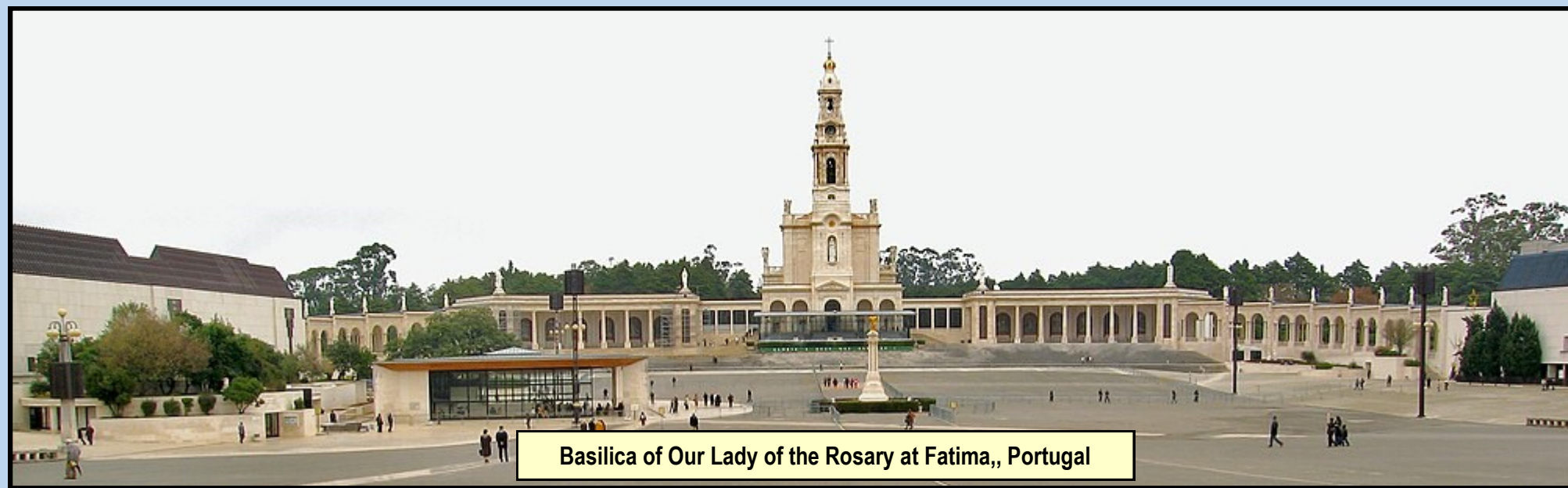


TRADITIONAL MARIAN DEVOTIONS

IN THE FATIMA APPARITIONS, PRAYING THE ROSARY AND DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY WERE REPEATEDLY REQUESTED

THE DEVOTION OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY



Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary at Fatima, Portugal

“Pray the Rosary every day”

Our Lady of Fatima, 1917

Our Lady of Fatima repeatedly asked in her 1917 apparitions for the daily praying of the Rosary: Lucia asked, “And Francisco? Will he go to Heaven too?” Our Lady replied, “Yes, but first he must say many rosaries.”... Our Lady then asked the children to recite the Rosary every day and then rose in a cloud into the sky. (May 13, 1917)

Lucia said, “My Lady, what do you want of me?” Our Lady responded, “I want you to come on the thirteenth day of next month and to pray the Rosary every day and I want you to learn to read.” (June 13, 1917)

Seeing Our Lady, Lucia asked, “What do you want of me?” Our Lady responded, “I want you to come on the thirteenth day of next month and to continue to pray the Rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary, in order to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war for she alone can help.”... Lucia then submitted petitions and prayer requests for Our Lady to present to God. Our Lady gave some responses to Lucia. Lucia then said, “Yes, she wants people to recite the Rosary. People must recite the Rosary.”... Our Lady added, “When you say the Rosary, say after each mystery: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need.” (July 13, 1917)

Our Lady appeared to the children while they were pasturing their sheep and she urged the children to continue coming on the thirteenth of the month and to pray the Rosary every day. (August 19, 1917)

Lucia asked Our Lady, “What do you want of me?” Our Lady replied, “Continue to pray the Rosary every day in order to obtain the end of the war.” (September 13, 1917)

Lucia then said to Our Lady, “What do you want of me?” Our Lady replied, “I am the Lady of the Rosary, I have come to warn the faithful to amend their lives and ask for pardon for their sins. They must not offend Our Lord any more, for He is already too grievously offended by the sins of men. People must say the Rosary. Let them continue saying it everyday.” (October 13, 1917)

The Rosary: “It does good for the heart, for the soul, for all of life.”

