

Prayer Service The Rose Dedicated to Our Lady

by Jean Grant

LEADER: Dear God, our beautiful Blessed Mother Mary was willing to put Jesus first in her life. Mary is often associated with the image of the rose and the scent of roses. Many saints who have died and were later exhumed had a sweet rose aroma accompanying their remains as their graves were opened. Wherever the fragrance of roses appears, it is recognized as a symbol of God at work.

ALL: From this day all generations will call me blessed; the Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his Name.

READER 1: The most common association with the rose in the Virgin Mary. In the third century, St. Ambrose taught that roses grew without thorns in the Garden of Eden until the fall of Adam and Eve. Thorns became synonymous with Original Sin. Because Mary was born without Original Sin, St. Ambrose called her “the rose without thorns.” St. Bernard of Clairvaux taught that Mary’s virginity is symbolized by the white rose. Mary’s charity is depicted by a red rose.

LEADER: St. Ambrose ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: St. Bernard of Clairvaux ...

ALL: Pray for us.

READER 2: In the Middle Ages, roses were grown in monastery gardens. By the twelfth century, the red rose also became symbolic of Christ’s Passion and death, as well as the blood of martyrs. St. Dominic is credited with the institution of the Rosary in the thirteenth century. The Rosary combines prayers recited as we follow along on a series of beads for Mary’s intercession on our behalf. It

encourages a reflection on the Joyful, Sorrowful, Luminous, and Glorious Mysteries: events in the life of Jesus and Mary.

LEADER: St. Dominic ...

ALL: Pray for us.

READER 1: The rose and rose petals have become a special symbol for Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth. Mary has appeared to many saints to encourage prayer. In many different areas of the world, saints have had experiences of a miraculous transformation of food into roses. Many saints, including St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Elizabeth of Portugal, St. Casilda of Toledo in Spain, and St. Didacus of Alcalá, had moments of miraculous intervention by Mary. All of these encounters involved the saint secretly carrying food under a cloak to help those in need. When questioned by others about what they were carrying, the food was miraculously changed into roses. A pungent but beautiful aroma came from the roses when the saint was forced to open their cloak. To honor this connection to Mary, people can offer a “spiritual bouquet” of prayer in their petitions to Jesus, the saints, and martyrs.

LEADER: St. Elizabeth of Hungary ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: St. Elizabeth of Portugal ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: St. Casilda of Toledo ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: St. Didacus of Alcalá ...

ALL: Pray for us.

READER 2: When St. Juan Diego encountered Mary, she helped him to arrange the flowers found in winter fields in his tilma, or cloak. Then he took the flowers to the Bishop. As the roses tumbled out, an image of the Virgin Mary remained on the inside of Juan Diego's cloak. May Our Lady of Guadalupe help us represent God's wishes as these saints did before us to the people of our world.

LEADER: St. Juan Diego ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: Our Lady of Guadalupe ...

ALL: Pray for us.

LEADER: The rose is a constant reminder from Mary of God's miraculous love. Let us all stand and pray the Hail Mary to honor Mary and the many ways she shows us God's presence in our lives.

ALL: Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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