

Did You Know...

✠ News and trivia from our parish and the Catholic Church ✠
-- contributed by the Christ Child Church Women's Club --

Christ Child Catholic Church

Dedicated to Growth in Christ and to the Challenges of Loving Service

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The Rosary -- Why is it called that?

Those lovely collections of beads and crucifixes, done in such a vast array of art and inspired creativity -- they don't much look like roses, or flowers of any kind. Why the curious name?

The answers are rich in fact and legend, and as beautiful as the objects themselves.

The simplest answer is deceptively so -- the word 'rosary' derives from the Latin 'rosarium', which translates to "garland of roses". But this can be more confusing than illuminating, especially when one knows that early Rosaries were sometimes created from knots in a simple string.



The deeper answer comes from legend: One day, Mary came upon a monk who was reciting prayers over rosebuds. She took the rosebuds from his lips, and wove a garland for her head. This beautiful image gave deep meaning to

the words rosarium/rosary, and they have represented the prayers and their deep spirituality ever since.

The actual sequence and content of the prayers changed considerably over time, and with the practice variations came variations in the physical Rosary as well. Then, around the 16th century, several Popes established a recognized structure for the prayers and sequences, and this helped to semi-standardize the physical Rosary.



Even then, the artistic content of the Rosary allowed it to assume many shapes and configurations. Some artworks were diminutive, only ten beads, upon which the Decades were counted multiple times. Others were more elaborate, both in art form and bead count.

But of course, the Rosary beads are only a lovely reminder, a charming assist to keep our prayers aligned and sequenced properly. And those prayers are a deep and soulful connection to Mary, to Jesus, and to all that they stand for and have taught us. Small wonder that we wish to say those prayers correctly, meaningfully, and with all the devotion they deserve.

Still Curious? See these links ---

<https://aleteia.org/2018/05/06/why-is-this-popular-devotion-called-the-rosary/>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosary>

--- *Karin and Greg Illies*

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