

These needs are universal and timeless, and, no doubt have always contributed to the development of devotions over the centuries. The value of devotions isn't in the particularities of the practice, but in the fruit that it bears.

*With* vows and commitments in crisis, practicing devotions are a vital way to teach younger generations how to be devoted to one another. The discipline and consistency that they develop can prevent us from being seduced by the myriad distractions that compete for our attention. The commitment that they require encourages us not to “bail out” on a situation when it gets challenging or on a person when they are vulnerable. The solace that they offer helps us to be a source of comfort and peace to others. Their capacity to cultivate our spirits allows us to discern what is compulsive and corrosive versus what is live-giving.

\*\*\*(excerpted from: //ncronline.org/blogs/young-voices/notions-devotion)

## *The Rosary*

*(The Most Popular Devotion)*

\*\*\*\**The Rosary* is an ancient, beautiful and powerful prayer of **Devotion** to God through devotion to Mary by means of a series of prayers and meditations on the life of Jesus and Mary. In it we find all that life offers: pains and joys, but also **always** the hope that only a loving, protecting, saving Father can truly give.

\*\*\*\*(excerpted from www.virtualrosary.org.)

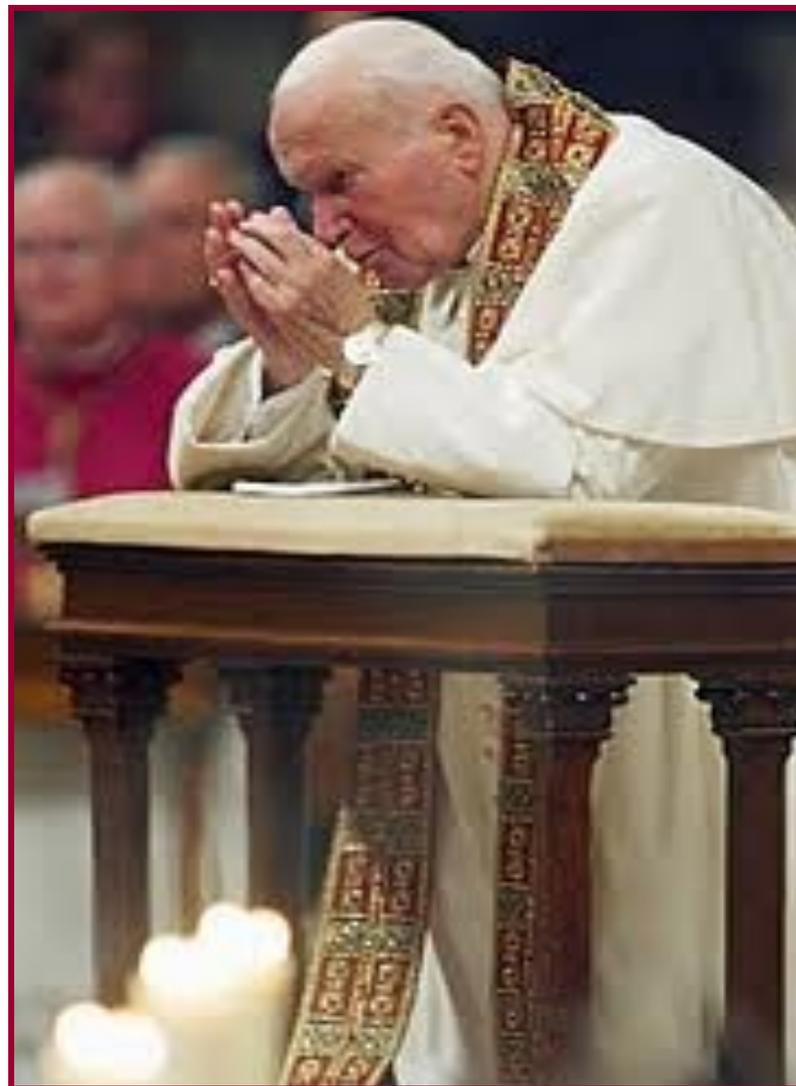
*The Rosary is a prayer of hope.*

\*\*\*\**The Popes* have also attached a “plenary indulgence” to those who pray 5 decades of the Rosary “**as a family**”. This plenary indulgence **cannot** be obtained by private recitation—**only** in the context of a “**family**” recitation. This stipulation demonstrates that the Catholic church privileges the devotion of **praying the Rosary as a family**. The reason for this is that the Rosary is the “rose garden” of sanctity for children. As the Holy Ghost teaches us: “**Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it**”. (Proverbs 22:6)

\*\*\*\*\*(excerpted from cantur.blogspot.com)



## *Devotions*



*Pope John Paul II  
Praying the Rosary*

**\*Prior to Vatican II**, many Catholics in the United States, besides attending obligatory Sunday Mass, also would gather in church on Wednesday and Friday evenings, or other weekdays, for regular and seasonal devotions. Many of these weekday congregational prayers centered on the Marian months of May and October, as well as the liturgical season of Lent.

