

ROSARY FACTS

In honour of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, here is a list of 25 super interesting facts. Hopefully upon reading this short list, you will grow in your appreciation of the Rosary. Better yet, perhaps you will be motivated to pray the Rosary more often. The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. Pope St. John Paul II explained the Rosary very beautifully in this way: “With the Rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love.” (RVM, 1)



1. A Pope’s Favourite Prayer. Early in his pontificate, Pope St. John Paul II said that the Rosary was his favourite prayer.

2. He Even Wrote on the Rosary. Pope St. John Paul II penned a spiritual masterpiece on the topic of the Rosary: *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* (On the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary). This letter can be found on the Vatican website under JP II. See <https://w2.vatican.va>



3. The Luminous Mysteries. Pope St. John Paul II added what we might call a “missing-link” to the Rosary: the *Luminous Mysteries*. These mysteries focus on Jesus’ mission in his adult life prior to his Passion.

4. The Names of the Luminous Mysteries. Can you name, in order, the five *Luminous mysteries* and the day that John Paul II suggested they be prayed? i) The Baptism of Jesus, ii) the Wedding Feast of Cana, iii) the Proclamation of the Kingdom and call to conversion, iv) the Transfiguration, and v) the Institution of the Holy Eucharist. And the day the pope suggested to pray these mysteries? Thursday!



5. Other Recent Popes and the Rosary. Pope St. John XXIII (who was canonized with Pope St. John Paul II) usually prayed all the decades every day. (So does Pope Francis!) The ‘good St. John XXIII’ called the Rosary: “A summary of the whole Gospel.”



6. The Rosary Pope. Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903), among other titles, is known as “the Rosary Pope”. During his pontificate, he wrote 12 encyclicals and 5 apostolic letters on the Rosary alone! How he loved the Rosary and encouraged the faithful to pray it.



7. It’s a Biblical Prayer. The Rosary is a biblical prayer with each prayer and meditation having its source in the Bible, making it a prayer for all Christians.

8. Biblical Composition. The main vocal prayers of the Rosary are the *Our Father* and the *Hail Mary*. Both have their origin in Scripture.



9. The Mysteries. The twenty mysteries of the Rosary are taken from biblical passages or biblical scenes.

10. The Month of the Holy Rosary. Did you know that June is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, July the month of the Precious Blood of Jesus, and May the month of Mary?

October however is the month of the Most Holy Rosary. We should strive to pray the rosary every day but especially in the month of October. If the Church underlines this month, it must be important to our spiritual health.

11. The Rosary Classic. One of the greatest spiritual masterpieces written on the topic of the Most Holy Rosary is *The Secret of the Rosary* by Saint Louis Grignion de Montfort. Also, this saint wrote the masterpiece of consecration to Jesus through Mary: *True Devotion*. Both are a “must read” to get to know and love Jesus and his mother all the more.



12. The Rosary Compared to a Human Person. Saint Louis de Montfort compares the Rosary to the composite nature of a human person. The human person has both soul and body; so does the Rosary. The body of the Rosary is made up of the vocal prayers; the soul of the Rosary is the contemplation of its mysteries. If prayed and contemplated, the Rosary is a prayer of monumental importance and spiritual strength. Many great books and CDs are readily available to help bring us deeper into each saving mystery of the Rosary.



13. The Secret Key. Pope St. John Paul II gave us the key to praying the Rosary well in order to draw the most spiritual benefits: to *contemplate the face of Christ at the school of Mary*. St. Luke the Evangelist reminds us that Our Lady is a true contemplative as she “kept all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Lk 2: 19).

14. The Rosary is Mary’s Favourite Prayer. The Rosary is a bouquet of roses (hence ‘Rosary’) offered to Mary’s Immaculate Heart. Many times, she has revealed her love for the Rosary. By means of the Rosary, Mary loves to teach us about the great saving mysteries of her Son’s life of which she was/is an intimate part.

15. The Mystical Rose. The poet Dante depicts Our Lady as the “Mystical Rose”. In Mexico, Saint Juan Diego (1531) gathered roses that Our Lady blessed with her own hands. The most precious rose that we can give Our Lady is the sincere prayer of the Rosary.

16. The Rosary and a Naval Victory. The famous naval Battle of Lepanto of October 7, 1571 is attributed to the supplication of Pope St. Pius V to all faithful Catholics to pray the Rosary to obtain victory. Winds changed and the sea’s tide turned causing a small Catholic fleet to crush a much larger Turkish fleet in an amazing victory that changed the course of history. To commemorate this day, October 7th was called the Feast of Our Lady of Victory. Later it was changed to the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. This date remains on the liturgical calendar.

17. The Time Factor. Many complain that they have no time to pray and, much less, time to pray the Rosary. In the time of one prime-time drama (60 minutes), one meaningful Rosary could easily be prayed. Let us make an effort to reorder our list of priorities.

18. St. Padre Pio and the Rosary. This great modern saint insisted we should have the habit of praying the Holy Rosary on a daily basis. He even called the Rosary the *weapon* for these times! Surely the saints know the roadmap to heaven and the tools to help get us there. Let’s take their advice.

19. Name Given in Fatima. In 1917, Our Lady appeared in Fatima, Portugal six times. At the last apparition on October 13, 1917 she revealed her identity saying, “I am the Lady of the Rosary.”



20. The Importance of the Rosary. Each time Our Lady appeared in Fatima, she insisted on the praying of the Rosary to obtain the conversion of sinners and world peace. St. Jacinta insisted that God had given the cause of peace to Our Lady to obtain for us.

21. May 13, 1981 and May 13, 1982. These are dates never to be forgotten. The first was when Pope St. John Paul II was shot and almost killed. The bullet missed vital organs by millimetres. The following year, JP II was kneeling, with his rosary in hand before the statue of Our Lady in Fatima, thanking her for saving his life in a powerful motherly intervention of which he was absolutely convinced. He deposited the bullet taken from his body in the crown of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima. May 13th was the day of the first apparition of Our Lady to the three Fatima shepherd children: Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia.



22. From Satanic Priest to Saint. In Pope St. John Paul II’s letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* (2002), several times the pontiff mentions a man that many have never before heard of: Bartolo Longo. This man fell into satanic practices and was even consecrated as a satanic priest. However, he was converted by praying the Rosary. He went on to build a stunning church in Pompeii, Italy: the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary. Now he is *Blessed Bartolo Longo*—from priest of Satan to Catholic saint! Our Lady’s power is limitless in bringing us to the fullness of Christ if we entrust ourselves to her, especially through the Holy Rosary.

23. Who was known as the Rosary priest? Fr. Patrick Peyton (1909-1992).

24. Fr. Peyton’s Famous Lines. 1) “A world at prayer is a world at peace,” and the most famous 2) “The family that prays together, stays together.” How these resound as true, today now more than ever.

25. For World Peace and the Cause of the Family. Pope St. John Paul II urged us to rediscover and take up the rosary once again for the cause of world peace and the cause of the family, both which are under much duress in our times. Pope Francis has repeatedly asked the same. Every family should set aside a time and a place and form the habit of praying the Rosary. Let us respond with generosity to the requests of our popes by making the Rosary a part of our lives.