

FRANCISCAN SISTERS, T.O.R. *of Penance of the Sorrowful Mother*



PRAYER LEADS US HOME

from the desk of *Mother Della Marie*
JANUARY 2022

Dear Friends,

Home is a space, not necessarily a location, where we can let ourselves be known. Home is where we are accepted as we are, and where we recognize our need for love and mercy and receive it from God. For Christians this is our relationship with the Holy Trinity, who dwells within us (cf. Luke 17:21). Home for us is an interior state that impacts every aspect of our lives.

I remember during my high school years, frequently living in and out of this state of “home.” When I avoided prayer, I tossed about in the waves of life, anxious and fearful of my future.

Then Our Lady stepped in.

My parents reverted back to the Catholic faith my seventh grade year, but until my junior year of high school, I misunderstood almost every teaching of the Catholic faith, including Mary’s role in my life. All of that changed in a life-changing moment: when I read Jesus’ words from the cross. John 19:26-27 says “Woman, behold your son!” Then Jesus said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” In that instant, I heard the Lord ask me to take His mother into my home.

My heart began to be open to all the truths of the Catholic faith. As I searched with greater openness, I found that the teachings of the faith were rooted in Scripture. Mary began to lead me into a deeper relationship with her Son through praying the Rosary. Each Hail Mary echoes the angel Gabriel’s greeting to Mary and includes the most powerful name of Jesus. The Rosary’s mysteries help us meditate on the events of His life.

As I prayed the Rosary and meditated on the mysteries of Christ, I developed deeper trust in God’s loving plan for my future. The more I entered into prayer the more I experienced God’s love for me and the meaning and purpose of my life. This gave me peace with God, my neighbor, and myself; I had found my “TRUE HOME.”



Hank praying the Rosary

I would like to share the witness of a friend of mine, Hank Waters, who found his “home” through the power of praying the Rosary. Hank confided in me that praying the Rosary made him a completely different person. Hank married Barbara, a faithful Catholic, decades ago and raised a family. As a non-practicing Protestant, he didn’t believe in his wife’s “praying ways.” But that took a turn when he became Catholic at the age of 79.

After his wife developed Lou Gehrig’s disease, Hank began to pray more frequently with her. As Barbara neared death, she requested that Hank pray the daily Rosary even after she was gone. When Barbara could no longer speak, she could still respond by shaking her head “Yes” or “No.” Prompted by the doctor, Hank asked her if she wanted medication that could take her pain away. Barbara clearly shook her head “No.” This touched Hank deeply, because he knew that she desired to offer her life for souls, that her suffering had meaning. Barbara’s witness greatly influenced Hank’s conversion.

Two years after Barbara’s death, Hank is still faithful to his wife’s desire to pray the daily Rosary. His son-in-law and next door neighbor, Tim Needles, prays the Rosary with him at 7:30 pm every day, no matter what.

“I heard the Lord ask me to take His mother into my home.”

Even on a business trip, Tim will call and pray the Rosary over the phone. Hank told me, "Through praying the Rosary, I became a different and better person. Everyone who knows me sees that I'm different. I used to get angry very easily." Now he feels differently about the people around him. He is more understanding of people and not as apt to judge or become angry with others.

Hank describes himself as not being good at praying, but when he prays the Rosary, he knows our Mother Mary is there with him. At the end of the day, he can bring everything to prayer and this gives him peace. I observe Hank being at home with himself and his God. Prayer leads us home where the best version of ourselves emerges.

The Holy Trinity dwells in each baptized soul and longs to be in relationship with us. In this friendship is our home. My New Year prayer for you is for the grace to grow deeper in your union with God. Call upon Mary, she always faithfully leads us to her Son!

As we seek to make known God's merciful love, we experience your intimate share in our mission. Thank you for making our consecrated life possible through your prayers and support. May you be drawn into His Heart - your true home - and know His presence with you in every circumstance.

In Christ's love,

Mother Della Marie Doyle, T.O.R.

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Reverend Mother

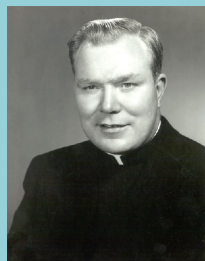


Tim with his father-in-law, Hank, holding up their favorite weapon

The Rosary Priest

FR. PATRICK PEYTON, CSC

Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. was born in 1909 in Ireland to a devout Catholic family. Praying the Rosary together each night was a routine in the Peyton household and laid a strong foundation for Father Peyton's faith, which he would need when he joined the Congregation of Holy Cross as a priest.

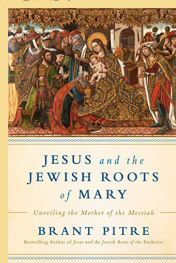
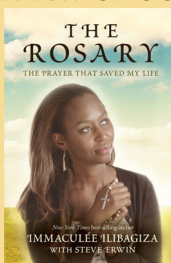


Father Peyton devoted his priestly life to spreading the devotion to Mary and encouraging family prayer, especially the Rosary. He used radio, television, and film, and 540 Rosary Rallies worldwide to accomplish his mission.

