

The Popes on the Rosary

Many of the popes have championed the Rosary as a powerful, multifaceted devotion. The theologian Romano Guardini described praying the rosary as "participation in the life of Mary, whose focus was Christ." Pope Leo XIII also viewed the rosary as a vital means to participate in the life of Mary and to find the way to Christ.

Meditation on the mysteries of salvation is to lead to conversion of heart and change of actions. Contemplation on the mysteries is essentially an act of gratitude through which the heart is "filled with love...hope enlarged, and the desire increased for those things which Christ has prepared for such as have united themselves to Him in imitation of His example and in participation in His sufferings." Attentive consideration of the "precious memorials" of our Redeemer leads to "a heart on fire with gratitude to Him." The popes tell us its essence is "to recall the mysteries of salvation in succession, while the subject of meditation is mingled and interlaced with the Angelic Salutation and prayer to God the Father."

The popes also teach that the Rosary is intended to influence society as a whole. The holy and powerful life of Jesus Christ is to be a real antidote and remedy for the errors afflicting society.

"The rosary, and rosary-like prayer, focus on the events of Christ's life, the incarnation, redemption, and the promise of eternal life, and on the Virgin Mary's participation in the mystery of Christ.

A person praying must be the agent who actively enters into the mysteries, and not simply one before whom the celebration unfolds. The rosary is an accessible reminder of the constant prayer of the Church, the incessant prayer of God's people throughout the ages. The Psalter of Mary, as the rosary is sometimes called, is a remembrance of the Church's deepest nature as a community of continual prayer." (Pope Leo XIII, 1896)

These pages are devoted to the words of the popes who have most strongly endorsed and encouraged the Rosary.

[Benedict XVI](#) | [John Paul II](#) | [John Paul I](#) | [Paul VI](#) | [John XXIII](#) | [Pius XII](#) | [Pius XI](#) | [Benedict XV](#) | [St. Pius X](#) | [Leo XIII](#) | [Gregory XVI](#) | [Benedict XIV](#) | [Benedict XIII](#) | [Innocent XIII](#) | [Clement XI](#) | [Innocent XII](#) | [Paul V](#) | [Gregory XIII](#) | [Gregory XII](#) | [Julius III](#) | [Adrian VI](#) | [Leo X](#) | [Innocent VIII](#) | [Sixtus IV](#) | [Eugene IV](#) | [Gregory XI](#) | [Benedict XII](#) | [Urban IV](#)

Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013)



The Rosary is “the prayer of the Christian who advances in the pilgrimage of faith, in the following of Jesus, preceded by Mary.”¹

“We desire to welcome the Virgin’s maternal request, committing ourselves to saying the rosary with faith for peace in our families, in countries, and in the whole world.”²

“The rosary is a means given by the Virgin for contemplating Jesus and, meditating on his life, for loving and following him always more faithfully.”³

In praying the Rosary, “we follow His Holiness Benedict XVI, who recites it with frequency each morning and uses it to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ.”⁴

“Dear young people, I invite you to value this traditional Marian prayer which helps us to understand better the central moments of salvation realized by Christ.

...Dear sick people, I exhort you to turn with confidence to the Virgin, through this exercise of piety, entrusting all your needs to her.”⁵

Benedict XVI invites newlyweds “to make the praying of the rosary in the family a moment of spiritual growth under the maternal gaze of the Virgin Mary.”⁶

1 general audience on St Peter’s Square, on 05/01/06

2 Zenit.org, 10/07/07

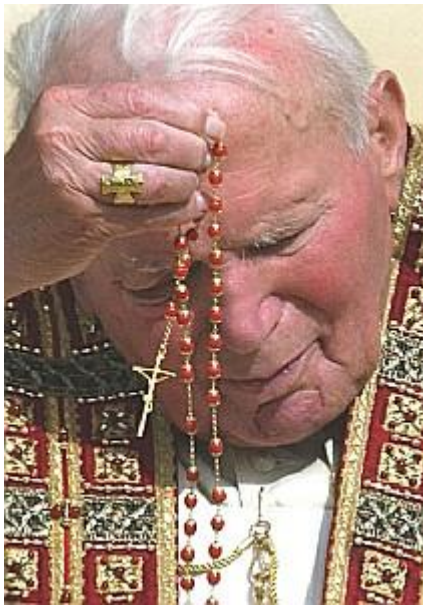
3 id.

4 Cardinal Bertone to seminarians in Peru, Zenit news agency, 08/30/07.

5 general audience on St Peter’s Square, on 05/01/06

6 id.

