

Hold us, Mary



Bedtime at the Barberrys is nothing short of a production. There are bathtime adventures, pajama races, and our own version of “circle time” where we discuss the events of the day and our dreams for tomorrow. This is followed by stories, including:

- perennial favorites like “Goodnight, Goodnight Construction Site”
- new selections from the St. Joan of Arc library (our fabulous librarian, Courtney McNiel, always finds the perfect books for Collin)
- a chapter from our latest page turner from the Magic Treehouse Series

We used to end with quick prayers of gratitude and petition followed by one of our favorite lullabies, but since Lent began, Collin has added a new element to our culmination of each day.

Rather than giving something up for Lent, he chose to say a decade of the rosary before bed. He has had lots of practice in Mrs. Pesa, Mrs. Stauffer, and Mrs. Amato’s classes, so the flow of Our Fathers and Hail Marys comes as naturally to him as breathing. We haven’t added on the layer of the mysteries yet, but that is soon to come as he delves deeper into Jesus’ life, death, and Resurrection during his preparation for his First Eucharist. Instead, we allow ourselves to drift into a peaceful meditative state with each click of the beads.

Frank, who is almost in Kindergarten, and Leo, who enters pre-K in the Fall, have started chiming in with us. They are familiar with Jesus and Mary, but the prayers that comprise the rosary are still very new to them. The other night when we were about halfway through our decade, I heard Frank whisper, “Hold us, Mary, Mother of God.” I felt a warmth come over me and smiled.

His words were not a beginner’s mistake. He was making an observation I never considered. When we pray the rosary before bed, we can imagine ourselves being rocked to sleep in our Holy Mother’s arms. When I find myself under duress, I begin to pray the rosary. Mary is holding me at those moments, too. Any time we pray a

Hail Mary, we find ourselves in her loving embrace. I can't think of anywhere else
I'd rather be at times of need.