



The Armor of Faith
Topic Summary: The Rosary
Part II: How the Rosary Came to Us



The Annunciation
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Introduction

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Helen is a lay-Dominican and has a love for music ministry. The Dominicans, I always mention, are also known as the Order of Preachers. Sharon is still our token cradle Catholic, and, as everyone knows by now, I am simply here to ask questions because I am always being accused of having the mind of a two year old. Fortunately, we are on radio, so no one can see the panel nodding their heads in vigorous agreement. Anyway, to answer my questions and correct my pronunciation is why we have our panelists, so welcome to our panelists as well as to our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

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

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

Dear Lord, we also lift up the prayers in our prayer basket. You know what is written on each one and you know the hearts of those who offer their thanks and praise and their petitions for the blessings of Your great mercy.

Dear Lord, we pray especially today for those who are discerning some moment in their lives. We pray You will lead them and guide them so they may respond to that which You call them.

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

If you would like to add your prayers to our prayer basket, send us an email at armoroffaithradio@gmail.com. Please include the word “prayer” in the subject line so that we will give it priority, capture it, and print it for our prayer basket. Just so you know, Sharon and I lift up our prayers with those in the Armor of Faith Radio prayer basket during our daily prayers.

If you haven't discovered, yet, you can also listen to Armor of Faith Radio on demand and on the go using your smartphone. In addition to wcatradio.com/armoroffaith, we are available through a number of streaming services, such as iHeart Radio, Spreaker, iTunes, and CastBox, among others. Simply search for “Armor of Faith Radio” and select the episode you desire. We will be happy to keep you company wherever you are and wherever you are waiting.

We would also like to ask for your assistance to help share our discussions. If you find an episode or series, which caused you to take a moment and think and you would like to share with family or friends, you only need to copy the URL of the show to which you are listening and drop it into an email or share it through social media. Several of the streaming services through which we are available on demand also have share options, so please help us to spread the good news of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Faith Event Announcements:

As we approach the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, which is 22 Jan 2020, there are a number of pro-life vigils and marches planned in communities around the nation during the week as well as the surrounding weekends. We pray everyone will demonstrate their support for life by supporting the events in your local area. We also pray for those who will travel to support such events. We pray God will touch your hearts, keep you safe, and enable you to touch the hearts of others so all hearts are moved to protect the sanctity of life. If you are unable to attend an event, we encourage you to lift up prayers. We know God will hear every one.

Why Catholics Do What We Do:

We have now come to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. This is the final step of being fully initiated into the Catholic Church. Again, this sacrament must not be taken lightly. It is most important for us to know and understand why we are receiving this miracle.

In the United States, the normal age for receiving this sacrament is about seven. The belief is that children of this age have the ability to study and understand what is happening during the Mass when the priest says the words of consecration and the act of Transubstantiation occurs. When a person of adult age requests to learn more about the church, they will receive the education needed to understand what it means to receive the precious body and blood of Jesus Christ.

When did the celebration of the Eucharist begin?

(CCC:1323)

"At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic

sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet 'in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.'"

What is the Eucharist?

(CCC: 1325)

"The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being. It is the culmination both of God's action sanctifying the world in Christ and of the worship men offer to Christ and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit."

(CCC: 1327)

In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: "Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking."

During the Mass, the priest leads the congregation through the greetings, the prayers of penance, the readings of Scripture and then he gets to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Jesus told us to "Do this in memory of Me" (Luke 22:19) and so this is what happens at this time in the Mass. We remember what Jesus told His Apostles. We recall the actions He made as He raised bread and said, "This is my body" and then raised the chalice and said, "This is my blood." (Luke 22:20) Jesus chose the Last Supper as the time to institute the Eucharist so that we would have Him with us for all time. Jesus also told the Apostles that He would send the Advocate to remind them of all He had taught them. This same Advocate, or the Holy Spirit as we most commonly know Him, comes to bring about the act of Transubstantiation which occurs during this part of the Mass.

