

Catholic faith: Feast of the Most Holy Rosary

October 7, 2014



The Feast of the Most Holy Rosary is celebrated on October 7 to honor the Virgin Mary as Queen of the Holy Rosary. The feast was instituted by St. Pope Pius V, as thanksgiving and in commemoration of the naval victory of the Catholic fleet against Turkish troops at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 – a decisive victory attributed to Our Lady’s intercession through the Rosary. It used to be called Feast of Our Lady of Victory.

Pope Gregory XIII changed the Feast of Our Lady of Victory to Feast of the Most Holy Rosary in 1573. Pope Clement XI extended the feast to the Universal Church, placing it in the Roman Calendar in 1716. Pope Pius X designated the date October 7 in 1913 for the feast. Successive popes urged the faithful to pray to Our Lady of the Rosary. During her apparitions at Fatima, Portugal, the Virgin Mary confirmed her title, “I am the Lady of the Rosary.”

According to the religious account, the Rosary as a prayer was given to St. Dominic in France in 1206 by the Virgin Mary to combat the Albigensian heresy: he gave it to the friar preachers to help in missionary work. St. Pius V helped spread its devotion after the Battle of Lepanto.

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary is widely venerated in Catholic nations all over the world. A number of miracles has been attributed through praying the Rosary. Filipinos have a special spiritual attachment to the Virgin Mary and the Rosary is a way of seeking her intercession. She is known by many names, and her shrine is found in provinces nationwide: Lady of Manaoag in Pangasinan, Mother of Perpetual Help in Baclaran, Lady of Piat in Cagayan, Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo City, Lady of Mt. Carmel in Lipa City, Ina Poong Bato in Zambales, Lady of Turumba in Laguna, and Lady of Holy Rosary La Naval de Manila. Filipino Catholics pray the Rosary daily in churches, in their homes or while traveling on land, sea, and air, to implore Our Lady’s protection. As St. Padre Pio said, “the Rosary is our weapon.”

The Rosary is a Biblically inspired prayer that centers on meditation on the mysteries of Jesus Christ in union with the Virgin Mary, who was associated with her son’s incarnation, passion, and resurrection. The Mysteries of Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, and Light are drawn from the New Testament, contemplating on events in the lives of Jesus and His mother. The traditional first three mysteries were finalized in the 16th Century. St. John Paul II added the Luminous or Light Mysteries on October 16, 2002

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