

WHAT IS A ROSARY CONGRESS?

A Rosary Congress is the continual praying of the Rosary in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament for seven days and nights in a particular parish or diocese, wrapping our country, our states, our cities, our dioceses, our families within the protective Heart of Mary.



A Rosary Congress is reminiscent of the Old Testament Siege of Jericho. For 7 days, God's chosen people marched around the walls of Jericho, as God instructed them, and on the 7th day its walls crumbled defenseless. As we pray the Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament for 7 days and nights, we believe we are "destroying the gates of hell, fighting the princes and rulers of darkness," as the Polish people testified to the effect of their first Rosary Congress in Poland in 1979.

A Rosary Congress is the fulfillment of the requests Our Lady made at Fatima 100 years ago. Our Lady called the children of God to pray the rosary daily, to repent and consecrate ourselves to her Immaculate Heart. She asked for prayers and sacrifices for sinners. She asked for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. In response to her wishes, on May 1, 1948, Pope Pius XII issued a special encyclical letter to all the bishops, priests, and laity throughout the world stating,

"It is Our wish, consequently, that whenever the opportunity suggests itself, this consecration be made in the various dioceses as well as in each of the parishes and families. And we are confident that abundant blessings and favors from heaven will surge forth from this private and public consecration."

A Rosary Congress brings the Church into the safe harbor of Jesus in the Eucharist and Our Blessed Mother. This references the dream of St. John Bosco which you will find in the [History page](#) of this website. By praying the Rosary before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, we draw on the truths of our Faith and live our lives more closely united to Christ.

The Rosary Congress is like the Cenacle or Upper Room in which the Eucharist was instituted at the Last Supper and was also the scene of the first novena in preparation for the descent of the Holy Spirit. At His Ascension Jesus had asked His disciples to return to Jerusalem and await there the Gift He would send them at Pentecost. So they gathered in the cenacle around the Holy Mother in continuous prayer. In this same way, Our Lady invites us to gather around her again in the Rosary Congresses to pray for and to await the second Pentecost.



The Rosary Congress is an intense week of prayer that hastens the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This truly spiritual experience is a foretaste of how beautiful the world will be when humanity returns to the love and service of God. It will be that period of peace foretold by Our Lady of Fatima wherein the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus will be the center of our lives and the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with the fire of his love to renew the face of the earth.

FINALLY, the Rosary Congress is enveloped in a spirit of penance and reparation for our sins and for the sins of humanity in order to call down God's mercy upon the whole world.

➤ **What can Rosary Congresses include?**

- Processions
- Special Masses for youth, healing, consecrated life, families, etc.
- Special conferences or guest speakers
- Catholic School participation
- Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the diocese, parish or families
- Children's Eucharistic hours

➤ **Why should we hold a Rosary Congress?**

The primary reasons for holding a Rosary Congress are to pray:

- To give God the greatest glory possible,
- To console the heart of Jesus,
- In reparation for our sins and the sins of the country,
- For the healing of the victims of abuse within the Church,
- For the healing of the Church,
- For the end to abortion,
- For peace in the world, and
- For the sanctification of families.

➤ **Is there only one way to do a Rosary Congress?**

There are three ways to do a Rosary Congress. Visit www.rosarycongressusa.org for more information.

➤ **When are Diocesan Rosary Congresses being held around the country?**

Visit www.rosarycongressusa.org for dates of the next Rosary Congress nationwide.

These seven days and nights of Masses, perpetual Eucharistic Adoration, and hourly Rosaries incorporated in the Diocesan Rosary Congress (DRC) program are offered in the spirit of reparation to restore the sanctity of human life, to establish peace in our cities, nation, and world, and to console the hearts of Jesus and Mary. Recognizing the authority vested in the local Catholic bishop, the DRC encourages those coordinating a Rosary Congress in their diocese to seek the blessing of their bishop.

Based on the successful and miraculous Rosary Congress held in Poland in 1979, the DRC is nothing new to the Church. It is what the Church has held in high esteem for centuries, namely, Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, and the prayer of the Rosary. It is the hope of the DRC team that those interested in organizing a DRC in their area will find all necessary resources on the website www.rosarycongressusa.org. Fortified with these plans and aids, prayerfully seek out a priest willing to host a Congress and seek the blessing of the local bishop.

