

OUR LADY OF VICTORY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION CHAPEL

Early Autumn



"To recite the rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ."

- St. John Paul II

ADORER NEWS

Special Request: The Adoration Chapel continues to need hourly commitments on **Friday afternoons** between **2 p.m. and 5 p.m.** Perhaps you adore at an hour that is crowded with other adorers; would you consider switching your time to keep Our Lord company during the most spiritually meaningful hours of the week? Let us not leave Him alone here to repeat His agony at Calvary, when He was abandoned by the apostles He so loved and needed.

Candle Memorials Available: We continue to take requests for the altar candles in the OLV Chapel. The donation is \$45 per donor; we can take up to two donors per month. To reserve a memorial, contact Debbie at 518-249-7035 or Rebecca at 518-799-5535.

Special Invitation to Families and children: The Adoration Chapel is not just for grown-ups who can be quietly prayerful for 60 minutes, but is here for people of all ages. If you are hesitant about bringing young people, consider that Our Lord especially loves them and delights in their presence. Feel free to start with 5 or 10 minutes to get them acquainted with Jesus in the Real Presence, or perhaps just a brief family visit to pray together before His Holy Face. They may surprise you with their interest and awe - and you may be surprised by the spiritual strength you draw from your time before Him!

Thoughts on the Holy Rosary: Recently, a national magazine published an incendiary article describing the rosary as the " 'battle-beads' culture of spiritual warfare" and its adherents as "radical traditionalists". The comparison was meant to be alarmist and derogatory, but is metaphorically on the mark. The word "radical" derives from the word "root", and yes, one can accurately say that praying the rosary is indeed a weapon against the roots of evil. Meditating on the Mysteries of the Rosary - the life of Jesus Christ - with His Mother Mary does bring their light into our very dark world. We are in fact fighting a spiritual battle, using the traditional means of prayer, fasting, repentance, intercession, the Holy Sacraments, and our precious hours of adoration of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ to aid us.

"For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places." -

Ephesians 6 : 12

The Net of the Rosary

In 2002, Pope John Paul II announced five new mysteries to the rosary, called the Luminous Mysteries. They were introduced in his Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*. Before the addition of these mysteries, there were 15 mysteries — five Joyous, five Sorrowful and five Glorious — known as the whole Rosary. The Hail Marys in these 15 mysteries along with the three preliminary Hail Marys, would number 153, if you continue reciting the 15 mysteries, one after another. (It should be noted that a third of the whole rosary is also called a Rosary.)



Praying the Rosary was part of the message of Fatima of 1917. It's interesting to realize that the span of time covered by Mary's appearances at Fatima, from May 13th to October 13th, adds up to 153 as well—153 days. You may do the addition of the days yourself: May (18); June (30); July (31); August (31); September (30); and October (13).

There is something else about that figure of 153 that could be associated with the rosary. The number 153 is found in Scripture, in John 21:4-13. It's the number of fish caught at the direction of Christ and hauled ashore in a net. So what might 153 fish have to do with the Rosary?

Consider this footnote in the Gospel of John, found in a Spanish language Bible, *La Nueva Biblia - Latinoamerica, Juan 21:*
'The apostles dragged in their nets 153 big fish. Now then, at that time the number of known nations in the world was 153. This way the miracle of the fish represents the action of the church. The shepherds of the church carried in their nets toward Christ all the nations of the earth.'

At Fatima the Blessed Virgin Mary asked that the Rosary be prayed for peace in the world. Jesus told Peter in Matt. 4:19, "I will make you fishers of men." In John 21:9-10 when they came ashore, they saw a fish laid on the coals. Jesus said to His disciples: "Bring hither of the fishes which you have now caught." The fish was not



only a symbol for Christ, but it represented his followers as well. It could just as well represent the nations Christianized. Jesus would want the whole world to come unto Him.

The Greek word *ichthus*, meaning fish, spells out the initial letter or two of the words in the Greek phrase *Iesous Christos, Theou Uios, Soter* (Ιησους Χριστός Θεου Υιός Σωτήρ). It sums up some very important facts about Our Lord, and when you think about it, it goes along with the Rosary which is Christ-centered. Pope John Paul II said in his Apostolic Letter, "The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer." Even the last two Glorious Mysteries with their focus on Mary, tell us how Jesus honored His mother.

