School/Class Assembly on The Rosary

DERRY DIOCESAN CATECHETICAL CENTRE

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **All: Amen**

Today, in this the month of the Rosary, we pray for peace in the world, especially in the Holy Land and for Ukraine with Russia. We pray also, for those suffering in other parts of the world. . . (name if wished) We pray that all peoples, everywhere will remember that God made each one of us and that our hearts are made for God. We can only experience the fullness of peace, happiness, and love if we are united with God. Prayer is one of the best ways to achieve that unity. The Rosary is one of the best forms of prayer to open our hearts to God. Before we begin our decade/rosary let us listen to the story of the Rosary

BACKGROUND:

The exact origin of the rosary, a Christian prayer rope, cord or chain used to count specific prayers is subject to debate among scholars. The use of knotted prayer ropes in Christianity goes back to the Desert Fathers in the 3rd and early 4th centuries. These counting devices were used for prayers such as the Jesus prayer in Christian monasticism. The period after the First Council of Ephesus in 431 witnessed gradual growth in the use of Marian prayers during the Middle Ages.

From the 16th to the early 20th century, the structure of the rosary remained essentially unchanged. There were 15 mysteries, one for each of the 15 decades. In the 20th century the addition of the Fatima Prayer to the end of each decade became popular.

In 2002 Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries – based on a compilation by George Preca, the first Maltese saint – as an option in an apostolic letter on the rosary, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*.

The Story of Lourdes:

On 11th February 1858, Bernadette saw "the Lady" for the first time, she prayed the Rosary, noticing that the Lady was, "passing the beads of her Rosary between her fingers without moving her lips". Ever since that first meeting, we have never stopped praying the Rosary at the Grotto: the simple prayer of the poor by which, through the Virgin Mary, we place our lives, our trials, our joys, and our loved ones into God's hands. While reciting the Our Father and the Hail Mary, we meditate on the main events in Christ's life as depicted in the mosaics that adorn the Rosary Basilica.

The Miracle of Fatima:

Our Lady of Fátima (formally known as **Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Fátima**) is a Catholic title of Mary, mother of Jesus, based on the Marian apparitions reported in 1917 by three shepherd children at the Cova da Iria in Fátima, Portugal. The three children were Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto. José Alves Correia da Silva, Bishop of Leiria, declared the events worthy of belief on 13 October 1930.[3]

During the June visit, the children said the lady told them to say the Holy Rosary daily in honour of Our Lady of the Rosary to obtain peace and the end of the Great War.

Opening Hymn: Hail Queen of Heaven/As I kneel before you (or alternative)

Opening Prayer:

Lord, we take time to become more aware of your presence in our lives. Mary, our Mother, is our model for peace. Like Mary, may we too be peacemakers, trusting in the love and mercy of God. We make this prayer, though your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Choose a scripture passage from one of the four mysteries – Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, or Luminous. Or you might prefer to focus on the Sorrowful, if praying for peace in a suffering world.

REFLECTION ON THE WORDS OF POPE FRANCIS:

Here I would like to emphasize the beauty of a simple contemplative prayer, accessible to all, great and small, the educated and those with little education. It is the prayer of the Holy Rosary. In the Rosary we turn to the Virgin Mary so that she may guide us to an ever-closer union with her Son Jesus to bring us into conformity with him, to have his sentiments and to behave like him. Indeed, in the Rosary while we repeat the Hail Mary we meditate on the Mysteries, on the events of Christ's life, to know and love him ever better. The Rosary is an effective means for opening ourselves to God, for it helps us to overcome egotism and to bring peace to hearts, in the family, in society and in the world.— from the book ***Mother Mary: Inspiring Words from Pope Francis***

INTERCESSION PRAYERS:

We pray the Rosary for those who suffer and those who cry out for help
R: Give them strength, Loving Father

We pray the Rosary that those who suffer may experience moments of peace and healing
R: Give them repose, Loving Father

We pray the Rosary that those who wage war, will turn their back on violence and hate and open their hearts to hear God call them to peace and love.
R: Give them courage, Loving Father

We pray the Rosary for the innocent victims of all wars, especially the weak and vulnerable and the young.
R: Give them Hope, Loving Father

DECADE:
We bring all our prayers together as we pray this decade of the Rosary. (Choose decade – brief explanation of context.)

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

We place all our trust in Mary's loving arms, safe in the knowledge that God is hearing our prayer. We pray together (choose one or an alternative)

The Memorare
Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help,
or sought thy intercession,
was left unaided.
Inspired by this confidence
I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To thee do I come,
before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me.
Amen.
OR
Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.
(Verse) Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God
(Response) **That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

CONCLUDING HYMN: Hail Holy Queen (or alternative)