Today, Father Peyton's message that "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together" is still well known around the world. His Cause for Sainthood was officially opened in 2001 and he is currently named Venerable.

WWW.FATHERPEYTON.ORG

INTERESTED IN A BOOK ON MARY OR THE ROSARY? HERE'S A FEW OF OUR PICKS!



CHECK OUT SR. MARY GEMMA'S NEW ALBUM

Found on Spotify, Pandora, iTunes, Youtube, and Amazon Music Search "Go Forward" or "Sister Mary Gemma"

CD ALSO AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.FRANCISCANSISTERSTOR.ORG: "NEWS & MEDIA"



MEET OUR NEW MEDIA ASSISTANT: SR. SARAH ROSE



WHAT DOES THE MEDIA ASSISTANT DO? I get to design publications, take pictures, and update our website and social media. I enjoy using my artistic side in this role! Other things I like to do: hang out with sisters, read, play music, enjoy nature, and drink coffee (on Sundays ☺).

BEHOLD, *your Mother...*

JN 19:27



What does Mary mean to you?

We interviewed three sisters about their relationship with Our Lady

SR. JEAN MARIE LEDSOME, TOR

» **How did your relationship with Our Lady develop?**

Before I was a sister, I would bring Mary my questions and doubts on aspects of the faith during the Rosary. I'd start to pray the Rosary and the answers would come. The answer would pop up on TV, in a book I happened to pick up, or through someone I spoke to. I was seeking truth and Mary would answer.

» **How has your relationship with her grown over time?**

Since entering the Franciscan Sisters, my devotion to her has grown and I can see my trust level growing towards her. There's a way she manifests her maternal presence to me in my sorrows, difficulties and trials that foster that trust in her care. I find that she knows me particularly. I've come to trust; I can give this to Our Lady, I can give this to Our Lady... family situations, people who have left the faith. I can entrust them to her and she's got it. She's walking with me through the mess.

» **Any advice you'd give to others?**

Pray the Rosary - Mary keeps her promises even if nothing seems to be happening or you're feeling discouraged. She's got you.



SR. AGNES MARIA KILONSKY, TOR

» **How has Our Lady become a home or resting place for you?**

My relationship with Mary began during and expericne that I had in confession when I was 16. The priest said, "You don't have a relationship with Our Lady, do you?" I replied, "Well... not a close one." He said, "You need to hold onto her hand because she's going to bring you to Jesus."

So I did the consecration to Jesus through Mary. She took my hand and led me to Jesus, especially in the Eucharist. Since then, she really is my "Mama." I know I can come to her and share my joys and sorrows and she'll receive me and love me as her child.

» **How has this grown since entering the sisters?**

The relief in our Chapel depicts Mary at the foot of the cross with her arm extended up to the cross. The other arm is reaching down to us and as I have looked at it and prayed, I sense that she is reaching down to scoop me up to be there with her. I can only do this by being in the arms of Our Lady.

» **Prayer request:**

Please pray for me as I prepare for final vows in June!



SR. SARAH ROSE DENT, TOR

» **Why did you choose Our Lady of the Rosary for your feast day?**

Our sisters choose a feast day to go with the name they request. I had a hard time choosing and a sister suggested this feast. I agreed because our family growing up prayed the Rosary every night and attended the first Saturday devotions that Our Lady of Fatima asked for. My personal devotion to the Rosary has taken time and still has far to go! I get easily distracted during the Rosary, but something I've loved about my feast is that instead of having to choose one mystery or feast of Mary or Jesus' life, I get to have all of them!

» **Do you have any advice with praying the Rosary?**

Something that has helped me is trying to enter into the mystery with my imagination. I picture in my mind what it might have looked like, how the people acted, and what they said. This may be a bit un-orthodox, but I also sometimes stay with the same mystery the whole Rosary, or make up a mystery that is an aspect of their life - ex: the miracles of Jesus, the quiet home life of the Holy Family. That helps me to stay engaged.



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SAVE THE DATE



**LENTEN RETREAT
MARCH 26, 2022**

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"To Glorify God and Make Known His Merciful Love"

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

For this retreat, we will have a talk and testimony by the sisters, adoration, small groups, Mass and possibly lunch (Covid permitting).

Fr. Nathaniel Polinski, OSB will be our celebrant for Mass.

Please check our webpage under "Events" for current info. and to register.



This event will also be livestreamed.

WWW.FRANCISCANSISTERS.TOR.ORG

A huge "Thank you" to the KURTZ BROS. CENTRAL OHIO, LLC AND KB BIOENERGY, INC. for sponsoring this Reverend Mother newsletter.

UPCOMING LENTEN PARISH MISSIONS 2022

Theme: Jesus' Presence in the Eucharist

- » **St. Raphael** - Bay Village, Cleveland, OH. Feb. 27 - March 1
- » **Catholic Community of Ironton, OH.** March 6-8
- » **Sts. Martha & Mary** - Pittsburgh, PA. March 13-16
- » **Mary Queen of Apostles** - Brook Park, Cleveland, OH. April 3-5
- » **Christ the King** - Concord, NH. April 24-26

PLEASE PRAY FOR US AND CONSIDER JOINING IF YOU LIVE IN THE AREA!