

## **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults**

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*--by Vickie Shepherd*

## **Beyond Mystagogy**

### ***The RCIA Process***

#### ***Mystagogy and Beyond***

There have been a few requests to address some of the customs, traditions and customs of the Catholic faith and Church. Since this is a part of our lives each and every day, I felt compelled to touch on some of the subjects that seem to be requested most often in our parish. As I might have mentioned before, we have a wonderful person in our parish who continues to meet with our group after Pentecost. She offers our newest members a chance to explore their newfound faith and helps them to discover a part of their lives that was missing or needing revitalization. The first practice or tradition of the Catholic Church I will touch on is the Rosary. This is a tradition that has been embraced by the faithful for centuries. I hope to help you understand more about the Rosary and why this devotion is so important to our Catholic faith.

#### ***The Rosary~The Vision***

Rosary: meaning crown of roses.

It is believed that each time the rosary is recited devoutly, crowns of heavenly roses are placed on the heads of Mary and Jesus. The crown contains 153 white and 16 white roses. Mary has approved the name of the rosary, referring to each 'Hail Mary' as a rose presented to her. It is said that when Mary is present, the scent of roses permeates the atmosphere around her.

The rosary has taken on many forms in the past and still does. The most popular form that is used universally is the five-decade rosary. Mary presented the rosary to St. Dominic, in an apparition.

The story is as follows.

### *The Apparition*

The year was 1214, and St. Dominic had been praying incessantly for a particular group of people. He felt his intercessions for salvation went unanswered by God -- so he continued to pray and do brutal forms of penance to gain His attention. St. Dominic was so intent on his mission that he continued to pray and fast, he began to grow physically weak and fell into a coma.

While in his coma, Mary and three angels appeared to St. Dominic and presented him with the rosary. She conveyed this message to him from the Triune Godhead: “ The weapon you are to use in this struggle is (and always has been) the ‘Angelic Psalter’. This prayer is the foundation of the New Testament. In the event you reach these sinners and win them over to Me, preach the ‘Angelic Psalter’”.

St. Dominic rose immediately, on fire with the ‘knowledge’ that had been given to him and he headed for the Cathedral. As he approached the Church, unseen angels rang the bells to summon the townspeople. He directly began to preach as Mary had instructed, and as he spoke an intense storm broke out. The earth began to quake, the sun was blotted out, and thunder and lightning encompassed them. The people looked on as a prominent picture of the Blessed Mother began to come to life. She raised her arms to the heavens three times to call down the wrath of God. She informed them that if they continued to ignore their call to conversion they would suffer the consequences. God revealed to them that they should show their devotion through the prayers of the Holy Rosary.

### *The Zealous Teacher*

St. Dominic enthusiastically preached and taught the townspeople the importance of praying the rosary. Finally most of the people Dominic had prayed for, embraced the practice of meditating on the prayers of the rosary. They were eager to renounce their former sinfulness and live out the promises of a Christian lifestyle.

St. Dominic was inspired through the power of the Holy Spirit to continue preaching the promises of the rosary and the importance of meditating on the mysteries, throughout his lifetime. He would pray the rosary in preparation for each of his sermons and before Mary would visit him after each assembly of the faithful.

### *The Promises*



***The basic message of meditating on the mysteries of the rosary is one of conversion. St. Dominic has given us the 15 Promises that God had revealed to him.***

1. Whoever faithfully serves me by the recitation of the Rosary shall receive special graces.
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell; it will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.
4. It will cause the virtue and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God; it will withdraw the hearts of people from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The souls, which recommend itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall not perish.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying themselves to the consideration of its Sacred Mysteries shall never be conquered by misfortune. God will not chastise them in His justice, they shall not perish by an unprovided death; if they be just they shall remain in the grace of God, and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary shall not die without the Sacraments of the Church.
8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have during their life and at their death the light of God and the plenitude of His graces; at the moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the Saints of Paradise.
9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.

10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in Heaven.
11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary.
12. I shall aid all those who propagate the Holy Rosary in their necessities.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.
14. All who recite the Rosary are my children, and brothers and sisters of my only Son, Jesus Christ
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a great sign of predestination.

*This is part one of The Rosary. Part two will follow with instruction on how to say the rosary.*

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