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FAMILY ROSARY

Called to be a Saint

Who, Me? Yes, You.

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

As Catholics, we begin this month with All Saints Day and All Souls Day – remembering those who have walked before us – from the great Saints to our own friends and family who have passed from this earthly world.

It is only fitting to also look to November as a time to do our own personal spiritual inventory. In an age of social media, it is easy to get lost in the comparisons – how others seem to have it all together while some of us struggle along.

This excerpt is from Pope Francis's Encyclical released March 2018, "On the Call to Holiness in Today's World" (Gaudete Et Exsultate), and has timely advice for each one of us in discerning our own individual path to holiness. Pour a cup of coffee, find a quiet space, and let our Holy Father speak to you today.

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 message created by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



TO BE SAINTS IS NOT A PRIVILEGE FOR THE FEW,
BUT A VOCATION FOR EVERYONE.

POPE FRANCIS



CALLED TO BE A SAINT

THE LORD CALLS : “ BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY” (LEV 11:44; CF. 1 PET 1:16)

With this Exhortation I would like to insist primarily on the call to holiness that the Lord addresses to each of us, **the call that he also addresses, personally, to you**: “Be holy, for I am holy” (Lev 11:44; cf. 1 Pet 1:16). The *Second Vatican Council* stated this clearly: “Strengthened by so many and such great means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord – each in his or her own way – to that perfect holiness by which the Father himself is perfect.

We should not grow discouraged before examples of holiness that appear unattainable. There are some testimonies that may prove helpful and inspiring, but that we are not meant to copy, for that could even lead us astray from the one specific path that the Lord has in mind for us. **The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. 1 Cor 12:7), rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them.** We are all called to be witnesses, but there are many actual ways of bearing witness. Indeed, when the great mystic, Saint John of the Cross, wrote his *Spiritual Canticle*, he preferred to avoid hard and fast rules for all. He explained that his verses were composed so that everyone could benefit from them “in his or her own way.” For God’s life is communicated “to some in one way and to others in another.”

I would stress too that the “genius of woman” is seen in feminine styles of holiness, which are an essential means of reflecting God’s holiness in this world. Indeed, in times when women tended to be most ignored or overlooked, the Holy Spirit raised up saints whose attractiveness produced new spiritual vigour and important reforms in the Church. We can mention Saint Hildegard of Bingen, Saint Bridget, Saint Catherine of Siena, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. But I think too of all those unknown or forgotten women who, each in her own way, sustained and transformed families and communities by the power of their witness.

This should excite and encourage us to give our all and to embrace that unique plan that God willed for each of us from eternity: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you” (Jer 1:5).

FOR YOU TOO

To be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious. We are frequently tempted to think that holiness is only for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer. That is not the case. We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. Are you called to the consecrated life? Be holy by living out your commitment with joy. Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by labouring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters. Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus. Are you in a position of authority? Be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain.

Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit in a path of holiness. Let everything be open to God; turn to him in every situation. Do not be dismayed, for the power of the Holy Spirit enables you to do this, and holiness, in the end, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (cf. Gal 5:22-23). When you feel the temptation to dwell on your own weakness, raise your eyes to Christ crucified and say:

“Lord, I am a poor sinner, but you can work the miracle of making me a little bit better.”

In the Church, holy yet made up of sinners, you will find everything you need to grow towards holiness. The Lord has bestowed on the Church the gifts of scripture, the sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and a multifaceted beauty that proceeds from God’s love, “like a bride bedecked with jewels” (Is 61:10).

This holiness to which the Lord calls you will grow through small gestures. Here is an example: a woman goes shopping, she meets a neighbour and they begin to speak, and the gossip starts. But she says in her heart: “No, I will not speak badly of anyone.” This is a step forward in holiness. Later, at home, one of her children wants to talk to her about his hopes and dreams, and even though she is tired, she sits down and listens with patience and love. That is another sacrifice that brings holiness. Later she experiences some anxiety, but recalling the love of the Virgin Mary, she takes her rosary and prays with faith. Yet another path of holiness. Later still, she goes out onto the street, encounters a poor person and stops to say a kind word to him. One more step.

At times, life presents great challenges. Through them, the Lord calls us anew to a conversion that can make his grace more evident in our lives, “in order that we may share his holiness” (Heb 12:10). At other times, we need only find a more perfect way of doing what we are already doing: “There are inspirations that tend solely to perfect in an extraordinary way the ordinary things we do in life.” When Cardinal François-Xavier Nguyễn van Thuân was imprisoned, he refused to waste time waiting for the day he would be set free. Instead, he chose “to live the present moment, filling it to the brim with love”. He decided: “I will seize the occasions that present themselves every day; I will accomplish ordinary actions in an extraordinary way”.

In this way, led by God’s grace, we shape by many small gestures the holiness God has willed for us, not as men and women sufficient unto ourselves but rather “as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pet 4:10). The New Zealand bishops rightly teach us that we are capable of

loving with the Lord's unconditional love, because the risen Lord shares his powerful life with our fragile lives: "His love set no limits and, once given, was never taken back. It was unconditional and remained faithful. To love like that is not easy because we are often so weak. But just to try to love as Christ loved us shows that Christ shares his own risen life with us. In this way, our lives demonstrate his power at work – even in the midst of human weakness.

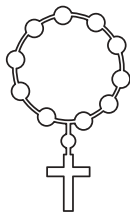
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GOING DEEPER

We hope you have found this comforting and challenging. Take some time this week to pray the Mysteries of the Light and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you in discerning what habit you could adopt that would help you on your path to holiness. We have so many in our Catholic toolbox – the Sacraments, the Rosary, our Saints to learn about!

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

Visit [Ave Maria Press](#) for some great books on Saints! There are many contemporary authors with rich stories on how their day to day life is inspired by those who have walked before us! James Martin's, "My Life with the Saints" and "My BadAss book of Saints: Courageous Women who showed me how to live" by Maria Morera Johnson are two of our personal favorites here at Holy Cross Family Ministries.



FAMILY ROSARY TEAM

Margaret Dwyer and Melissa Fitzpatrick collaborate to provide eBooks for you every week! In addition to being coworkers and cubical neighbors at Family Rosary, Margaret and Melissa are great friends and help each other grow in spirit!

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

We hope the time you've spent reflecting with this material has been enriching. Remember, we're with you in prayer, every step of the way!

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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