

Enhance your family prayer with  
**FAMILY ROSARY**

# *Embody Mercy*

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER



# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

Transitioning out of Ordinary time and into Lent, we're reminded how the special seasons of the Church are a gift from God. Though we're called to continuously grow our faith throughout the year, Lent gives us a particular reason to take time and reflect. So as we enter this Lenten season, embrace this spiritual opportunity you and your family have been gifted by God.

During this third week of Lent, we invite you to read and reflect upon the writings of Gregory Popcak from his book ***BeDADitudes: 8 Ways to Be an Awesome Dad.***

Whether you are a mother or a father, grandfather, grandmother, aunt or uncle, friend or co-worker looking to transform your interior relationship with God – and in doing so transform your family, workplace and day to day life – this chapter from Greg's book is certain to make an indelible impression on your heart and soul.

Know that we are 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 message created by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



“ WE ARE ALL CALLED TO LIVE THE JOY THAT COMES FROM THE ENCOUNTER WITH JESUS, TO OVERCOME OUR SELFISHNESS, AND TO MOVE BEYOND OUR COMFORT ZONE. ”  
POPE FRANCIS





# EMBODY MERCY



## WORDS OF WISDOM FROM ONE DAD TO ANOTHER

What does it truly mean to be merciful? There is a popular perception that being merciful means letting someone off the hook, but while there is a sense in which this is true, mercy means so much more.

Consider, for example, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

The Corporal Works of Mercy are listed as follows:

1. Feed the hungry
2. Give drink to the thirsty
3. Clothe the naked
4. Give Shelter to the homeless
5. Visit the sick
6. Visit the imprisoned
7. Bury the dead

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are listed below:

1. Instruct the ignorant
2. Counsel the doubtful
3. Admonish sinners
4. Bear wrongs patiently
5. Forgive offenses willingly
6. Comfort the afflicted
7. Pray for the living and the dead

Although it does not occur to many people, these works of mercy give us an operational definition of what it means to actually be merciful. Taken at face value, they can seem like just random ways we could be nice to people. In fact, on that superficial level, these lists can even seem contradictory. For instance, how is it merciful to both forgive willingly and admonish sinners? The key to understanding how these lists define mercy is asking, "What do these lists have in common?" When you apply this question, the actual definition of mercy becomes clear. To be merciful is to treat others in a manner that demonstrates their worth in the eyes of God.

We engage in works of mercy such as clothing the naked because every child of God deserves to be dressed in a manner that reveals his or her dignity as a son or daughter of the King of Kings! We feed the hungry because every person deserves to know that he or she has a rightful place at the royal feast set at God's table! We forgive willingly and bear wrongs patiently because we recognize the challenges involved in becoming saints and because we try to be generous about the struggle that's part of that process. **And yet, when those we love forget who they really are, neglect to**

*strive for greatness, and, instead, decide to wallow in their brokenness, we admonish them, not to condemn or judge but to invite them to remember that they were meant to be more and to live more fully than they are.*

## **BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE MERCIFUL**

### **YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

As important as the external works of mercy are, what we do for others is equally important in our own spiritual journey as being merciful to ourselves.

How can we cooperate with God's desire to transform us from the inside out into new creations? What does it mean to live out the command of Ephesians 4:24 and "put on the new, created in God's way in righteousness and holiness of truth?"

There is a saying that "God loves you just the way we are, but he loves us too much to let us stay that way." Just as you love your children for who they are today while simultaneously knowing that they are destined for so much more, your heavenly Father loves you for who you are but calls you to a greatness beyond your wildest dreams – divine sonship. God wants to make you – a mortal, sinful being – into a new person who will be perfected in Christ, capable of living forever and destined to being united with God's infinite love for all eternity. He wants nothing less than to make us "share in the divine nature."

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## **GOING DEEPER**

This week take the time to discuss the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy with your family. Consider finding one that you can do together, such as collecting money to feed the hungry or food for your local shelter, or perhaps organizing a neighborhood clothing drive.

Equally important, be sure to take a few minutes to sit quietly. All of us battle sin, so with a kind and forgiving spirit toward yourself, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what needs to be removed so that your heart, life and presence on this earth can more fully reflect God's love in the world today. Ask for the intercession of Saint Teresa of Calcutta in this appeal!

"If we pray, we will believe. If we believe, we will love. If we love, we will serve." (Saint Teresa of Calcutta)

## **CONTINUE THE JOURNEY**

Be sure to look up Greg Popcak's other book *The Corporal Works of Mommy [and Daddy Too]* that explores how the various works of mercy can enable you to view even the most mundane tasks of family life as a powerful path to holiness.

Whether you want to create a more intimate and godly marriage, celebrate a more faithful and fulfilling family life, or discover the path to a more grace-filled personal life, the **Catholic Counselors**

at **Pastoral Solutions Institute** can help strengthen and support you on your spiritual and emotional journey! You can find more about Catholic tele-counseling services at [www.CatholicCounselors.com](http://www.CatholicCounselors.com).

For daily encouragement tune into **More2Life** with Dr. Popcak and his wife Lisa on Ave Maria Radio every Monday through Friday at 10:00AM (Eastern).



## GREGORY POPCAK

Dr. Gregory Popcak is the Executive Director of the Pastoral Solutions Institute, an organization dedicated to helping Catholics find faith-filled solutions to tough marriage, family, and personal problems. The author of over a dozen popular books integrating solid Catholic theology and counseling psychology, Dr. Popcak is an expert on the practical applications of the Theology of the Body. Through the Pastoral Solutions Institute, he directs a group pastoral tele-counseling practice that provides ongoing pastoral psychotherapy services to Catholic couples, individuals and families around the world.

# 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](http://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.*"

### WHERE YOU CAN FIND US:



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