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In October the Year of the Rosary comes to a close

At a general audience before 16,000 people on October 29, John Paul II stated that "with the month of October, the Year of the Rosary comes to a close." His remarks follow.

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"I am so grateful to God for this time of grace in which the entire Church community has been able to explore the value and importance of the

rosary, which is a Christological and contemplative prayer."

After recalling the "motto" of the Year of the Rosary, "Contemplating the face of Christ with Mary," John Paul II said that these words, taken from the apostolic letter "'Rosarium Virginis Mariae', concisely express the authentic meaning of this prayer, both simple and profound. At the same time, they highlight the continuity between the proposal of the rosary and the path indicated to the People of God in my previous apostolic letter 'Novo millennio ineunte'."

"If at the beginning of the third millennium, Christians are called to grow as 'contemplators of Christ's face', and the ecclesiastical communities are called to become 'genuine schools of prayer', the rosary is the privileged 'Marian way,' in order to reach this dual objective."

The Pope recalled that during this year he wanted "to entrust two great prayer intentions to the People of God: peace and the family. The 21st century, born under the sign of the great jubilee year reconciliation, has unfortunately inherited from the past numerous and enduring acts of war and violence. The disconcerting attacks of September 11, 2001 and the events that followed in the world have peaked tensions on a global level. Despite these alarming situations, praying the rosary is not a retreat inside oneself, but a decision of responsible faith, a conscious choice of faith: contemplating the face of Christ, our peace and our reconciliation, we want to implore God for the gift of peace through the intercession of Mary, Most Holy. We ask her for the necessary strength to be builders of peace, beginning in our daily family life."

Referring to the family, the Holy Father emphasized that it should be "the first environment in which Christ's peace is embraced, cultivated and fostered. In our time, however, without prayer it becomes more and more difficult for the family to realize this vocation. This is why it would be very useful to take up again the beautiful custom of praying the rosary at home, as it was done in past generations. 'The family that prays together, stays together'."

"I entrust these intentions," he concluded, "to the Virgin, so that she may protect the family and obtain peace for each person and the world. I hope that all believers, accompanied by Our Lady, set out decisively on the path of sanctity, their gaze fixed on Jesus while they meditate, with the rosary, the mysteries of salvation. This will be the most precious fruit of this year dedicated to the rosary."

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