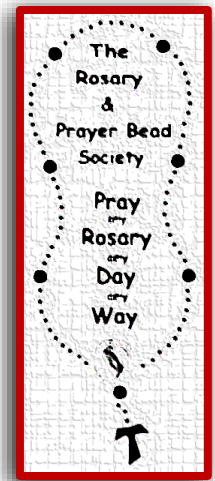


The Rhythm and the Beads

The Newsletter of the
Rosary and Prayer Bead Society
Society of St. Francis TSS: Summer 2026

Greetings from Poland and the Shrine of the now
Saint, Jerzy Popieluszko, and Perhaps the Largest
Rosary in Poland

Br. Peter TSSF



My father's parents immigrated from Poland in 1915. I have been drawn to this country for most of my life, and by God's grace, I visited this land as a pilgrim in June and July.

Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko was one of the many voices of the Solidarity Movement which began in Poland in the late 1970's, continued into the early 90's, and eventually was a catalyst in toppling the USSR. The grave site, the church, the grounds, and the museum, all contribute to an amazing and fulfilling encounter.



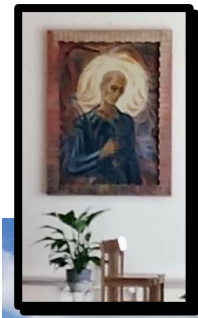
Grave of Fr. Jerzy surrounded by the large stone rosary in the shape of Poland



A truly humble parish priest, known to many as, "That nice Fr. Jerzy who brings me communion when I can't get to church." He also served and ministered to the protesting Steel Workers who eventually made him an honorary member of the Solidarity Union. Because of this, he was continually badgered and harassed by the Socialist authorities. I didn't know about Fr. Jerzy until after his abduction and murder by the Secret Service in 1984. Since that time, I have longed to make this pilgrimage. His grave is surrounded by an enormous stone rosary. Much more than a novelty, it provides for a moving experience to walk and pray it stone by stone.

Elsewhere in Warsaw...

The Church of St. Maximilian Kolbe Franciscan and Rosary Devotee



While on pilgrimage in Poland, I tracked down one of nearly 100 churches dedicated to St. Maximilian Kolbe. There is much to admire at this church but the outdoor gardens are particularly wonderful. The circle of apostles and rosary walk are highlighted below.



Fr. Kolbe was passionately devoted to praying the



rosary so it is appropriate that there is a rosary walk on the grounds of this church. He grew up in a family that prayed the rosary daily and he learned this devotion (as well as the Angelus and the Litany of Our Lady) at an early age. As a priest, in 1917, he founded the Knights of the Immaculata. Consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, they strove to bring people to Christ through the praying of the rosary. He continued praying the rosary while imprisoned in Auschwitz, which sustained himself as well as his fellow prisoners.



Spending time and praying at this particular rosary walk was especially meaningful. Fr. Kolbe has been both a hero and inspiration of mine for many years.



A Rosary is Made Twice

By Fiach OBroin-Molloy

The first making happens at a workbench. Separate beads, wire, cord, chain, medals and a cross are measured, joined and tested until they become something the hands can hold. The second making happens more slowly. It begins when somebody takes that rosary into prayer and returns to it over days and years.



My own path to the workbench grew from several parts of my life that had always belonged together. I grew up in an Irish family in which making was ordinary: there was beekeeping, silversmithing, woodcarving and ceramic work. My father was an artist whose work drew deeply on the Book of Kells and early Celtic design, so I spent much of my childhood around the textures, tools and patient processes of a workshop.

After settling in the west of Scotland, I began making rosaries and keeping my own bees. Those activities may seem unrelated, but they ask something similar of the hands. Neither responds well to being hurried. Both require attention, repetition and respect for materials that have their own character.

The maker gives a rosary its form; prayer gives it a history.

Prayerful making should not be romanticized. A workbench also contains dropped jump rings, stubborn wire and measurements checked twice. Prayer does not replace craftsmanship. If anything, it makes careful workmanship more important. A rosary intended to accompany years of prayer must be strong, comfortable and honestly made.

I think about the weight of the cross, the spacing of the beads and how naturally each bead will pass beneath the thumb. Wood brings warmth and grain; stone brings weight, variation and a sense of the earth from which it came. Metal carries detail and gradually records the marks of use.