Pope John Paul II (1978-2005)



“The Rosary is my favorite prayer.”¹

“Pray, pray much. Say the Rosary everyday”²

“I would therefore ask those who devote themselves to the pastoral care of families to recommend heartily the recitation of the Rosary.”³

“Recite the Rosary every day. I earnestly urge Pastors to pray the Rosary and to teach people in their Christian communities how to pray it.”⁴

“How beautiful is the family that recites the Rosary every evening.”⁵

Magisterial Documents :

Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* (10/16/02)

1 John Paul II, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, Introduction, 2

2 Msgr J. Cirrincione and T. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, Tan Books and Publishers, p.31

3 *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 41

4 stmichaelonline.org/Rosary/Important.htm

5 *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, id. and ewtn.com/library/prayer/confra.txt

[Top](#)

Pope John Paul I (August 26–September 28, 1978)



“MY ROSARY” (Oct.7, 1973)

Homily by Albino Cardinal Luciani

“The Rosary is an impoverished prayer? What then would be a 'rich prayer'? The Rosary is a procession of Paters, the prayer taught by Jesus; of Aves, the salutation of God to the Virgin by means of the Angel; of Glorias, the praise of the Most Holy Trinity.”¹

“The crisis of the Rosary doesn't come first. What comes first is the crisis in prayer in general today. People are all taken up in material interests; they think little about the soul...For the interior life, and for...the tender colloquy with God,...it is too tiring to find a few minutes of time. What a pity!”

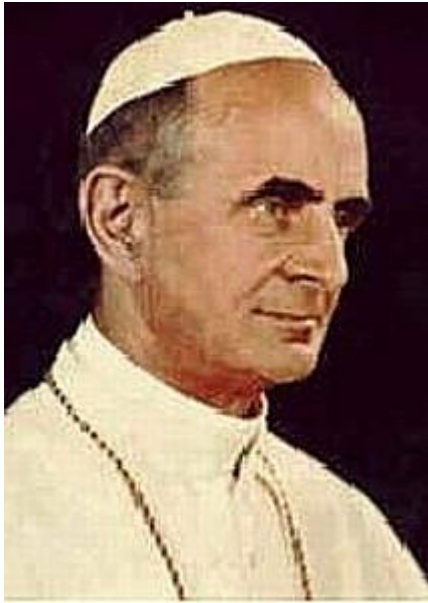
“...The Rosary, a simple and easy prayer, helps me to be a child again, and I am not ashamed of it at all.”

The Rosary—even if it should be shortened and adapted—recited in the evening by the parents together with the children, is a form of family liturgy.

¹ All the quotations on this page are from the homily “My Rosary”

[Top](#)

Pope Paul VI (1963-1978)



If evils increase, the devotion of the People of God should also increase. ...Pray ardently to our most merciful mother Mary by saying the Rosary during the month of October, as We have already indicated. This prayer is well-suited to the devotion of the People of God, most pleasing to the Mother of God and most effective in gaining heaven's blessings.”¹

We now desire, as a continuation of the thought of our predecessors, to recommend strongly the recitation of the family Rosary.²

There is no doubt that, after the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, the high point which family prayer can reach, the Rosary should be considered as one of the best and most efficacious prayers in common that the Christian family is invited to recite.³

Christi Matri, Encyclical on Prayers for Peace During October (09/15/66)

Marialis Cultus, Apostolic Exhortation (02/02/74)

1 *Christi Matri*, 9

2 *Marialis Cultus*, 52

3 *ibid.*, 54

[Top](#)

Pope John XXIII (1958-1963)



"The Rosary is the glory of the Roman Church.... It takes its place ... after the Mass and the Sacraments."¹

"The Rosary is a magnificent and universal prayer for the needs of the Church, the nations and the entire world."²

"My day must be one long prayer; prayer is the breath of life. I propose to recite all fifteen decades of the Rosary every day, if possible in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament."³

"We never fail to recite it {the Rosary} each day in its entirety {mysteries}."⁴

"We have several times had occasion to urge the clergy and laity to public and private prayer."⁵

"If you recite the Family Rosary, all united, you shall taste peace."⁶

Grata Recordatio Encyclical on the Rosary : Prayer for the Church, missions, international and social problems (09/26/59)

1 Msgr J. Cirrincione and T. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, Tan Books and Publishers,

2 id.

