

Fr. Peyton did not invent the Rosary. The Rosary comes from an ancient tradition and has undergone many different manifestations and ramifications over the years. It can be traced in some form or other all the way back to the praying of the 150 Psalms from the Old Testament.

When the praying of the Our Father and eventually the Hail Mary replaced the 150 Psalms, people were encouraged to think about the events of the life of Jesus: the Joyful, the Sorrowful and the Glorious Mysteries. Of course now we also have The Luminous Mysteries to fill in that rather large gap between the “Finding in the Temple” and the “Agony in the Garden.” These four mysteries make up the whole ministry of Jesus.

Fr. Peyton never heard of the Luminous Mysteries. They were instituted a few years after his death. But if he did ever pray the Luminous Mysteries, I have often said that his favorite mystery would have been the “Wedding Feast of Cana.” Not because of the water being turned into wine but because of the profound words spoken by Mary, “Do whatever He tells you.”

Fr. Peyton spent his life “Doing whatever He told him.”

... to the ends of the earth spreading the importance and the joy of the Family Rosary.

... to the ends of the earth spreading the peace that comes from a world at prayer.

... to the ends of the earth spreading the love and devotion to a Mother who loves us and a God who welcomes us into His family.

Families do many things together: they go to football games together, they go on vacation together, they live together, and they eat together. Let us hope as we continue to pray for the Beatification of Fr. Peyton that families will have a renewed appreciation of the thing that was most dear to him. Let us hope that we will continue as a family to pray together.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Pray for us.

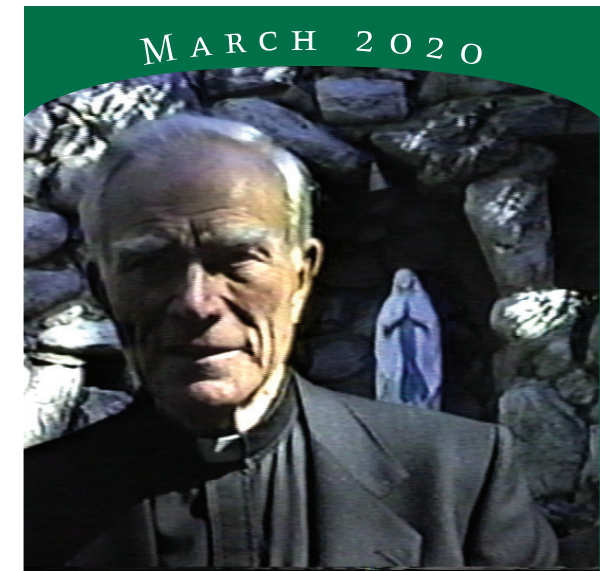
Now and forever.

AMEN

Rev. Steve Gibson, C.S.C., is the spiritual director at the Fr. Peyton Centre in County Mayo, Ireland. The ministry at the Fr. Peyton Centre is tremendously varied in its scope. It provides meals on wheels to many of the local residents. It has a vibrant youth ministry program that reaches well over a thousand young people each year from four different Dioceses and has a regular weekly program for senior citizens. The Centre includes a restaurant, a gift shop, a prayer chapel, beautiful grounds, and an auditorium for concerts, funeral wake services, days of prayer and reflection. Fr. Peyton is arguably the most famous graduate of the University of Notre Dame and we are proud to serve here in a ministry dedicated in his honor.



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## MONTHLY REFLECTION SERIES

### Venerable Patrick Peyton and Family Prayer

Rev. Stephen Gibson, C.S.C.

In the summer of 1989, I had the distinct privilege of accompanying Fr. Patrick Peyton as he visited the campus of the University of Notre Dame. He spoke of the importance to him of these particular places: the Grotto, Sacred Heart Basilica, the Dome, Holy Cross Seminary, the Cemetery.

At the Grotto, he spoke of a time when he had come there late one evening as a seminarian to “say good bye.” He was convinced that he no longer had a vocation and was leaving the seminary to return to his family. But as he prayed there by himself he was overcome, not by a vision or words from some heavenly voice, but by a feeling of being embraced by Mary’s love. It was this embrace that led him back to the seminary and years later supported him in his struggle with tuberculosis. It was this same embrace that took him to the ends of the earth in his ministry.

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**“ Holy Mary,  
Mother of God,  
Pray for us.  
Now and forever. ”**

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In front of the Dome, he spoke enthusiastically about the education that he had received at the university that enabled him to speak confidently to princes and paupers, presidents and politicians, people of every race and religion. At the cemetery, he prayed over the graves of some of those teachers and the superiors who gave him the permission he needed to do what he had promised to Our Lady.

During this interview with Fr. Peyton, a year or so before he died, he was insistent that everyone should understand that his mission was to promote not just “the Rosary” but “the Family Rosary.”

It was his belief, founded firmly on his personal experience, that there was no better place to learn our faith and practice our faith than in the family.

He said that the greatest words that he ever heard spoken by anyone were the words that he heard from his father, kneeling with his family, in that little cottage not far from here where I am writing this message, “I believe in God.” And they prayed the Rosary, the Family Rosary.

Words don’t make a prayer. The thought behind the words is what makes words a prayer. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “When you pray, do not use a lot of meaningless words like some people

do, thinking that God will hear you just because you use a lot of words.”

God already knows what you want or need. You need to find a quiet place in your mind and in your heart where you can become aware of what you really need. Where you can become aware of the God who loves you. No better place to find that than in your family.

During that last conversation that I had with Fr. Peyton, he gave me his description of the Family Rosary.

A small child sitting in his mother’s lap mindlessly fingering the beads but learning from the discipline of the others that there is something important going on here.

An older child learning to say the words and learning how to recite the prayers along with the others and beginning to understand what it all means. Then he said that his hope was that eventually some of them would learn how to contemplate on the mysteries of the life of Jesus and relate it to their own lives and family.

“Saying the Rosary” is using a lot of words over and over and over again.

“Praying the Rosary” is using the thoughts behind those words to take us to a place where we can relate that particular Mystery to our own lives. The Mysteries of the Rosary are the mysteries of our lives.