I want to spend a little more time on this "Transubstantiation." This is a very big word but a very, very important and often misunderstood word and one that I believe we need to understand a bit better. For this reason, we will have another session on the purpose and meaning of Transubstantiation.

I also want to explore other names given to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. So next week we will begin to discover the importance of the words and expressions used to mean the same thing.

Have a blessed week All. Remember, you are loved dearly by God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and yes, by us as well.

Discussion:

During the course of our last discussion, we addressed a variety of criticisms of the Rosary, but in so doing, my hope is that we revealed that many of the criticisms are leveled as a result of a lack of understanding of all which is contained within the Rosary. It is not a simple set of prayers for us to memorize and recite. There is a lot for us to discover within the Rosary and

how it leads us to a deep relationship with our Lord and Savior. As we continue this series, we will discuss in more detail how the Rosary came to us and some of the history which reinforces its meaning to us as we contemplate our faith with the assistance of the Rosary.

As we continue, we will also go into more detail about the mysteries and to what we are drawn to reflect upon as we pray and contemplate our relationship with our Lord and Savior.

As I mentioned last time, it is often easy to criticize something from the outside when only considering a small segment of something and disregarding the larger context. As I am confronted with the various criticisms, it largely reveals to me that the critic either does not understand the full context or they are intentionally relying upon the ignorance of those they are attempting to dissuade from engaging the blessings of the Rosary; and in case I have not mentioned this before, we should remember that a blessing is an invocation of God's power and care.

Hopefully, as we continue this series, we will draw attention to the spiritual gifts revealed to us through the Rosary and their meaning to our lives. As we discuss that which the Rosary contains and brings to our hearts in the span of a quarter of an hour, we might ask ourselves, who benefits by our not praying the Rosary and who would dissuade us from what it brings to our heart? Indeed, who desires the most that we do not spend this time lifting our hearts to God?

Today, the focus of our discussion turns to how the Rosary came to us. As Father William Saunders wrote about the subject, he stated, "The origins of the [R]osary are 'sketchy' at best." (Saunders) Personally, I find history can be a rather frustrating thing, because we must discern the facts of time past from evidence which may not be complete or may be manipulated to mislead us in some way.

We need look no further than the artifacts of our current day where practically everything is captured in one media form or another. One would think that if we have the video, we have the truth. Unfortunately, truth in history remains problematic given that the news media reports political narrative rather than reality. Reality is only used if it underscores the political narrative. If it does not, then, it is often suppressed or manipulated by the various political and media powers. It is a sad state of affairs, but the reality is, this behavior is nothing new, it is just amplified by the digital age.

The critic often points to the "sketchy" history as part of a variety of attacks, but our discussion today is not about who did what, rather, what has come to us through the progress of time. As kind of a quick summary of what is revealed by various sources, the Rosary evolved from the practice of early monks who spent a portion of their day reciting the 150 Psalms. To assist in the effort, they might gather pebbles and toss them away or transfer them from one bag to another as each Psalm was recited. It was a means of counting. (Peter)

Over time, other counting aids were used, such as knots tied in twine or strung beads. Of course, the monks had a particular devotion to memorizing the Psalms, but the average person did not have the time, the education, or even a copy of the Psalter from which to build this ability. Other forms of prayer and devotion began to develop, to include what is called the "Angelic Salutation," which reflected the greeting of the Angel Gabriel to Mary.

Over time, the laity began to say a series of Our Fathers, in imitation of the monks praying the Psalter, as a means to reflect on faith. Eventually, the combination of Our Fathers and Angelic Salutations evolved into what we recognize today as the Rosary. Some would begin to refer to this practice as the “poor man's Psalter.” Because copies of the Psalter were expensive, the poor did not commonly have access, as did religious of the day, so the poor memorized common prayers, such as the Our Father and the Angelic Salutation. (Catholic Answers)

Depending on the historian or critic, various dates are tossed about as to the origins of various prayers, but the Rosary as we are familiar with today, was reportedly promoted by Saint Dominic after receiving a vision of our Blessed Mother in 1214. Even here, some contest that contemporary art or other artifacts of the time do not reflect the assertions by Dominicans that Our Lady directed Saint Dominic to spread devotion to what was known as the Angelic Psalter or the *Rosarium*. In Latin, *rosarium* means rose garden or a garland of roses. (Association of the Miraculous Medal) Skipping ahead, the most recent evolution of the Rosary is attributed to Saint John Paul II when he introduced the Luminous Mysteries in 2002.

