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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **434/246**(57) **ABSTRACT**

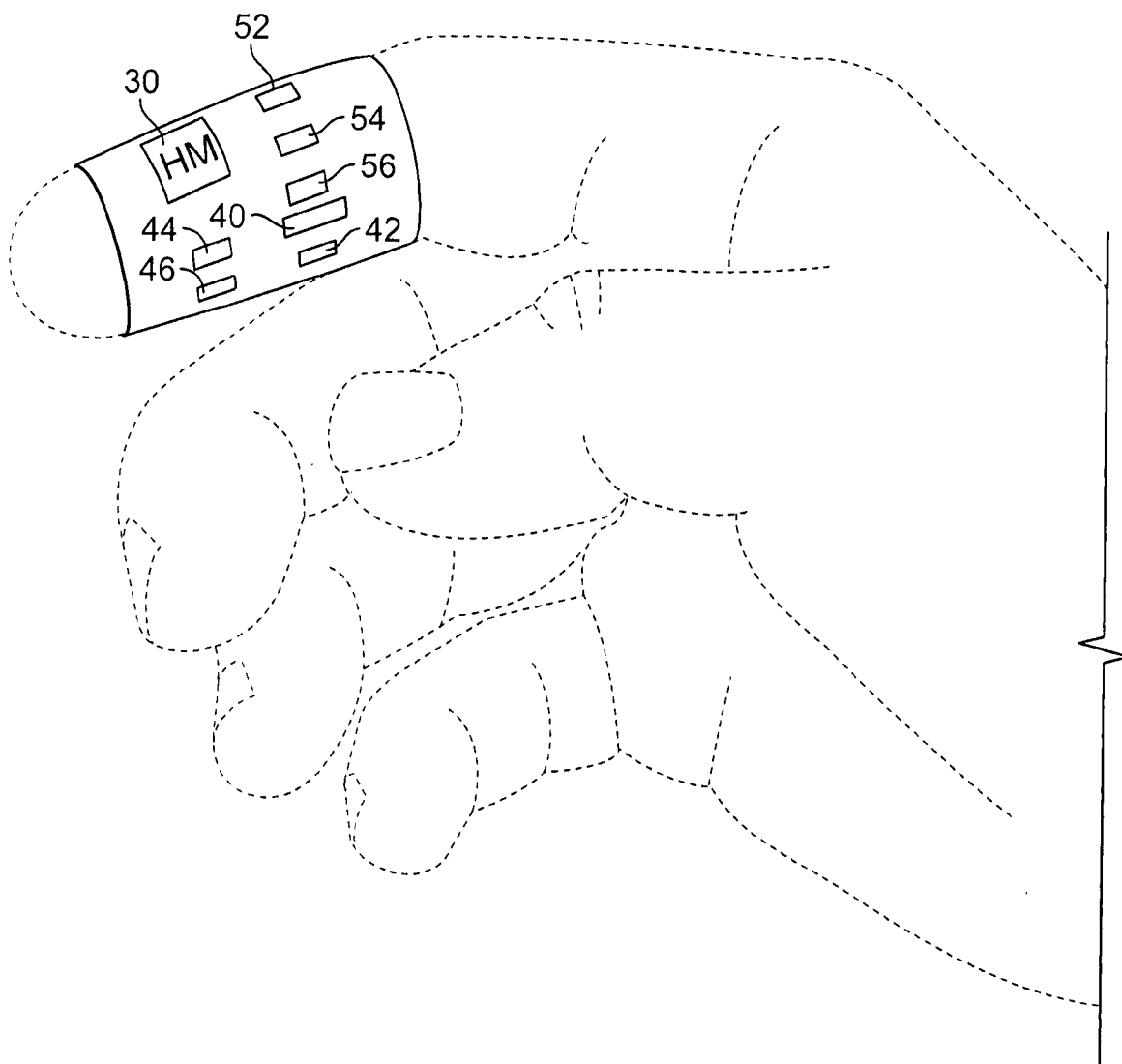
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A mechanical or computer-assisted electronics device, typically worn on one, two or three fingers of either hand to aid the user in saying and keeping track of the prayers of the Rosary. The device may be useful to a person saying the Rosary prayers while involved in other activities during a busy day, such as driving a vehicle, in public transportation, walking, etc. The system may be especially desirable when full use of both hands are needed at times, as well as when others in the area need not know that the user is deep in prayer. The user may wish to keep the hand with the device in a pants pocket, hidden in scarf or other clothing, covered by the other hand, or merely partly covering the device by the adjacent thumb. Growth to other prayer groups or sets of meditations and to prayers of other religions is disclosed.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/809,187**(22) Filed: **May 31, 2007****Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 60/813,880, filed on Jun. 15, 2006.