Pope Francis, November 20th, 2013

During the Sunday Angelus, Pope Francis prescribed praying the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet daily as efficacious spiritual medicine for the heart, soul and whole of life. As he began to speak, volunteers started giving away about 20,000 boxes containing a rosary, a Divine Mercy holy card and a medical-style instruction sheet. He said:

“I would like, now, for all of you to consider a medicine. But some may think: ‘Is the Pope being a pharmacist now?’ It is a special medicine to make the fruit of the Year of Faith that is coming to a close more concrete. This little box contains the medicine, and some volunteers will distribute it to you as you leave the square. Take it! It’s a rosary with which one can pray also the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, spiritual help for our souls and for spreading love, forgiveness and brotherhood everywhere. Don’t forget to take it. Because it does good, eh? It does good for the heart, for the soul, for all of life.”



Pope Francis

THE HISTORY OF PRAYING THE ROSARY AND ITS POWER

According to tradition, the devotion of the Rosary as we know it today was given in a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1214 to Saint Dominic de Guzman as the Albigensian heresy was infecting Christendom. Our Lady told him she would give him a weapon to convert the world. “Preach my Psalter,” she said, “if you want to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God.” In the fifteenth century as the faith in Western Europe was being undermined during the Renaissance, Our Lady appeared to another Dominican, Blessed Alan de Roche, in 1460 and told him to re-establish the devotion of the Rosary, which he successfully did in all earnest. Throughout history there are a number of documented examples of the power of the Rosary, some of which follow:

Victory at the Critical Battle of Lepanto

A dramatic example occurred on October 7, 1571 at the naval Battle of Lepanto, a decisive moment in European history. The fleet of the Catholic League was greatly outnumbered yet it delivered a crushing defeat to the powerful navy of the Ottoman Empire that was seeking to once again to have Islam invade Western Europe and conquer the Catholic world. Before and during the battle, Pope St. Pius V led the faithful in a Rosary crusade to which he credited this crucial victory. Afterward he instituted the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7th, the day of the Lepanto victory, to show how this devotion is specially linked to victories over the enemies of the Church and Christendom.



St. Dominic

Success in Preserving the Faith from Heresy & Revolution

In the early eighteenth century as the Jansenism heresy was increasing in Catholic France, St. Louis Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716) preached the Rosary and the consecration to Our Lady which strengthened the faithful. And later, they enabled the faithful to remain strong through the severe persecutions of Catholics during the catastrophic French Revolution at the end of that century. In his work *The Secret of the Rosary*, St. Louis de Montfort says Our Lady prefers the Rosary to all other devotions.

Halting the Prussian Invasion of Western France

On January 17, 1871, the Mother of God appeared at Pontmain, France as the Prussian (German) army was advancing. She encouraged the residents to pray and as they faithfully prayed the Rosary, the Prussians halted the advance themselves and an armistice was signed ten days later. In gratitude, a basilica of Our Lady was built at Pontmain.

Surviving Hiroshima Atomic Bomb at Its Epicenter

On August 6, 1945, the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan and the acute effects of the bomb killed 90,000-146,000 people on that day and in the four months that followed. Within one mile of the epicenter of the bomb’s detonation, there was a church building with four Jesuit priests inside and while everyone and everything immediately around them was destroyed, the priests experienced no harm. One of the priest would later explain: “I can only tell you that we have always tried to fulfill the message of Our Lady of Fatima.”