HISTORY OF THE ROSARY CONGRESS

The History of the Rosary Congress began in Poland in May 1979, when the Polish people prayed through Mary's intercession for the coming of Pope John Paul II to his beloved homeland. It has since been attributed as the fulfillment of St. John Bosco's dream of the Two Pillars ([click here to read Dream](#)), bringing the Church into the safe haven of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady under the direction of our Holy Father.

THE FIRST ROSARY CONGRESS IN POLAND

The "Pillars of Victory" are thus clearly made known to us – Jesus in the Eucharist and true devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Rosary Congress is a gift from Our Lady for the pivotal work of establishing everywhere the Pillars of Victory prophesied by Don Bosco.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

In 1978, our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, requested permission to visit Poland. The government would permit him to enter Poland if he would visit only those places predetermined by the government. The Holy Father desired to visit other places. Permission was not granted; the trip to his homeland seemed to be in jeopardy.

On December 8, 1978, through a private revelation, Our Lady requested seven days and nights of continuous Rosaries to be said from May 1 – 7, 1979, at the shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa. The prayers were to be offered for a resolution of the impasse preventing the papal pilgrimage. On the same day (Dec. 8), Our Lady's request was relayed to Bishop Zbigniew Kraszewski, a member of the Polish episcopate's Marian Commission. He said, "It is good to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament. It is good to say the Rosary for the intentions of the Pope. It is good to pray at Jasna Gora. Do it!" The next day, the late Bishop Stefan Barela, Ordinary of Czestochowa and president of the bishops' Marian Commission was approached. He was pleased with the idea of seven days of prayer and encouraged it. However, he advised that it not be called a congress, for he feared possible repercussions from governmental authorities. "If you do not call it a congress, it will be easier for you to organize," he said.

SIEGE OF JERICHO The seven-day prayer vigil or Rosary Congress began as requested on May 1. It was soon popularly referred to as the "Siege of Jericho", reminiscent of the Old Testament battle, because participants believed they "were destroying the walls of satanic darkness ... overcoming the gates of hell ... fighting the princes and rulers of darkness. Such was the form of our prayers and meditations," said one organizer and participant.

AROUND THE CLOCK PRAYER That first congress featured 15 conferences on the Rosary in Jasna Gora's Rosary Chapel. From 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. there was a continuous sequence of Masses, Rosaries and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Sacred Heart

Chapel. From 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. Rosaries were prayed before the miraculous icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

As the Rosary Congress was beginning, Bishop Kraszewski was informed again by Polish Communist authorities on May 2 that the Pope would be permitted to visit Poland, but with a limited itinerary. The bishop reportedly answered that the governmental restrictions would bring shame on the nation in the year marking the 1000th anniversary of Polish Christianity. The Pope would not come to Poland with such restrictions, he said.

A TRIUMPH FOR OUR LADY On May 7, the last day of the Rosary Congress at Jasna Gora, the government unexpectedly relented and removed the major obstacles to the papal visit. The Polish people credit the Rosary Congress, or “Siege of Jericho”, with clearing the path for the Pope’s visit. Since that time, whenever Pope John Paul II made any apostolic journey outside of Rome, somewhere in Poland there was a Rosary Congress offered for his intentions and protection.

THE ROSARY CONGRESS IN THE U.S.

In 1988, one of the original participants of the Rosary Congress in Poland came to America to bring the gift from Our Lady to us. He found a small group of faithful people on the east coast who grasped the spirit of the congresses and began to organize. The First National Rosary Congress was held in Washington, D.C., in 1988, at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, now a Basilica. Over the next five years the National Rosary Congress drew as many as 500 people who came from all over the country as well as outside of the country, who stayed at Catholic University during the week of prayer and adoration. There were many activities and conferences during those Congresses to encourage and strengthen the faithful, and to educate them in True Devotion to Mary and other practices such as wearing the Brown Scapular, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and holding candlelight processions.