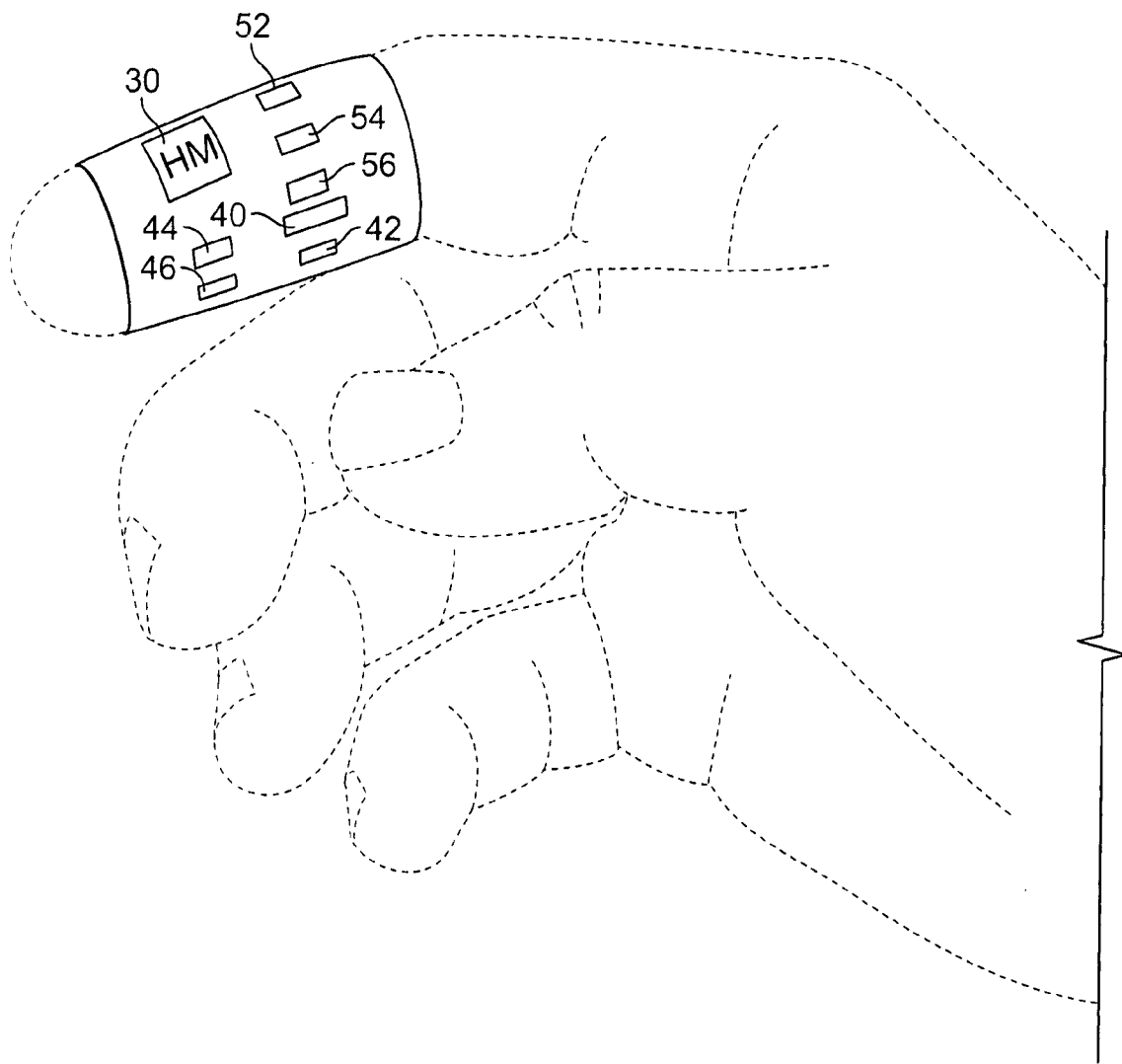


FIG. 1

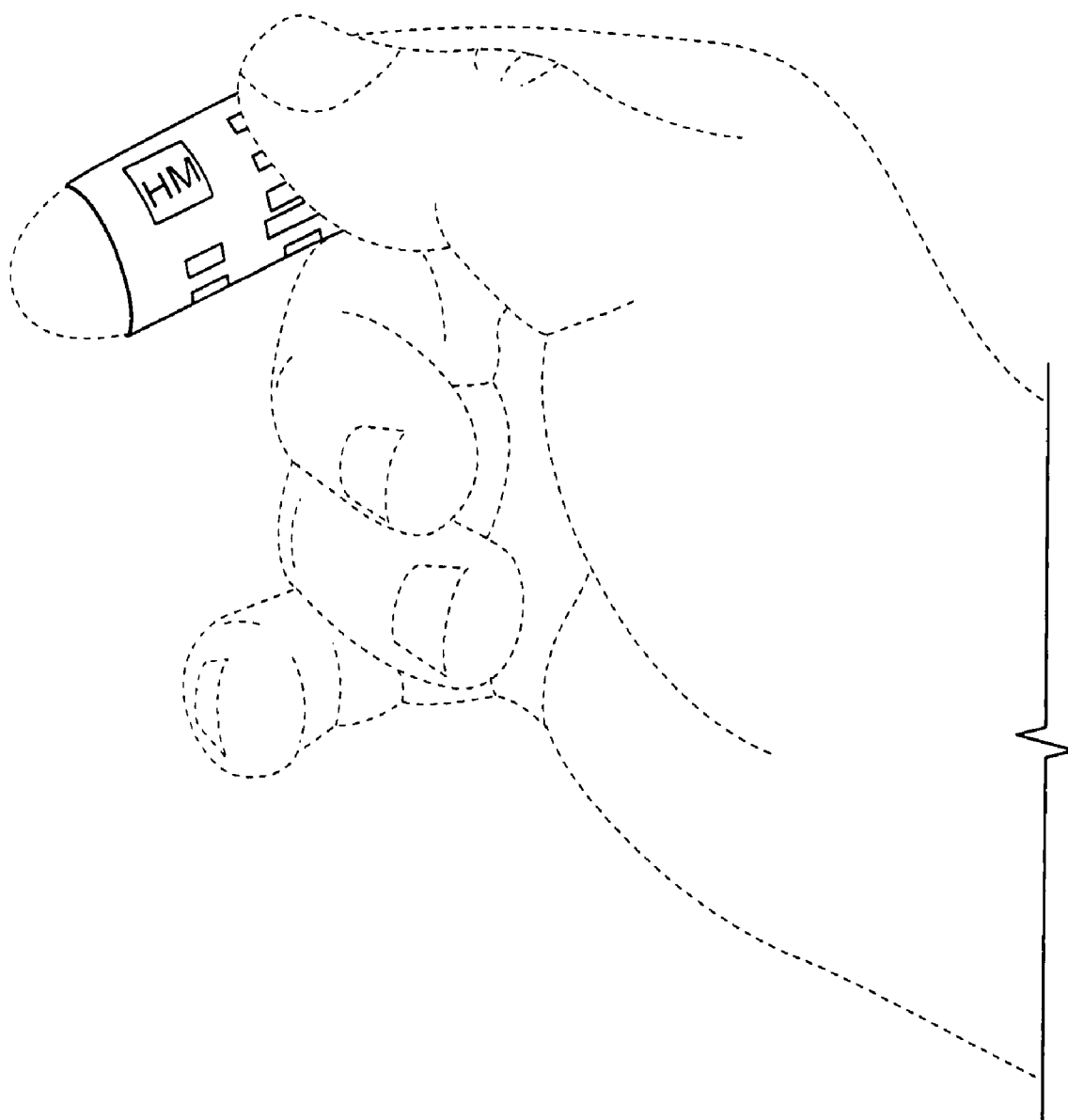


FIG. 2

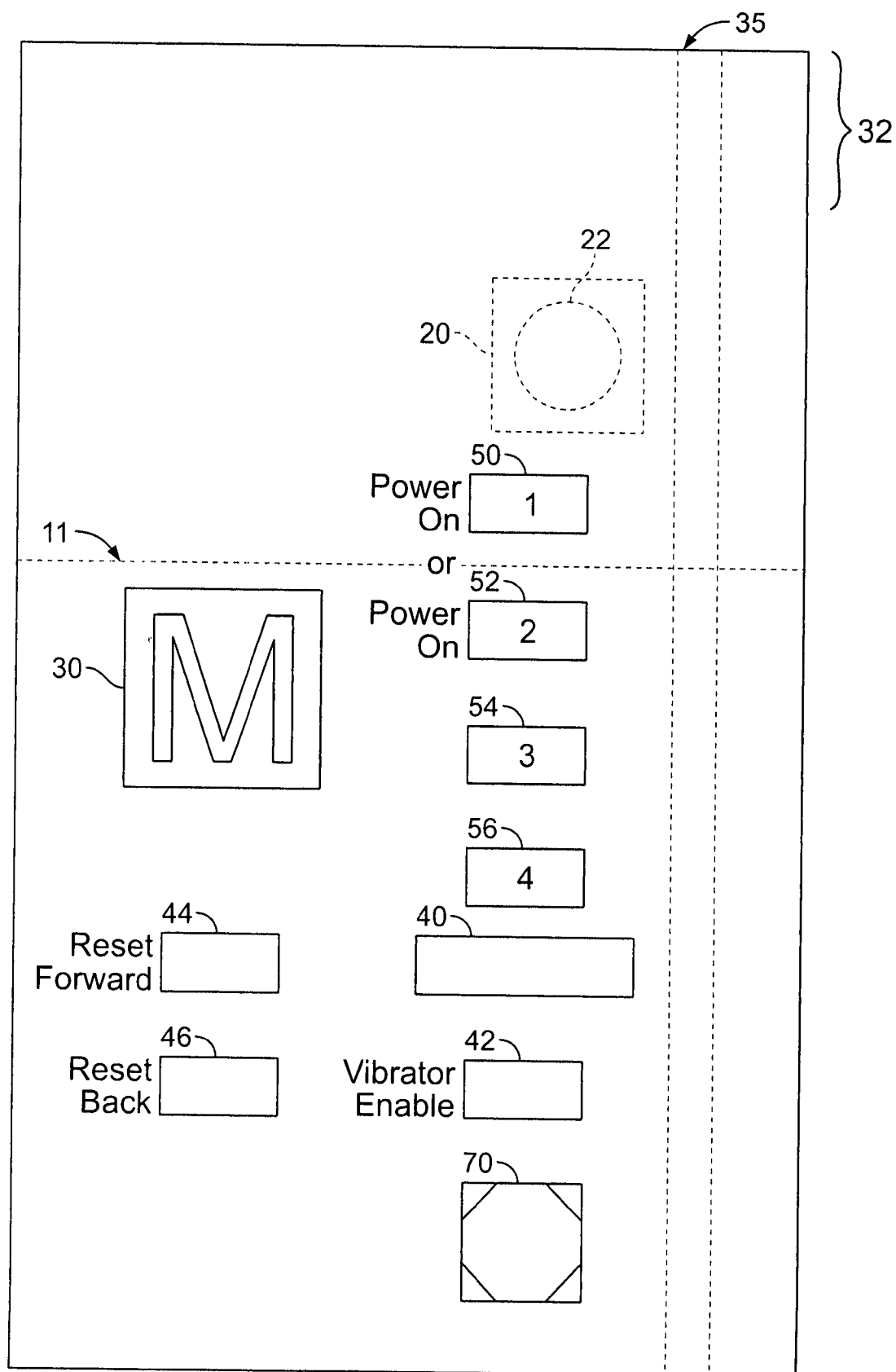


FIG. 3

PRAYER COUNTER

[0001] This application claims priority from provisional patent application entitled "A Unique System to Pray the Rosary—With Only One Prayer Bead" by inventor Frank P. Forbath filed Jun. 15, 2006 having U.S. Provisional application No. 60/813,880.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The invention is in the field of electronic prayer counters.

DISCUSSION OF RELATED ART

[0003] Christians and other faiths often pray several times a day. Prayer is vital to the lives of millions of people and allows countless souls to grow closer to God and to receive spiritual blessings from God. Prayer encourages, revitalizes and emboldens millions of people each day.

[0004] Prayer takes a wide variety of forms, customs and rituals. Sometimes, prayers are brief and spontaneous. Prayer is personal to some people who prefer to pray in private. Catholics who pray using the Rosary may feel out of place or embarrassed while counting in public using the fingers of one or both hands. Oftentimes, people who want to pray have difficulty finding time to do so. Therefore, a variety of portable Rosary devices have been invented to accommodate busy and mobile people.

[0005] Rosary beads have been used for hundreds of years, always including introductory prayers, followed typically by five groups of an Our Father prayer and ten Hail Mary prayers, followed by a Glory Be to The Father prayer. Rosary beads are well known in the art and have a long history and tradition. The Rosary beads can be made of crystal beads with a metal cross, wooden beads and a wooden cross, and these parts can be made of plastics, seeds, etc. Each Our Father prayer and Hail Mary prayer is said on an individual single bead. The Glory Be prayer is said without a bead at the end of each decade.

