

Faith in Five – Adults
Personal Objects of Devotion / The Rosary
October 7, 2022



Popular piety is characterized by a variety and richness of bodily, gestural and symbolic expressions: kissing or touching images, places, relics and sacred objects; pilgrimages, processions; kneeling and prostrating; wearing medals and owning blessed objects of devotion. These outward expressions reflect our internal love and commitment to live the Christian life for God. Without authentic interior devotion, symbolic gesture runs the risk of being empty customs or mere superstitions, in the worst cases. ([Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy](#))

The blessing the priest gives a devotional object is what makes it sacramental; its dedication to God allows Him to work through it. The sacramental blessing of the devotional object consecrates and makes holy the object. Without the blessing, they do not hold any of the graces or benefits promised by the Church. Since they are blessed objects, sacramentals should always be treated with reverence and devotion. As mentioned in last week's post, sacramentals are not articles of superstition, magic, or guarantees of favor.

God can use these consecrated objects, but our trust remains solely on Him. It is He alone who saves, not the devotional object. We use these objects to aid in our devotions and prayers. The use of sacramentals for personal use with devotional piety help to extend faith throughout the whole of daily life, helping to sanctify every moment.

1. Crucifix, Statues, Icons, Images, Holy Cards

The images used for Catholic worship and devotion are reminders of the things we revere. This is not idolatry, the belief that an image is divine or is itself an object of worship. We honor that which these objects represent. Similar to having pictures of loved ones in frames and in our wallets, so we have holy pictures in our homes and churches. Through the beauty of the images, our minds and hearts are drawn to what they signify. They are signs pointing the holy way of life.

2. Catholic Jewelry

In the past, one could identify a catholic as someone wearing a crucifix necklace rather than a plain cross. It was a sign of religious and spiritual devotion. Today, catholic jewelry is not necessarily worn as a profession of faith. People may wear religious jewelry as a fashion statement without thoughtful purpose. Catholics have a responsibility to understand and know the intention behind the religious jewelry they wear. The jewelry deserves to be blessed to be a sacramental and can be used as an opportunity to share the faith.

3. Medals

Medals are small pieces of metal with an image or text, worn as an act of devotion. They may be made of precious metal. They "commemorate persons (e.g., Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints), places (e.g., famous shrines) and past historical events (e.g., dogmatic definitions, miracles, dedications, etc.). They can represent personal graces like baptism or First Communion. Medals are used to teach lessons of piety, are

specially blessed to serve as badges of pious associations or to consecrate and protect the wearer, and finally are often enriched with indulgences ([Source](#)).” They are a visible sign of one’s faith, a reminder of the virtues symbolized by the subject of the medal, and a bearer of blessings.

4. Scapulars

A scapular consists of two small pieces of cloth attached by a string and worn over the shoulders. The squares of cloth rest on the chest and back, emulating the full-size scapulars worn by certain monastic orders. They indicate an attachment to a particular confraternity or religious order and are traditionally invested during a ritual or ceremony. Indulgences are sometimes associated with wearing one. The most familiar is the brown woolen scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

5. Rosaries - The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries of our salvation. The main focus is on Jesus—His birth, life, death, and resurrection. We invoke the Father in the Our Father prayer, Mother Mary during the Hail Mary prayers, and the Holy Trinity during the Glory Be prayer. The constant repetition of words helps create an atmosphere in which to contemplate the mysteries of God.



6. Tradition states the rosary was introduced to St. Dominic in the early 13th century by the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was popularized by theologian Alan de la Roche (also known as Alanus de Rupe) in the late 15th century. Some early forms of the Rosary consisted of fifteen decades, but the popular Rosary used today consists of five decades; each decade consists of the Lord’s Prayer, ten Hail Mary’s, and the Glory Be. The beads help keep count of the prayers, so that the mind can contemplate the sacred mysteries of Christ’s life, death and resurrection. These mysteries, assigned to different days, are divided into Glorious (Sundays and Wednesdays), Joyful (Mondays and Saturdays), Sorrowful (Tuesdays and Fridays) and in 2002, the Luminous Mysteries were added (Thursdays).

7. The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, October 7th was initially known as the Feast of our Lady of Victory to honor Europe’s naval victory over Turkey. Saint Pius V established this feast in 1573, to thank God for the victory attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the rosary. Pope Gregory XIII later changed the name to the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. The story of the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary focuses on the intercessory power of Mary. Mary encouraged praying the rosary in her apparitions. She prays to Jesus Her Son on our behalf.

This is a free resource! For more information, visit www.acatholicmomslife.com

We invite you to review the Faith in Five postings for Children (ages 3-8) and Children (Ages 8+) during the month of October. The weekly postings there will focus on the lives of the saints, in preparation for November’s All Saints Day!