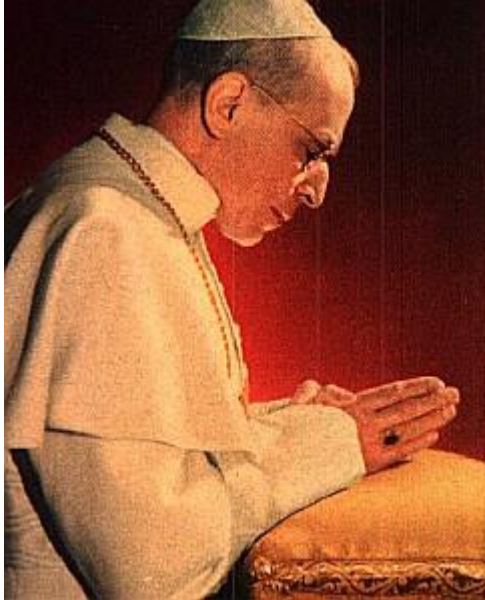
3 id.

4 *Grata Recordatio* Encyclical

5 id.

6 *The Rosary and the Crisis of Faith*

Pope Pius XII (1939-1958)



“We do not hesitate to affirm publicly that We put great confidence in the Holy Rosary for the healing of evils of our times.”¹

“Through your efforts, Venerable Brethren, the Christian people should be led to understand the dignity, the power and the excellence of the Rosary.”²

"There is no surer means of calling down God’s blessing upon the family . . . than the daily recitation of the Rosary.”³

“The home of the Christian family, like that of Nazareth, will become an earthly abode of sanctity, and, so to speak, a sacred temple, where the Holy Rosary will not only be the particular prayer which every day rises to heaven in an odor of sweetness, but will also form the most efficacious school of Christian discipline and Christian virtue.”⁴

Ingruentium Malorum Encyclical Letter on Reciting the Rosary (09/15/51)

1 *Ingruentium Malorum*, 15

2 Id.,

3 Sister Patricia Proctor, OSC, 101 *Inspirational Stories of the Rosary*, p.51, and : geocities.com/Athens/Rhodes/3543/HolyRsry.html

4 *Ingruentium Malorum*, 14

Pope Pius XI (1922-1939)



“a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight”¹

“Kings and princes, however burdened with most urgent occupations and affairs, made it their duty to recite the Rosary.”²

“Venerable Brethren, We have thought fit earnestly to exhort you, and through you, all the Faithful, to carry out this pious practice.”³

“...We exhort them, citing Our own example, not to let even one day pass without saying the Rosary, no matter how burdened they may be with many cares and labors”⁴

“We desire very earnestly...that the Holy ROSARY should be recited ...both in the churches and in homes.”⁵

The fathers and mothers of families particularly must give an example to their children, especially when, at sunset, they gather after the day's work, within the domestic walls, and recite the Holy Rosary on bended knees before the image of the Virgin.”⁶

Ingravescentibus Malis Encyclical on the Rosary (09/29/37)

1 *Ingravescentibus Malis*, 14

2 Id., 15

3 Id., 30

4 Id., 29

5 Id., 17

6 Id., 28

[Top](#)

Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922)



“The prayer of the Rosary is perfect, because of the praises it offers, the lessons it teaches, the graces it obtains, and the victories it achieves.”¹

The Most Holy Rosary is a prayer that “is most adapted to fostering widely piety and every virtue.”²

“The Roman Pontiffs have let pass no occasion of commending the Rosary and have enriched it with Apostolic Indulgences.”³

“Finally, We wish this to be a special care of the Dominicans - the spread and frequent use of the Rosary among Christian people. We make this exhortation in these troublous times.”⁴

Fausto Appetente Die, Encyclical on St. Dominic (06/29/21)

1 Msgr Joseph A, Cirrincione and Thomas A. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis of Faith*, p.34, Tan Books and Publishers, Inc.

Also found in *101 Inspirational Stories of the Rosary*, Sister Patricia Prostor, OSC,

Franciscan Monastery of St Clare, Spokane, Washington. (rosary101.com)

2 *Fausto Appetente Die*, Encyclical, 11

3 Id., 11

4 Id., 13

[Top](#)

St. Pius X (1903-1914)



“The Rosary is the most beautiful and the richest of all prayers to the Mediatrix of all grace; It is the prayer that touches most the heart of the Mother of God. Say it each day!”¹