[0006] Simplified Rosary beads have also been used for some time. A smaller version has a chain of a single decade of beads, containing beads representing one Our Father prayer, ten Hail Mary prayers and a Glory Be prayer, and typically has a cross. This simplified Rosary size may be approximately $\frac{1}{5}$ th the size of a standard Rosary, and thus more portable for private prayer in public and less noticeable to others. The simplified rosary bead configuration with its reduced number of beads may still be too cumbersome for private prayer or public prayer. Also, a variety of mechanical and electronic Rosary prayer aids have been devised.

[0007] The Catholic Rosary prayers are well known to the users and are listed in many prayer books, e.g., Dominican Mission Manuel. The prayers in usual English translation are listed below, in part. The user recites the Apostle's Creed as follows:

[0008] I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord

[0009] In the Catholic Rosary the next prayer is the Our Father prayer which is as follows:

[0010] Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, . . .

[0011] The Catholic Rosary also includes the Hail Mary prayer. The Angel's salute to Mary—the first part of the prayer—reads as follows:

[0012] Hail, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

[0013] Each set of Hail Mary's ends with the Glory Be prayer which is as follows:

[0014] Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, Both now and ever,

[0015] The Catholic Rosary—when prayed in full—ends with the Hail Holy Queen, which is recited as follows:

[0016] Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry,

Because there are a number of different repetitions of the same prayers, a user can be assisted with an apparatus that keeps count of the prayers. Traditionally, this apparatus has been the Rosary beads.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the present invention as worn on a finger.

[0018] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the present invention showing a user advancing to the next prayer, as if the user were in the process of moving that "finished" bead down and then to move his thumb to the next bead on a Rosary apparatus—again sitting on top of his/her index finger.

