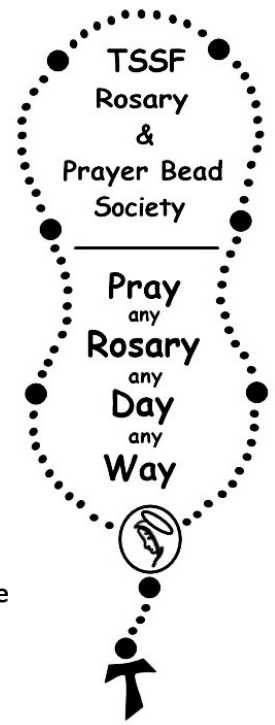


THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE TSSF ROSARY AND PRAYER BEAD SOCIETY [RPBS]  
THE THIRD ORDER, SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS, PROVINCE OF THE AMERICAS

EARLY SPRING 2019

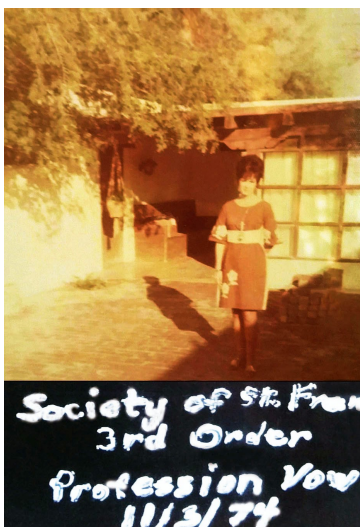


**A WORD FROM DARLENE**

Greetings Friends. Spring is nearly here along with the rich events of our church calendar. I wish you all a warm and wonderful experience of transition as we move forward in 2019. So many interesting and inspiring stories have already been shared with lots more to come. Just praying over our Rosary and Prayer Bead Society membership intercessions list during the Daily Office and Community Obedience has brought me great joy. How exciting to see how the Lord has brought so many of us together through the rosary and Our Lady. I remember well our humble beginnings and will never forget the faithful few who "kept at it" with me for such a long time (for nearly forty-five years), before this new and humbling explosion of growth occurred. Have a blessed Lent and Eastertide. *Darlene Sipes, TSSF (Founder, The TSSF RPBS) St. Mary Of The Angels Fellowship*

**A BIT MORE OF THE HISTORY**

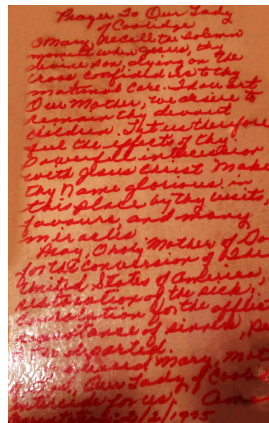
Below is a picture of Darlene standing outside of St. Michael's Church where she had her vision of Our Lady while on a silent retreat as a postulant. This photo was taken just after her profession and right before the *Franciscan Crown Rosary Group* (our beginnings) was formed. We are now nearing one hundred and sixty members! Praise God for His goodness.



*This picture was taken at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Coolidge, Arizona on the occasion of Darlene's profession in The Society of St. Francis (TSSF) on November 3rd, 1974.*

**THE PRAYER**

Later on, after Darlene's experience, a friend (another tertiary) named Marie Webner wrote a prayer called "Prayer To Our Lady of Coolidge," which we shared in a previous edition of *The Rhythm And The Beads*. Darlene likes to save things and so she has provided us with a picture of the original composition of the prayer.



**PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF COOLIDGE**  
Blessed Mary, handmaid of the Lord, pray for us. Daughter of God through faith, pray for us. Mother of God, vessel of the Most High, pray for us. Our friend and sister in Christ, pray for us. Mary, full of grace, pray for the conversion of the world, especially of this nation. In your compassion, pray for those sick in body, mind, or spirit, that they may be healed. Pray for the departed, that they may know your Son. And grant us your favors Holy Mary, that the Name of Jesus may be glorified in this place. Our Lady of Coolidge, mother and maiden, pray for us.

*Marie Webner, TSSF*

**THE CARVING**

Soon after the vision, the drawing, and the prayer, came a carving which was created by Darlene's husband Ed. It seems that all of the people in her circle of love in some way were affected by her unique experience on that retreat back in early May 1972. Who would have thought that seeds sown nearly forty-seven years ago would bring us to where we are today?





## SPRING IS NEARLY HERE!

Shortly, members of The Rosary And Prayer Bead Society will be receiving a Spring gift along with a letter from our pastoral leaders Judith and Joy. Similar to the Angelus single decade prayer card, this new one is based on the Pater Noster (Our Father or Lord's Prayer). Sometimes when we pray familiar prayers, we can lose focus, wander, and miss their beauty and depth. Try using this prayer methodically, applying it to the ten beads of any single decade rosary or rosary ring. By praying with intention, slowly and deeply, you will experience something special.

### WHY FOCUS ON SINGLE DECADE ROSARIES?

Someone asked why we have been highlighting single decade rosaries in the last few issues. The reason is simple. A number of our members are new to the rosary and they actually started with this prayer practice after being mailed a finger rosary! In more than one instance, people put the rosary in their pant pockets or purses and at the oddest times found that they were handling the beads unconsciously and praying!

