

Through the centuries the Dominican Order has been very influential in the promotion of the rosary as we know it today. Other religious communities also developed and practiced their own particular form of this prayer.

The Franciscan rosary, or as it is properly called, The Franciscan Crown, dates to the early part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. At that time a young man who found spiritual joy in weaving a crown of wild flowers for a beautiful statue of Mary decided to enter the Franciscan Order. After entering the community, however, he was saddened when he no longer found the time to gather flowers for his personal devotion. One evening, while feeling tempted to abandon his vocation, he received a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Virgin Mother encouraged the young novice to persevere by reminding him of the joyfulness of the Franciscan spirit. She also instructed him to meditate daily on seven joyful events from her own life as a new form of the rosary. Instead of a crown of flowers, the novice would now weave a crown of prayers. Before long, many other Franciscans began to pray the Crown and soon it spread to the entire Order, becoming officially established in 1422.

In addition to developing this Marian devotion, the Franciscans are credited with adding the final words to the Hail Mary, **Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.** In 1263, Saint Bonaventure, Minister General of the Order, encouraged liturgical devotion honoring the mystery of the Visitation. Saint Bonaventure also popularized the daily triple recitation of the Angelus which it is believed Saint Francis initiated after visiting the Holy Land. Francis was deeply impressed by the Muslim practice of stopping to pray several times a day, and desired to Christianize this pious custom. A Franciscan pope, Sixtus IV (1471-1475), introduced the feast of the Immaculate Conception and the feast of Saint Joseph as husband of Mary. He also issued the first papal pronouncement encouraging the rosary as a valuable instrument of personal and societal conversion.

Taken from **The Franciscan Crown**



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## ***The Franciscan Crown Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin (or Seraphic Rosary)***



***Saint Francis receiving a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary.***

***She instructed him to meditate daily on seven joyful events from her own life of 72 years as a new form of the rosary.***

## **Franciscan Crown**

### **Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary (or Seraphic Rosary)**

*"Let the brothers and sisters keep the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ, ever before their eyes. Let them do this according to the exhortation of St. Francis who held Holy Mary, Lady and Queen, in highest veneration, since she is the virgin made church. Let them also remember that the immaculate Virgin Mary, whose example they are to follow, called herself the handmaid of the Lord." TOR RULE, CHAPTER VI, # 17*

### **METHOD OF SAYING THE FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY**

**(The objective of this rosary is to say 72 Hail Mary's for the 72 years our Lady lived on earth.)**

Begin at once with the Sign of the Cross, on the Crucifix, using beads for the Franciscan Crown (7 decades), announce the first mystery and pray the Our Father on the medal.

Pray one Hail Mary on each of the ten beads.

On the single bead between the decades announce the next mystery and pray one Our Father, then continue to pray one Hail Mary on each of the next ten beads. Continue in like manner for the remaining mysteries.

After the last mystery, pray one Hail Mary on each of the **first two** beads **after** the medal to complete 72 years of Mary's Life on earth.

Pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be for the Pope's intentions **on the three beads nearest the Crucifix.**

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross, on the Crucifix.

**(No other prayers are required).**

#### **The Seven Joys of Mary are:**

- 1) The Annunciation.
- 2) The Visitation.
- 3) The Birth of our Lord.
- 4) The Adoration of the Magi.
- 5) The Finding of Jesus in the Temple.
- 6) The Resurrection of our Lord.
- 7) The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

To gain the indulgences, it is not necessary to meditate on the various mysteries, but merely to recite the decades in honor of them.

Moreover the Crown may be interrupted at will, as long as the entire rosary of seven decades is recited on one and the same day (Pius X, July 22, 1908).

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From the foregoing it is evident that the Franciscan Crown is the easiest rosary to say and at the same time the most richly indulgenced of all rosaries.

The **plenary Indulgence** attached to the recitation of the Franciscan Crown, **and applicable to the dead**, may be gained as often as the crown is recited. **(Under usual conditions)**

In 1905 Pope Pius X, in response to the petition of the Procurator General of the Friars Minor, enriched the Franciscan Crown with several new Indulgences that may be gained by all the faithful.

All those whether or not members of the Franciscan order who assist at a public recitation of the Franciscan Crown participate in all the Indulgences attached to the Seraphic rosary that are gained by the members of the Franciscan Order. It is required, that beads, used are blessed by a priest having the proper faculties.

A translation of the pontifical Brief is given in "St. Anthony's Almanac" for 1909, page 540.



### **Origin of the Franciscan Crown**

The name rosary was derived from the rose, a flower having a great depth of symbolism. One of the spiritual titles given to the Virgin Mary, Mystical Rose, referred to her womb as the developing flower of Christ the Savior. Moreover, the patient unfolding of the five concentric petals of the rose was likened to our own patient mastery of the five senses, the integration of all the creative and life-communicating energies of a human person. Yet the blossoming of the spiritual life could only be achieved and maintained by the defensive "thorn" of daily perseverance.