[0019] FIG. 3 is a plan view of the present invention, as if slit at the bottom of the finger(s) and spread flat.

Similar callouts are used consistently in the drawings.

Terminology used Here

[0020] Apparatus: A Rosary of the type used for hundreds of years, typically containing five decades of prayer beads and containing introductory prayer beads.

[0021] Device: The invention's physical embodiment to aid in praying the Rosary.

[0022] Unit/Element: A portion of the device, such as electronic parts, including a computer and a display, other materials, etc.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0023] The following terms are useful in understanding the disclosure. The central processing unit 88 can be implemented in a wide variety of physical embodiments. For example, an ASIC chip is an application specific integrated circuit which is a custom integrated circuit. A computer can be a microcomputer or a microprocessor. The term computer here represents computation by computer, ASIC or other computational unit. In low volume production, field programmed logic arrays (FPLA) or similar units may be used for the computational tasks. These physical embodiments and resultant electronics methods are well known in the art and therefore are not further described. Also, flexible printed circuit embodiments are well known in the art and also not further described in this disclosure.

[0024] An electronic prayer aid device housing 10 is shown in FIG. 1 as a loop having near-paper-thin thickness and placed over the index finger of the right hand. The device housing 10 consists of a short tube of flexible,

preferably flesh-colored material. The loop formed as a flexible resilient tube could be made of plastic or fabric, and preferably expands to a certain degree so that it is adjustable in its diameter for differing size fingers or sets of fingers for small fingers of a child. Compact and flat electronics are mounted between the outside and inside surfaces of the tube.