### AN ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY!

One of the most astounding discoveries the team has made since we started is the number of ways our members are using the beads to pray. Walking, sitting, talking, standing, traditional prayers, or wordless praying, the beads have meaning. They are a tangible and tactile way to sense comfort and peace. Keep praying. Keep trying new modes of the rosary and you will be surprised by its impact. God Bless you. Please keep your stories coming. The Holy Spirit is using them to encourage others on their journeys.

*The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society Team*



**The "Our Father" (Pater Noster)**  
**The Lord's Prayer**  
A Format For Rosary Rings  
Or Any Single Decade Rosary  
*Hold The Cross And Say  
A Silent Prayer Of Your Choice*

- [01] Our Father, who art in heaven,
- [02] hallowed be thy Name,
- [03] thy kingdom come,
- thy will be done,
- [04] on earth as it is in heaven.
- [05] Give us this day  
our daily bread.



- [06] And forgive us our trespasses,
- [07] as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.
- [08] And lead us not into temptation,
- [09] but deliver us from evil.

- [10] For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Hold The Cross And Say Any Silent Prayer*



## THE BEADS OF FAITH

The rosary is one way that I can trace and continue my faith journey. It is rooted in a tradition that goes back centuries in time. The formation of my soul began when I was a Roman Catholic. As a young child, praying the rosary was something that I witnessed my mother and many others around me doing on a regular basis. It was my mother who taught me how to pray using a rosary.

### SLOW AND STEADY PROGRESSION

There was a time dedicated to praying the rosary as a community each week. Praying the rosary was encouraged as an act of faith and hope whether to give thanks or request intercession for a particular need or concern. As a student, attending parochial school for twelve years, it was a regular practice for me to pray the rosary in the chapel both alone and in community. This time in community was very meaningful for me because praying together with others felt very powerful. The cadence of our voices as we said the prescribed prayers sounded truly beautiful to me.



**A Dominican Rosary**

### I KEPT ON

Over time, the practice of praying the rosary in community waned within the church. Like a number of other traditions, attendance at the weekly, then monthly gatherings faded to only a few people. This did not stop me from praying with the rosary beads on my own. For me, it held such a powerful significance that I kept it as an integral part of my prayer life for many years.

### SETTING A NEW COURSE

However, God's plan included a change in the expression of my faith. For various reasons I will not enumerate here, the path led me to the Episcopal Church. Upon being received into the church I was unsure whether praying the Dominican Rosary would be appropriate since I did not realize at the time that this tradition existed within the Episcopal Church. As I explored the different facets of this church, I encountered two wonderful available experiences which would set a new course in my faith tradition. The first was being informed that there was a group of followers of St. Francis known as the Third Order, which greatly appealed to me. The second came a few years later when I discovered people in the Anglican Church had their own version of the rosary. This was comforting to me as it connected me to the earlier part of my spiritual journey, which had begun in the Roman Catholic tradition!

**Watch for your gift and letter via surface mail!**

**BACK ON TRACK!**



It was with great joy that I pursued becoming a Third Order Franciscan and resumed my practice of praying the rosary with the Anglican format. Thanks to the internet, I discovered

**An Anglican Rosary**

that there were many other types of rosaries and rosary prayers that existed in other faith traditions. I even made Anglican rosaries for myself and others. Over the years my rosary practice became sporadic because I did not set aside time for it. That's the truth! But I really began to feel the loss of that way of praying and resumed it. This time it stuck. One of my methods for assuring that I would pray the rosary was to carry one with me in my pocket. It is very helpful to do so, since it is my "change" pocket and it serves as a reminder to pray each time I reach in for change when making a purchase. Recently, thanks to The Rosary and Prayer Bead Society, I am back in community praying the rosary. It is with heartfelt gratitude that, once again, the powerful sense of praying intentionally with others is present in my life.

*Philip J. Muñiz, TSSF  
The Bread of Life Fellowship*



**Mary With Franciscan Saints**



**WHY ALL THIS TALK ABOUT MARY?**

I am Episcopalian! A number of (actually, many) Episcopalians and Anglicans are quite uncomfortable about Mary. These individuals will agree that she is special, chosen of God, Mother of Jesus, and even significant in the entirety of a faith journey. However, they ask where exactly does she fit in and how much attention should she be given?

**GOOD QUESTION**

The answer is quite personal. Sure, the church has her teachings, but individually it seems that people wrestle with finding a place for Mary in their lives. Ask a few of your friends about their relationships with Our Lady and you may get a variance of opinion. It is true that TSSF has deep Anglo-Catholic roots, but it seems that at times there is a resistance to this reality. Some people may never bridge this gap, and that is fine. Oh, but what joy for those who become comfortable with any practice or church tradition which deepens their faith.



**TAKE A CLOSE LOOK**

With no intention of cajoling, convincing or converting anyone, we ask that you simply take a look at the relationship between Father Francis and Our Lady. Notice the level of honor and reverence he has for her. There is no suggestion here that Mary should be regarded in the same way as God Almighty, *but* it seems that in an effort to not do that, some tend to disregard her completely *and* her importance.