(Question 1: Though historical accounts may differ, we can still observe that the Rosary did not come to us all at once or through a single miracle, rather, it evolved and came to us through the prayerful and faithful; you could also say from the lowly as well as Popes. Both Jesus and Mary have touched hearts to “preach their Psalter.” **What might this tell us about this form of prayer?)**

- Brought to us through tradition and hearts
- A reflection of faith, flowing through hearts
- A prayer which evolved through the generations for the generations
- Hearts searching to become closer to the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord used these prayers to bring Him and His Mother into their hearts
- Jesus and Mary wanting us to come closer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the salvation He offers
- It is not about the means of counting, it is about what is shared in the heart

In his book, [The Secret of the Rosary](#), Saint Louis de Monfort (1673 – 1716) writes about the request of our lady to Saint Dominic in the early 1200s to preach the Rosary. Saint Louis de Montfort writes:

Saint Dominic, seeing that the gravity of people's sins was hindering the conversion of the Albigensians, withdrew into a forest near Toulouse, where he prayed continuously for three days and three nights. During this time he did nothing but weep and do harsh penances in order to appease the anger of God. He used his discipline so much that his body was lacerated, and finally he fell into a coma.

At this point our Lady appeared to him, accompanied by three angels, and she said, "Dear Dominic, **do you know which weapon the Blessed Trinity wants to use to reform the world?**"

"Oh, my Lady," answered Saint Dominic, "you know far better than I do, because next to your Son Jesus Christ you have always been the chief instrument of our salvation."

Then Our Lady replied, "I want you to know that, in this kind of warfare, the principal weapon has always been the Angelic Psalter, which is the foundation-stone of the New Testament. Therefore, if you want to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God, preach my Psalter." (Montfort)

(Question 2: This account by Saint Louis de Montfort, as restated from the account given by Blessed Alan de La Roche, tells us something about what was given to Saint Dominic. What was given to Saint Dominic in this moment?)

- A mission → Reach hardened souls and win them over to God
- A means → Preach my Psalter
- Awareness of the principal weapon by which to reform the world → The Angelic Psalter

Saint Louis de Montfort begins his book, The Secret of the Rosary, with a message to priests. Under the sub-title, "White Rose," he writes:

DEAR MINISTERS of the Most High, you my fellow priests who preach the truth of God and who teach the gospel to all nations, let me give you this little book as a white rose that I would like you to keep. The truths contained in it are set forth in a very simple and straightforward manner as you will see. Please keep them in your heart so that you yourselves may make a practice of the Holy Rosary and taste its fruit; and please have them always on your lips too so that you will always preach the Rosary and thus convert others by teaching them the excellence of this holy devotion. (Montfort)

(Question 3: In this message to priests, Saint Louis de Montfort encourages priests to have the fruit of the Rosary always on their lips and to always preach it. What are the fruits of the Rosary that the priests should preach?)

- The prayers and the love to which they point
- The mysteries Joyous, Sorrowful, Glorious – (**Note:** The Luminous mysteries were added by Saint Pope John Paul II in 2002)
- The scripture of the Gospel which provides the context of the mysteries
- The threads of the Old Testament which point to the prophesies fulfilled
- The sacrifice made for us
- The salvation offered to us
- The love poured out for us
- The blessing, grace, and mercy of our Lord

In the second segment of his book, Saint Louis de Monfort offers a red [crimson] rose to sinners. He explains:

POOR MEN AND WOMEN who are sinners, I, a greater sinner than you, wish to give to you this rose----a crimson one, because the Precious Blood of Our Lord has fallen upon it. Please God that it will bring true fragrance into your lives---but above all may it save you from the danger that you are in. Every day unbelievers and unrepentant

sinners cry: "Let us crown ourselves with roses." (Wis. 2:8) But our cry should be: "Let us crown ourselves with roses of the Most Holy Rosary."

