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**FAMILY ROSARY**

# *The Passion of Our Lord*

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

# WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

As we encounter Holy Week this week, let us pause and reflect on our growth, shortcomings, and victory during our Lenten Journey. If you find yourself restless, be still and know that **the best is yet to come.**

Here at Holy Cross Family Ministries we are blessed with so many wonderful resources for growing deeper spiritually through Rosary meditations. Father Thomas M. Feeley, C.S.C, wrote a book *Minute Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary* that we will reflect with today.

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.



JESUS MADE HIMSELF LIKE THE GRAIN OF WHEAT THAT FALLS TO THE GROUND AND DIES TO GIVE LIFE. OUR HOPE SPRINGS FROM THAT LOVE-FILLED LIFE.

POPE FRANCIS





# THE PASSION OF OUR LORD



During this Holiest week of the year, the Passion of the Lord according to Mark is proclaimed at Sunday Mass and the Passion of the Lord according to John will be proclaimed at the heart of the Good Friday Solemn observance. For this week of the Passion, we offer meditations from the late Father Thomas Feeley, C.S.C., vice postulator of the Cause for Venerable Patrick Peyton and long-time professor of philosophy at Stonehill College. These reflections are drawn from Father Feeley's small book of *Minute Meditations*.

We hope you will find these meditations fruitful for your Holy Week prayer and so inspiring that you will be moved to share them with family and friends.

As Catholic Christians we are called to be missionaries bearing faithful witness to our faith. A beautiful way of doing that is to pray the Rosary regularly and fearlessly since it is a condensed version of the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Think about it; the Rosary will be around five hundred years from now when all our smartphones and other gadgets are long gone. What a wonderful way of introducing Father Peyton's Rosary and our Catholic faith to a whole new generation of Christians.

## THE ROSARY

The Rosary is a simple prayer. It is also a family prayer, a most effective way to instruct our children in the truths of our Christian faith. For it holds up for imitation our Christian ideals – the infinite compassion of our heavenly Father, the utter selflessness of Christ's love, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, the humility and tenderness and prayerfulness of Our Lady.

The Rosary teaches us the Good News and shows us how to live in God's presence and experience joy in our daily lives, to discover meaning in suffering and peace in repentance. It also reinforces our commitment to love God and serve the needs of our neighbors by reminding us of the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom and the glories of heaven.

## THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES: THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

Jesus took Peter, James and John with him into the Garden of Gethsemane and asked them to watch and pray with him. When Jesus came to them for comfort, he found them asleep and said, "*Could you not watch one hour with me? Watch and pray that you are not put to the test*" (Mt 26:40-31).

A short time later when the mob arrived to take Jesus prisoner, Peter took a sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, fled with the other apostles and later denied three times that he even knew Jesus. Would things have been different had he prayed to understand the mind of Jesus and to have the strength to stand by him?

How bitterly Peter must have wept whenever he heard a cock crow! It reminded him that he had failed his Lord and Master because he had failed to pray.

## THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR

Eager to placate the crowd Pilate ordered Jesus to be scourged (Mt. 15:15). Scourging was the Roman prelude to crucifixion. The prisoner was stripped, his hands tied to a pillar so his back and shoulders were exposed, and he was lashed 39 times with a leather whip loaded with iron balls and bits of sheep bone. The prisoner would be left half dead from pain and loss of blood.

We do not like to look on suffering. We tend to avert our gaze and isolate ourselves from it. Thus we do not see the suffering of the poor, the downtrodden, the exploited and the abused. In the scourging at the pillar Christ joined the ranks of all those who are unjustly and cruelly abused. We cannot let ourselves ignore them in their misery, for what we fail to do for them we fail to do for Christ. *We must bear one another's burdens to fulfill the law of Christ (Gal 6:2).*

## THE CROWNING WITH THORNS

The soldiers crowned Christ with thorns in mockery of his claim before Pilate, "*I am a king*" (Jn 18:37). They wanted to make a fool of him. They were not concerned that *his kingdom was not of this world* (Jn 18:36) because this world and its momentary pleasures and empty amusements were all they cared about.

When we follow Christ, who told us "*Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*" (Mt 6:33), we must expect to be mocked as he was. But when we are ridiculed we should also find comfort in what Christ told us: "*In the world you will find trouble, but be brave; I have overcome the world*" (Jn 16:33).

## THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS

Jesus carried his cross through the narrow, crooked crowded streets of Jerusalem, past those who jeered at him and the women who wept for him, to Calvary, outside the city where he was to die and three days later rise again. If we would be his disciples we must follow in the footsteps of our Lord and carry our crosses with patience, humility and abiding trust in our heavenly Father. *If it was necessary for Christ, the sinless, all holy Son of God, to suffer in order to enter into glory (Lk 24:26), there must be no other way.*

## THE CRUCIFIXION

*When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he (Jn 8:28).* In these words, Jesus refers to his death on the cross as the moment when his true nature as the Son of God would be revealed.

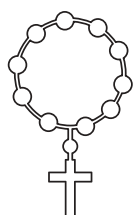
Why on the cross? Because *God is love* (1 Jn3:8), pure benevolence, utterly selfless love, and on the

cross Christ revealed that his love was the same as his heavenly Father's love. He died in loving obedience to his Father who willed that Jesus die out of perfectly selfless love for us: "Greater love than this no one has than to lay down his life for his friends," he said (Jn 15:13). We cannot overcome our natural selfishness and love in such a selfless manner unless we are united to Christ in faith and love. But, when the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts, the selflessness of our love for one another will give evidence that we are truly disciples of Christ and children of our heavenly Father.

*Excerpted from Minute Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary by Rev. Thomas M. Feeley, ©2004. @Family Rosary*

## GOING DEEPER

Make this Holy Week a spiritually moving time for you and your family. Meditate on the Sorrowful Mysteries - even if you can only manage one mystery a day - and discover how praying the Rosary together can transform your family. The Sorrowful Mysteries in particular are a wonderful way for children and teenagers to understand that as Jesus suffered, we too may suffer at times. But like Christ we need to completely trust in our Heavenly Father.



### 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](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.*"

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