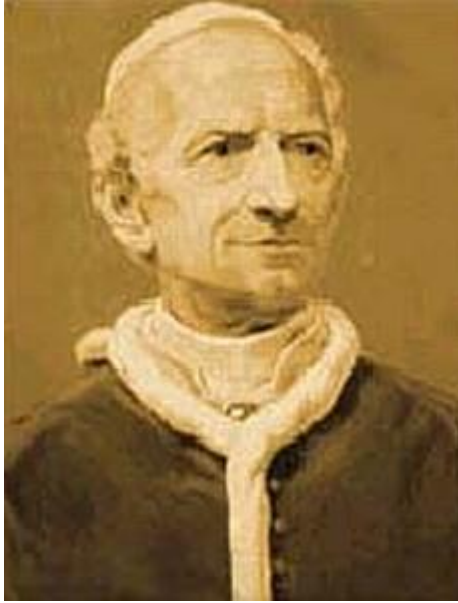
“Amidst all prayers, the Rosary is the most beautiful, the richest in graces, and the one that most pleases the Most Holy Virgin.”²

1 Cf. Msgr. J. Cirrincione and T. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, Tan Books and Publishers, p.34

2 Quoted in *Spiritual Will of St Pius X*, quoted in fraternitenotredame.org/Pages/EN_Pages/ChurchTexts/EN_CTx-Pope&HRosary.html

[Top](#)

Pope Leo XIII (1878- 1903)



...“The Rosary is the most excellent form of prayer. It is the remedy for all our evils, the root of all blessings. There is no more excellent way of praying.”¹

“The formula of the Rosary, too, is "excellently adapted to prayer in common”²

“...it is Our desire that in the principal church of each diocese it should be recited every day, and in parish churches on every feast-day.”³

“Our need of divine help is as great today as when the great Dominic introduced the use of the Rosary of Mary as a balm for the wounds of his contemporaries.”⁴

... “And that old custom of our forefathers ought to be preserved or else restored, according to which Christian families assemble before a figure of Our Lady and alternately recite the Rosary”....⁵

“We earnestly exhort all Christians to give themselves to the recital of the pious devotion of the Rosary publicly, or privately in their own house and family, and that unceasingly.”⁶

Supremi Apostolatus Officio, Encyclical on Devotion of the Rosary (09/01/1883)

Superiore Anno, Encyclical Letter on the Recitation of the Rosary (08/30/1884)

Quod Auctoritate, Encyclical proclaiming an Extraordinary Jubilee (12/22/1885)

Viè En Ben Noto, Encyclical on the Rosary and Public Life (09/20/1887)

Octobri Mense, Encyclical on the Rosary (09/22/1891)

Magnae Dei Matris, Encyclical Letter on the Rosary (09/08/1892)

Laetitiae Sanctae, Encyclical Letter Commending Devotion to the Rosary (09/08/1893)

Iucunda Semper Expectatione, Encyclical Letter on the Rosary (09/08/1894)

Aduitricem, Encyclical Letter on the Rosary (09/05/1895)

Fidentem Piumque Animum, Encyclical on the Rosary (09/20/1896)

Augustissimae Virginis Mariae, Encyclical on the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary (09/12/1897)

Diuturni Temporis, Encyclical Letter on the Rosary (09/05/1898)

1 Cf. Msgr. J. Cirrincione and T. Nelson, *The Rosary and the Crisis in the Faith*, Tan Books and Publishers, p.34

2 *Fidentem Piumque Animum*, Encyclical, 2

3 *Idem*

4 *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, Encyclical, 7

5 *Fidentem ...*, 2

6 *Idem*

[Top](#)

Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846)



Approved in 1832 'The Living Rosary' in which fifteen persons unite to say the rosary every month. ¹

“The Rosary is a miraculous means; the most capable one amongst other means, to destroy sin and regain divine grace.”²

“We are confident this prayer, so conducive to giving honor to the Blessed Virgin in all places and at all times, will not only continue to spread more and more everywhere because of its simplicity, but also, because made more powerful by so close a union among those who pray, it will be most favorably accepted by God.”³

[Top](#)

Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758)



St. Dominic was “the designer, the author, promoter, and most illustrious preacher of this admirable and truly heavenly instrument, the Rosary.”¹

¹ rosary-center.org/1149n5.htm

[Top](#)

Pope Benedict XIII (1724 – 1730)



On March 26, 1726, Benedict XIII made obligatory the lessons of the Roman breviary for the Matins of the Feast of October seventh, teaching that Mary recommended to St. Dominic the preaching of the Rosary to the people, giving him to understand that this prayer would be an exceptionally efficacious succor against heresies and vices. ¹

¹ Cited by Father Antonin Danzas, O. P., in his work *Etudes sur les temps primitifs de l'Ordre de Saint-Dominique* (Paris: Oudin Freres, 1877), vol. 4, p. 59

[Top](#)

Pope Innocent XIII (1721-1724)



“The Rosary had been instituted by St. Dominic to appease the anger of God and to implore the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” ¹

1 Leo XIII, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, Encyclical, 5

[Top](#)

Pope Clement XI (1700-1721)



“Clement XI, has “decreed that the Blessed Mother of God should every year be especially honored in her Rosary by the whole Church.”¹

1 Leo XIII, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, 4

By Bull of October 3, 1716, Clement XI has directed the observance of the feast of the Rosary (October 7) by all Christendom and inscribed it on the universal calendar, in gratitude for the victory gained on August 5, under the auspices of Our Lady of the Snow. This victory was followed by the raising of the siege of Corfu, and completed a year later by the taking of Belgrade.”