How different are theirs from ours! Their roses are pleasures of the flesh, worldly honors and passing riches which wilt and decay in no time, but ours, which are the Our Father and Hail Mary which we have said devoutly over and over again and to which we have added good penitential acts, will never wilt or die and they will be just as exquisite thousands of years from now as they are today.

On the contrary, sinners' roses only look like roses, while in point of fact they are cruel thorns which prick them during life by giving them pangs of conscience, at their death they pierce them with bitter regret and, still worse, in eternity, they turn to burning shafts of anger and despair. But if our roses have thorns, they are the thorns of Jesus Christ Who changes them into roses. If our roses prick us, it is only for a short time----and only in order to cure the illness of sin and to save our souls.

So by all means we should eagerly crown ourselves with these roses from Heaven, and recite the entire Rosary every day, that is to say three Rosaries each of five decades which are like three little wreaths or crowns of flowers: and there are two reasons for doing this: First of all to honor the three crowns of Jesus and Mary----Jesus' crown of grace at the time of His incarnation, His crown of thorns during His passion and His crown of glory in Heaven, and of course the three-fold crown which the Most Blessed Trinity gave Mary in Heaven.

Secondly, we should do this so that we ourselves may receive three crowns from Jesus and Mary. The first is a crown of merit during our lifetime, the second, a crown of peace at our death, and the third, a crown of glory in Heaven. (Montfort)

(Question 4: There is a lot here in this few words. What themes do we see here and how do they help us understand what the Rosary brings to us?)

- Gift of the Precious Blood of Our Lord and Savior
- The roses sinners seek for themselves, which pass away and decay
 - ➔ Pleasures of the flesh
 - ➔ Worldly honors
 - ➔ Passing riches
- The roses which the faithful should seek
 - ➔ Our Father
 - ➔ Hail Mary
 - ➔ Good penitential acts
- Sinners roses only look like roses, but are really cruel thorns, which:
 - ➔ Prick them during life by giving them pangs of conscience
 - ➔ Pierce them at death with bitter regret
 - ➔ Become burning shafts of [eternal] anger and despair
- The crowns of Jesus

- ➔ Crown of grace at the time of His incarnation
 - ➔ Crown of thorns during His passion
 - ➔ Crown of glory in Heaven
 - The crowns offered through Jesus and Mary
 - ➔ Crown of merit during our lifetime
 - ➔ Crown of peace at our death
 - ➔ Crown of glory in Heaven
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In the fourth segment of his book, Saint Louis de Montfort offers a “rosebud” for the little children. To them he writes:

DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS, this beautiful rosebud is for you; it is one of the beads of your Rosary, and it may seem to you to be such a tiny thing. But if you only knew how precious this bead is! This wonderful bud will open out into a gorgeous rose if you say your Hail Mary really well. Of course it would be too much to expect you to say the whole fifteen mysteries every day, but do say at least five mysteries, and say them properly with love and devotion. This Rosary will be your little wreath of roses, your crown for Jesus and Mary. (Montfort)

(Question 5: As I read this, I also reflected on the “Angelic Salutation;” the Hail Mary. Think of this a moment, as children let the Angelic Salutation flow through their heart, it is like saying, Mama, pray for us; Mama, pray for us; Mama.... But that is not all. What else flows through the heart of little children who pray the Rosary? Why should we encourage our little children to reflect on these things?)

