



A Tribute to Our Lady of the Rosary

The Family Rosary for Peace

401 ORANGE STREET

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611

By Msgr. Joseph A. Cirrincione
(Last of a Four-Part Series)

About the middle of last August, several strangers turned up to participate in the nightly broadcast of the Rosary Hour. After the broadcast they asked to speak with me. My usual routine is to have my evening meal after the program and then, after a look at the newspaper, to go to chapel for my Holy Hour and the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours (the Divine Office or Breviary for those as old as I am). So I usually try to keep these interviews brief.

These people were from a suburb of Syracuse. They had been listening to The Family Rosary for Peace for years over WRLX, Auburn. But they had friends in the city of Syracuse who could not get the program. Would I consider broadcasting it on a Syracuse station?

I thought to myself, "Poor dears, if you only knew how bad your timing is." But I politely mentioned that I was just getting over having to drop a station in Buffalo and was hardly in the mood to go through a similar experience in Syracuse. Still, I decided, I mustn't speak for Our Lady. So I gave them two practically hopeless tasks to let them find out for themselves the formidable odds in the way. I told them they would have to find a Syracuse radio station that would carry our program live at 6:30 p.m. I would consider no other time. And if, through some miracle, they should find such a station, then they would have to organize a committee to publicize the program, get people to listen and to send contributions. I explained the advantage we have in our own diocese where the bishop endorses the program, sends out an annual letter of appeal for support, and where the Courier-Journal is ready to provide publicity. In another diocese, the people have to do all this. They agreed to begin with problem one — getting the radio station.

Less than a week later, I received a phone call from my Syracuse friends. They had a station in Syracuse that would carry our program at 6:30 p.m.

I could hardly believe my ears. As they went on to explain, I could see the hand of Divine Providence clearly intervening once again. Station WYRD was a Syracuse religion-oriented AM station but a day time station only. So it had to go off the air at sundown. But they had recently purchased a powerful FM station from the CBN Network, WOIV, and when approval of the sale came through, they would carry our program at 6:30 p.m., on WOIV, and from April to September inclusive, also on WYRD. My friends asked to come and see me the following Saturday, which would be the feast of the Queenship of Mary.

That morning, the phone rang at 11 a.m. Lou Schriver, the owner of WYRD, Buffalo, was on the line. He said that he had given the matter of our program a lot of thought since we had left and decided to put us on at 6:30 live if we would come back.

My head was in a whirl. Again I could hardly believe my ears. And the irony of it all! A month previously I would have jumped at the offer. Now, as I explained to him, I was expecting people that very afternoon to discuss our going into Syracuse. I couldn't give him any answer until I saw how that project turned out. "Well, the time is yours, whenever you want to come," he said. My Syracuse friends did come that afternoon. We discussed the formation of a Syracuse Committee of The Family Rosary for Peace which they agreed to start organizing as soon as they returned home. And I made my Holy Hour that evening, not kneeling, not sitting, but floating on Cloud Nine.

But clouds have a way of changing from the white fluffy kind, lazily drifting across the sky, to the menacing kind — thunderheads. My cloud became a thunderhead the following Tuesday when the general manager of WRLX, Auburn, called to say he was coming down to see me. He arrived Thursday, Aug. 27. And this time, he dropped the bomb. WRLX was going to change its image, change its format from beautiful music to country music, and... "Let me guess," I cut in. "You want us off the station?" He nodded his head slowly but firmly. "How long do I have?" I asked like a condemned man. "Till Oct. 1." We discussed possible replacements of his station in Auburn and Central New York, i.e., between Rochester and Auburn and down to Watkins Glen. He pulled out his little book and, after studying it, could find only three stations that might cover roughly a similar area.

After he left I was haunted by the prospect of being turned down by all three stations. I turned to Our Lady for guidance. Whom shall I ask to check out these stations for me? For this was a delicate task, one for a professional, for one in the industry who knew his way around radio circles and who thought well enough of the Rosary

Rosary on the Air

The Family Rosary Network may be heard at 6:30 nightly over the following stations:
 WWWG, Rochester (1500 AM);
 WXXY, Watkins Glen (104FM);
 WSFW, Seneca Falls (99FM and 1110AM);
 WOIV, Syracuse (105FM);
 WYRD, Syracuse (1540 AM), and
 WXRL, Buffalo (1300AM).

program to give it a good buildup. Our Lady must have answered me, for only one name came to my mind, and that, with the certainty that he alone could do it: Joe Frizzeri, general manager of WXXY, Watkins Glen. On more than one occasion, he had come to my rescue during the two years we had known each other. If it could be done, he would do it.

I called him and got exactly the response I had prayed for. He would be glad to contact the three stations and get back to me in a few days. From that moment, I felt the matter was completely out of my hands and in Our Lady's hands... and Joe's. Joe did call me a few days later, as he had promised, and had good news for me. WSFW, Seneca Falls' AM and FM stations, would take on our program at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 1. There were details to be worked out but Joe said he would handle everything for me.

(I wrote the above on Labor Day, Sept. 7. There were still serious problems, so I decided to wait till they were solved before continuing. The following then, is a chronicle of what ensued.)

Among the details to be worked out were how to get the program from Seneca Falls to Watkins Glen and from Rochester to Seneca Falls at the least possible cost. (AT&T telephone rates had gone sky high the last few months.) The first was Joe's problem, the second was mine.

A few days later Joe called to say that his engineer — a consultant engineer for half a dozen stations in Central New York — had been engaged by a Rochester radio station to come up on Saturday, Sept. 19. Perhaps I could talk to him then and get his advice. I jumped at the chance, leaving word with the Rochester station to have him call me.

I waited all day Saturday the 19th, but the call never came. In 10 days we had to be ready to switch to a new network hookup. And one of those precious weekend days had been wasted.

About 8 p.m. I decided to call the station. A strange voice answered. He asked who I was. When I told him, he answered excitedly: "Father, this is Frank Ciccoricco. Don't you remember me? I grew up around the corner from your rectory. Pierina Quadrini is my godmother, just up the corner. I live in Groton now and I'm a consultant radio engineer. I've been working here all day but I've been thinking about you. My partner just left for a few hours and so I'm free to see you. Why don't I to see you? Why don't I drive over?"

He arrived in 20 minutes. I took him over to the Rosary Chapel. On the way, he explained that the problem on the other end had been solved. But when he saw my problem, I could tell from the look on his face, it presented a much greater challenge. He had no tools with him. Nevertheless he took off his jacket, asked if I had a screwdriver, cutters, any cable (I had two short pieces), etc. He worked till midnight, all the while reminiscing with me about old times in the neighborhood. At midnight we were ready to check out the line. By 12:30 a.m., he was satisfied. Being a perfectionist, that meant he had not only solved the problem but had improved the quality of our output tremendously.

He called his partner at 1 a.m. and told him he was heading for a motel and would see him later in the morning. As I crawled into bed and realized the new network hookup was ready to operate the next night — No! that very night, for it was already Sunday morning — ten days ahead of time, my last thought was: "Dear Lady, if I write this up, who is going to believe it?"

FASHION SHOW

Geneva — A Fashion and Hair Style Show to benefit DeSales High School will begin at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 28, at Club 86 on Avenue E. Tickets, which include dinner, are available for \$15 by calling the school, 789-5111. Papillon Boutique and Hair Magic are involved in the benefit.

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