

RCIA, Session #15: An Etymology of the Rosary

The University of St. Francis

Rosary 📖

c.1440, “rose garden,” from L. *rosarium* “rose garden,” from neut. of *rosarius* “of roses,” from *rosa* “rose” (see *rose*). The sense of “series of prayers” is 1547, from M.Fr. *rosaire*, a figurative use of the word meaning “rose garden,” on the notion of a “garden” of prayers. This embodies the medieval conceit of comparing collections to bouquets (cf. *anthology* and M.L. *hortulus animæ*, “prayerbook,” lit. “little garden of the soul”). Sense transf. 1597 to the strings of beads used as a memory aid in reciting the rosary.

From the website <http://www.etymonline.com>