

How Learning About the Rosary Blew My Mind

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For all good Protestants, myself included, Mary is the ultimate stumbling block on a journey into full Catholic communion. This wasn't so for the first 1,500 years of Church history. Martin Luther one of the earliest Protestant reformers held strong and fast to Marian doctrine even doctrine, like her perpetual virginity, which couldn't be strongly backed up by his *sola scriptura* theology.

For me, Mary was OK, but Marian devotions and rituals like the Rosary were wholly foreign and frightening. The Rosary felt so *European*, like something Italian grandmothers would cling to in the back pews of dusty churches.

So I got a book. I got a book that talked about Mary, a fairly pedestrian text after already reading Dr. Hahn's book, but there, tucked in the last few chapters, was a detailed explanation of the mysteries of the Rosary.

This is what happened... I didn't know a lot. I knew enough to know that the "Hail Mary" was a biblically-based prayer that asked for Mary to pray for us and acknowledged her incredible position as the bearer of the Christ child. It's a powerful prayer and after studying and understanding it's origins

It turns out that the practice of the Rosary is like a complete Bible study on a necklace. When I learned this, it blew my mind. When I learned this, I realized that I'd been so skeptical of the Rosary. I know, in my intellect, that Catholics don't worship Mary, but I worried that the Rosary somehow skewed the role of Mary and placed, upon her, too much emphasis. I was wrong, forgive me, because the Rosary is awesome and the Rosary is firmly, and rightly, Christ-centred.

At the heart of the Rosary are meditations on particular scenes from the gospels. This is what makes the Rosary a mini Bible study. This is what made the Rosary so popular for catechesis in the Middle Ages.

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