

October – The Month of the Holy Rosary

The Franciscan Crown (Special Rosary of the Franciscans)

Ordinarily, on statues of Franciscan Saints there can be seen rosary beads that hang on the cord as seen on the habit of fr. Anthony Francis. Many may not be aware of it but the set of beads represented there are not the usual 5 decade rosary that we commonly pray. It has instead 7 decades/joys which correspond to the Seven Joys of our Lady. This rosary is called the Franciscan Crown because the prayers are like a bouquet of roses lovingly woven together to crown our Blessed Mother. This Marian devotion is a wonderful way of contemplating the Faith of the Virgin Mary who inspires joy amidst sorrow, endurance in temptation and courage through tribulation. Mary's Faith response to God as attested in Scripture is grounded in an unshakable trust in God, which allowed her not only to promptly accept God's call but also to cooperate in Christ's struggle to overcome evil and His ultimate victory over sin and death. The 7 Joys are:

1. Annunciation
2. Visitation
3. The Nativity
4. Adoration by the Magi
5. Finding in the Temple
6. The Appearance of Jesus after His Resurrection to the Blessed Virgin Mary
7. Assumption and Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

The Franciscan Crown and the rosary abundantly contain the lessons of Christ's life and that of His Blessed Mother. They teach us in a personal way through meditation of the mysteries how to apply the Gospel into our daily life. Mary herself is described to us from the Scripture as someone who "treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." (Lk 2:19), and we too must learn from her contemplative spirit how we can be occupied in thought, word and action with the mystery of God be filled with grace.

October is the month especially dedicated to the Rosary and at the Parish of St. Francis of Assisi we honor this beloved tradition by praying it every day before Mass and every day during the year. We certainly invite all of you to join us in these prayer moments throughout the month of October and throughout the year as we pray for the Church, the world and our loved ones. May our devout meditation on the life of Our Lord and Our Lady truly make us worthy of the promises of Christ!