[0025] For a majority of cases, a right-handed person will be using a right-handed version on the right hand. FIG. 1 shows the device with the thumb off the device before engaging in prayer or pausing between prayers. The device is equally convenient on the left hand, but a version that may be a mirror image layout can be implemented as a left-handed version. Either a right-handed or left-handed person can use both the left-hand or right-hand versions.

[0026] The device 10 should weigh less than one ounce and, when collapsed, the thickness is preferably no more than the thickness of a nickel, and can conveniently fit in a shirt pocket, eyeglass case or a small coin purse.

[0027] A person's hand is shown in dotted line. For a smaller hand, the index and next finger may be inserted. A small child may use the index and one or two or more fingers. The tube can be made having a smaller diameter that can size to the index finger of a small child so that a small child can optionally insert only the index finger. The top of the finger line 11—or near the top—is shown in FIG. 3 where traditionally a Rosary apparatus bead would rest while saying a prayer. (A beads Rosary apparatus user, after completing a prayer, pulls that bead down so that the next following bead now arrives at the top of the finger line 11.) This device, with the buttons shown, enables the user hence to simulate the prayer advancing of the Rosary apparatus heads.

[0028] The controls include a group of miniature pressure sensitive switches, shown as buttons. The buttons can be rectangular as shown, or elliptical, or in a wide variety of shapes. FIGS. 1 through 3 show four buttons, but two to five buttons may be used to signal the downward progress of the thumb (or other finger) to indicate completion of a prayer and advancement to the next prayer. Further, other types of contacts, such as a matrix of pressure contacts, or capacitor circuits, may replace the button switches.

[0029] The user while praying may rest the thumb near or on the top of the device 10, possibly pressing on the first prayer bead button switch 50, or on both the first prayer bead button switch 50 and the second prayer the button switch 52. As that prayer is being finished, the user then presses and slides the thumb over the lower prayer bead button switches which would be the third prayer bead button switch 54 and the fourth prayer bead button switch 56. To record the completion of a prayer, the thumb moves down, while sequentially pressing the switches from top to bottom. FIG. 2 shows the thumb approaching the bottom position. Thus, the thumb moves over the switches in a downward motion, just as a thumb would grasp a Rosary apparatus prayer bead and pull that prayer bead down from near the top of the index finger (finger line 11), so as to bring up the next bead. The progress and then completion of the forward movement of the switches is noted by the device computer implemented as a central processing unit 88, which advances the display to show the next prayer.

[0030] Ideally, the prayer bead button switches 50, 52, 54, 56 should be depressed in sequence beginning with the first prayer bead button switch 50 and ending with the fourth 56 or last prayer bead button switch. This would be the ideal

prayer bead advanced input. This sequence would show that a user intends to move a bead forward and go to the next bead. Because users may not be able to have sufficient dexterity—or may be slightly distracted as in driving in heavy traffic—to depress the prayer bead button switches in sequence, the following algorithm should be applied as equivalent prayer bead advance inputs. At least two switches should be sequentially depressed and switch movement should be in the forward direction from the lower numbered switch to the higher numbered switch to be an equivalent prayer bead advance input. The equivalent prayer bead advance input advances the sequence to the next bead when the switches are pressed within a predetermined time in sequence and the thumb is lifted from the highest number switch or any of the higher number switches, as long as two switches have been closed. The predetermined time can be a time such as a second, or as short as one fourth of a second when at least two switches are sequentially depressed and switch movement is in the forward direction from the lower numbered switch to the higher numbered switch. Preferably, the software prayer completion timer is reset approximately after two seconds without a closure of at least the two top switches. The software prayer completion time would be programmed or otherwise set into the central processing unit 88, which can include timing measurement in a wide variety of software and/or physical manifestations.

[0031] Therefore, the following sequences would be equivalent prayer bead advance inputs: Pressing the first prayer bead button switch 50, then pressing the second prayer bead button switch 52, then pressing the third prayer bead button switch 54 is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the second prayer bead button switch 52, then pressing the third prayer bead button switch 54, then pressing the fourth prayer bead button switch 56 is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the first and second prayer bead button switch simultaneously, then pressing the third and fourth prayer bead button switch simultaneously is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the first, second and third prayer bead button switch simultaneously, then pressing the fourth prayer bead button switch is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the second and third prayer bead button switch simultaneously, then pressing the fourth prayer bead button switch 56 is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the first and second prayer bead button switch simultaneously, then pressing the fourth prayer bead button switch 56 is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the first prayer bead button switch 50, then pressing the fourth or third prayer bead button switch is an equivalent prayer bead advance input. Pressing the second prayer bead button switch 52, then pressing the third or fourth prayer bead button switch 54 is an equivalent prayer bead advance input.

[0032] The following sequences should not be equivalent prayer bead advance inputs and would be exceptions to the general rule stated above: the first being sequential pressing of the first prayer bead button switch 50, then pressing the second prayer bead button switch 52; the second excluded sequence being sequential pressing of the third bead button switch 54, then pressing the fourth prayer bead button switch

56. Preferably, only these two embodiments are excluded as equivalent prayer bead advance inputs.

[0033] FIG. 3 shows a plan view of the device layout. The device housing **10** is shown as a flat flexible planar electronically enabled rectangular member that has its upper and lower edges joined together to form a tube housing. The dotted line on the tube represents the position that sits over the top of the index finger which is the top of finger line **11**. In the best mode, the tube housing is somewhat expandable in diameter and contains the controls and the display information on the left side.

