

The Importance of the Family Rosary

This article is taken from the booklet "Our Glorious Faith and How To Lose It" written by Fr. Hugh Thwaites, S.J. It contains different stories of how we can lose our faith but this paper will deal only with the Holy Rosary. Fr. Thwaites' words on this subject are as follows:

Without delay now, I want to talk about my theme. It seems to me that a principal cause of the loss of faith is the dropping off in the practice of the family rosary.

In Austria, after World War II, there was a complete collapse of vocations. One year, apparently, no one at all entered the seminaries. So the bishops held a synod, to find out how it could be that this had happened. The conclusion they reached was that the war had so disrupted family life that the centuries-old practice of the rosary in the home had stopped, and had just not started up again. This is my experience, too; **when the rosary goes, the faith soon collapses.**

I remember someone telling me of a friend of his, a great Catholic, the pillar of the parish, whose children had all lapsed, one after the other. They had all fallen away from the sacraments and from attending Mass. So I said to him, "I wouldn't mind betting that your friend had been brought up to recite the family rosary when he was a boy, and that his children haven't." The next time I saw him, he said that this was indeed true. His friend had recited the family rosary at home when he was a boy, and when he had got married and started his own family they all said the rosary. But then, one evening when they were about to start the rosary, one of the children switched on the television, and that was that. The custom of the family rosary was dropped, and in due course, they gave up the practice of the faith.

After this life, that one unrebuked action will be seen to have affected the eternity of many people. **God sent His Mother to Fatima to tell us that we had to say the rosary every day.** There were no other prayers She asked us to say. Accordingly, we should do what She asked.

A layman I met once who did not say his rosary told me that he read the breviary every day. That is fine. It is what priests have to do. It is the prayer of the Church. So in a way it is better than the rosary. But it is not what Our Lady asked for. She asked for the rosary. If a mother sends her child to the shop for a bottle of milk, and he comes back instead with ice cream, is she pleased? In a way, ice cream is better than milk, but it is not what she asked for.

In that most holy home at Nazareth, do you think that Our Lady had to ask for anything twice? If we want in any way to be like Jesus, we must do what His Mother asks. If we do not, can we expect things to go right? We cannot with impunity disobey the Mother of God. She knows better than we the dangers of this spiritual warfare. She sees more clearly than we do the dangers that beset us. **She warns us: You must say your rosary every day.**

If the garage mechanic warns you that your car needs repairing or else it will break down, surely you would heed that warning. If the gas gauge warns you that you need more gas, do you do nothing about it? And if Our Lady comes to Fatima and tells us, **not just once but six times, that we must say the rosary every day,** do we disregard that warning? If we do, we have only ourselves to blame when we find that our children have lapsed from the faith.

I know that Fatima is only a private revelation, but nevertheless the Church has endorsed it, and that makes it rash for us to disregard it. If the Church informs us that Our Lady really did come to Fatima and tell us these things, then we must harken to her words. It really seems to me that those Catholics who do not take Fatima seriously and say the rosary every day in their homes are very akin to the Jews who laughed at Jeremiah. If God sends us His prophets and we do not take them seriously - well, we have the whole of the Old Testament to tell us what happens as a result. But at Fatima, God sent us, not His prophets, but His Immaculate Mother.

So I think that **the abandonment of the family rosary is a main reason why so many Catholics have lost the faith.** It seems to me that **the Church of the future is going to consist solely of those families who have been faithful to the rosary.** But there will be vast numbers of people whose families used to be Catholic.

In my work of going round visiting homes, I have seen this conclusion borne out time and again. **Homes can be transformed by starting the recitation of the daily rosary.** I remember a woman telling me that she could not thank me enough for having nagged her into starting it; it had united her family as never before. And I remember another home where I called. There was a strange tension there: the children were silent and the wife seemed withdrawn, but the husband was willing to start the family rosary. When I called back again a couple of months later, the atmosphere was quite different. The children were chatty and the wife was friendly, and the husband walked down the road with me afterwards and said how amazing it was that the home was so much happier.

One reason, I think, why the daily rosary makes for a happy home, is this. From what some possessed people have said, and from what some of the saints have said, it seems certain that **demons fear the rosary.** It makes their hair stand on end, so to speak. Holy water certainly drives them out, but they come back again. **The daily rosary drives them out and keeps them out.** It is rather like living in an old house where there are mice everywhere. The only way to get rid of them is to bring cats. If you get a couple of cats, after a week or two there simply will not be any more mice. Mice fear the very smell of cats. And in a home where the rosary is said every day, after a time the demons realize they are impotent in front of Our Lady, and go elsewhere.

This must be one reason why, as they say, **"the family that prays together stays together."** In that home, utterly free of evil spirits, there is an atmosphere one does not find outside. In a demon-infested city like London, where I live, such a home is an oasis of God's grace, and people find a comfort and peace there which they enjoy greatly. We human beings are not meant to live in the company of demons, but with God and with the angels and saints in heaven.

So, as I see it, in this effort we are making to keep the faith and pass it on, **the practice of the rosary is absolutely indispensable.** Whatever else a person may do, even though they go to Mass every day, they still need to say the rosary in their home. It is the medicine our Mother has told us to take, to keep our faith strong and healthy.

