

Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

Mercy Before Judgment

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

There is no right or wrong when it comes to praying with your family. It may be chaotic and imperfect one day and quiet and orderly the next. Take comfort in knowing there is no one "correct" way of doing it. Any family can gather in prayer and amazing things may come from it!

No matter where you are, create a sacred space: At home with your family, light a candle, place your family Bible or an image of the Holy Family on the coffee table. If you find yourself in your vehicle on-the-go, roll down the windows and have everyone take a deep breath of fresh air. Wherever you are in this busy life, slow down long enough to welcome God's presence.

We're so glad to be joining you 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

Servant of God Patrick Peyton 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.



“JOHN THE BAPTIST SAW JESUS COMING TOWARDS HIM AND DECLARED, ‘HERE IS THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!’” (JOHN 1:29)

MERCY BEFORE JUDGMENT

“Every time we draw a line between us and others, Jesus is always on the other side of it.”

As I’ve done for twenty-some years now, I retreated to St. Joseph’s Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts this past Thanksgiving week to re-charge my battery in preparation for the demands of the upcoming month, what retailers insist is the “most wonderful time of the year.” It’s been my experience, though, that this month between Thanksgiving and Christmas can be especially awful for those who have hyped-up expectations of health and happiness. And as a hospital chaplain, I’m often sucked right into the middle of all the brokenness; hence, my yearly escape to the Trappist monks of St. Joseph’s Abbey.

WARNING!

Traveling to the abbey on Monday of Thanksgiving week, I spotted a bumper sticker that seemed to set the theme for the days ahead—“If we were all forced to wear a warning label, what would yours say?” It is now humbling to confess that I could easily answer the question, for I had experienced myself growing increasingly impatient and judgmental as retreat week approached. I felt myself over and against a few people in particular, and I was hoping a few days away would soften my edges, trim the bristles.

Spiritual memoir: it’s the reading material I most relish, accounts of the varied journeys of women and men in search of God. So I’d packed just such a book for the week—“Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner and Saint.” The author, Lutheran minister Nadia Bolz-Weber, is founder and pastor at the House for All Sinners and Saints, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Denver, Colorado. Let a brief excerpt from a review say more:

I’d first learned about this woman when a friend sent me a YouTube clip. What I saw rather stunned me—a tattooed woman, leather-clad in a sleeveless vest, strutting her multiple body piercings before an audience. And she wore a clerical collar! Just like mine! At first I thought it was a tasteless attack on religion. But it wasn’t. In fact, once Nadia began to preach, the assurances of God’s love she offered her congregation were no different from those I deliver, though in more genteel terms.

SAINTS AND SINNERS

Thus, I was captured. And when I read her book during that retreat week, I knew it was not really Nadia but God who had netted me. One sentence from the book so struck me that it became the theme for the whole retreat and the many days that have followed: “Every time we draw a line between us and others, Jesus is always on the other side of it.”

Wow! It's what I do all the time! It occurred to me then that when I make judgments about people, I draw lines between myself and them, thinking myself in the right, of course. But then to be told that God is always on the other side of the line I'd drawn. My sin had been revealed!

TATTOOED JUDGMENT

Seeming to add divine emphasis to the lesson the tattooed Nadia offered me, the very next morning at Mass, at the sign of peace, I turned around to a youngish monk behind me and offered my hand. As he reached to shake it, the sleeve of his white religious habit slid up, revealing a large tattoo. Stunned again, I was! Speaking later to an older monk about the tattooed Trappist, he commented easily, “Oh yeah, a few of our young monks have them. Got them before they joined us, of course, but I guess it's just part of their spiritual journey.”

Indeed, the spiritual journey can turn some odd corners! And some very unusual people can turn out to be God's most effective prophets. It's this very dynamic that we encounter in the gospel passage we hear today. In conversation with a group of his own followers, “John the Baptist saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29)

It's pretty much what Nadia Bolz-Weber did for me when she slapped me with a painful truth about my own life—“Every time we draw a line between us and others, Jesus is always on the other side of it.” And just in case I didn't get the import of the message, a tattooed Trappist reached out during Mass, took my hand in Christ's peace, and erased all the lines I'd drawn.

Take a moment to sit quietly and consider a line you have drawn, and picture Jesus on the other side! Pray for guidance to reach out and accept whomever that person is in your life. In God, all things are possible!

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

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 additional e-books and the mobile Rosary App, 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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