



The rosary is a very easy prayer to “do” rather than “pray.” I was sitting on the plane the day after Christmas as a sixteen-year old waiting on the runway to take off. I was on my way to visit my family on the farm for Christmas from the high school seminary. Due to a snowstorm, my flight from New Hampshire to Minnesota had be re-routed through Charlotte, taking a big bite out of my already short holiday visit. I was a bit disappointed to say the least.

I pulled out my rosary and started to pray. Next to me sat an elderly man, discretely reading his Sky Mall. We were both minding our own business when I felt the Holy Spirit move me to one of those moments of “holy indiscretion,” or evangelization better said. I leaned over and showed the old man my rosary. “You see this rosary? It’s made of olive wood from the Jerusalem. **Would you like it as a little Christmas gift from me?**” He gently accepted the gift (which I didn’t expect—I really liked that rosary) and held it in his hands for a few moments. Then my old friend started to cry. He told me how the rosary reminded him of his grandmother who always used to pray it with him, but that it had been years since he had prayed it, in fact, years since he had prayed at all. “Would you like me to teach you how to pray it?” There on that plane, well on our way to Charlotte, **I taught him how to pray the rosary. God wanted that flight to Minnesota re-routed.** His Mother had an “ambush of grace” prepared for one of her sons who hadn’t talked to his Heavenly Mother in a while.

The rosary is a gift to our Mother. Yes, it’s repetitive. Yes, it takes time. Yet I remember many afternoons as a teenager sitting at the kitchen counter as my mom was preparing supper. We just spent the time together and talked about life. Those conversations were repetitive. They took time. Yet they weren’t burdensome, because we didn’t see it as repetitive and time-consuming, but time spent with a loved one. The rosary should be the same way. It is simply spending time with Mary. **Through the Hail Mary’s we tell our Mother we love her. That never gets old. You can never say it enough. We enjoy just being with her in prayer. That is how our rosary should be, and how it melts our Heavenly Mother’s heart when we pray it that way.**

The rosary is even more so a gift from our Mother. It is one of her favorite channels

through which to pour out her motherly love and aid on her children. It was the lifesaver she chose to throw out to my friend on the plane. They call it the lasso by which Mary ropes her renegade children into Heaven. How many graces Mary pours out on those who pray the rosary. My family is a testimony of that.

When I was about ten, my family started praying the rosary every night as we put my younger siblings to bed. With the often unforgiving summer schedule on the farm, that moment at the end of the day was often the one time we were all together as a family. The older siblings and my parents would divide up between the rooms of the littler ones to tuck them in as we went through the mysteries. Sometimes it was very late; sometimes we were exhausted after a day of haying or hauling, but to this day we have not once missed this family event, and Mary has taken us under her mantle. She has blessed us far beyond what we could ever imagine: a united family, two vocations to the religious life, happiness and peace, etc. It is cliché to say that the family that prays together stays together, but it's true.

Mary will never fail to pour out her maternal protection, intercession, and love on all who pray the rosary. She is faithful. On our part we need to be faithful too. May we not see the rosary as an empty devotion that "distributes" graces if we blindly race through it. May our rosaries not be monotonous, droning, empty repetitions, but rather symphonies of love to the Queen of Heaven. May each Hail Mary be a rose we give with a simple, childlike heart to our dear Mother. May that time spent with Mary be a joy for us, a joy just to be with her. Relish your rosary. Your Heavenly Mother does.