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MISSION MESSAGE

**Uniting Hearts in Prayer:
World Mission Rosary**

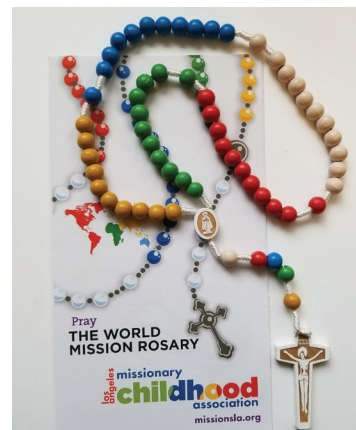
*By Shannon Kowalski
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The World Mission Rosary, also known as the Rosary of the Nations, was introduced by Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in the 1950s. Its design is distinctive, featuring colored beads representing five different regions of the world, each assigned a specific prayer intention.

The white bead represents Europe — the seat of the Pope; green represents Africa, for the growth of faith; red symbolizes the Americas, calling to mind the fire of faith that brought missionaries to America; blue signifies the Pacific Islands, for peace; and yellow stands for Asia, for missionary efforts in the morning light of the East. This innovative approach encourages Catholics to pray not only for their personal intentions, but also for the universal needs of the Church and of the world.

As May unfolds, Catholics around the world celebrate the



month dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God. It is a time when believers turn their hearts and minds to the Blessed Mother, seeking her intercession and guidance. May, fittingly, is also a time to reflect on Mary's role as Our Lady Queen of Peace, a title that magnifies her maternal concern for the well-being and harmony of humanity.

At the heart of the World Mission Rosary's intentions lies a profound call for peace, particularly in regions ravaged by conflict and strife. Among these regions, the Holy Land holds a special significance as the birthplace of Christianity and a focal point of religious tension.

The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, marked by decades of violence and displacement, has resulted in immense suffering for both Israelis and Palestinians. In the Holy Land, the call for peace is not merely a political aspiration but a deeply spiritual one. It resonates with the prayers of millions of Christians who long to see the land where Jesus walked, preached, and died and rose from the dead, restored to a state of harmony and tranquility.

The World Mission Rosary

serves as a tangible expression of solidarity with the suffering and a channel for invoking God's grace upon those embroiled in conflict.

Pope Francis has consistently emphasized the importance of prayer as a means of promoting peace, reconciliation, and dialogue among nations. In his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* ("The Joy of the Gospel"), he writes, "Peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle while others have to make do as they can."

The World Mission Rosary embodies this vision of peace as a holistic and inclusive reality, encompassing social justice, reconciliation, and the common good.

The World Mission Rosary is not merely a string of beads but a profound expression of faith, solidarity, and compassion. As Catholics lift up their hearts in prayer during the month of Mary, we stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, asking for God's mercy and grace upon all who suffer amidst the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In a world marred by division, the World Mission Rosary reminds us of our shared humanity and our common destiny, urging us to work tirelessly for peace, justice, and reconciliation.

I invite you to join me in praying the rosary during the month of May, uniting our intentions with those of countless others around the world. If you happen to have a World Mission Rosary, pay special attention to the yellow beads while praying for peace in the Holy Land.

Through Mary's maternal intercession, let us seek the grace to be instruments of God's peace in a troubled world. Our Lady Queen of Peace, pray for us!



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