

# THE FAMILY ROSARY

by Sr Mary Augustine

The Rosary is not the most powerful of all prayers. The liturgy of the Church - The Mass (the supreme prayer) and the Divine Office - holds first place. However the Rosary is the most beloved of all devotions and has the recommendation of Heaven through the various approved apparitions of Our Lady.

The Rosary is what the people of God almost instinctively go to when the chips are down, and the wolf is at the door, which is why all the faithful the world over - and especially in our benighted country - need to grab their beads right now, go on their knees and recite the Rosary - alone, with friends and above all in the family, anywhere, anytime.

How should we approach the Rosary?

- It is not firstly a penitential exercise, although all prayer, in one sense is "work" and makes some demands on us. It is not a game of magical numbers; of multiple prayers rattled off at speed.
- It is a devotion - that means it should be said reverently and with our minds in gear.
- It is a contemplative prayer - turning the mysteries of Christ over in our hearts.
- It is an act of Faith - not a mindless routine.

Some simple hints to help your family love the Rosary:

Don't think you have to say the whole five decades every day. Try saying one decade a day - slowly and reverently. Quality-prayer is better than quantity-prayer, or so Our Lord tells us in the Gospel.

Set the scene for the prayer by setting up a little shrine or lighting a candle under a crucifix or statue of Our Lady - and turning off the noise.

To help in meditation on the mystery being said, try reading a little Gospel verse or mentioning an intention between each Hail Mary.

Share up the prayers - letting different members 'give out' each prayer or perhaps lead the Rosary/decade.

If you want your children to adopt the Rosary as a life-long prayer-practice, keep it short, devotional and regular. Never put up the excuse that there is no time; a decade takes a minute and half!