The Power of the Rosary

The most holy Virgin in these last times in which we live has given a new efficacy to the recitation of the Rosary to such an extent that there is no problem, no matter how difficult it is, whether temporal or, above all, spiritual, in the personal life of each one of us, of our families, of the families of the world, or of the religious communities, or even of the life of peoples and nations, that cannot be solved by the Rosary. There is no problem, I tell you, no matter how difficult it is, that we cannot resolve by the prayer of the holy Rosary. With the holy Rosary, we will save ourselves; we will sanctify ourselves; we will console our Lord, and obtain the salvation of many souls. **Conversation between Sr. Lucy of Fatima and Fr. Fuentes, Dec. 26, 1957**

“The Rosary is a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight and to keep oneself from sin... If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, and in your country, assemble each evening to recite the Rosary. Let not even one day pass without saying it, no matter how burdened you may be with many cares and labors.” **Pope Pius XI**

“Among all the devotions approved by the Church, none has been so favored by so many miracles as the Rosary devotion.”
Bl. Pope Pius IX

“The Rosary is the most excellent form of prayer and the most efficacious means of attaining eternal life. It is the remedy for all our evils, the root of all our blessings. There is no more excellent way of praying.” **Pope Leo XIII**

St. Dominic prayed to Our Lady that she would force the devils who possessed a man to reveal the truth about devotion to her. The devils were forced by Our Lady to reveal: “Now that we are forced to speak we must also tell you this: Nobody who perseveres in saying the Rosary will be damned, because she obtains for her servants the grace of true contrition for their sins and by means of this they obtain God’s forgiveness and mercy.”

Miracles of the Rosary

Battle of Lepanto, 1571 - On Sunday, October 7, the Christian and Turkish fleets met in Lepanto Gulf, off the coast of Greece. The bitter battle finished with a brilliant victory of the Christians who were vastly outnumbered. That very evening Pope St. Pius V had at Rome a clear knowledge of this success. The same afternoon, the Confraternities of the Rosary, particularly in Rome, had marched through the streets in procession reciting the Rosary. This victory put an end to the naval power of the Turks and saved Christian Europe. To this day this victory has been attributed to the praying of the Rosary. The feast of “The Most Holy Rosary” is celebrated on October 7 now and the month of October is dedicated to the Most Holy Rosary.

Rosary Miracle at Hiroshima, August 6th, 1945 - There was a home eight blocks (about 1 kilometer) from where the A-Bomb went off in Hiroshima Japan. This home had a church attached to it which was completely destroyed, but the home survived, and so did the eight German Jesuit missionaries who prayed the rosary in that house faithfully every day. These men were missionaries to the Japanese people, they were non-military, but because Germany and Japan were allies during WWII they were permitted to live and minister within Japan during the war. Not only did they all survive with (at most) relatively minor injuries, but they all lived well past that awful day with no radiation sickness, no loss of hearing, or any other visible long term defects or maladies. Naturally, they were interviewed numerous times (Fr. Schiffer, a survivor, said over 200 times) by scientists and health care people about their remarkable experience and they say “we believe that we survived because we were living the message of Fatima. We lived and prayed the rosary daily in that home.” Of course the secular scientists are speechless and incredulous at this explanation - and they are sure there is some “real” explanation - but at the same time over 55 years later the scientists are still absolutely bamboozled when it comes to finding a plausible scenario to explain the missionaries’ unique escape from the hellish power of that bomb.

Russians Pullout of Austria, 1948 - After World War II, the Allies turned over Catholic Austria to communist Russia. For three years the Austrian people endured this tyranny. Then, a Franciscan priest, Father Petrus, remembered how the Christians although greatly outnumbered had defeated the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto through the Rosary, and he launched a Rosary crusade. Through it 70,000 people, one tenth of the Austrian population, pledged to say the Rosary daily for the Soviets to leave their country. Austria was valuable to the Russians because of its strategic location, rich mineral deposits and oil reserves. Yet on May 13, 1955, the anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady at Fatima, the Russians signed the agreement to leave Austria, and they did so without one person being killed and without one shot being fired. It is the only time that the militant atheistic forces of Marxism have ever peacefully left a country in which they held power. Military strategists and historians are baffled as to why the Russians pulled out. But we are not - it was the power of the Rosary.

The Country That Saved Itself, Brazil 1962 - In 1962 there was a looming threat of communist takeover in Brazil. A woman there named Dona Amelia Bastos was known to have formed a Rosary rally among the Brazilian women there to do their part in opposing the looming threat. Their goal was simply to pray the Rosary in large groups asking the Virgin Mary for help in opposing the Communist takeover which the President of Brazil was leaning toward at the time. In Belo Horizonte 20,000 women reciting the rosary aloud broke up a Communist rally. In Sao Paulo, 600,000 women praying the rosary in one of the most moving demonstrations in Brazilian history, caused the President of Brazil to flee the country and not a single death was encountered, sparing the country from Communist takeover.

The above accounts are just a few of the countless examples of *The Power of the Rosary!*

Our Lady of the Rosary Library 11721 Hidden Creek Road • Prospect, KY 40059

For copies of this article visit our website and Store at www.olrl.org 1/13