted the whole world by its beauty and its wonderful fragrance. If the Holy Spirit compares her to the lily, to balsam, to cinnamon, to the cedars of Lebanon, to the cypresses of Mount Sion, all trees and plants which have their own fruits and qualities, it is because each one symbolizes a particular virtue of the Blessed Virgin: the lily, purity of life; balsam, the sweet fragrance of piety; cinnamon, her meditation on the

divine mysteries; the cedar, integrity of soul; the cypress, the loftiness of her merits. The rose, however, expresses perfectly all the virus of her life.

The fragrant rose to which the heavenly bee, which buzzes among the lilies and dwells in the land of the angels, has flown, on which it has settled, to which it has attached itself, and from which it has drawn the sweet flower of its humanity. The rose whose beauty is admired by the sun and the moon, whose fragrance cures those who are ill, which strengthens the infirm and resurrects the dead. The rose which by its sweetness gives joy to heaven, saddens hell, and sustains the world with graces it receives from Jesus Christ. Mary! True rose of Jericho, without thorns, adorned in white and vermilion, very beautiful and very fragrant. Eve was the thorn which not only pricked her husband to death but even made his entire posterity feel the sharp point of his sin. Mary, on the other hand, is the thornless rose which alleviates the pain of all men (and women) and renders their lot a happy one.

The rosary is like a crown of roses, like a diadem with which the faithful adorn the head of their queen, hoping, quite rightly, that the Blessed Virgin Mary will prevail against their enemies. Its feast is made to coincide with that of Our Lady of the Victory. (See pages 57 & 58 of Marian Writing, Volume 1, Marianist Resources Commission, Dayton, OH, 1980)

So the next time you are praying the rosary imagine yourself in a rose garden and use your senses to experience the fragrance and the beauty surrounding you and consider being in an intimate conversation with Mary about life and how you see your relationship with her and her Son.