**CONSIDER . . .**

**ST. BONAVENTURE, MAJOR LIFE, IX, 3**

"He (St. Francis) embraced the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ with an indescribable love, because she had made the Lord of Majesty our brother and had obtained mercy for us. After Christ it was Mary in whom he placed his trust and whom he chose as advocate, both for himself and his brothers."

**CONSIDER . . .**

**THOMAS OF CELANO CL, 198**

"He (St. Francis) embraced the Mother of Jesus with inexpressible love, since she made *the Lord of Majesty* a brother to us. He honored her with his own *Praises*, poured out prayers to her, and offered her his love in a way that no human tongue can express. But what gives us greatest joy is that he appointed her the Advocate of the Order, and placed *under her wings* the sons to be left behind, that she might *protect* and cherish them to the end."

**CONSIDER . . .**

**A SALUTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

"Hail, O Lady, Holy Queen, Mary, holy Mother of God, Who are the Virgin made Church, chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, in whom there was and is all fullness of grace and every good.

Hail His Palace! Hail His Tabernacle! Hail His Dwelling! Hail His Robe! Hail His Servant! Hail His Mother!"

**CONSIDER . . .**

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PASSION**

"Holy Virgin Mary, among women born into the world, there is no one like you. Daughter and servant (handmaid) of the most high and supreme King and of the Father in heaven, Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, pray for us . . ."

**CONSIDER . . .**

**FROM THE JERUSALEM BIBLE (LUKE 1:46-49)**

"And Mary said: 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my savior; because he has looked upon his lowly handmaid. Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is his name' . . ."

**AND CONSIDER . . .**

**FROM A FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE . . .**

As you read further about Mother Mary and her relationship to believers (especially to Franciscans, we invite you to open your hearts and to explore a deeper relationship with Her.

*The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society Team*



*The Blessed Virgin And St. Francis (Ancient Fresco, Assisi)*



**MARY: MODEL AND PATTERN  
(OF THE FRANCISCAN'S RESPONSE TO GOD)**

Why bother with Mary? What role does she have in the life of a Christian? What role, if any, might she have in the life of a Franciscan? Martin Luther in one of his sermons said, "The veneration of Mary is inscribed in the very depths of the human heart." Our own St. Bonaventure wrote, "It is not surprising that the Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts of the faithful, should inflame their devotion to the Virgin more than to other saints." But why? As a part of this short reflection on Mary's place in a Franciscan spirituality I'll limit myself to a few of the writings of Francis and Bonaventure since an outline of her role throughout our family's history would be too vast an undertaking.

**TSSF: OUR ROOTS**

The founder of our Province of the Americas, Fr. Joseph (Claude Crookston), said in our first Tertiary manual, *The Bundle of Myrrh*, that, "The Blessed Virgin Mary, stainless and immaculate, is the sole Patroness of the whole Franciscan family, and the three Orders of St. Francis are in a special sense her very own." While we may be a bit uncomfortable at times with the way he uses the Anglo-Catholic language of his day, what Fr. Joseph says is true. It can be said that the Franciscan movement throughout its strivings to follow the footprints of Jesus Christ, has taken St. Mary the Virgin as its pattern and guide.

**BONAVENTURE, IN HIS BIOGRAPHY OF FRANCIS WRITES:**

*He embraced the mother of the Lord Jesus with an inexpressible love since she made the Lord of Majesty a brother to us and, through her, we have obtained mercy. In her, after Christ, he put all his trust and made her the advocate of him and his brothers... FA: ED II pg. 598*

**THE THEOTOKOS (THE GOD-BEARER)**

Contemporary reflection on Mary, sees her as the first faithful disciple of her Son in the Scriptures. At the beginning of this trend in the 1970s, evangelical Anglican author John de Satgé in his book, *Down to Earth: The New Protestant Vision of the Virgin Mary*, called her a prototype of the Church and humanity. Francis had already grasped this insight and chose her as an exemplar for his followers. It could even be said that he did so, in a particular way, for the Order of Penitents, aka, the Third Order. The little pamphlet from Church Publishing on Mary in the Episcopal church says it seeks to help Episcopalians come to a deeper understanding of Mary as a mother, disciple, role model and sister in Christ. But of all her many facets, Mary is first and foremost, the Theotokos, the God-bearer. As Franciscans that is our calling as well. "The primary aim for us as tertiaries is therefore to make Christ known." To be bearers of God in the world. It is first and foremost in her role as mother and God-bearer that Mary holds a central place in Franciscan spirituality.

**BONAVENTURE, IN THE INTRODUCTION TO HIS SERMONS ON THE FIVE FEASTS OF THE INFANT JESUS WROTE:**

*I had the opportunity to withdraw for a short while from the turmoil of distracting thoughts. In my innermost self, I asked which aspects of the Lord's incarnation, the object of my reflection during this time should be. My purpose was to obtain some spiritual consolation in which I might savor the divine sweetness reflected, as in the mirror, in this vale of tears (Ps. 83:7); and, having savored it, however fleetingly, to keep myself more resolutely from passing and illusionary consolation.*

*As I considered these things, it rose in my mind that by the grace of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High, a soul dedicated to God could spiritually conceive the holy Word of God and only begotten Son of the Father, give birth to him, name him, seek and adore him with the Magi and finally, according to the law of Moses, joyfully present him in the Temple to God the Father.*

This idea of spiritual motherhood was reflected in Bonaventure's *Life of Francis*, which the Order asked him to write about a year after he gave these sermons. For him, Francis was the perfect example of the Spirit-filled disciple giving birth once more to Christ's presence in the world.

