



US OFFICE of the Rosary Confraternity, P.O. Box 134, St. Mary's, KS 66536
Enrollment Form (Please print neatly and fill out as completely as possible.)

Circle one: Mr. (Head of household) Mrs. Miss.

First Name (baptismal) _____ Last Name _____

Address (mailing) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Date of Birth _____ Baptismal Date (at least month & year) _____

Can we email your yearly letter? Email address: _____

Signature _____ Signed in (City or town) _____ Date _____



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The Origin of the Prayer of the Rosary and its Excellence



A constant tradition, which, on several occasions, the Popes have solemnly endorsed, tells us that Saint Dominic (+ 1221) instituted the Rosary.

For instance, in the Bull *Consueverunt* of September 17, 1569, inaugurating the great movement in promotion of the Rosary which, two years later, was to lead to the famous victory of Lepanto, Pope Saint Pius V wrote:

The Blessed Dominic (...) himself lived in times similar to our own, when the Albigensian heresy was ravaging France and Italy, casting a great number of the laity into the blindness of impiety and raging with fury against the clergy and priests of Our Lord. Guided by the

example of those who had preceded him in the service of God, and filled with the Holy Ghost, Dominic raised his eyes to Heaven and fixed his gaze on that holy mountain, that is to say on the glorious Virgin Mary, the sublime Mother of God. *In begetting Christ, she crushed the head of the Infernal serpent. She alone has destroyed all heresies.* By the fruit of her womb, she saved the world from the damnation which the fall of our first parents had merited for us. From this holy mountain without human aid, the stone which is Christ was detached; and the Son of Mary, immolated on the tree of the Cross, let abundant streams of grace flow from His wounds.

Full of these thoughts, Saint Dominic then discovered an easy method, accessible to all, a method of incomparable piety and an excellent way of praying to God and making our supplications to Him. This method is called the Rosary, or the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It consists in honoring the Mother of God by offering her the recitation of the Angelic salutation a hundred and fifty times, corresponding to the hundred and fifty psalms of David. Each decade (of ten Hail Marys) is preceded by an Our Father and the decades are accompanied by meditations in the course of which we pass in spirit through the whole life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Such is the rite in which Saint Dominic created and which propagated in every part of the Roman Church through the intermediacy of his children, the religious of the Order of Friar Preachers.

This devotion was gladly received by the faithful. Soon, in the midst of these meditations and these prayers, hearts were inflamed with the ardour of charity; one saw a multitude of people transformed by this devotion; the darkness of heresy vanished, and the light of faith shone forth anew in the world. In order to establish this veneration of Mary in a lasting manner, Confraternities were founded in various places, set up by the religious of the Order of Friar Preachers, who were given authority by their superiors for this purpose, and many people were received as members of these Confraternities.

This passage from the Bull *Consueverunt* is particularly noteworthy. By itself, it amounts to a whole treatise on the Rosary, because it defines its essential elements with perfect clarity. It tells us:

1. The *name* of this devotion: The 'Rosary', or 'Mary's Psalter'.

2. Its *matter*: that is, the hundred and fifty Angelic salutations and fifteen Our Fathers, recited in a particular order and in decades.

3. Its *form* (in the scholastic sense of the word, that is, what determines a thing's specific nature): the meditation on the mysteries of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Its *qualities*: This devotion is an easy method, accessible to everybody, has an admirable piety, and is an excellent way of praying to God and of honoring Mary.

5. Its *author*: Saint Dominic, who through divine inspiration, thought of this treasure.

6. Its *ministers* or *promoters*: the Friar Preachers, who have spread this devotion in every part of the Roman Church.

7. Its *method of propagation*: that is, its lasting extension through the Confraternities instituted with the assistance of the Friar Preachers.

8. And finally, the *effects* or the *object* of this devotion: to inflame hearts through meditation on the mysteries of the life of Christ, to enlighten minds through the clarity of the Faith, to revive in souls, Catholic beliefs and virtues, to dispel the darkness of error, and to cause the splendors of revealed truth to shine forth in the world with a new brilliance.

9. Through this last point we see that the Rosary has a double efficacy:

- The Rosary has a marvelous *efficacy of intercession* especially against heresy and error which attack souls;
- The Rosary has also a powerful *efficacy of sanctification*: it is a school of prayer of virtue and of Catholic holiness.

What the Rosary has been and has done in the past, it should continue to be and to do in our own day. This depends on each and every one of us.

In this time of apostasy in which we live, it is necessary for us also to fix our gaze on the Mother of God – the holy mountain – and to be filled with the thoughts which inspired Saint Dominic and Saint Pius V. Our Lady, through Jesus, the Fruit of her womb, has received eternally the power to crush the head of the Serpent, the Prince of this world. In consequence of this, it her wish that what she accomplished in the 13th century in exterminating the Albigensian heresy through the intermediacy of Saint Dominic, and what she did in the 16th century in restraining Protestantism and destroying the Turkish threat through the agency of Saint Pius V, she still desires to continue, so as to annihilate the heresy of neo-modernism and the paganism of our time. She wishes to do this and she certainly will do this – through the same one and only means of the holy Rosary.

One must be profoundly convinced of this fundamental truth because it determines all our faith in the Rosary.

The Rosary Confraternity

The Rosary Confraternity is an association intended to spread widely the devotion of the Rosary. It is very old – one of the first confraternities was established in Valencia in 1221, the year of Saint Dominic's death. It is very rich in spiritual favors, and in various privileges which the Popes have constantly granted to it.

Leo XIII in the Constitution *Ubi Primum*, published on October 2, 1898, which constituted the "charter" of the Rosary Confraternity, determined its object and its nature:

The Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary was instituted with the object of encouraging a great number of men, united through fraternal charity, to praise and to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to obtain her protection through praying with one accord, using the very pious prayer formula from which the association has taken its name. And that is why, without seeking any gain, without asking payment, the Confraternity accepts men of every condition and *establishes no other bond between them than that of the recitation of Mary's Rosary*. That is how it comes about that everyone, through bringing only a little to the common treasury, draws much from it... Every member who follows the rules of the Confraternity, and who accomplishes the recitation of the Rosary, joins in the intention all the members of the society, who render to him, many times over, the same charitable office.

The Rosary Confraternity is thus a real mutuality of prayers and good works.

