

Authentic praying of the Rosary brings healing, counsels Benedict XVI

Vatican City, May 5, 2008 / 10:30 am (CNA).- On Saturday, the Holy Father presided at the praying of the Rosary in the Roman Basilica of St. Mary Major. He noted that when one prays the Marian prayer authentically, it brings peace and reconciliation.

Pope Benedict reflected on his experiences with the Rosary especially during May, the month of Mary. He recalled how evenings in May "evoke pleasant memories" of paying "homage to the Virgin Mary." He also noted that "the holy Rosary is not some pious practice relegated to the past, a prayer of distant times to be thought of nostalgically. Indeed, the Rosary is experiencing what is almost a new springtime."

The Rosary is especially needed today, because it "helps us to place Christ at the center, as did the Virgin who meditated upon everything that was said about her Son and upon what He Himself did and said. When we recite the Rosary we relive important monuments of the history of salvation, we again go over the various stages of Christ's mission. With Mary we turn our hearts to the mystery of Jesus."

The Holy Father called on the Blessed Mother to help us "welcome within ourselves the grace that emanates from these mysteries, so that through us this grace can 'irrigate' society, starting with our everyday relationships, purifying it from many negative forces and opening it to the novelty of God."

The Pontiff added that the Marian prayer can bring healing to the world. "The Rosary, when it is prayed in an authentic manner - not mechanically and superficially, but profoundly - brings peace and reconciliation. It contains the healing power of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, invoked with faith and love at the heart of each Hail Mary."

Benedict XVI then called on those present to ensure they remained united to Mary during these days leading up to Pentecost, "invoking a renewed effusion of the Holy Spirit for the Church." In conclusion, he also entrusted them with "the most urgent intentions" of his ministry: "the needs of the Church, the great problems of humanity, peace in the world, the unity of Christians, and dialogue between cultures", as well as the pastoral objectives of the diocese of Rome.