[Top](#)

Pope Innocent XII (1691-1700)



He has “spread the devotion of the Rosary throughout the countries of the East” ¹

1 Leo XIII, *Adiutricem*, Enc. Letter, 28

[Top](#)

Pope Paul V (1605-1621)



“The rosary is a treasure of graces” ¹

1 1621, fraternitenotredame.org/Pages/EN_Pages/ChurchTexts/EN_CTx-Pope&HRosary.html

[Top](#)

Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585)



Monet Apostolus (April 1, 1573) Bull instituting the solemnity of the Feast of the Holy Rosary in memory of the victory at the battle of Lepanto.

{Gregory XIII changed the name of the Feast of Our Lady of Victory instituted by St Pius V on October 7 to the Feast of “Our Lady of the Rosary” and transferred it to the first Sunday of October in 1573.}

“The Rosary has been instituted by St. Dominic to appease the anger of God and to implore the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”¹

1 Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical on Devotion of the Rosary, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*. September 1, 1883, 5.

[Top](#)

Pope Gregory XII (1406-1415)



“The Rosary is a wonderful instrument for the destruction of sin, the recovery of GOD’s grace, and the advancement of His glory”¹

1 Sister Patricia Proctor, OSC, 101 *Inspirational Stories on the Rosary*, p.102

[Top](#)

Pope Julius III (1550-1555)



THE ROSARY

The Rosary is “the Glory of the Church.”¹

1 Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical on Devotion of the Rosary, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*.
September 1, 1883, 5.

[Top](#)

Pope Adrian VI (1522-1523)



“The rosary is the scourge of the devil.” 1

1 Sister Patricia Prector, OSC, 101 *Inspirational Stories on the Rosary*, p.180

2 Web pages:

tomsdomain.com/rosary/id46.html

ageofmary.com/holyrosary/

[Top](#)

Pope Leo X (1513-1521)



The Rosary “was instituted to oppose pernicious heresiarchs and heresies.”¹

¹ Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical on Devotion of the Rosary, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*.
September 1, 1883, 5.

[Top](#)

Pope Innocent VIII (1484-1492)



Privileged the Confraternities of the Rosary¹

¹ <http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Rosary> and
http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/ROSA_SAC/ROSARY_Lat_rosarium_.html

[Top](#)

Pope Sixtus XI (1471-1484)



This method of prayer, the Rosary, “redounded to the honor of God and the Blessed Virgin, and was well suited to obviate impending dangers”¹

1 Pope Leo XIII, *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, 5

[Top](#)

Pope Eugene IV (1431-1447)



Constitution *Advesperascente*

Has spread the devotion of the Rosary throughout the countries of the East.¹

1 *Advesperascente* issued in 1439, cited by Leo XIII in *Adiutricem*, Enc. Letter, 28

[Top](#)

Pope Gregory XI (1370- 1378)



“The Rosary is this wonderful means to destroy sin and recover grace.” ¹

1 fraternitenotredame.org/Pages/EN_Pages/ChurchTexts/EN_CTx-Pope&HRosary.html

[Top](#)

Pope Benedict XII (1334-1342)



“The Rosary is a sovereign remedy to errors and vices.” ¹

[Top](#)

Pope Urban IV (1261-1264)



“Every day the Rosary obtains fresh boom for Christianity.”

“There is a pious rite which, to be protected against the dangers threatening the world, consists in reciting ... the *Ave Maria*, as many times as the Psalms of David, while saying before each decade the dominical prayer... With our Apostolic authority, we approve this psalter of the Virgin.”¹

1 1264, fraternitenotredame.org/Pages/EN_Pages/ChurchTexts/EN_CTx-Pope&HRosary.html

2 Cited by Pope Leo XIII, in *Supremi Apostolatus Officio*, Encyclical issued in 1883, 5.

[Top](#)

All About Mary includes a variety of content, much of which reflects the expertise, interpretations and opinions of the individual authors and not necessarily of the Marian Library or the University of Dayton. Please share feedback or suggestions with marianlibrary@udayton.edu.