**IN CHAPTER THREE OF BONAVENTURE'S BIOGRAPHY WE READ:**

*In the church of the Virgin Mother of God her servant Francis lingered and, with continuing cries, insistently begged her who had brought to birth the "Word full of grace and truth," (Jn 1:14) to become his advocate. Through the merits of the Mother of Mercy, He conceived and brought to birth the spirit of Gospel truth. FA: ED II pg. 542*

*In the church of the Porziuncula, St. Mary of the Angels, Francis "...conceived and brought to birth the spirit of Gospel truth." In other words, he gave birth to the Franciscan way of life. It was here at St. Mary of the Angels that the words of the Gospel penetrated his heart and that he exclaimed, "This is what I want! ...this is what I desire with all my heart."*



*The Annunciation By Ilario da Viterbo (14th Century)*

**THE VIRGIN ANNUNCIATE**

Placed over the altar in the chapel of the Porziuncula, there is a 14th century painting by Ilario da Viterbo, which is centered on an image of the Annunciation. Many scholars feel that it replaces an earlier image of the scene that might even have been present when Francis restored the chapel. Whether or not an image of the Annunciation was always present, or whether it

was first placed there as a reflection on what occurred that February morning in 1209, it is a perfect symbol. The Virgin Annunciate, is a perfect image of the disciple's call to incarnate the Gospel. There she sits, contemplating the scriptures, which are always shown in her hands, while the Holy Spirit hovers over her, over-shadowing her. Here is the moment when the Word of God is conceived in the heart of the believer, who then must bring it to birth in her life. Thus, Francis became a mother, not just to a way of life, but to those who would follow him.

*For the poor and sterile simplicity of our holy father [Francis] had already brought seven [brothers] to birth and now he wished to bring to birth in Christ the Lord all the faithful in the world called to cries of penance. FA:ED II pg. 54*

"All the faithful in the world called to cries of penance," includes all of us who try to follow him as Tertiaries. Bonaventure's embrace of the Christian's spiritual motherhood and his maternal vision of Francis is not something he creates whole cloth, but something he draws from Francis' own descriptions of himself, his prayers and his vision for his followers.

#### **IN DESCRIBING THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE BROTHERS IN THE EARLIER AND LATER RULES, FRANCIS WRITES:**

*Let each one confidently make known his need to another that the other might discover what is needed and minister to him. Let each one love and care for his brother as a mother loves and cares for her son in those matters in which God has given him the grace. FA:ED I pg. 71*

*And also, "Wherever the brothers may be and meet one another, let them show that they are members of the same family. Let each one confidently make known his need to the other, for if a mother loves and cares for her son according to the flesh, how much more diligently must someone love and care for his brother according to the Spirit! When any brother falls sick, the other brothers must serve him as they would wish to be served themselves." FA:ED I pg. 71*

#### **BROTHERS AND MOTHERS**

In describing the roles of the brothers living an eremitical life, Francis uses the imagery of mothers and sons. It is interesting that some of the later manuscripts, uncomfortable with Francis' words, changed them to "fathers and sons":

*Let those who wish to stay in hermitages in a religious way be three brothers or, at the most, four; let two of*

*these be "the mothers" and have two "sons" or at least one. Let the two who are "mothers" keep the life of Martha and the two "sons" the life of Mary... Let those brothers who are the "mothers" strive to stay far from everyone and, because of obedience to their minister, protect their "sons" from everyone so that no one can speak with them. And those "sons" may not talk with anyone except with their "mothers" and with the minister and his custodian when it pleases them to visit with the Lord's blessing... The "sons," however, may periodically assume the role of the "mothers," taking turns for a time as they have mutually decided.*

#### **BROTHER FRANCIS SPEAKS TO BROTHER LEO**

Finally, in one of his most tender writings, his letter to Brother Leo, Francis describes himself as mother:

*Brother Leo, health and peace From Brother Francis! I am speaking, my son, in this way—as a mother would—because I am putting everything we said on the road in this brief message and advice. If, afterwards, you need to come to me for counsel, I advise you thus: In whatever way it seems better to you to please the Lord God and to follow His footprint and poverty, do it with the blessing of the Lord God and my obedience. And if you need and want to come to me for the sake of your soul or for some consolation, Leo, come.*



*The Virgin And Child With St. Francis Of Assisi  
By Francesco Raibolini*

## TRINITARIAN AND CHRISTOCENTRIC

It is in his prayers that Francis is most explicit about Mary's identity, and how it is she came to give birth to Christ in her life. More and more we realize that Francis' spirituality at its core is Trinitarian. It is Christocentric to the extent that Christ dwells at the center of the Trinity. Christ is never addressed alone in Francis' prayers, but only in a Trinitarian context. His vision of Mary, therefore, and her embrace of the Gospel, is one in which he sees her caught up in the life of the Trinity. In his Salutation to the Blessed Virgin Mary we read:

*Hail, O Lady,  
Holy Queen,  
Mary, holy Mother of God,  
Who are the Virgin made Church,  
chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven  
whom he consecrated with His most holy beloved Son  
and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,  
in whom there was and is  
all fullness of grace and every good.*

*Hail His Palace!  
Hail His Tabernacle!  
Hail His Dwelling!  
Hail His Robe!  
Hail His Servant!  
Hail His Mother!*

*And hail all You holy virtues  
which are poured into the hearts of the faithful  
through the grace and enlightenment of the Holy  
Spirit, that from being unbelievers,  
You may make them faithful to God. FA:ED I pg. 163*



Eastern  
Orthodox  
Icon  
Of The  
Praises  
Of The  
Theotokos  
(Poxvala)

## THE VIRGIN MADE CHURCH

She is intimately connected to the life of the Trinity, consecrated by the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit. What is truly striking here is Francis' identification of Mary with the Church. While other authors have called her the Mother of the Church, Francis in his enthusiasm makes an even more bold, and in the tradition, unique statement. She is the Virgin made Church. Somehow, then for all believers, she is connected, as exemplar to their acquisition of the virtues which are at the heart of the Gospel life. This is affirmed by the fact that scholars see the literary connection to Francis' Salutation to the Virtues. It is also true that many of the early manuscripts link these two writings, some seeing them as one piece. Therefore, though Francis would see these as virtues present in Mary, all believers are called to embrace them.

*Hail, Queen Wisdom!  
May the Lord protect You,  
with Your Sister, holy pure Simplicity!  
Lady holy Poverty,  
may the Lord protect You,  
with Your Sister, holy Humility!  
Lady holy Charity,  
may the Lord protect You,  
with Your Sister, holy Obedience.  
Most holy Virtues,  
may the Lord protect all of You  
from Whom You come and proceed.*

*There is surely no one in the whole world  
who can possess any one of You  
without dying first.  
Whoever possesses one  
and does not offend the others  
possesses all.  
Whoever offends one  
does not possess any  
and offends all.  
And each one confounds vice and sin.*

To hear songs about the Virtues and Mary, go to our website [tssf.org](http://tssf.org) and click on [Resources For Tertiaries](#) and look for the *TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society* tab.

## THE OFFICE OF THE PASSION

In addition to the praying of the Divine Office which was a central part of Francis' prayer life and which was required in all the Rules he wrote, Francis composed his own devotional Office of the Passion. The Office of

the Passion was intended to be prayed as a private devotion alongside the Office of the Church. At the beginning and end of each of the seven hours, an antiphon to Mary that he composed was to be prayed:

*Holy Virgin Mary,  
Among the women born into the world,  
There is no one like you.  
Daughter and servant  
Of the most high and supreme King and of the Father  
in heaven.  
Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ.  
Spouse of the Holy Spirit,  
Pray for us  
With Saint Michael the Archangel,  
All the powers of heaven  
And all the saints,  
At the side of your most holy beloved Son,  
Our Lord and Teacher. FA: ED I pg. 141*

### **EXEMPLAR FOR TERTIARIES' LIVES**

Here again Mary is caught up in the life of the Trinity as Daughter, Servant, Mother and Spouse. Now if we turn to Francis' *Exhortation to the Brothers and Sisters of Penance* in both versions, and hold in our minds what Francis has said about the Virgin Mary, it is clear how he sees her as exemplar for the Tertiaries' lives:

*O how happy and blessed are these men and women while they do these things and persevere in doing them, because the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them (Is 11:2), and make its home and dwelling place among them (Jn 14:23), and they are children of the heavenly Father Whose works they do, and they are spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ. FA:ED I pp. 41-42*

### **SPOUSES, BROTHERS AND MOTHERS**

*And the Spirit of the Lord will rest (Is 11:2 Lk 4:18) upon all those men and women who have done and persevered in these things and It will make a home and dwelling place in them (Jn 14:23 49). And they will be the children of the heavenly Father, Whose works they do. And they are spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ (Mt 5:45).*

*We are spouses when the faithful soul is united by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brothers, moreover, when we do the will of His Father Who is in heaven; mothers, (Mt 12:50 Mk 3:35 Lk 8:21) when we carry Him in our hearts and bodies through love and a pure and sincere conscience; (Mt 12:50 Mk 3:35 1 Cor 6:20) and give Him birth through a holy activity, which must shine before others by example (Mt 5:16).*

*O how glorious and holy and great to have a Father in heaven! O how holy, consoling, beautiful and wonderful to have such a Spouse! O how holy and how loving, gratifying, humbling, peace-giving, sweet, worthy of love, and above all things desirable it is to have such a Brother and such a Son: our Lord Jesus Christ, Who laid down His life for His sheep (Jn 10:15). FA:ED I pg. 49*



*Santa Maria Degli Angeli By Angela Thomas*

### **THE ANNUNCIATION**

And so, we have returned to the Porziuncula and its image of the Annunciation. The faithful Tertiaries meditating and imbibing God's Word, over-shadowed by the Holy Spirit, conceiving and giving birth to the Word in the actions of their lives. They are called to be caught up in the life of the Trinity and be children of God, and spouses, mothers and brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, as St. Clare writes in her Testament: "Among the other gifts that we have received and continue to receive from our magnanimous *Father of mercies* and for which we must express the deepest



thanks to our glorious God, there is our vocation, which the more perfect and greater it is, the more are we indebted to Him. Therefore, the Apostle [writes]: *Recognize your vocation.* The Son of God has become for us *the Way* that our blessed father Francis, His true lover and imitator, has shown and taught us by word and example. Therefore, beloved sisters [and brothers] we must consider the immense gifts that God has bestowed on us."

