



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY

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Dear Parish Family,

August 14, 2011

Recently I came across what is called the Rosary of St. Joseph. It is prayed exactly like the Marian Rosary that we are all familiar with, except that the "Hail Mary" is replaced with this prayer to St. Joseph:

*Joseph, son of David, and husband of Mary; we honor you, guardian of the Redeemer, and we adore the child you named Jesus. **

Saint Joseph, patron of the universal church, pray for us that, like you, we may live totally dedicated to the interests of the Savior. Amen.

There are five "Mysteries" of the St. Joseph Rosary (versus 20 for the Marian.) They are: (1) Betrothal to Mary (Mt 1:18), (2) Annunciation to Joseph (Mt 1:19-21), (3) Birth and Naming of Jesus (Mt 1:22-25), (4) Flight into Egypt (Mt 2:13-15), (5) Hidden Life at Nazareth (Mt 2:23; Lk 2:51-52).

It's always a good time to pray the Rosary - St. Mary's or St. Joseph's. As we near the end of the summer, please consider taking up the practice of praying the Rosary as "homework" in preparation for and during the upcoming school year.

Pope Benedict's prayer intentions for this month are that young people throughout the world may be encouraged to have their lives rooted and built up in Christ; and that Christians may be open to the action of the Holy Spirit and rediscover the freshness and enthusiasm of their faith. Let us pray, as well, for the many young people who are traveling to Spain for World Youth Day.

As we wind up the summer, remember you can't take a vacation from God - include prayer and Mass in your plans! If you are traveling, you can go online to www.masstimes.org to find a weekend Mass. Please pray me and for one another!

Fr. David

So says the Holy Father **God Speaks in the Silence**

In every age, men and women who have consecrated their lives to God in prayer have established their communities in particularly beautiful places: in the countryside, on hilltops, in valleys, on the shores of lakes or the sea, or even on little islands. These places unite two elements which are very important for contemplative life: the beauty of creation, which recalls that of the Creator, and silence, which is guaranteed by living far from cities and the great means of communication. Silence is the environmental condition that most favors contemplation, listening to God and meditation. The very fact of experiencing silence and allowing ourselves to be "filled," so to speak, with silence, disposes us to prayer. The great prophet, Elijah, on Mount Horeb - that is, Sinai - experienced strong winds, then an earthquake, and finally flashes of fire, but he did not recognize the voice of God in them; instead, he recognized it in a light breeze (cf. 1 Rev 19:11-13). God speaks in silence, but we need to know how to listen. This is why monasteries are oases in which God speaks to humanity; and there we find the courtyard, a symbolic place because it is a closed space, but open toward the sky.

The silence and beauty of the place in which a community lives - simple and austere beauty - are like a reflection of the spiritual harmony which the community itself attempts to create. The world is filled with these oases of the spirit, some very ancient, particularly in Europe; others are more recent, while still others have been restored by new communities. Looking at things from a spiritual perspective, these places of the spirit are a load-bearing structure of the world! It is no accident that many people, especially in times of rest, visit these places and stop there for some days: even the soul, thanks be to God, has its needs!

Let us remember, therefore, the Saints who remind us of the importance of turning our gaze to the "things of heaven," like St. Francis, St. Clare, St. Edith Stein (Teresa Benedicta of the Cross), Carmelite, co-patron of Europe, whom we celebrated last week. And we cannot forget St. Lawrence, deacon and martyr, with a special wish for Romans who have always venerated him as one of their patrons. Finally, let us turn our gaze to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she may teach us to love silence and prayer.

-Pope Benedict XVI

DEVOTION TO MARY

THE MILK AND COOKIES OF CATHOLICISM

I got a great gift the other day – a woodcarving of a seated Madonna holding Jesus with one hand and admiring a piece of fruit – looks like an orange – with the other. It reminds me that I love the Blessed Virgin because she is a very human representation of holiness.

This is a bit of homespun theology, but to me Mary is like the milk and cookies of Catholicism – she comforts and nurtures and is there with emotional support. She has exalted titles, such as Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. She is patroness of the United States under that title. That's good for a nation as powerful as the USA, but Mary also has titles which make her seem more accessible.

I like the title "Cause of Our Joy," partially because it is lesser known. It is depicted as Mary with outstretched arms offering Jesus to the world. It was also the name of the Legion of Mary group I belonged to as a teenager.

Other titles have appeal at different times. When I am not sure what to do, I pray to Our Lady of Good Counsel. In times of crisis I pray the *Memorare*, which I associate with Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. I go to Mary for human and spiritual assurance.

I once made up a title. I prayed to Our Lady of the Press Conference before Pope Benedict's election because I was in Rome, had to host a post-election media conference but didn't know when it would be or which cardinals would be present or whose election we would herald. I like things more controlled, so I turned to Mary in desperation.

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe caught my imagination when I was 10. I loved the account of the poor Indian Juan Diego who had to convince the local bishop that he had seen the Virgin. When Juan Diego told Mary the bishop wouldn't believe she had appeared to him, she sent Juan Diego back to the

doubter to show him an outpouring of roses on a snowy December morn. Clearly Mary would take the extra step for the little guy who needed help.



Being Irish, I have a fondness for Our Lady of Knock, who appeared with St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist on a church wall in Knock, Ireland more than a hundred years ago. Washington's Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is a majestic church filled with numerous oratories named after titles of the Virgin. The Our Lady of Knock oratory is aglow with Waterford crystal, humble Erin's brilliant gift.

Devotions learned early stick with you. Pope Benedict XVI prayed at the shrine's image of Our Lady of Altoetting when he visited the national shrine in 2008. It is a replica of the one that he visited as a child in his native Bavaria and where he left his cardinal's ring after he became pope.

Marian devotion has led some people to wrongly accuse Catholics of adoring, rather than revering, Mary, though adoration is reserved to the savior. A parish priest once complained that our annual May procession to honor Mary exceeded our celebration of the Risen Christ at Easter.

Perhaps the affection reflects the emotional aura surrounding Mary, her embodiment of the best of all maternal characteristics. She is the consoler of young children with skinned knees and the wise counselor of older ones to do the right thing in the face of life's challenges.

Mary is the milk and cookies of our theology and provides the comfort found in an Oreo, chocolate chip, ginger snap or Social Tea. And she's just as accessible as the supermarket shelf.

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From the USCCB Media Blog
By Sr. Mary Ann Walsh