

The Story of Our Lady of the Rosary

Saint Pius V established this feast in 1573.

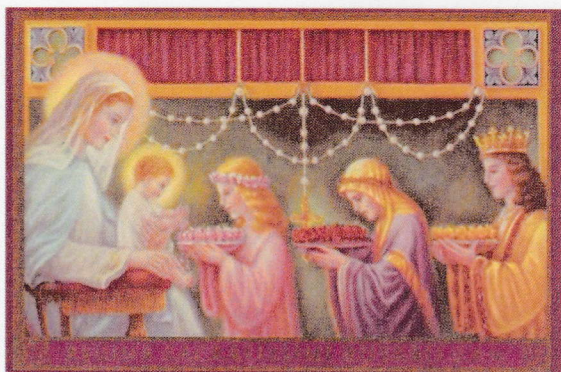
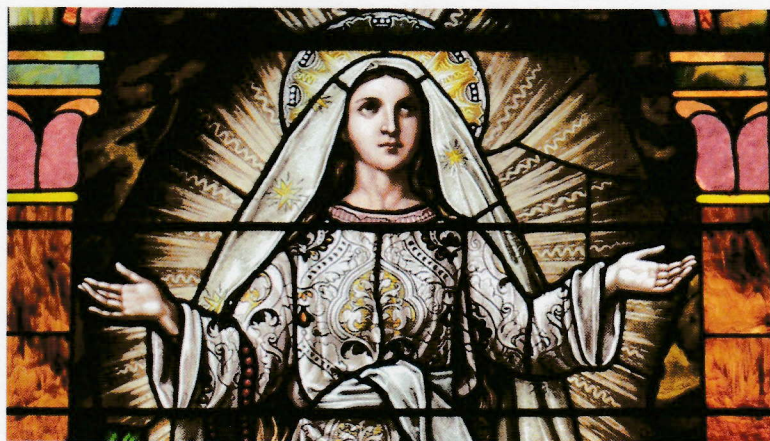
The purpose was to thank God for the victory of Christians over the Turks at Lepanto—a victory attributed to the praying of the rosary. Clement XI extended the feast to the universal Church in 1716.

The development of the rosary has a long history. First, a practice developed of praying 150 Our Fathers in imitation of the 150 Psalms. Then there was a parallel practice of praying 150 Hail Marys. Soon a

mystery of Jesus' life was attached to each Hail Mary. Though Mary's giving the rosary to Saint Dominic is recognized as a legend, the development of this prayer form owes much to the followers of Saint Dominic. One of them, Alan de la Roche, was known as "the apostle of the rosary." He founded the first Confraternity of the Rosary in the 15th century. In the 16th century, the rosary was developed to its present form—with the 15 mysteries (joyful, sorrowful and glorious). In 2002, Pope John Paul II added five Mysteries of Light to this devotion.

Reflection

The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries of our salvation. Pius XII called it a compendium of the gospel. The main focus is on Jesus—his birth, life, death, and resurrection. The Our Fathers remind us that Jesus' Father is the initiator of salvation. The Hail Marys remind us to join with Mary in contemplating these mysteries. They also make us aware that Mary was and is intimately joined with her Son in all the mysteries of his earthly and heavenly existence.



O Virgin Mary, grant that the recitation of the Rosary may be for me each day, in the midst of my manifest duties, a bond of unity in my actions, a tribute of filial piety, a sweet refreshment, an encouragement to walk joyfully along the path of duty. Grant, above all, O Virgin Mary, that the study of thy fifteen mysteries may form in my soul, little by little, a luminous atmosphere, pure, strengthening my will, my heart, my memory, my imagination, my whole being. So shall I acquire the habit of praying while I work, without the aid of formal prayers, by interior acts of admiration and of supplication, or by aspirations of love. I ask this of thee, O Queen of the Holy Rosary, through Saint Dominic, thy son of predilection, the renowned preacher of thy mysteries, and the faithful imitator of thy virtues. Amen.