[0034] The right side preferably includes a narrow slightly flexible section **35**. The flexible section **35** can be worn over the finger joint to facilitate more comfortable opening and closing of the finger and hand. The flexible section **35** can be an elastic band, or also an elastic fabric. The FIG. 3 shown device bottom portion is worn facing the user, for most of the control and display of the prayer counting function. The narrow flexible section travels parallel to the orientation of the finger providing finger relief.

[0035] A small vibration element **40** such as a flat Piezo-electric element can send one or more pulses of vibrations in the range of 10 to 200 Hz for validating the user's correct button sequence selection after completing each prayer or upon completing certain prayer sequence events. The vibration element **40** may also be used to validate other switch selections. The vibration element can also change frequency or pulsation pattern to denote a variety of verification signals. For example, a user finishing a first series of prayers such as a first decade can receive a single pulse. A user then finishing the next series of prayers such as a second decade can receive two pulses. A user then finishing the next series of prayers such as a third decade can receive three pulses. The user would receive the same number of pulses as the number of the series of prayers, traditionally typically until the user has finished the typical five decades (although other number of decades may be prayed), which according to traditional Rosary prayer sequence, the user may receive five pulses to remind the user that the user should now finish the Rosary with a Glory Be and a final prayer called the Hail Holy Queen.

[0036] Prayer-completion verification by the vibrator can be (1) at the end of each prayer, or (2) only at the end of the initial first three Hail Mary's and the end of the current decade (possibly with multiple pulses, depending upon the decade count, per above). The default operation upon Power On is preferably vibrator operation on the end of each prayer. This end-of-each-prayer default may be appropriate for first-time users. The default selection may be changed at any time, e.g., by rapidly depressing the vibrator enable/disable switch two or more times within one second or within some set period of time.

[0037] The vibrator Enable/Disable switch **42** is located directly below the vibration element **40**. The enable/disable is toggled by depressing the switch for approximately one second, and the selection can be changed at any time. The most recent default settings and the enabled or disabled state can be retained after power is turned off, by such means like flash memory.

[0038] The vibration element **40** optionally can verify selected Reset switch operation such as forwarding or backing through prayer sequences. The vibration element **40** may physically be wider than shown, so that verification can

more readily be confirmed by the thumb or other finger closing one of the reset buttons or the prayer advance buttons.

[0039] A display element **30**, shown in FIG. 3 as a single-character liquid crystal display (LCD), permits viewing of the status of the prayer and/or prayer group awaiting to be said or being said. The M displayed on the display represents the Hail Mary prayer. The display—for English—is preferably a 16-segment display that optionally also may have intermittent or constant backlighting from LED, phosphor luminescent or other source. The FIG. 3 display is shown as a single alphanumeric digit, but two or more digits may be used. In a two-digit version, HM can signify the Hail Mary prayer as seen in FIG. 1 and FIG. 2. More characters can be incorporated in a multiple character display. The display can be a higher resolution graphic display for displaying various languages. The display **30** and the two reset buttons preferably are on the left. Three of the four prayer advance buttons are normally seen by the user near the top, above the vibration element **40**. The back of the device is shown in FIG. 3 as containing the 1st button (a suggested location), as well as one or more miniature batteries **22**, enclosed in the battery pouch **20**. The battery **22** can be a thin battery.

[0040] The one character display may nonetheless show multiple characters by displaying a first character for a set length of time such as one second, then displaying a second character for a set length of time such as one second. Therefore, scrolling through the characters would allow showing of each character for a long enough time to allow the user to read the characters. Alternatively, the one character display may show multiple characters by continually displaying the last character. For example, if the first character is H corresponding to Hail, the second character is M corresponding to Mary, and the third character is 6 corresponding to the sixth Hail Mary. Thus, a single-character display may persist in displaying the third or any other character. Also, the one character display can show the multiple characters by persisting on the last character, but scrolling through the first two characters whenever the user initially presses a button, or releases all buttons. A blank screen between characters and/or after a series of characters for a short time may allow ease of reading. Similarly, a two or longer character display can be shown sequentially to provide a longer letter stream, hence more information.

[0041] The digit letters are preferably 0.27" high on the display **30**, so most persons without glasses can see them. In the above example, with the characters scrolling on the display, after the H/M/6, the H/M/7 will appear to indicate to the user to start the next Hail Mary prayer. Here, the slant /, termed 'virgule', indicates a display of successive characters.

[0042] An electronic speaker element **70**, in conjunction with and/or instead of the display and the vibrator, may be used to signal the user. The electronic speaker **70** is preferably flat and flexible, so that it conforms to the plastic tube housing **10**. The speaker element **70** can be programmed to output a wide variety of languages such as Spanish, Latin, German and English, matching the display text language.

Rosary Device Operation

[0043] First, the user puts the device over an index finger, or an appropriate number of fingers, and turns on the device

by pressing one of the power-on buttons, **50** or **52**. Upon a typical power-on (e.g., the device has not been used for several hours), the first prayer is displayed. The name of the first Rosary prayer would be the Apostles' Creed. In a seven-segment display, a (preferably) sixteen-segment display or other display, the display—for a two-character display—would show AC, representing the Apostles' Creed.

each decade, a numerical digit displayed on the next Our Father prayer can keep count of that next decade of prayers to be said—thus the second decade Our Father would be displayed as OF2. The start of the third decade would be displayed as OF3, etc.

