

Enhance your family prayer with
FAMILY ROSARY

When Hate Turns into Love

The Conversion of Saint Paul

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THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY

It's a new year! Take a moment to breathe in this fresh start. Begin or end each day with family prayer to get in the habit of praying together. Don't worry, it doesn't have to be perfect! Take comfort in knowing there is no one "correct" way of doing it.

It's a busy time of year for everyone, but it's especially important to slow down and enjoy each other's unique presence.

Know that we are joining you and your family in prayer. We promise to be with you, growing in faith, every step of the way. May God continue to bless you and your family.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. began his ministry in 1942 with the goal of building **family unity** through daily prayer of the Rosary. Inspired by his own father who had a deep devotion to family prayer, praying the Rosary became the foundation for the life of Father Peyton (1909-92).

We at Family Rosary are ever so grateful Father Peyton's family instilled in him the importance of **family prayer**. Now it can be part of your family's tradition so you can fulfill the vision that "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together," the message created by Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., so many years ago.



BE ON YOUR GUARD, STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH, BE COURAGEOUS,
BE STRONG. YOUR EVERY ACT SHOULD BE DONE WITH LOVE.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13-14





WHEN HATE TURNS INTO LOVE



Saul completely turns against all that his old self deemed important and becomes Paul, an agent of God's mercy and love spreading the Gospel to all corners of the world.

This week we honor the conversion of Saint Paul on January 25. St. Paul was born Saul of Tarsus, a Roman citizen and later became a Jewish leader. As Saul he was well known by the Apostles as a persecutor and regarded as an enemy to all those who loved Jesus Christ. It is believed by many that he was at the stoning of our first martyr, St. Stephen, after the death of Jesus.

SAUL THE HATER

What do you think it was like in those early days after the death of Jesus? We know the Apostles were definitely afraid, especially because they were not yet able to fully understand the greater meaning of Jesus' death. Hunted by the Romans and leaders of the Jewish faith, the bible tells us the disciples hid together until the Holy Spirit emboldened them to witness the truth and hope of Jesus' Life, Death and Resurrection.

Still many people hated them, including the important character, Saul. He was determined to hunt down each disciple to wipe them off the face of the earth. And by doing so, erase all the teachings and promises Jesus had made during his ministry.

But God had other plans. On the road to Damascus, Jesus appeared to Saul as an intense light and struck him blind (Acts 9:1-22). Saul continued to Damascus, blinded and led by his traveling companions. During this time the Lord instructed his disciple Ananias to welcome Saul and to baptize him.

SAUL TO PAUL – FROM HATE TO LOVE

Ananias is a key player in this conversion, as you can imagine, he is reluctant to approach Saul because of his reputation for imprisoning all who followed "the way" of Jesus. But Jesus insists and Ananias chooses to obey. Thus one of the great writers of the New Testament begins his ministry – baptized Paul, he goes on to preach in Rome, Greece, and all of Judea. He is responsible for authoring approximately 1/3 of the New Testament in his letters to the Romans and the Corinthians to name just a few.

Here is one of his most popular passages:

Though I command languages both human and angelic -- if I speak without love, I am no more than a gong booming or a cymbal clashing.

And though I have the power of prophecy, to penetrate all mysteries and knowledge, and though I have all the faith necessary to move mountains -- if I am without love, I am nothing.

Though I should give away to the poor all that I possess, and even give up my body to be burned -- if I am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances.

Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes...As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-6, 13

It's pretty incredible if you think about it; Saul who was once motivated by hate and bigotry wrote one of the most popular bible verses on love. This man who had so much anger in his heart becomes a preacher, a disciple of Jesus Christ and a writer who puts to paper what is needed for the foundation of our Catholic Church. Certainly his actions convinced all that his conversion was real.

EVERY DAY WE CAN EXPERIENCE CONVERSION!

Two thousand years later we remember the beginning of this conversion. His conversion and our conversion are not one day events, rather each time we say "yes" to God's call we move one step closer to completing His mission for us on earth. One step closer to being God's children.

When you truly put into context the life history of Paul, it is a remarkable witness to the power of God and the Holy Spirit. To go from Roman and Jewish Persecutor to a leader in our early Church, he completely turned against all that his old self deemed important.

Paul became an agent of God's mercy and love spreading the Gospel to all corners of the world. We are called to do the same – wherever you are in your journey on this earth, whatever your vocation – God is constantly inviting us to go deeper to bring others to Him by our lives, actions and words. As we go about our daily life, we are called to be agents of love and mercy. Paul says in Colossians 3:2, "Set your heart upon things above rather than upon goods of earth."

LET US PRAY

Take a few minutes today to consider the depth of your faith; do you have the courage to witness your faith in the world today?

Pray together with your family through the intercession of St. Paul:

St. Paul, we humbly ask you to impart great wisdom and courage in each of our hearts. Give us the strength to help others open their minds, hearts and souls to Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Amen.

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

As Catholics we don't always take the time to read the Bible. Pick something from the Letters of St. Paul in the New Testament this week to read – slowly! Take ten minutes a day to read a passage, sit quietly and ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart to reveal how this applies to your mission on earth.

GOING DEEPER: LIVING THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

Let us continue meditating on the Luminous Mysteries. The Second Luminous Mystery asks us to reflect on The Wedding at Cana.

At Cana Our Lady showed her loving concern for the wedding couple and told Jesus of their embarrassment. At her gentle urging he changed water into wine and his disciples believed in him (John 2:12).

Our Lady intercedes for us now. When we pray to her she tells us what she told the waiters, "Do whatever he tells you" (Luke 2:5). She knows that when we experience the abundant life that her Son will provide for us, our faith in him will grow, just as it did for his first disciples.

[Father Thomas M .Feeley, Minute Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary page 9]

Allow Mary's words to echo in your heart: "Do whatever he tells you." Just like St. Paul welcomed his conversion, answering his call from God, we too must listen. How is Jesus asking you to share and spread His love?



MARGARET DWYER

Margaret has been married to her husband Michael Hogan for twenty years, and they reside in Easton, Massachusetts with their four children. She is a catechist at her church, and loves to help Holy Cross Family Ministries spread devotion to Father Peyton's cause and his continuing ministry, Family Rosary.

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER IN PRAYER

We hope the time you've spent reflecting with this material has been enriching. Remember, we're with you in prayer, every step of the way!

For additional online resources for family prayer including a Prayer Petition Page and our World at Prayer Blog, please visit our website at www.FamilyRosary.org.

This e-book and all our resources represent a culmination of Father Peyton's passion for family unity through prayer. We hope our services will enhance your family's prayer life particularly remembering Father Peyton's famous words, "*The Family That Prays Together Stays Together.*"

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