When I know that a rosary is being made for a particular person or intention, I can hold that quietly while I work without pretending to know more than I have been told. When its future owner is unknown, it can be simpler still: that the hands receiving it will find steadiness, and that the rosary will serve faithfully whatever prayer it is asked to accompany.

The maker's responsibility is real but limited. I can make the rosary carefully; I cannot manufacture the prayer that will follow. The familiar prayers of the Rosary give the hands a pattern: the Apostles' Creed at the cross, the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Glory Be, with the mysteries drawing our attention repeatedly into the life of Christ. In the **Franciscan Crown**, seven decades lead us through the seven joys of Mary. At other times, when words are



difficult, a bead may carry only the Holy Name of Jesus, a brief prayer for mercy, or the name of somebody being placed before God.

The beads do not make those prayers more effective, nor do they contain God within an object or method. Their purpose is humbler. They release us from counting, give the body a place within prayer and provide a physical path back when the mind has wandered.

Repetition by itself can become mechanical. Repetition joined to attention becomes practice.



That distinction matters. A prayer repeated attentively does not merely pass through us unchanged. It gradually forms habits of return. We learn to begin again without drama when concentration fails. We become a little more patient with our own limitations and, one hopes, with the limitations of other people. Words first spoken by the mouth may slowly descend towards the heart.

The deepest purpose of the Rosary is not that we become accomplished at saying prayers. It is that prayer should refine the inner life and move us towards deeper love of God and neighbor. What we return to shapes us.

This is where the second making of the rosary begins.

Beads polish beneath the fingers. Wood darkens. Metal acquires small scratches and changes in tone. Cord becomes more supple. The object is altered by being used, but so too, less visibly, is the person using it.

I rarely know the full life into which something from my workbench travels. A rosary may be held during grief, gratitude, illness, pilgrimage, uncertainty or an entirely ordinary morning. It may be prayed faithfully every day or rediscovered after a long period of silence. At its best, it becomes less an object to look at than a path the fingers know.



When I finish a rosary, I check every connection and hold it for a moment before wrapping it. Then I let it go. The physical making is complete, but the more important work has not yet begun. A maker can give a rosary strength, balance and beauty. Only prayer can give it wear, memory and meaning. That is why a rosary is made twice—and why the second making may continue for a lifetime.

About the Author



Fiach OBroin-Molloy is the Irish maker and apiarist behind Paisley Honey, a small workshop and working apiary based in Paisley, Scotland. He creates Catholic rosaries, Anglican prayer beads and other devotional objects by hand, drawing inspiration from faith, pilgrimage, Celtic Christian heritage and the natural world. His work can be found at <https://www.paisleyhoney.com/>.





Sister Fall 2026

Br. James Philliops TSSF

Sister Fall, come into our hearts. Grant us the gracious gift of humility, thankfulness, and love for all those inextricably woven into our lives from the past as well as the present.

Let us never forget your dignity and grace as reflected in the change of colors in the deep woods, the cooling of the days, the harvest from the fields, and all of God's little creatures who sense the changes you bring.

Hold us close to remind us we first were created as spiritual beings. Help us to understand this short human experience as a season in the cycle of incarnate love from our heavenly Father.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit +

Amen

James +



**From the Rosary and Prayer
Bead Society,
Br. Peter TSSF Editor
Dear Friends:**

I became the Editor of the newsletter over six ago. Since that time, we have published not only pieces on rosaries, but pieces which include artwork, photos, stories, poetry and various other forms of spiritual encouragement. Since we are already including a variety of enrichment pieces, and the response continues to be enthusiastic, we will continue to include pieces on all types of rosaries, as well other forms of devotional aides and practices.

The thing is, we want lots of others to participate!

During Advent, we will publish an Advent/Christmas edition of the newsletter. Please start thinking now of contributing an article on any of the following topics:

A method of praying that pertains to the Rosary.

Any Rosary prayers of any type

all forms of original artwork,

original story,

original poetry,

original photographs.

... even original cartoons

... AND MORE!

Send them all to:

The Rosary and Prayer Bead
Society

c/o Br. Peter TSSF

ppletitbe@gmail.com