Is there a linkage of the 153 Hail Marys, the 153 days of Fatima and the 153 fish? I believe all three can be associated together. The Rosary is meant for meditation and we can "set out into the deep," cast our net into the depths, contemplate the mysteries, and hope to come up with something more Christ-like—and pray to internalize it in our lives and the lives of others in the world.

If you want to use your imagination, think of the Rosary beads being like floats on a net. Visualize the loop of beads being drawn across the surface of the water, and down in the water, the net to catch the minds and hearts of men, which drawn forth, bring a better world to the earthly shore.

-John Riedell



THE ROSARY: Solace and Power



In 1994, Immaculee Ilibagiza, author of "Left to Tell", spent 91 days hiding in a tiny 3 x 4 bathroom with 7 other women during the Rwandan genocide. She believes that praying the rosary during her ordeal not only brought her profound peace but spared her from being slaughtered. This excerpt from her book "The Rosary" describes her experience with the rosary prayers' life-giving blessings.

While I may have learned the great power of the rosary prayer during a nightmare I would not wish on any living soul, I know for a fact that we do not have to be facing danger or death for Our Lady to hear our cries, for Jesus to come to our aid, or for God to answer our prayer. They are always there for us, but by learning to travel toward them through a more focused and profound prayer, we are able to meet them at ever-deepening depths within our own hearts. And that is where the rewards of prayer in our life become limitless.

Within my first week of hiding, hundreds of Hutu killers amassed in the pastor's backyard on the other side of the bathroom wall. Some dressed like jungle savages, in animal skins with horns on their heads; all of them carried blood-stained spears, clubs, or machetes and sang hunting songs celebrating the murders of Tutsi women and babies.

Through a small bathroom window I recognized boys I had gone to school with and neighbors who had been welcome guests in my parents' home. Now they hunted me - even calling out my name, taunting me, singing for me to "come out, come out" from wherever I was because I couldn't hide forever.

That's when the devil began whispering in my ear, tempting me to abandon hope, to scream out as loudly as I could to let the killers know where I was hiding... Satan's voice was no illusion; I was not hallucinating or delusional. I could hear his voice as clearly as I could hear the killers' taunts. The devil was beside me all right, calmly and persuasively trying to separate me from God. In his seductive whisper, he listed the horrors being done to my family and friends as proof of God's absence and indifference... The devil's voice boomed in my head like an enormous, deafening bell. I clutched my father's red-and-white rosary and prepared to pray as I have never prayed before. The faith I had nurtured, and that had been nurtured

in me all my life, had maintained a thread of truth between God and me. I remember hearing somewhere that praying the rosary was like pulling on a rope that bent heaven towards Earth, and I never needed to feel God's heavenly presence near me as much as I did at that very moment.

I began the first of the rosary's opening prayers by squeezing the crucifix of my father's beads between my thumb and forefinger with such force that the metal grew hot against my skin. I made the Sign of the Cross and silently said the rosary's first prayer. Perhaps for the first time in the thousands of times I'd said it, I fully understood and completely meant every word.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The devil's voice was suddenly banished by this short, perfect prayer. The words were my declaration that I was about to do something with the backing of the most powerful force in the universe: the Father of all Creation, His Son, the embodiment of all good; the Holy Spirit, the power of God's love within us.

It dawned on me that as a child of God, part of that power belonged to me. I realized my words meant: "By the power invested in me by God Himself, I began this prayer!" It was the most positive and empowering phrase ever to pass my lips, yet my heart had never been more humble. I spent at least two hours contemplating this one prayer, and was only pulled out of my reflection by the cries of someone being attacked a few hundred yards from the house.

...I plunged back into my rosary...silently commencing the second prayer - the Apostle's Creed. This prayer had always been a chore for me, repeating that I believed in God, then what the Bible says about Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the Church and Saints and on and on and on, was just so...*redundant*. Just one day earlier, this prayer had meant so little to me. Now it was my spiritual compass. In a moment of clarity I recognized in its words who and what I was and where I stood in my faith. I was a child of God and followed in the footsteps of Jesus, and no power on Earth - not the killer at the door or the devil in my ear - could take that away from me.