Charles McCarron, TSSF  
The Long Island Fellowship



## **DIVINE-HUMAN COMMUNION (THROUGH THE ROSARY)**

My positive relationship with the Rosary and its beads was not made until mid-life. I shall tell my story. My first exposure to the rosary came by way of my new neighbors when I was about five or six years old. Into our colonial, Protestant town near Plymouth, Massachusetts, landing place of the original Pilgrims, came a large Roman Catholic, Irish family. They moved into a New England homestead just two houses away. From a cultural point of view, they were misfits but, I was entirely overjoyed with the prospect of having five new playmates! Consequently, I spent a great deal of time with the family and in their home developing lasting friendships.

### **I SAW RELIGIOUS STATUES**

A central focus within their home was the radio. It seemed to be perpetually tuned to the "Catholic station." Even in the car, we had exposure to it! Hence, I learned the rosary from the droning, repetitive voice streaming from the radio with my friends, the Dutsons. Additionally, I saw religious statues, beads, seemingly morbid crucifixes and framed prints of Jesus with His mother. I wasn't attracted to any of their religious ways. They went to Parochial School and I didn't like their uniforms either. Nevertheless, I certainly did love the Dutson family and still do!

### **HORROR STORIES**

After an entire childhood as an Episcopalian, I eventually married a Unitarian Universalist minister. It seemed that half the members of the churches in which he served were formerly Roman Catholics. They were brimming over with horror stories about Catholicism and its negative effects on their lives. After twenty-two years of hearing their woe-some complaints, I wanted to investigate Roman Catholicism for myself. This coincided with the dissolution of my marriage and my return to the Episcopal Church.

### **SACRED ART-MAKING**

While being actively involved in the church of my girlhood, I made a new, close friend in a Catholic retreat house. Sister Jannette had been a cloistered, Franciscan nun for twenty years before coming out of the cloister to work in the retreat house nearby. We had so very much in common that we started a successful School of Sacred Art-Making at her retreat house. I became like one of the group of religious clergy and sisters who managed the house. Hence, Catholicism became my new study and involvement. I joined the Franciscan Order myself, as an Episcopal Third Order member (TSSF) in 2001. My expression of it was and is quite Anglo-Catholic.



**Coptic Marian Altar  
(At The Church Of The Holy Sepulchre In Jerusalem)**

### **I FINALLY MET MARY**

Later, I took classes in Franciscan spirituality for three years at a local friary. As it turned out, the focus was actually on the Divine Mother Mary, not on St. Francis. So, *finally*, I met Mary! How could I not embrace and love her with all my heart after such an exposure by an adoring group of devotees? Of course, I eagerly learned the rosary from them and became a part of a rosary group called the Legion of Mary. It exists solely for the purpose of perpetuating the daily recitation of the rosary and the performance of spiritual works of mercy. Beautiful!

### **MY OWN FRANCISCAN ORDER**

Alas, I am an Anglican and needed to be reigned into my own corral, so I withdrew from the friary and formal Catholic groups, deciding to become more involved in my own Franciscan Order. Nevertheless, I am still welcome to this Catholic Rosary group, which meets every single week for recitation of the Rosary followed by a business meeting which I do not attend for obvious reasons.

## CONTACT THE LEGION OF MARY

Well, I'm writing and sharing my story to inform all who read it, that they too, are welcome to attend any Legion of Mary meeting, world-wide, to join in group rosary recitation. In my case, I have developed precious friendships. When the group finishes the rosary, and the business meeting begins, I depart and go to the softly lit cathedral next door, light a candle and finish the hour in silent prayer. Altogether, it is a most cherished experience which I recommend to anyone who would like an experience of praying the rosary with others as a change from individual prayer. You need to simply phone the nearby Catholic Church and ask for the contact information for the closest Legion of Mary meeting, and chances are there will be a local branch nearby.

## HUMAN-DIVINE COMMUNION

Do I love my rosary beads themselves? Not especially, yet in some special way they are dear to me. I see them as a vehicle for facilitating the thing I cherish the most, the "human-divine communion." They become my mantra, my chant for transcendence. Now, that I love!

*Cynthia Henrich, TSSF  
Brother Juniper Fellowship*



## SOMETIMES I TIRE OF WORDS

My mother was an Irish Catholic who married an Irish Protestant. By the time I was born in Toronto, Canada, my mother not only was ostracized by the Roman Catholic Church, but also estranged from her family. Mom had already settled me into an Anglican parish; it was Anglo-Catholic as she felt at home with the bells and incense.

