THE ROSARY
LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

Outline for this study

➢ History of the Rosary
➢ Who is Romano Guardini
➢ His Book The Rosary of Our Lady
➢ Exploring the Luminous Mysteries
The Rosary has roots in several early Christian Prayer Traditions. They share similar formats to the Rosary with repetitive structures and prayers.

Third-Century Christian Hermits and Monks in Egypt used stones and later prayer ropes to keep track when praying the 150 Psalms.

Various forms of “the Jesus Prayer” (such as “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.”) became popular. The short prayer was said over and over again in a type of mantra while counting beads.

The Our Father was also prayed 150 times, using a string of beads with five decades referred to as a Paternoster.
The Hail Mary Prayer

- The Hail Mary Prayer came together slowly. It took more than a thousand years. The earliest version simply added Mary’s name to the message delivered by the angel Gabriel to Mary; “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee” (Luke 1:28).
- Around 1050 AD, the words Elizabeth used to greet Mary during the Visitation were added: “Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb” (Luke 1:42). In 1261, Pope Urban IV added the name of Jesus to the end of Elizabeth’s words.
- St. Peter Canisius published the Hail Mary in his 1555 Catechism with almost the entire final petition: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners.”
- 11 years later, the Catechism of the Council of Trent (a work that Canisius was instrumental in creating) included, for the first time, the entire final petition, concluding with the words “now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”
- The version of the Hail Mary we pray today was given official approval in 1568.
Why Rosary Beads

➢ Catholics were not the first to pray with beads.
➢ The exact origin of prayer beads is unknown.
➢ Men and women of many faiths and cultures (Hindus, Greeks, Buddhists, and more) use beads to pray.
➢ The word bead in English is actually derived from an Old English word that means prayer.
➢ While praying with beads is not original to the Catholic Faith it's a powerful reminder that everything before the coming of Jesus was preparing for that moment and that God yearns to transform everything into something holy, even something as ordinary as a small rope with some beads on it.
➢ Today, Roman Catholics use a rosary made up of 59 beads. The 6 large beads are used for praying the Our Father prayer, and the 53 smaller beads are used for praying the Hail Mary prayer. The other prayers of the rosary include the Apostles’ Creed, the Glory Be, and the Hail, Holy Queen.
The Story of St. Dominic

- It is widely believed that in 1214 St. Dominic had a vision of Our Blessed Mother. She is said to have presented him with the Rosary, both the beads and the prayers to be prayed.
- St. Dominic had a tremendous devotion to Our Blessed Mother, and the Rosary, which he promoted wherever he traveled to preach. He encouraged Catholics to gather in small groups to pray together what was an early form of the rosary together. These were quite possibly the first expressions of the prayer groups and small group communities that are still having a powerful impact today.
The Growth of the Rosary

➢ The earliest form of the rosary developed when Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) popularized an early version of the Hail Mary prayer by asking it to be prayed on the 4th Sunday of Advent. Many individual begun praying the Hail Mary in a repetitive fashion using a string of beads to keep track of the prayers.

➢ After the full development of the Hail Mary prayer, the term “Rosary” was finally given in 1597. For 320 years, from 1597 until 1917, the form of both the Hail Mary and the Rosary remained the same.

➢ During these 320 years, there was much written and spoken about the Rosary. Most notably Pope Paul VI said when we pray the Rosary, we can experience the key moments of the Gospel. It is a simple, beautiful, and focused meditation, especially when focusing on the Mysteries of the Rosary.
The Fatima Prayer

➢ On May 13, 1917, Mary, our Blessed Mother, appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. She told them to come back to that exact place on the 13th of each month for the next 6 months. Mary promised she would appear to them each time and entrust a message to them.

➢ St. Mary told the children to pray for world peace by reciting the Rosary every day. On July 13, 1917, St. Mary asked the children to add a short prayer to the end of each decade of the Rosary: *O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy.*

➢ Today this prayer is referred to as the Fatima prayer, and many Catholics incorporate it into the Rosary as Our Blessed Mother has requested.
The Mysteries of the Rosary

➢ The Mysteries of the Rosary were introduced by Dominic of Prussia sometime between 1410 and 1439. This gave each decade of the Rosary a unique quality. Each Mystery leads us to ponder very specific events in the lives of Jesus and Mary and the lessons they hold for our own lives today.

