

# Most Holy Rosary (Great Escapes)

“Blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. ... He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord.”

1. Having arrived in the Pentapolis—the five cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, we find that there are no travel agencies save only ONE. The citizens of this place are allowed to travel between the five cities but there is no leaving this valley without going through this one travel agency which is the Holy Church. Only She can grant a visa enabling one to escape this polluted place. Only She can provide the required sponsor and guide to make the trip a success. Is this not the message of Lot and family. Only with Abraham sponsoring them from above could the travel agents of the Holy Catholic Church, the angelic guides, come and lead Lot up and out to safety.
2. Come to find out the best way to make contact with the travel agency is through the Beads of the Rosary. That is how we call, seeking sponsorship and the granting of that ticket to heaven... that visa opening the way to the greatest of all escapes.
3. As we all know, man loves stories about great escapes. The closer the heroes came to losing everything, the more thrilling they are. From the very beginning, we find that God and His travel agents are want to pull off some amazing escapes. The list is long... There was Noah and the Ark that God commanded him to make... the ark by which he and his family escaped the worldwide deluge that left fossils and seashells on the top of the highest mountains in the world. Remember how Isaac, by the hand of an angel, narrowly escaped the blade of sacrifice. Joseph escaped three times... one from the malice of his brothers, a second from the seductions of Potiphar's wife, and a third from the prison of the Pharoah. Moses escaped drowning as a tiny baby and lived to lead the Israelites in their epic escape out of Egypt. Jonas escaped the belly of a whale, Daniel the den of starving lions, and the three young men the fiery furnace.
4. All these foreshadowed the greatest of all escapes, that of Our Lord and Savior, rising from Death and the gates of Hades, in His Resurrection to Ascend into heaven. Our Lady followed with the great escape of her Assumption. The chains dropped from St. Peter and he walked free from the depths of a heavily guarded prison because the Church interceded for

him with angels to guide him; St. Paul escaped shipwreck and snake bite and many other trials. God loves to pull off great escapes.

5. We know these stories are also big money makers. Many books and films of our day involve great escape stories ... those from the prisons in Germany and Russia and Japan, from plane disasters, submarine sinkings, towering infernos, capsized ships to Apollo space craft.
6. But faith tells us, and history has shown us, that God especially loves to work great escapes for those who are willing to communicate with Him through His Holy Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Her Most Holy Rosary. We have many examples of this, such as the victories won against overwhelming odds at Lepanto, Vienna and other places.
7. Consider a more recent example: At the end of January of 1944 a military aircraft went down into the Atlantic ocean off the Florida Coast. Due to an unexpected soft landing, all three crewmen were able to get out and climb into a life raft without injury. After some days on the open seas, however, they ran out of water and then food. Captain Hart fared worse of all and after several capsizings of their boat in rough seas and swallowing lots of sea water, he neared death. Lieutenant Madden, a good Catholic, had been praying the Rosary lots and finally awakened the faith in the third member of their crew, Private Elsie. As Captain Hart approached death, Madden conditionally baptized him and he died a very peaceful death...coming out of his stupor one last time exclaiming Maddens name and then falling back with a large smile on his face.
8. Later after more days and many capsizings, private Elsie also gave up...he did not have the strength to get back into the boat even though Paul Madden tried and tried to get him in and talk him in... he disappeared beneath the waves. The Lieutenant wanted to jump in after him but something kept him back. Alone Madden continued to pray the Rosary and all the other prayers he knew. After days of such trials, he began to slip in and out of a dreamlike state. He also started to black out. During this time, he decided to open a packet of sea trace just to see if it worked. This trace colors the water so that it can be easily seen from a distance. He had a novena leaflet with him from his sister who was a nun (he had a sponsor). He kept praying it too. So weak was he that a breeze came and blew it out of his hands. He would not survive another capsizing!

9. But just then, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day (length of a novena!), he saw a tanker approaching. He thought he was dreaming. He was rescued. When taken on board, someone had to unclasp his hands to remove his rosary. He held it so tight that it was cutting his water swollen fingers. Then he learned that the tanker had only accidentally traveled this route because of missing its convoy and was trying to make up lost time. Then, too, it was the first time Madden had used the sea trace in the ten days since the crash. He had dumped it in the sea just in time for the crew to see it. He escaped certain death (cf. *Desperate Journeys and Abandoned Souls*, Edward E. Leslie, pp. 424-428). Such escapes here on earth are only signs of that great escape God wants to work for us when the time is right to be freed from this polluted valley, but we must make contact with His travel agency and begin to work on that exit visa and heavenly sponsor... by praying our Rosary always!