

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Last week we celebrated our patronal Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, so it is a good time to encourage you to pray the rosary daily. While this is not a prescribed discipline of our church, it is a personal and daily devotion recommended by many saints, popes and spiritual directors.

The rosary engages three parts of our person: our will, intellect and imagination. I have described our free will as “a smidgen of God’s omnipotence”. His omnipotence is his complete and total power. If we are created in his image, then it follows that we share in his attributes. If he is omnipotent, then our will is free and all powerful (but within the limits of our morality) When we say in the Lord’s prayer, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” we are aligning our will with His omnipotence, so we can affirm that “with God all things are possible”. When we decide to pray the rosary, our will is engaged. We have put our beliefs into action, and have decided to do something beautiful for God.

Our intellect is the rational, reasoning part of our mind. When devotees of Eastern religions meditate, they attempt to empty their mind in order to enter into the “emptiness of the universe”. This is essentially nihilistic and irrational. The rosary is very different. As we meditate on the mysteries of the gospel we must think them through. Our intellect is engaged and if we have intellectual difficulties the prayer of the rosary helps to dissolve them. When counseling non-Catholics who have intellectual objections to the Marian dogmas, for example, I advise them to pray the rosary, and this devotion helps to enlighten the mind and heart to help them understand the dogmas intellectually and with the understanding of the heart.

The imagination is the part of our mind that uses images or picture language. This is the center of our emotional life and it pre-dates the development of language and verbal reasoning. This is the “deep down” part of our minds and hearts. The rosary also engages this deep part of our being because as we meditate on the mysteries of the rosary our imagination and emotions are involved.

In addition to this, the rosary involves our body, mind and spirit: Body because we hold and finger the beads, mind because the three aspects of our mind are engaged as outlined above, and spirit because we pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, engaging our immortal souls.

The beauty of this devotion is that, while it is theologically and intellectually profound, it is accessible to everyone. I love to hear our school children recite their rosaries knowing that the same beautiful prayer is also being prayed by the adults in the parish—those who are highly educated or not so highly educated—the old, the young, the men and women, boys and girls—and that this is true around the world among billions of our fellow Catholics in every race, nation, tribe and tongue.

As an encouragement, we have a **Parent Led Rosary** on Tuesdays at 2:30pm in Lower Church, **Mothers of the Rosary** meeting monthly, and the newly established **Rosary Confraternity** with information [HERE](#).

Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. AMEN.

Your Pastor,
Fr. Longenecker