➢ There were originally three sets of mysteries: the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries.

➢ On October 16, 2002, almost 600 years after the original Mysteries of the Rosary were established. St. John Paul II proposed adding a new set of mysteries called the Luminous Mysteries (the Mysteries of Light)
ROMANO GUARDINI
1885 TO 1968

➢ Was born in Verona, Italy
➢ Family moved to Mainz, Germany when he was one year old
➢ Lived in Germany for the rest of his life
➢ Ordained a Catholic Priest in 1910
➢ Received a doctorate in 1915
➢ 1923 he was appointed to a chair in Philosophy of Religion at the University of Berlin
➢ In 1935 he wrote the essay “Der Heiland (The Savior) this essay criticized the Nazis. He was forced to resign from his position at the University in 1939.
➢ From 1943 to 1945 he retired to Mooshausen.
➢ In 1945 Guardini was appointed professor in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Tübingen.
➢ In 1948 he became a professor at the University of Munich, where he remained until retiring for health reasons in 1962.

➢ Guardini’s books are powerful studies of traditional themes in the light of present-day challenges or examinations of current problems as approached from the Christian, and especially Catholic tradition.
➢ His first major work, Vom Geist der Liturgie (The Spirit of the Liturgy).
➢ 1985 Jorge Mario Bergoglio (Pope Francis) started his doctoral dissertation on Guardini.
➢ 1996 Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) wrote the work The Spirit of the Liturgy to update Guadini’s work and enable it to speak to a new generation.
The work by Father Guardini was originally published in German in 1955.

Praying means conversation with God. This conversation is life. But all the expressions of life cannot be reduced to the same pattern. There is no prescription for prayer to be taken “as directed.”

Revelation tells us who God is and who we are, and in what disposition we should approach Him, but not the precise manner in which to walk and dwell before God.

Type 1 (Petition): There is a form of prayer in which man expresses a petition or sentiment to God: an appeal, gratitude, or repentance. This he must do sincerely and concisely, and his expression should be in keeping with his innermost impulse. We are reminded here of Christ’s warning against excessive speech. If in his anxiety he longs for expression, he may well repeat his prayer ten or a hundred times. Prayer is good when it springs from the heart’s impulse.

Type 2 (Meditation): But there is another kind of prayer in which it is not a matter of simply saying what is in one’s heart, but in which one yearns to dwell in God’s presence. This prayer is inclined to use fewer and fewer words.

Type 3 (Repetitive): Finally, there is still a third form of prayer. It is also centered around a sojourn with God, around a service to Him in an inner self-knowledge and tranquility, but in a manner that makes a flowing channel out of the words in which it is expressed, a force that keeps the prayer moving. Repetition becomes the outer form of prayer for the purpose of pacifying and fulfilling the inner emotion.
UNDERSTANDING THE ROSARY

➢ The Rosary represents a certain form of religious devotion. The individual may claim that he cannot do anything with it; that is his affair. But he must not call this prayer senseless or un-Christian, for then he would show ignorance.

➢ The string of beads obviously has the purpose of diverting the thoughts from certain external distractions of attention. One bead leads the person praying to the next. Their number keeps the repetition within certain bounds, approved by long usage.

➢ It is said of all things, even the spiritual, that they have to be learned. But learning requires practice; and practice is nothing else but a training of technical skill, liberating our strength and attention for what is essential. This is the purpose of the string of beads, the Rosary.
On every bead we say a prayer consisting of words that come from Holy Scripture or from Christian tradition. The word is something very rich, alive, even mysterious; a formation of sounds and consonances by which the speaker gives the listener a glimpse into the inner realm of thought.

The word comes into existence if the sound expresses not only an emotion of a situation but also an association, a perception, and a reality.

Those who hear the word can grasp its meaning. Then it fades away, and its meaning is inside again, in one’s own self and those who understood it.
EXPLORING THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

➢ First: Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17)
➢ Second: Wedding at Cana (John 2:5-7)
➢ Third: Proclaiming the Kingdom (Matthew 10:7-8)
➢ Fourth: Transfiguration (Luke 9:29,35)
➢ Fifth: Institution of the Eucharist (Luke 22:19-20)