## EVERYWHERE I WENT

The only time I visited Mom's family, I noticed that her mother and sisters all used rosaries, but because I was now a "Prot," mom decided to "shield" me from exposure to the rosary. It was only years later, as an Anglican Priest and a Chaplain in the Canadian Forces, that I experienced true ecumenism. It was a Roman Catholic Chaplain who first explained the rosary to me. Later, as a Peacekeeper (Blue Beret) in the Middle East, I visited Jerusalem; there I bought my first Catholic Rosary from a Roman Catholic Convent. I carried that Rosary everywhere I went.

## FROM THE MUNDANE TO THE SPIRITUAL



Prayer Rope

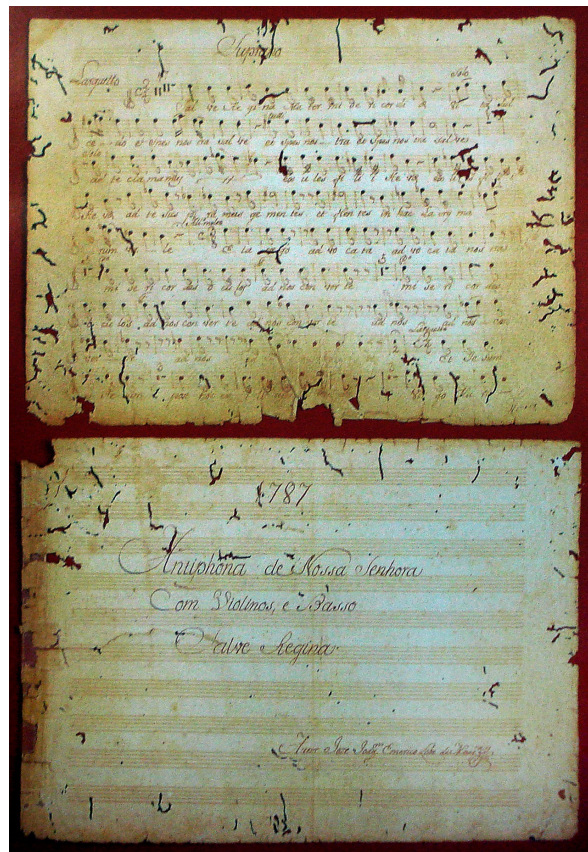
After retirement, as a member of a meditation group in Winnipeg, I was introduced to the Anglican Rosary. I now have three of them, which I use interchangeably each day. Recently, my Spiritual Director, also an Anglican

Sister, gave me an Orthodox Tchotki or Prayer Rope. When I attend meetings such as the Diocesan Synod, and finances are discussed, I reach for the rope wrapped around my wrist, silently say the prayers, and am transported from the mundane to the spiritual.

## INHALING AND EXHALING

Sometimes I tire of words. The comforting click of beads carries me out of myself into unity with Christ. I can relax and just be, without thinking of what to say or do. I am able to be truly in the present. The Rosary and the Prayer Beads I carry are a constant reminder that there is a thin veil separating me from the Divine. It is a veil which falls away with every click, with every breath I inhale and exhale, till I can touch the face of Christ.

*Gordon Shields, TSSF  
The Dogwood Fellowship (Canada)*



Manuscrito da Antífona (Salve Regina) 1787



## MARY AND MUSIC

Although Mary is mentioned in many Christmas Carols and hymns, Anglicans and Episcopalians typically do not pay attention to, or venerate her in the same manner as our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. Most times when Mary is mentioned, it is in hymns with devotional references such as ones used for the Feast of the Annunciation ("The angel Gabriel from heaven came," hymn #265 and "Praise we the Lord this day," hymn #267).

**TRY DOING YOUR OWN RESEARCH**

Unfortunately, special Marian days such as the Feast of the Annunciation and the Feast of St. Mary do not occur on Sundays, so the appropriate hymns which might be used for those celebrations are often overlooked and rarely sung. Hymns for the Feast of St. Mary include "Sing of Mary, pure and lowly," hymn #277, and "Sing we of the blessed Mother," hymn #278. There are others as well, for both these Holy Days, which you might like to explore in the most recent Episcopal hymnal (the 1982 version). Here are some more hymns to help you with your research (#263, #264, #268, #269, #278, and #232).

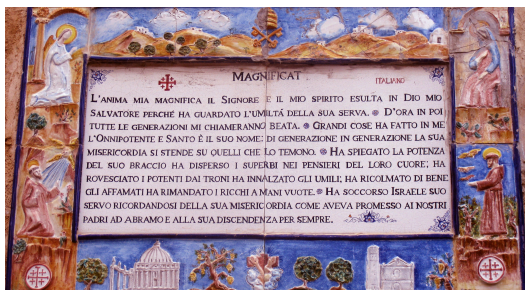
**THEOLOGICAL IN NATURE**

Often, hymns are written to instruct, and indeed can be theological in nature. Even so, some get very little usage (or the message or reference may pass by unnoticed). For instance, take the advent hymn #60 "Creator of the stars of night." It states that Jesus has come among us as "the child of Mary, blameless mother mild." Then there is hymn #618, "Ye watchers and ye holy ones." This one tells us that Mary is "higher than the cherubim, more glorious than the Seraphim."