[0048] A chart of the following Rosary prayers shows the traditional progression.

	Sequence	Abbreviation	Count	Letters	Remarks
Introductory	1	Apostles' Creed	1	AC	
	2	Our Father	1	OF	
	3	Hail Mary	3	HM	Faith, Hope and Charity
	4	Glory Be	1	GB	can be without a "bead"
First Decade	5	Our Father	1	OF	Start of 1 st decade
	6	Hail Mary	10	HM	
	7	Glory Be	1	GB	
Repeating 4 more Decades	8, etc				Repeat of Seq. 5 to 7, 4 more times
End of Rosary		Hail Holy Queen	1	HHQ	

[0044] During the recitation of each prayer, the user typically will start and continue to pray with the thumb at or near the top of the index finger, depressing button one and perhaps simultaneously also button two. After reciting the prayer, the user passes the thumb over the four bead buttons to advance to the next prayer. (Note here—for the Rosary apparatus user—that the device thumb movement is essentially equivalent to that on a Rosary apparatus, with the user holding the bead during a prayer typically at or near the top of the index finger. Then, upon completion of that prayer, the user's thumb slides that apparatus bead down from the index finger. The next subsequent bead is concurrently brought along and placed at or near the top of the index finger.) After the prayer completion on the device, the thumb is lifted again up off the device and then placed again upon the top of the index finger. FIG. 1 shows the hand with the thumb in that lifted off position.

[0045] After the completion of the Apostles' Creed, the name of the next prayer would be the Our Father. In a two-character display, the display would show OF representing Our Father. After completing that prayer, the user again advances the thumb by passing the thumb over the four bead buttons. The user is now ready to recite the first Hail Mary prayer. In a two-character display, the display would show HM, representing Hail Mary. After the user recites a first Hail Mary, typically meditating on Faith, the user again advances by passing the thumb over the four bead buttons.

[0046] The user is now ready to recite the second Hail Mary, meditating on Hope. After the user recites the second Hail Mary, the user again advances by passing the thumb over the four bead buttons. The user is now ready to recite the third Hail Mary, meditating on Charity. After the user recites the third Hail Mary, the user again advances by passing the thumb over the four bead buttons. The user then completes this set (and every set) of Hail Mary's by reciting the Glory Be prayer without advancing a bead.

[0047] The user is now ready to recite the first decade. Each decade consists of one Our Father, ten Hail Mary's and one Glory Be. Typically, a traditional Rosary prayer has five decades and ends with the Hail Holy Queen prayer. After

[0049] If a user gets tired, distracted or otherwise busy—as in driving in heavy traffic or stopped for lunch—the user has two options. The user can (1) simply lift the thumb off the device or merely rest the thumb on the top one or two buttons, and resume prayers at the last one being prayed or next to be prayed (for a delay of up to perhaps 2 hours) or (2) turn off the device, and an optional memory feature can save the last prayer so that the user can go to the last prayer where the user left off. This turn-off selection may require. CMOS circuitry, which can retain information status for an extended time, or require non-volatile memory of which flash memory is now widely available and discussed at length in various publications and in the prior art.

[0050] A reset switch is provided to permit change of prayer start or continuation points. The two reset buttons are Reset Fwd **44** & Reset Back **46**, with the Reset Fwd button **44** on top, just below the display. A single push of the Reset Fwd button **44** advances to the next appropriate prayer or prayer group, for example when in the middle of a decade, the advance is to the end of that decade and to the start of the Our Father (OF) of the next decade. A single Reset Back switch **46** closure resets the prayer to the start of the 1st Hail Mary of the current decade. Thus, if Reset Fwd button **44** is pushed, the user skips through most of the decade's prayers and merely wants to say the Glory Be and then advance to the next decade start. Conversely, if Reset Back switch **46** is pushed, the current decade is repeated from the start, after the Our Father.

[0051] Reset Fwd button **44** pushed twice rapidly will advance the Rosary prayers essentially almost to completion, such as to the start of the Hail Holy Queen. Reset Back switch **46** pushed twice rapidly will return to the Our Father prayer at the start of the first decade of that Rosary. Of course, turning Pwr Off & then Pwr On again—without the optional memory feature (2) above—will reset the device to the beginning of that Rosary, namely to the Apostles' Creed.

[0052] Power can be turned on by holding down the first or second prayer bead switches, but preferably not at the same time, and preferably for two seconds. If any other buttons are simultaneously also held down, the power is not enabled. Note that this power on design is to protect against inadvertent power on—for the device layout shown in the

Figures—when the device is not worn and is placed on a flat surface and a book or another heavy object is placed over it. Analogously, power can be turned off by holding down both the reset buttons for two seconds. Thus, the reset buttons also operate as power off buttons. Power also can be turned off automatically after a set amount of time such as two hours without any switch action.

Optional Device Operation

[0053] Optional items and growth can be incorporated into the device. These added features can be built in initially—to possibly allow for several device models—or added in for later production. The user can select a feature by pressing a combination of the above-detailed control switches and/or by depressing an added function select button(s).

[0054] One option may be for user selection of prayers in either English or Spanish, as an example. For foreign languages, the display may be augmented with accent marks, tilde, and other marks for the characters, as appropriate. For some languages of Asia, Middle East and other areas, a dot-matrix display (perhaps a 5×7 matrix of dots for each character) may be appropriate to present the information. These language and display options may be essential for the device to be used in place of various religions' prayer beads.

