



## Thoughts on the Journey...

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The room of the Hospice unit had an orange glow cast from the lampshade of the light next to his bed. It was the early morning hours

of February 16, 2010. I remember it well because it was my Dad's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and also the day he would pass from this life to the next. Someone from our family was with him at all times during his last days. On this day, my three children and I decided to spend the night in his room. He was barely conscious at this point, but once in awhile his eyes would flutter and I would wipe his head with a cool cloth, moistened his lips with a small sponge, and talk to him hoping he could hear the things I wanted him to hear from me.

It was approximately 3 a.m., and I was beginning to feel drowsy. Since there was no way on God's green earth that I was going to miss a minute of the life that remained in my dad, I decided to pray the rosary with him. My father was devoted to the rosary in the latter years of his life; he prayed it faithfully. As I started, he softly began to mouth the words of the prayers with me. I was overcome with joy that I could hear his voice again. His voice was peaceful and sometimes his words were broken, but I could hear him. I wanted to wake everyone that loved him so they could hear him too. It was Tuesday, so we were praying the Sorrowful Mysteries. On the fourth decade, his eyes opened, he squeezed my hand, looked at me and said, "Do you know how proud I am of you?" Those were the last words I heard my dad say to me. He could not have said anything more profound or beautiful. I needed to hear those words from his mouth because, on some level, I always felt that I had disappointed him. I leaned over and kissed his forehead and then continued with the rest of the rosary.

The fourth decade of the Sorrowful Mysteries is *Jesus Carries His Cross*. I believe it was a gift from heaven, that during the recitation of that mystery the cross of feeling like I was a *disappointment* was lifted from me and the cross of my father's suffering was lifted from him. It was the first of many miracles that I have personally witnessed as a result of praying the rosary.

October is the month of the Holy Rosary. This year is also the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Our Blessed Mother's

apparitions at Fatima when she urged the world to pray the rosary. The Blessed Virgin Mary promised to Saint Dominic and to all Christians, Fifteen Promises to those who recite the Holy Rosary:

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall **receive signal graces**.
2. I promise my **special protection** and the **greatest graces** to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary shall be a **powerful armor against hell**, it will **destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies**.
4. The Rosary will **cause virtue** and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the **abundant mercy of God**; it will **withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities**, and will **lift them to the desire for eternal things**. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary, **shall not perish**.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred mysteries shall **never be conquered by misfortune**. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just **he shall remain in the grace of God**, and become **worthy of eternal life**.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary **shall not die without the sacraments** of the Church.
8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have **during their life and at their death the light of God** and the **plentitude of His graces**; at the moment of death they **shall participate in the merits of the saints** in paradise.
9. I shall **deliver from Purgatory** those **who have been devoted to the Rosary**.
10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall **merit a high degree of glory in Heaven**.
11. You shall **obtain all you ask** of me **by the recitation of the Rosary**.
12. All those who **propagate the Holy Rosary** shall be **aided by me in their necessities**.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the **advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death**.
14. All **who recite the Rosary** are my sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters of my only Son Jesus Christ.
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a **great sign of predestination**.

Our Blessed Mother is our Advocate. Regardless of what you are going through in your life, it's never too early to begin praying the rosary.