

prosper our efforts and no prayer succeeds so well as that which is proved sincere by work.

Prayer is always needed when there is question of leading even one soul to perform one good action. It is needed more especially when the good action is to be repeated, and when we are striving to acquire a virtue by such constant exercise of goodness. It is never more needed than when the good thing sought for is more a gift freely given by God than the ordinary grace which He deigns to extend to our human efforts as if we were in some way entitled to it. Devotion is such a gift, a gift that we can cultivate once we have obtained it, but which must come in the first instance freely from the hands of God. It is, in its general sense, any increase of faith, hope and charity, or, what is the same, any renewal or advance in a disposition to serve God, any readiness to do His will, any strengthening of the ties that bind us to Him. It is, therefore, a confirmation of our religious sentiments, and as these, in the first instances, come freely from God, so, too, must devotion be His free gift; this is why we are to seek it so earnestly by prayer.

If prayer be needed to obtain devotion in its general sense, much more is it necessary for obtaining and for inducing others to seek any special devotion. Take, for example, this very devotion of the Rosary. Before we can hope to have many practice it, we must first remove the singular prejudices, which even some Catholics have against it, and then we must make all, even those who are well disposed towards it, realize that they can never acquire it, or derive the proper benefits from it without constant prayer to this end. This then is the work and the prayer that our General Intention calls for during the month of the Rosary and it is this we shall endeavour to explain.

It is not easy to forget the popular simile between the