Sparing Austria, Brazil and World from the Evils of Communism

In his book *The Power of the Rosary*, Fr. Albert Shamon describes a number of incidents where the faithful praying of the Rosary by many people coincided with negative outcomes for Soviet Communism such as: (1) In 1948 an Austrian 1948 a priest organized a Rosary crusade where over 10% of the Austrians, then under Communist control, pledged to say the Rosary daily and seven years later on May 13, 1955, the anniversary of Fatima, Soviets pulled out of Austria, baffling many military strategists and historians; (2) With about a million pilgrims praying for peace and Russia at Fatima the night of October 12-13, 1960 and joined by 300 dioceses worldwide, there was a military nuclear test disaster that seriously setback the Soviet’s atomic warfare program for many years and additional internal Soviet military setbacks occurred in 1984 and 1988; and (3) In 1962 Brazil was threatened with a Communist takeover but the women of Brazil organized a nationwide Rosary campaign that succeeded in sparing Brazil the same destiny as Communist Cuba.

DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY & THE FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTION

“God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart. If people do what I ask, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.” (Our Lady of Fatima to Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, July 13, 1917)



“Tell everybody that God gives graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Tell them to ask for graces from her, and that the Heart of Jesus wishes to be venerated together with the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Ask them to plead for peace from the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the Lord has confided the peace of the world to her.” (Our Lady of Fatima to Jacinta, circa Dec. 1919-Jan. 1920)

“I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me.” (Our Lady of Fatima to Lucia, Dec. 10, 1925)

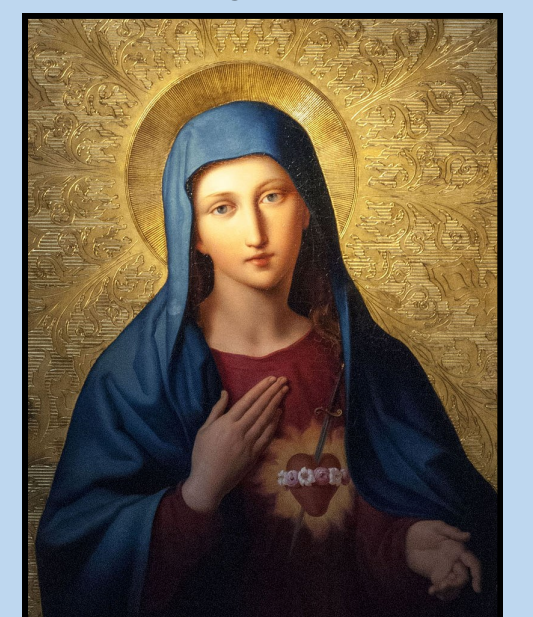
THE HISTORY OF THE DEVOTIONS

The practice of honoring the Blessed Mother on Saturdays is believed to date back to early Church tradition that Jesus appeared to His Mother on Holy Saturday. Sister M. Jean Frisk S.T.L. wrote in *Saturday Devotions in Honor of Our Lady*, published by the Marian Library at the University of Dayton, that the liturgical observation of venerating Mary on Saturday can be attributed to St. Alcuin (735-804), a leading scholar and teacher at the court of Charlemagne and later the Abbot of the Abbey at Tours. St. Alcuin composed two Votive Mass formularies for Saturday in honor of Our Lady and the practice was quickly embraced by both clergy and laity. Over the centuries that followed, the devotion to the Heart of Mary grew up in parallel with the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. The common representation of Mary’s Heart being pierced with a sword reflects the prophetic words of Simeon in the Gospel of Luke at the presentation of the child Jesus in the Temple.

The Catholic Encyclopedia describes the history of the modern day First Saturday devotion as being:

“Closely affiliated in style and substance with the Sacred Heart Devotion, the origins of this practice may be traced to St. John Eudes (1601-1680), the ‘apostle of devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary’, and to Venerable John J. Olier (1608-1657), founder of the Sulpicians. But it was after the apparitions at Fatima that this devotion gained momentum, since Our Lady was said to have recommended it specifically, promising her intercession for the final perseverance at the hour of death to all who would be faithful to it.

“As in devotion to the Sacred Heart, the dominant theme of this devotion is reparation offered to Christ, in this context ‘to the Divine Son through the Immaculate Heart of His Mother.’ In the revision of the [liturgical] Calendar following the Second Vatican Council, the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was transferred to the day after (that is Saturday) the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”



Notably, five years before the 1917 Fatima apparitions, Pope St. Pius X granted new indulgences to the already existing First Saturday Devotion, stating that the purpose is “to make reparation for the execrable blasphemies uttered against her august name and heavenly prerogatives of that blessed Virgin...”