One of the goals of the organizing group was to help participants bring the Rosary Congress back to their own dioceses. That happened in a few instances. In Fort Worth, TX, a woman ran a Rosary Congress in her diocese from 1990-2010, until she was unable to continue due to sickness. In New Orleans, there has been a Rosary Congress every year since 1990. October 5-11, 2019 brings their 29th Rosary Congress. The Greater New Orleans Area has experienced numerous graces due to their Rosary Congresses. The very last day of their very first Congress in 1990, the largest abortion clinic closed its doors. At this time they now have 41 seminarians in their diocese. After the last day of their Rosary Congress in 2016, another abortion clinic closed its doors. Imagine the numerous graces our country would receive if many more dioceses held a Rosary Congress. And how powerful that would be if they were all held at the same time to honor Our Lady of Fatima on the 100th Anniversary of her final appearance in Portugal.

ROSARY CONGRESS TODAY

Eighteen Diocesan Rosary Congresses were planned across the country to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima, from October 7 – October 13, 2017. This was an effort to make reparation for the great sins committed in our country and by our country. This was an effort to ask God for the grace to rebuild the family and lift the cloud of darkness that covers the hearts and minds of our young people. This was an effort to bring our families, our dioceses, our cities, our states and our country into the safe haven of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Fourteen Diocesan Rosary Congresses took place in October 2018, in conjunction with the historic Rosary Coast to Coast event on October 7 around the world. More dioceses signed up in 2019, and the momentum continues to grow. A predominantly lay-lead effort, the Rosary Congress Movement is a grass roots effort that seeks the blessing of the local bishop, and draws in the faithful from all over to supply adoration 24 hours a day for 7 days with the Rosary prayed at the top of every hour followed by silent adoration. Providing the adoration and rosary schedule is the main purpose of the Congress, however, to enrich the community's gathering together to worship, evangelize, and make reparation, a diocese can add daily Mass, a special evening Mass each day, Eucharistic processions, guided meditations on the mysteries of our Faith, confessions throughout the week, a literature table where people can find good resources for how to pray the rosary, and Consecration of the Family to the Immaculate and Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

If you wish to begin your own Rosary Congress, visit www.rosarycongressusa.org.

OVERVIEW OF A ROSARY CONGRESS

As previously stated, the Rosary Congress is a cenacle of prayer that hastens the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This truly spiritual experience is a foretaste of how beautiful the world will be when humanity returns to the love and service of God. It will be that period of peace foretold by Our Lady of Fatima wherein the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus will be the center of our lives and the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with the fire of His love to renew the face of the earth.

The Cenacle or upper room in which the Eucharist was instituted at the Last Supper was also the scene of the first novena in preparation for the descent of the Holy Spirit. At His Ascension Jesus had asked His disciples to return to Jerusalem and await there the Gift He would send them at Pentecost. So they gathered in the cenacle around the Holy Mother in continuous prayer. Now, Our Lady invites us to gather with her again in cenacles of prayer and fraternity to await the second Pentecost.

In that spirit, a Rosary Congress desires to be nothing but a continuous cenacle. Following the Polish example, much time is spent in Eucharistic adoration while meditating on the central mysteries of our Faith in the prayer of the holy Rosary; conferences help to enlighten and strengthen our Faith; and all is enveloped in a spirit of penance and reparation for our sins and for the sins of humanity in order to call down God's mercy upon the whole world.

Finally, but far from least in importance, it is to be remembered that every Rosary Congress has the explicit desire and intention to be united with Our Holy Father, and to pray for his protection.

THE POWER OF THE ROSARY

After the official prayer of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours, the Rosary is the most powerful form of prayer. It is said that in 1214, the Blessed Virgin told St. Dominic that the principal weapon the Holy Trinity relies upon to reform the world is the Rosary. Throughout history there are numerous examples showing the power of Our Lady when humanity turns to her intercession through the Rosary. A few instances worth recalling:

- In 1571, the Rosary crusade of Pope St. Pius V is credited with saving Christian Europe from the invading Turks. The Catholic forces won a decisive victory over the formidable Turkish armada at Lepanto.
- In August 1945, the Russians mysteriously withdrew their forces from occupied Austria after a mere 10% of the Austrian people pledged to say the Rosary daily.
- In Brazil, devout praying of the Rosary prevented an attempted communist takeover in 1954.

- In our own day, the power of the Rosary is credited with the peaceful revolution in the Philippines. According to a public statement made by Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila, Our Lady personally intervened to protect her children from a military attack.