The format for May and October was standard and familiar: an opening Marian hymn; recitation of the rosary; the Loreto litany; a brief period of silent prayer or another hymn in preparation for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; adoration of the Host in the monstrance; and a closing hymn. The Friday Lenten devotions were the Stations of the Cross, again followed by Benediction. Various ethnic groups had their own distinctive practices as well. \*(www.catholicliturgy.com) It was very common for Italians to have a thirteen Tuesdays devotion in honor of St. Anthony.

**\*\*In the Latin Rite**, a Catholic devotion is a willingness and desire to dedicate oneself to serve God; either in terms of prayer or in terms of a set of pious acts such as the adoration of God or the veneration of the saints or the Virgin Mary. Catholic devotions are “external practices of piety” which are not part of the official liturgy of the Catholic Church but are part of the popular spiritual practices of Catholics. They are not part of liturgical worship, even if they are performed within a Catholic church, in a group, or in the presence of a priest.

These devotions have various forms, ranging from formalized, multi-day prayers such as Novenas, to activities which do not involve any prayers, such as Eucharistic Adoration outside Mass, the wearing of scapulars, and the veneration of the saints. Common examples of Catholic devotions include the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Holy Face of Jesus, the various scapulars, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Seven Sorrows of Mary, Novenas to various saints, pilgrimages and devotions to the Blessed Sacrament.

By the term “devotions” in the plural, or “popular devotions” are external practices which evoke a sense of piety, devotion, love or affection for God. Several factors shape the effects of these practices on the devout:

- Association with the private revelation of others
- The strong appeal which they make to the emotions
- The simplicity of form which puts them within reach of all
- The association with many others engaged in the same practice
- The derivation from the example of others considered to lead a holy life.

The best known devotions have either originated from the imitation of some practice of the religious order, or from reported religious visions, often by saints such as Juan Diego or Margaret Mary Alacoque. In its earliest form, the Rosary was known as “Our Lady’s Psalter.” At the time the recitation of all one hundred and fifty Psalms was a common practice of the religious orders; those unable to read recited instead a hundred fifty Pater Nosters or Hail Mary’s. The Rosary was thus a miniature Psalter.

Another example is the Stations of the Cross. It became popular in the eleventh century, at a time when much Christian attention was focused on the Holy Land but few were able to actually visit. Great numbers of Europeans found an equivalent to walking the Via Dolorosa in following Christ’s footsteps in spirit. The practice of the Stations of the Cross was a kind of miniature pilgrimage. Similarly, wearing a scapular of a particular religious order is like wearing a miniature habit. The Angelus originated with the eleventh-century custom of reciting three Hail Mary’s during the evening bell.

Many devotions such as the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and other devotional prayer forms declined abruptly after the Second Vatican Council. Under the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, they have begun to flourish again. Over time and in different nations and cultures there is a tendency to multiply various devotional forms. While the Rosary is a particular devotion, the rosary beads are often used for other devotional purposes known as chaplets.

Throughout history, Popes, Doctors of the Church, and saints have also recommended some traditional devotions and pious practices which have been effective for growth in holiness, especially through daily practice and dedication. The gifts received from these actions are: comfort, assurance, and faithfulness. Many younger generations today are struggling with commitment, devotion helps someone attain a sense of peace, comfort and consistency because they are a spiritual practice performed with regularity and dedication. It would seem that devotions are needed more than ever in today’s world. \*\* (excerpted from: //en.wikipedia.org)

**\*\*\*The appeal of a devotion like the rosary may be evidence of a powerful need for comfort and stability.** When we grasp the beads, we are grasping at reassurance. When we recite the same prayer repeatedly, we are reaching for consistency that seems ever more elusive in a culture where images, inclinations and information seem to be in constant flux. In a time when it’s a struggle to get anyone’s attention, it is remarkably healing to feel that our inner thoughts and hopes are always being heard.