

The background of the entire page is a photograph of two lit purple candles. The candles are placed on a lush arrangement of greenery, including eucalyptus leaves and small purple flowers. A plaid ribbon is tied around the base of the candles. The scene is set against a dark, textured background, possibly a tablecloth.

Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

Oh Holy Night

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER



WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Pope Francis once said, "Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man." Help prepare your family for the coming of Christ by praying together each day. Don't worry, it doesn't have to be perfect! Take comfort in knowing there is no one "correct" way of doing it.

It's a busy time of year for everyone, but it's especially important to slow down long enough to prepare your hearts and minds for Jesus. Take a moment to breathe in the great anticipation.

As the Church transitions into a new season, know that we're joining you and your family in prayer. We promise to be with you, growing in faith, every step of the way. May God continue to bless you and your family.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. began his ministry in 1942 with the goal of building **family unity** through daily prayer of the Rosary. Inspired by his own father who had a deep devotion to family prayer, praying the Rosary became the foundation for the life of Father Peyton (1909-92).

We at Family Rosary are ever so grateful Father Peyton's family instilled in him the importance of **family prayer**. Now it can be part of your family's tradition so you can fulfill the vision that "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together," the slogan coined by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



“IF FAMILIES GIVE OUR LADY FIFTEEN MINUTES A DAY BY RECITING THE ROSARY, I ASSURE THEM THAT THEIR HOMES WILL BECOME, BY GOD'S GRACE, PEACEFUL PLACES.
FATHER PATRICK PEYTON, C.S.C.”



OH HOLY NIGHT



“OH HOLY NIGHT, THE STARS ARE BRIGHTLY SHINING”

When I got the call just after 4p.m. on Christmas Eve 2002 that my mom had died after a four month battle with cancer, I cried. But by the time my sweet husband Michael had bundled our two children who were 4 and 2 into the car for Christmas Mass, I was at peace.

Our Franciscan pastor took me by the hands after the Mass and looked me straight in the eyes with nothing but compassion. I told him “It’s okay Father, my mom went home on the holiest night of the year – with choirs of angels singing! It was just as it is meant to be.”

This acceptance, this perspective and peace was shaped over the previous four years when I began praying the Rosary. In the first five years of my marriage, my husband and I buried five immediate family members: a nephew who was like a little brother to me died tragically in a car accident at 21, my father passed the following April after a short battle with cancer, my brother-in-law who lived up the street at 43 with two small kids from cancer, my husband’s brother Jimi in year five from ALS.

It was a lot. It could have suffocated us, and our young marriage and family. We could have been bitter. We could have left the faith and asked, “why us?” But a beautiful thing happened during this time, a dear friend gently urged me to continually pray the Rosary.

My mother was devoted to the Rosary and although I had gone to Catholic schools most of my life, I had never really prayed it. I considered it old fashioned. Once, when I found myself newly single after moving to Boston far from my native Michigan, my mom gave me a finger Rosary that I kept in my car. I would do one Our Father, and ten Hail Mary’s on my way to work – but that was the extent of it, and I only resorted to it when life was stressing me out.

But this time was different. While we were saying goodbye to so many important people in our lives, we were also giving birth to three beautiful healthy children. Our days were full of highs and lows as new parents. We were both drowning in tears and feelings of profound joy AND sadness ... and in crept the Blessed Mother.

THE GREATEST GIFT

With a card published by Holy Cross Family Ministries, I learned and memorized all the Mysteries of the Rosary. That first year when Will was born, and we said goodbye to my dad – I was still working. I put the card in my car visor, and would learn one mystery a week at stop lights on the way to work.

Having your dad go through Hospice while you are 900 miles away is not an easy thing, but this kept me grounded – praying for him, praying for my mom and opening myself up to the Holy Spirit helped me handle the situation on both fronts. My husband, who had prayed the Rosary daily in college, also began praying the Rosary during his daily commute to work. The Rosary became our lifeline.

Four years later, when my sweet mom Beatrice was too weak to speak, she looked me straight in the eyes as I prayed the Rosary at her bedside. It was the last time we were together as I was not able to travel the final six weeks of my pregnancy. I realized in that moment that while learning and praying the Rosary had been my anchor the previous four years, the Blessed Mother was also preparing me as I helped my mom in her final weeks on earth by praying the Rosary with her – something we had never done together in my adult life. When I left her bedside, I made my older siblings promise me they would pray it with her until she passed – a promise they kept.

Our third child was born six days later after my mom died – December 30, 2002– and we named her Grace Mary. At the birth my Hindu Obstetrician asked if her name was after the “Hail Mary Full of Grace” prayer – and I said it most certainly was. It was only fitting after all the Blessed Mother had done for me during this emotional time.

FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

The Rosary has a profound way of helping you sort out what is important in life, and what is not. When we really and truly meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary, you can't help but gain a new perspective – life is hard, as it was for Joseph and Mary when they gave birth in a stable. But God will always provide for you, he will give you what you need in any situation, just “ask and you shall receive.”

Give a gift to yourself and your family by sharing the daily habit of our Pope and many Saints – learn and meditate upon the mysteries of the Rosary. By doing so, you will be putting yourself at the feet of the Blessed Mother – who is Mother to us all! She will lead you to a deeper relationship with her Son Jesus, and intercede for you in unimaginable ways. The Rosary in combination with the sacraments of our Church, are the tools that join Heaven and Earth.

You can pray it in the car, at bedtime, or even when you're out walking! The point is to make the time and take that first step! If it's a habit you already have, find a way to bring someone else to this beautiful tool of our faith – the way my new friend, who is now my spiritual director, did twenty years ago. Model for others the peace of mind that comes from this simple devotion.

This is indeed the greatest gift you can give someone else – the gift of faith, and all the beautiful ways that can transform a life, a family, a world.

A World at Prayer is a World at Peace! Visit FamilyRosary.org for resources on praying the Rosary!

GOING DEEPER

As you pray the Rosary with your family, reflect especially on the fourth Joyful Mystery, the *Presentation in the Temple*. This Mystery reminds us of a basic truth we must never forget: each one of us belongs to God. Though born of human parents, we are God's children. Mary and Joseph acknowledged God's dominion over Jesus when they presented him in the Temple.

Our babies, children, spouses, students and friends can never be our property. They are God's children, and they have been entrusted to us to help them, but our words and example, to live holy, happy lives. Our love for them must never be possessive or exploitative. Because we are all God's children, we must treat one another with respect and kindness.



MARGARET DWYER

Margaret has been married to her husband Michael Hogan for twenty years, and they reside in Easton, Massachusetts with their four children. She is a catechist at her church, and loves to help Holy Cross Family Ministries spread devotion to Fr. Peyton's cause - the Family Rosary.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM HCFM

Dear Friends, I am Father Willy Raymond, C.S.C., President of Holy Cross Family Ministries, I am delighted to extend Christmas greetings from the Father Peyton Center in Easton, MA.

Our hearts are filled with deep joy during these days of Christmas celebration, joy at the incredible love of God that he would come among us out of that pure love to draw us into the warm embrace of the Living God. His coming fills us with faith in his promises, hope for eternal life and joy that no one can take away from us. A joy that is ours even in the midst of loss.

I want to take a moment to express our gratitude to Margaret Dwyer, a dear friend of our ministry, for sharing her powerful, poignant and personal story. I have been blessed to hear many similar stories over my years of priesthood; and this year we are hearing many more stories of faith and stories of holiness about our founder, Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. I found Margaret's story to be particularly unique and deeply moving. Moving stories about Father Peyton abound this year as we have special cause to celebrate with joy. In Rome, on December 18, Pope Francis declared Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., "The Rosary Priest," to be "Venerable." Many of us have been inspired by his love for Mary and his passion for family prayer, especially the Rosary. Along with many others, we have been waiting for 25 years for this happy day to arrive.



BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

Even though he is now Venerable Patrick Peyton, our work is far from done. To mark this special occasion, I would like to invite you to join us in the following:

1. Praying for the beatification of Father Peyton,
2. Spreading news and devotion to him by joining with others in a chapter of the Peyton Guild to pray that he would be recognized as a “Saint for Family Prayer.”
3. I invite you to join us on January 1 as we launch a special novena of prayer in thanksgiving to God for the declaration that Father Peyton is now Venerable. Providentially, this novena culminates on Father Peyton’s birthday, January 9, 2018.
4. Please consider this a personal invitation for you and your family to join us in helping to introduce this ‘Champion of family unity through prayer’ to a whole new generation of young families,
5. Finally, please accompany us as we extend our thanks and appreciation to Pope Francis, and to all the friends of Father Peyton and those who continue his ministry in Family Rosary, Family Theater, the Peyton institute for the family and Catholic Mom.com.

This is a Christmas like no other for us here at the Peyton Center. Please join us in sharing this Christmas joy and peace by praying with us January 1-9 at FamilyRosary.org.

Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Happy New Year to you, your family and loved ones.

Father Willy Raymond, C.S.C. and the Team at Holy Cross Family Ministries.

We hope the time you’ve spent reflecting with this material has been enriching. Continue to pray with your family every day, wherever you are.

For additional online resources for family prayer including a Prayer Petition Page and our World at Prayer Blog, please visit our website at www.FamilyRosary.org.

This e-book and all our resources represent a culmination of Father Peyton’s passion for family unity through prayer. We hope our services will enhance your family’s prayer life particularly remembering Father Peyton’s famous words, “*The Family That Prays Together Stays Together.*”

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