

Hail Mary, full of grace!

Once again, the Month of the Holy Rosary is here. The Catholic Church dedicates this month to honor Mother Mary through praying the Rosary. Yet, praying the Rosary is not an October-only devotion. It is a prayer that we are encouraged to pray daily. So how can we make the praying of the Rosary more special in this month? I suggest we practice these three "more's" when we pray the Rosary.

1. More presently. I don't know about you, but a lot of times when I pray the Rosary, my mind wanders to places. It goes on a tour to different locations. It thinks of other people. It comes up with many plans. While these things are

not bad, the Rosary is not the appropriate time for us to think about these things. The more ideal place for us to wander to is the

scene of the Bible.

Before each decade of the Rosary is an event in the life of Jesus or Mary. We are called to immerse ourselves into that event and meditate on it. We can use our imagination to place ourselves in the event to see what the characters would have seen, to do

what they would have done, to feel what they would have felt. In this way, the Scripture becomes more alive to us through the Rosary.

2. More trustfully. I have to confess that sometimes I wondered whether my prayers are heard. In times like those I have to reassure



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myself that, Yes, Jesus and Mary are present and are listening to my prayer. As Christians who live in a time where people (falsely) claim that the only things that are real are material and sensible, we are challenged to go beyond our senses and to realize that God, the angels, the saints, though insensible, are real. Thus, it may help to make an act of faith in the presence of the Lord, who is near you at the very moment you pray, and to believe that whatever you pray, the Lord hears it because he is right by your side.

3. More consciously. When we do something often, that thing becomes a habit. It is definitely a good thing to make praying a habit. Yet, there is a small danger: once praying becomes a habit, we sometimes tend to pray unconsciously. We say the words, but we are not conscious of their

meaning. When we are unintentionally and unconsciously praying our prayers, our prayers become empty words. Thus, it is crucial to know the meaning of the words of our prayers, and to mean what we pray. When we say, "Hail Mary," we are greeting her. When we say, "full of grace," we are praising her as the Immaculate Mother of the Lord Jesus and acknowledging God's special favor toward her. Etc. This practice will help turn our prayers into a real conversation where we really mean what we pray and not just mumbling empty words.

Try to apply these three practices into your daily praying of the Rosary, and you will see a big change in our devotion to Mary. May our Lord Jesus help us love His Mother more and more.

Br. Augustine Bao Tran, C.Ss.R.