

## **Have your children lost their Catholic faith? Pray the Family Rosary even more.**

Consider St. Monica and her unceasing prayers for the return of her son St. Augustine.

(LifeSiteNews) — Why shut the barn door after the horse has bolted? This useful idiom has stood the test of time since the 14th century.

For some, this may describe the Family Rosary landscape of the 21st century. With increased interest in Catholic tradition, inspired by the renewal of the Traditional Latin Mass, Catholic families are returning to the recitation of the daily Family Rosary to pass on their faith to their children.

But for some Catholic families, there is a sad reality. Some have older or adult children who have already lost their faith. For them, this idiom seems sadly applicable. They have reasoned, “It’s too late for us! Our kids have left the Church years ago and they’re not coming back.” Translation: The horse has bolted the barn and he’s not likely returning – too late to close the barn door. They may even employ another idiom: It’s too little, too late (for the Family Rosary for our family).

But Catholic reality suggests the polar opposite!

With children in a family leaving the faith, the situation becomes an even more urgent call for the remaining family members to pray the Family Rosary every single day. The intention of each Rosary should be for these children to return to Holy Mother Church. Asking Jesus through His Holy Mother and Her Holy Rosary every day is a powerful practice.

Father Hugh Thwaite, SJ, advised, “To recover our Faith (in the 21st century) we have a great battle on our hands – a long war. Our main assault weapon in this war is the Rosary. In the plight in which families find themselves today, I’d say without the Rosary, defeat is inevitable; with it, victory certain. If we mean by victory, the salvation of everyone in the family and the passing on of the Faith to the next generation.”

If the fallen-away children still live under the roof of the parents, they should be invited to pray the Rosary with the family. Certainly, there is no need to share the Rosary intention with them. The parents know why they are praying.

Father Thwaite reflected, “When I meet parents who say their children have lapsed and they don’t say the Rosary every day for them, it’s shocking, really. Parents have a responsibility for their child’s salvation. And, any mother or father have a duty to say the Rosary for their children’s salvation.”

So, pray relentlessly for them.

## Consider St. Monica & Her Wayward Son

In the rich history of Catholic saints, one learns that this is precisely what St. Monica did to bring her son, St. Augustine, into the Catholic Church way back in the 4th century.

Augustine was not exactly a model youth. In fact, he seemed to love his life of sin. He is said to have loved his waywardness. In his famous manuscript, *Confessions*, he describes a time when he and some friends stole fruit from a neighbor's garden – not because they wanted the fruit but because it was not permitted. St. Augustine wrote, “I loved my own errors.”

Undeterred by her son's love for the wayward life, St. Monica prayed relentlessly. She continued to do so on the advice of her spiritual director St. Ambrose when she had moved to Milan. Almost always, St. Monica prayed to the point of weeping. She did not want her child's soul to be lost. And she did not give up!

On one noteworthy occasion, St. Ambrose consoled St. Monica, who was once again in tears. He famously and beautifully prophesied to her, “Woman, the child of so many tears shall never perish.” St. Ambrose was prescient. Augustine became a Catholic, a Bishop, a Doctor of the Church, and a saint. His conversion was the result of 12 years of prayer by his saintly mother. Let St. Monica be our guide.

Living in the 4th century, St. Monica did not have access to the Holy Rosary. St. Dominic did not receive it from Our Blessed Lady until the early 13th century. But we do! And the Family Rosary can be the most powerful version of Our Lady's Rosary.

St. Louis de Monfort taught, “When people say the Rosary together, it is far more formidable to the devil than one said privately, because in this public prayer it is an army that is attacking him. He can often overcome the prayer of an individual, but if this prayer is joined to that of other Christians, the devil has much more trouble getting the best of it. It is easy to break a single stick, but if you join it to others to make a bundle it cannot be broken.”

So, close the barn door if you must, but keep the corral gate open – and pray the Family Rosary every day for their joyful return. Recall what the father said on the return of the Prodigal Son, “Let us eat and make merry; because this my son was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and is found.” (St. Luke 15)

St. Monica, pray for us!