



Bishop blesses 20,000 rosaries

DISTRIBUTION TO CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STUDENTS

Special from the Catholic Diocese of Venice in Florida

Venice – Most Rev. Frank J. Dewane, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Venice in Florida, blessed 20,000 rosaries to be gifted to Catholic students throughout the 10-county region.

Rosaries are not a decoration. In fact, a rosary is a series of prayer beads that are laid out in specific order and used by Catholics for a Scripture-based prayer. Pope Francis said the faithful, through praying the rosary, can contemplate all that God in His love has done for us and for our Salvation, and helps us understand that our life is united with Christ.

A project of the Diocesan Department of Education, Office of Religious Education, Office of Evangelization, and Communications Office, the rosaries will first be distributed to each of the 4,777 Diocesan Catholic School students at this year's Back-to-School Catholic Masses celebrated by Bishop Dewane. Then more than 15,000 rosaries will be sent to each of the 61 Diocesan Parishes in September for distribution to those participating in Religious Education programs. Along with each rosary, the young people will receive a card "How to Pray the Rosary."

"The Rosary is an important symbol of the Catholic Faith," Bishop Dewane said. "By distributing these rosaries, the Diocese is

providing an important instrument of prayer to help our young people grow closer to Jesus Christ." The Bishop blessed the rosaries during a brief prayer service on July 16 at the Chancery in Venice.

A Scripture-based prayer, the Rosary is a devotion in honor of the Virgin Mary. It consists of a set number of specific prayers. Praying the Rosary begins with the recitation of the Apostle's Creed, an Our Father, three Hail Mary's and a Glory Be. Then there are five decades which each begin and end with an Our Father and Glory Be, and have ten Hail Mary's in between. When you pray the rosary, you meditate on the events in Jesus' life. There are the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and the Luminous Mysteries.

The word rosary comes from Latin and means a garland of roses, the rose being one of the flowers used to symbolize the Virgin Mary. The use of knotted prayer ropes dates to the late 3rd century as a practice to imitate Christian monks of the period. According to tradition, the concept of the modern Rosary was given to St. Dominic in an apparition of the Virgin Mary during the year 1214. It was in 1569 when Pope Pius V officially established the devotion to the rosary in the

Catholic Church. Throughout Church history, many Popes and Saints have encouraged the praying of the Rosary.

Pope Francis recently urged young people to "learn to pray with the simple and effective prayer of the Rosary. I, too, often recite the Rosary and through the prayer, Mary brings Christians closer to Jesus and the meditation of the mysteries of Christ's life is also our life because we walk with the Lord. Let us invoke Mary's intercession, so that the Lord may grant peace and mercy to the Church and to the whole world."

The blessing and distribution of the rosaries comes following the December 2017 consecration of the Diocese of Venice to Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Through the Act of Consecration by Bishop Dewane, the faithful confide the Diocese and all its good works to Our Lady to fulfill more readily the will of her Divine Son for His Church.

"By this devotion of the Rosary, handed down through generations, we give ourselves to Jesus through the heart of Mary as we are reminded of our Baptismal Promises and incorporate them that into our lives as we grow spiritually from this experience," Bishop Dewane said.

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