**CHOICES**

But what to do with all these references to the Blessed Virgin Mary? There exists in our parishes an abundance of church music. So much so, that a music director has to make choices as to which are played and which are not. Add to this the fact that the church calendar dictates much of these choices, and one can imagine that the more obscure hymns do not stand a chance of being heard. Perhaps a good way to start learning more about the Blessed Mother is to ask yourself what do you *know* about her for *sure*, versus what *notions* do you have about her? What has been your experience with her? Did you ever give any serious time to learn about Mary or study the scriptures with an eye to uncovering the hidden places where references to her are found? And just as a point of reference, it is necessary to state for the record that Franciscan Orders are Marian Orders, regardless of where individuals rest with regard to their own connection to Mary. Happy researching!

*The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society Team*



**The Magnificat On The Wall Of The Church Of The Visitation**



**INTENTIONS SCHEDULE (PRAYER SUGGESTIONS)**

	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Rosary Options</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Dominican Rosary	5 Decades
<b>MONDAY</b>	Rings/Prayer Rope	1 Decade
<b>TUESDAY</b>	Anglican Rosary	4 Weeks
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	Franciscan Crown	7 Decades
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Dominican Rosary	5 Decades
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Unique Rosaries/Beads	Various
<b>SATURDAY</b>	Franciscan Crown	7 Decades
	<b>MONTHLY</b>	<b>INTENTIONS</b>
<b>JANUARY</b>	3rd Order TSSF	Stability/Vocations
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Companions SSF	Stability/Vocations
<b>MARCH</b>	1st Order Brothers SSF	Stability/Vocations
<b>APRIL</b>	1st Order Sisters CSF	Stability/Vocations
<b>MAY</b>	Poor Clares/Cloistered	Stability/Vocations
<b>JUNE</b>	All Religious Orders	Wise Leadership
<b>JULY</b>	World Hunger/Peace	Help/Disarmament
<b>AUGUST</b>	World Leaders	Care/Compassion
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Purging/Simplicity	Less Possessions
<b>OCTOBER</b>	Pause/Reflect	Counting Blessings
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Thanksgiving/Creation	Incarnation/All Life
<b>DECEMBER</b>	Lost/Know Salvation	Win Souls
	<b>SEASONAL</b>	<b>INTENTIONS</b>
<b>ADVENT</b>	Prepare/Lord's Birth	In Hearts/Lives
<b>CHRISTMAS</b>	Thanksgiving/Jesus	The Incarnation
<b>LENT</b>	Holy Lenten Time	Revisit Rule
<b>EASTER-TIDE</b>	Thanksgiving	Resurrection



**OPEN MEMBERSHIP**

Anyone may join. Just commit to praying any rosary once a week, minimally. That's it! Contact Judith [serg1us@aol.com](mailto:serg1us@aol.com) or Joy [joymazzola@me.com](mailto:joymazzola@me.com) or write The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society P.O. Box 706, NY 11766.

**UNTIL NEXT TIME**

Our acceptance of stories for publication is ongoing. Please do not wait for a call. Simply send in your story any time. Thank you. It has been interesting to see how our Lord has been shaping each issue of *The Rhythm And The Beads* newsletter. Sometimes there is a deliberate focus, but often the topics emerge "on their own." Such is the case with this issue which features Our Lady.

*The TSSF Rosary And Prayer Bead Society Team*

**PRAY ANY ROSARY, ANY DAY, ANY WAY! AMEN.**

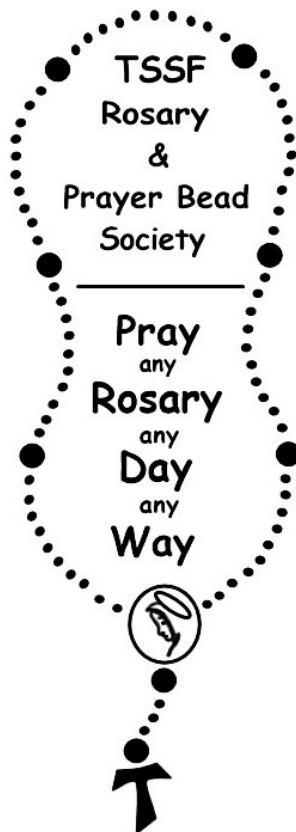
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**THE NEWSLETTER OF  
THE TSSF ROSARY AND PRAYER  
BEAD SOCIETY [RPBS]**

**THE THIRD ORDER, SOCIETY OF ST. FRANCIS,  
PROVINCE OF THE AMERICAS**

**"PRAY ANY ROSARY, ANY DAY, ANY WAY!"**

**EARLY SPRING 2019**

**INSIDE THIS EDITION**

- A Word From Darlene • Darlene Sipes, TSSF
- The Beads Of Faith • Philip J. Muñiz, TSSF
- Why All This Talk About Mary? I Am Episcopalian!
- Consider... Readings From Franciscan Source Material
- Mary: Model And Pattern (Of The Franciscan's Response To God) • Charles McCarron, TSSF
- Divine-Human Communion • Cynthia Henrich, TSSF
- Sometimes I Tire Of Words • Gordon Shields, TSSF
- Mary And Music
- **Open Membership** In The TSSF RPBS!
- Until Next Time