- The Apostolic Creed (a profession of faith)
 - The Our Father
 - The mysteries of faith → Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, Glorious
 - The life, passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior
 - The promises of Christ
 - The blessings, grace, and mercy of God
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As Saint Louis de Monfort begins to explain the prayers of the Rosary, he writes:

THE ROSARY is made up of two things: mental prayer and vocal prayer. In the Holy Rosary mental prayer is none other than meditation of the chief mysteries of the life, death and glory of Jesus Christ and if His Blessed Mother. Vocal prayer consists in saying fifteen decades of the Hail Mary, each decade headed by an Our Father, while at the same time meditation on and contemplating the fifteen principal virtues which Jesus and Mary practiced in the fifteen mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

In the first five decades we must honor the five Joyous Mysteries and meditate on them; in the second five decades the Sorrowful Mysteries and in the third group of five, the

Glorious Mysteries. So the Rosary is a blessed blending of mental and vocal prayer by which we honor and learn to imitate the mysteries and the virtues of the life, death, passion and glory of Jesus and Mary. (Montfort)

(Question 6: As we reflect on this explanation of the Rosary, we observe two components; mental prayer and vocal prayer. We are told the Rosary is a “blessed blending” of these two forms of prayer. Why is this important for us to understand if we are to pray the Rosary correctly?)

- Say it and feel it
- Reflect in the heart, not just on the lips
- Reflect on the threads of the love, suffering, and promises of our Lord
- Reflect on the Joy, Sorrow, and Glory of our Lord for our salvation
- Reflect on all which was done for us so we might spend eternity with Him
- If all we do is say the words, we will never fully comprehend their meaning

Quotes:

– *Pope Pius IX, 23 May, 1877*

I exhort you to fight against the persecution of the Church and against anarchy, not with the sword, but with the rosary, with prayer and good example.

– *Rev M.J. Frings*

If this prayer [Rosary] were better understood it would be prayed with more devotion, and greater benefit would come from it.

– *Saint Louis de Monfort recounting a vision of Jesus to Saint Dominic*

'Dominic, I rejoice to see that you are not relying upon your own wisdom and that, rather than seek the empty praise of men, you are working with great humility for the salvation of souls. 'But many priests want to preach thunderously against the worst kinds of sin at the very outset, failing to realize that before a sick person is given bitter medicine he needs to be prepared by being put in the right frame of mind to really benefit by it. "This is why, before doing anything else, priests should try to kindle a love of prayer in people's hearts and especially a love of my Angelic Psalter. If only they would all start saying it and would really persevere, God, in His mercy, could hardly refuse to give them His grace. So I want you to preach my Rosary.' "

Final Thoughts:

If we think about it, to those who find the blessings of the Rosary, it comes to each of us at different times within our lives and in different ways. Some learn about it from parents. Others learn about it through religious formation. Some are exposed simply by hearing others praying it. Some, sadly, never truly experience it for no one has shared it with them or they are lured away from it.

Even for those who pray it regularly, there is a journey of learning. We do not unlock everything in one sitting of the prayer. Those who explore its blessings comprehend that it is not about

memorization and recitation, but about true prayer and opening our hearts so God may fill them with His love.

To gain insight, we should examine what history tells us about the Rosary, for those who have spread its devotion and those who have preached its mysteries may enable us to see further into its depths.

I must admit, when I was first exposed to the Rosary, it was intimidating because I did not understand it other than it was something Catholics did. As my children grew, it was something their mother taught them, but I missed the blessing of praying it with them. The first time I remember saying the Rosary, I was in a group and simply followed along; mumbling the best I could the parts I did not know.

As I look back, I realize I focused on the wrong thing; did I say the prayers correctly? I failed to absorb their meaning. At that point in my life, I was never really taught what it was all about, but that does not mean it did not touch me, for there is a learning as we hear the prayers and say the mysteries. Once I learned how to let it flow through my heart, suddenly, it captured me. I pray it will capture every heart, especially the reluctant heart, which mine once was.

Next time, we will begin to examine the mysteries and their meaning. As we consider the threads of scripture associated with each mystery, I would hope that even the most ardent critic of the Rosary will see that it is far from the accusations of idolatry of Mary, rather, it is a meditation and contemplation upon a love story; a love story greater than humankind has ever known.

Wrap Up: Well, our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we turn our discussion to the Joyful Mysteries.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may put on the armor of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: The Rosary – Part III: The Joyful Mysteries

Why Catholics Do What We Do References:

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