I quickly learned that, with my rosary in hand and my heart humbled before God, I could open a door in my mind and step out of the bathroom to be with Him. By the time I'd finished the rosary's opening prayers I'd feel a warmth in the center of my chest, as though a glowing ember had been placed beside my heart; after making the Sign of the Cross, that warmth would radiate throughout my entire body. My state of mind was so peaceful that by the time I chose the mystery I intended to meditate


on, the bathroom was a blur to me, the shouts of the killers - whether they were outside or searching within the house - were a barely noticed thrum of background noise. I was not hallucinating or experiencing any kind of psychotic break; I was always conscious that somewhere just behind or in front of me armed men were trying to murder me.

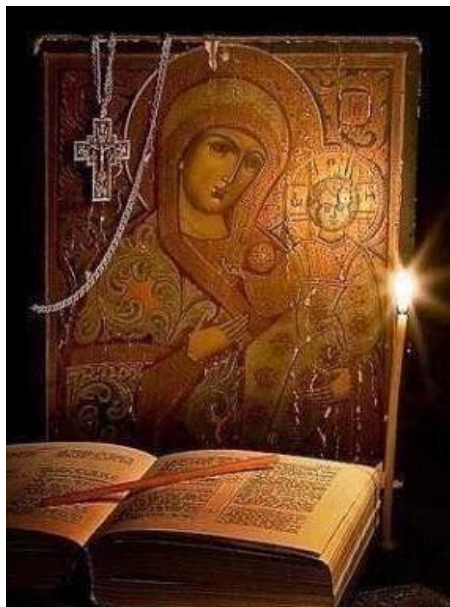
When meditating upon a mystery, I felt the same way I did when I was a child sitting beside a wood fire, with my head resting comfortably on my mother's lap. It wasn't my earthly mother's lap in which my head rested now, however, it was the lap of Mother Mary.



Now, the idea that I was sitting and chatting with the Virgin Mary while praying the rosary may seem strange to some people, but it didn't to me. Not then and not now. What is sometimes hard for me to believe is how, sitting in the center of the most wretched killing fields the world has ever seen, I was repeatedly able to reach a near-blissful state of prayer. Yet that is exactly what happened to me. While enduring unbearable suffering, I received the most beautiful gift I'd ever gotten: I discovered how to pray the rosary, find the Blessed Mother, and talk to the Lord. I discovered how to appreciate and receive the full beauty and power these precious beads offer to each and every one of us. The lessons I learned through meditating upon these mysteries delivered me from the evil of the genocide and showed me how to let go of the anger and hatred I felt toward the men who killed my family.

The power of the rosary will bring blessings into our lives too numerous to count. It can clear confusion from our thoughts, chase trouble from our hearts, restore us to health, resolve problems that plague us, and fill us with happiness and hope. Those are big promises to make and may sound too good to be true - I probably wouldn't have believed them myself, except that they are promises that have been fulfilled in my life and the lives of countless other people.

The Virgin Mary, my favorite saint, promised that anyone who prayed the rosary from their heart will receive anything their heart desires...and I am living proof that Our Lady keeps her promises. 



"THE kind of warfare upon which we are engaged is a continual one, and we can never afford the rest from struggle that in other kinds of strife might be expected as a sequel to success.

Our participation in the Passion covers the whole of our lives; it is not for the moments of conflict only.

Our example here is Mary. For her, the work of suffering went on

beyond the Twelfth Station. It has been suggested by theologians that since her capacity for love was ever expanding, the contribution made by Mary to her Son's purpose was greater after His death than before. The whole of Mary went out to the whole of Christ, dead or living. There is this also to be considered about Mary's compassion: not only did she suffer on one particular day for one particular Person, but she suffered all her days for all who belonged to her Son's Mystical Body.

We are at this moment enjoying graces merited for us by Mary's sympathy as expressed at the taking down of Christ's dead Body from the Cross. Having accepted the responsibility of being Mother to mankind, Mary bears still the weight of Christ's Mystical Body. The concerns of the Church are her concerns; the Church's sufferings were given to her from the Cross, and she has never ceased to bear them. Individually and collectively, we are able to count on Mary's help before, during, and after whatever trials are ours."

-Dom Hubert Von Zeller, "Suffering: The Catholic Answer".
