“Pray the Family Rosary!”

 By Fr Bill Kneemiller, Senior Priest in Resident, Holy Family

1**) First, I strongly encourage everyone to not be “afraid” of the 5-Decade Rosary**. I personally think that the length, and possible time involved for praying the Rosary keep many Catholics away from its daily use and recitation. So, if you are a busy family person with a job or two, and children at home, and have not been praying a family Rosary, please consider praying a simple “One-Decade Rosary”, perhaps just after supper, and begin inviting the Holy Family to part of your family! And start by asking for the grace to pray, “From the Heart”.

**2) “Praying From the Heart.”** I also have experienced that many Catholics avoid the Rosary as they call it “repeitive” or even “boring”. This was my own experience, growing up in Catholic schools when the Rosary was prayed very speedily, and in a mechanical way. What a profound difference was my experience with a family in Iowa who invited me to join a family Rosary. They had just come from a pilgrimage overseas, and learned about ‘Prayer From the Heart”.

 The Family started the Rosary with their intentions, then they prayed to our Lord to be granted the grace to “Pray from the Heart”. Just hearing the first prayers, I knew this Rosary was for me! The Creed, the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be prayer were prayed with love, meaning, and a depth of feeling that embodying praying from the heart—with God’s grace! Admittedly, this Rosary did take 3-4 times longer to pray, than the ‘Speedy Rosary”, but after this wonderful Rosary I experienced an inner peace that I had been searching for decades.

**3) “Practical Benefits of Praying the Rosary”.** Sometimes I find that when I turn off the lights to go to sleep, then I may have a lot of random thoughts just racing through my mind. I simply start praying a Rosary Decade and always find that everything calms down with these prayers which announced the coming of Jesus Christ, our Messiah and Savior. Also, praying even a few “Hail Mary’s” during the day will help me have a focus on good things to do, and increase love for those around me.

**4) “Live the 1917 Fatima Message from our Blessed Mother**”. I recently did a study of the Fatima Message, and found that there are two key messages that our Blessed Mother gave to “avoid another World War”. Her advice was to pray the Holy Rosary, and avoid serious sin. There are also some additional very good messages on observing the first Saturdays and benefits of this, but the first two key messages are very clear. Pray the Holy Rosary, and avoid serious sin—this means living a saintly life, but with the Holy Family in your family, you will be well on this way!

5. **“Yes, Your Home Can Be a Home of the Holy Family, and Live the True Meaning of Christmas”.** I encourage everyone to invite Jesus’s Divine Love to come into your heart. And, what better way to prepare for this Love, as we invite our Immaculate Mother, and Holy St Joseph to “prepare” our hearts for Jesus’ Divine love to fill our hearts! You may reply, “am I worthy of this?” – Good question, but as Jesus says in the Holy Gospel “Come to me, all you are weary, and I will refresh you” … and John encourages us with Jesus’ words, “Be perfect as I am perfect”.

When we experience the Holy Family living in our hearts, then Christ can truly be born in our Hearts. We can then live the true meaning of Christmas, not just on December 25, but everyday we can live Christ in our hearts, and then share Christ with others around us. As our hearts become a home for the Holy Family we truly live, New Life in Christ!