

TAPE. Angelus (over)

Last Monday, you may remember I talked about the Rosary — the origin of it — of the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary — and of its composition. As this month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary, I want to talk a little more about it today. Because, despite all you hear about it, all the exhortations to use this form of prayer (remember the message of Fatima, <sup>at Lourdes</sup> commemorated yesterday in a special ceremony at, appropriately, Rosaryhill school?), a lot of people find it difficult or uncongenial. Whether or not you accept the Fatima or Lourdes apparitions, their message of the need to pray, and of the position and value of Our Lady's intercession in our prayer to Christ her son, & to His Father & ours, is and always has been in the practice of the Church, perennially valid. So, it's a question of finding how but each of us, for ourselves, can use the ideas and traditions enshrined in the saying of the Rosary. I don't propose to devote Midday Prayer to the saying of the Rosary; but you who listen at this time every day could do worse than quietly finger your rosary-beads and think about those central events of Christianity, those mysteries of faith which are the cause of our redemption, during these quiet hours. Meanwhile, let us pray in the <sup>long-</sup> familiar words of this midday few minutes of prayer: PRAYERS.

Now, another <sup>musical</sup> version of that angel's greeting to Mary, which is the backbone of the Rosary — let's not merely listen, but join in mind and heart with the prayer which this is.

Ave Maria  
- Dei Mater  
(Cornish)  
RHK

⇒ Even, or perhaps more especially, people who have developed a habit of saying the Rosary regularly, are sometimes puzzled by the statement, or insistence, that the most important element in this form of prayer is, not so much the repetition of familiar words as the meditation on, consideration of the 'mysteries' associated with each decade of the Holy Marys. But this is true! Merely rote repetition of any form of words is not, to say the least, a particularly valid prayer — because prayer should be a raising of the mind and heart to God. And what greater incentive to praise and thanksgiving to God is there than the 'mighty deeds' He has done for us, in sending His Son into our world, among us, to live a human life and thereby show us how as well as the fact that we can live as God wants us to: His son, who in obedience, service and love, gave his very life for us, undergoing <sup>heavy</sup> suffering and death, again showing us that neither of these need be the painful, wasteful experiences they seem so often to be — that in fact, terrible as they may be for human nature, they are not something to be frustrated by, but the way which Christ went, for us and where we've got to go with Him, in order to enter a new life. But that new risen life of Christ is already within us, sent to us in the coming of the Holy Spirit. These are the main facts of our faith, the main cause of our gratitude & thanksgiving to God; — they are the events we celebrate in the cycle of the Church's year in the liturgy — AND they are the subject-matter of meditation through the 15 decades of the Rosary. For Mary too, a human being who needed redemption by Christ, these are causes of her joy, her suffering (because Christ is her son & she felt more deeply than anyone else, the pain he suffered, because of our sin & the world's sin, on our behalf.)

and of her glory, where she is now with her risen son in the eternal life and  
happiness of God's love in heaven. So, it's but natural to make our thanksgiving  
for these things with Mary, who was so personally so close to the events and  
concerned in them as a mother. And this is the Rosary - a period of  
remembrance with Mary, if you like to think of it that way, about the great things  
God has done for her - through her, and for us too; a family chat. Perhaps  
it would help you get this atmosphere to read the little bits of the gospels which  
concern almost all the 15 decades of the Rosary; read them slowly & thoughtfully,  
at least from time to time, and it should make the saying of the Rosary more  
meaningful for you, & give you food for thought & conversation with God, through  
Mary.