

FROM THE PASTOR
OCTOBER 10, 2021
TWENTY EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE HOLY ROSARY

Praised be Jesus Christ and Mary His Most Holy Mother! We have entered the month of October which in the devotional life of the Church is the month of the Most Holy Rosary of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary. We may ask why is October the month of the Most Holy Rosary? The answer goes back to the year 1571.

In that year the forces of Islam were poised to make yet another incursion into the heart of Christian Europe. The great navy of the sultan was preparing an invasion and for the long-held dream of Islam, to turn the Basilica of St. Peter into a pasture where cows would graze. All Christian Europe was in fear as the sultan's navy was the most powerful in the world.

Under the leadership of the pope and the Christian heads of state a Christian navy was raised under the leadership of Don Juan of Austria (the natural son of Emperor Charles V) and the great Admiral Andrea Doria (after whom the ill-fated ocean liner was named). Don Juan insisted that all his sailors confess before boarding the ships, for their enterprise was not merely military; it was the Cross against the Crescent. They would be fighting for Christ.

On Sunday October 7, 1571, the great naval battle of Lepanto was fought off the Greek coast. The Christian forces were greatly outnumbered but all the Church was praying the Holy Rosary for a great victory. The Christian forces were being decimated when suddenly the wind shifted, and the sultan's navy was destroyed upon the rocks. The great green flag with its crescent moon was captured from the flagship of the sultan by Admiral Andrea Doria. He placed it in the chapel of St. Mary Major in Rome where it may still be seen today. The pope at the time, Pope St. Pius V, saw the victory in a vision and decreed that until the end of time the Church would in thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory keep the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary on the anniversary of the battle, October 7th. And thus did October become the month of the Holy Rosary.

I would encourage all parishioners to pray the Rosary each day. We may say we are too busy. But we may pray the Rosary while walking, driving, or exercising. There

is always time to pray if we really want to. After all, have we ever heard someone say I am too busy to eat that ice cream cone? We can always do what we want to do. Our Lady will bring the true victory over ourselves. She will help us in every way. The *Hail Mary* will take us to heaven. Please pray the Holy Rosary.

In Jesus and Mary,
Monsignor James F. Pereda