

The Rosary is anchored in Holy Scripture

The Pope visited the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary at Pompeii, Italy on Oct 20. In this excerpt about his trip, he talks about the power of praying the Holy Rosary.

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Before praying the Rosary at 5 p.m. today with faithful gathered at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Holy Rosary at Pompeii, Italy,

Benedict XVI paused for a few moments in the chapel of Blessed Bartolo Longo, and asked: "Where did this great apostle of Mary find the energy and constancy necessary to achieve such an important enterprise? Was it not in the Rosary which he welcomed as a true and heartfelt gift from the Virgin?"

"Yes, that is how it was! This popular Marian prayer is a vital spiritual means to increase our intimacy with Jesus and to learn, in the school of the Blessed Virgin, always to carry out the divine will."

"Yet in order to be apostles of the Rosary, it is necessary to gain a personal experience of the beauty and profundity of this prayer, so simple and universally accessible."

"The Rosary is a school of contemplation and of silence. At first sight it may seem like a prayerful accumulation of words and hence

not easily compatible with the silence which is rightly recommended for meditation and contemplation. In reality though, this regular repetition of the Ave Maria does not disturb inner silence, rather it ... nourishes it".

The Pope pointed out that an atmosphere of inner silence would benefit our prayer of the Holy Rosary: "Silence rises up through the words and phrases, not as a vacuum but as a presence of ultimate meaning which transcends the words themselves and, together with them, speaks to the heart. (...) Even when prayed in large groups, the Rosary must be seen as a contemplative prayer, and this cannot come about if an atmosphere of inner silence is lacking".

Furthermore, the Rosary "is interwoven with elements from Holy Scripture", such as the words that

describe each Mystery, the first part of the Ave Maria... And the second part of the Ave Maria “rings out like the response of children who, addressing themselves imploringly to their mother, express their own adherence to the plan of salvation. (...) Thus the minds of those who pray remain anchored in Scripture and in the mysteries it contains".

Finally, Pope Benedict once again he spoke about the figure of Bartolo Longo who was famous for his spirit of charity, and said that he wished that the Shrine of Pompeii would be a centre from which the prayer of the Rosary irradiates and a place of intercession for peace among peoples. He concluded, “Dear friends, I wish to confirm both the goals of the apostolate of charity and the prayer of peace, and entrust them once more to your spiritual and pastoral efforts".

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