As for the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, it appears again that it was St. John Eudes’ promotion of the Immaculate Heart devotion that resulted in a feast being first celebrated in 1648 at Autun, France and later in a number of French dioceses. A century and a half later in 1799, Pius VI approved a feast of the Most Pure Heart of Mary for some of the churches in the diocese of Palermo. Then decades later in 1855, the Congregation of Rites finally approved the Office and Mass of the Most Pure Heart of Mary but it did not impose them upon the Universal Church. Then almost a century later and twenty-seven years after the Fatima apparitions and two years after the first consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in 1944 Pope Pius XII instituted in the Latin Rite the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to be celebrated on August 22nd, coinciding with the traditional octave day of the Assumption. In 1969, Pope Paul VI moved the celebration of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the Saturday, immediately after the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is celebrated on the third Friday after Pentecost.

THE CONDITIONS OF OUR LADY’S PROMISE

The Saint Benedict Center (www.saintbenedict.com) explains that the elements of this devotion consist in the following four points, all of which must be offered in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. One should make this intention before carrying out Our Lady’s requests. The four conditions of the Promise are as follows:

Confession: This confession can be made before the First Saturday or afterward, provided that Holy Communion be received in the state of grace. In 1926, Christ in a vision explained to Lucia that this confession could be made a week before or even more, and that it should be offered in reparation.

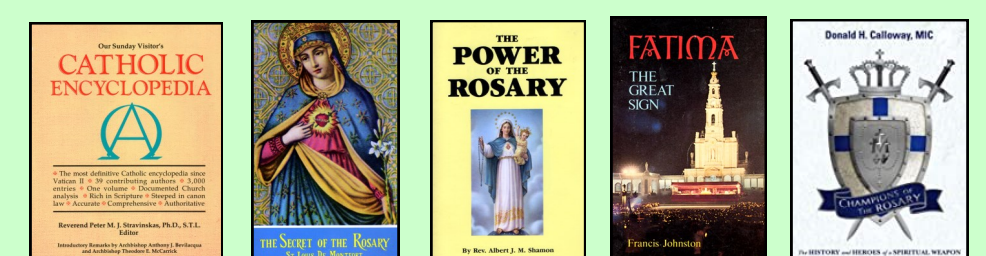
Holy Communion: Before receiving Holy Communion, it is likewise necessary to offer it in reparation to Our Lady. Our Lord told Lucia in 1930, “This Communion will be accepted on the following Sunday for just reasons, if my priests allow it so.” So if work or school, sickness, or another just reason prevents the Communion on a First Saturday, with this permission it may be received the following Sunday. If Communion is transferred, any or all of the other acts of the devotion may also be performed on Sunday if the person so desires.

Rosary: The Rosary is a vocal prayer said while meditating upon the mysteries of Our Lord’s life and Passion and Our Lady’s life. To comply with the request of our Blessed Mother, it must be offered in reparation and said properly while meditating.

15-minute meditation: Also offered in reparation, the meditation may embrace one or more mysteries; it may include all, taken together or separately. This meditation should be the richest of any meditation, because Our Lady promised to be present when she said “...those who keep me company...”

After completing the Five First Saturdays, one may continue the devotion simply to console the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady. A tender love of our Blessed Mother will lead one to do all he can to make reparation for the sins which pierce her Immaculate Heart. Let us remember, too, that although Our Lady made this promise to those who would observe five such First Saturdays in succession, in her July apparition she asked simply that Communions of reparation be made on every First Saturday to atone for the sins of the world.

PRIMARY SOURCES: In addition to the cited Papal teachings and sources cited above, the following sources were used: The *Catholic Encyclopedia* by Our Sunday Visitor; *The Secret of the Rosary* by St. Louis De Montfort, Montfort Publications; *The Power of the Rosary* by Rev. Albert J.M. Shamon, Reible Foundation; *Fatima, The Great Sign* by Francis Johnson, Tan Books and Publishers, Inc.; and *Champions of the Rosary* by Rev. Donald H. Calloway, Marian Press.



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