[0055] An electronic audio speaker may be included in the device (as noted above) or added later, and can have a recorded voice that reads a prayer to the user, or only states the name of the prayer. For beginners, the recorded voice reading the prayer, or merely the first one or two words of the prayer, may be helpful in memorizing the prayers and prayer sequences. Similarly, the device can output a recorded voice to remind the user about meditating on Faith in the first Hail Mary, on Hope in the second Hail Mary, and on Charity in the third Hail Mary.

[0056] The present invention also can speak (via an audio speaker) and/or merely display text and count the multiple Mysteries of the Rosary. The Rosary Mysteries are The Five Joyous, The Five Luminous, the Five Sorrowful and The Five Glorious Mystery sets. Upon powering on, the default Mystery set may be The Five Joyous Mysteries, or it may be the next Mystery set after the last prayed completed set, or the last prayed Mystery in that last not-completed set, as recorded in memory. Each of the five decades of a Rosary can be prayed while meditating upon by the corresponding live Mysteries of that set. For example, for the Joyous Mysteries, the (abbreviated wording used here for the) five are: The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Presentation and The Finding in the Temple.

[0057] The Mysteries of the Rosary thus may be specifically identified for the user in addition to merely identification of the appropriate start of a Rosary at the Apostles' Creed, e.g., AC1 for The Joyous Mysteries. By adding one or more display digits, text such as JOY can signify the Joyful Mysteries series. The word ANGEL can signify the Annunciation by the Angel, Visitation to Elizabeth by VISIT and Nativity and birth of Jesus signified by the letters BIRTH, etc. The characters for the words can be scrolled across the LCD screen or otherwise displayed one letter at a time, two letters at a time, or three letters at a time, as display examples.

[0058] The user may press the Reset Fwd button three or more times rapidly to advances to the start of the next Mystery set of the Rosary, as discussed above. After a

moments pause, another repeat of three or more rapid pushes of the Fwd button will again advance to the next following Mystery set sequence. Similarly, pressing Reset Back rapidly three or more times will back up the Mystery set selection.

[0059] Other sets of prayers or meditations can also be selected, displayed and counted by adding more digits such as a total of between 4 to 7, to allow display of many words and abbreviations. Further, by time-sequencing or scrolling multiple sets of words, more complex prayers and series of prayers can be presented to the user from the LCD display. The tube housing can be elongated so that it extends toward the second finger joint in the embodiment Where more characters or more screen space is needed. The best mode for an elongated housing on a right-handed device is to have the display, along with the reset switches on the left side of the finger joint, and the prayer completion switches and vibrator, along with the vibrator enable/disable switches, on the right side.

[0060] Examples of other meditations and prayers may include: (1) Stations of the Cross—the title or other identification of next of the 14 Stations being meditated upon would be displayed. The user may walk from one location to another in a park, e.g., for each Station. (2) Ten Commandments—the user would see the identification of the next of the Commandments, and might meditate on how best to live that day to follow this Judeo-Christian rule and pray for the strength to follow through. (3) Gifts of the Holy Spirit—the user would pray to the Holy Spirit seeking assistance that day in strengthening or making better use of each of the Gifts received. (4) Corporal Works of Mercy, the Beatitudes, etc.—meditations on these many traditions of the Church could be incorporated in the Rosary device.

[0061] The prayer bead “completion” switches may provide advance to the next meditation or prayer, as is done for the device Rosary prayers. The Reset switches could permit advance to the selection of next group/set (or a prior group/set) of meditations or prayers. Alternately, for simplicity of operation, a separate Prayer Function Select button may be incorporated to change between several sets of meditations and/or prayers.

[0062] Thus, a wide variety of other meditations and prayers can be counted and kept track of by the device “bead” advancement, which makes use of the present invention.

[0063] The inclusion of a clock time function in the computer may allow time-related functions to be accurately determined.

[0064] The following call out list of elements is for convenient reference.

Call out List of Elements

- [0065]** 10 Tube Housing
- [0066]** 11 Top Of Finger Line
- [0067]** 20 Battery Pouch
- [0068]** 22 Battery
- [0069]** 30 Display
- [0070]** 32 Elastic Material
- [0071]** 35 Elastic Band Area
- [0072]** 40 Vibrator
- [0073]** 42 Vibrator Enable
- [0074]** 44 Reset Forward
- [0075]** 46 Reset Back
- [0076]** 50 First Prayer Bead Switch

[0077] 52 Second Prayer Bead Switch

[0078] 54 Third Prayer Bead Switch

[0079] 56 Fourth Prayer Bead Switch

[0080] 88 Central Processing Unit

[0081] While the presently preferred form of the invention has been shown and described, and several modifications thereof discussed, persons skilled in this art will readily appreciate that various additional changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention, as defined and differentiated by the following claims.

1. An electronic prayer bead counter comprising:

- a. a housing defining a cavity fitting on one or more fingers on either hand;
- b. a plurality of prayer bead switches comprising at least a first prayer bead switch and a last prayer bead switch, wherein the plurality of prayer bead switches are mounted on the housing;
- c. a computer mounted within the housing, receiving a prayer bead advance input when at least two switches are sequentially depressed and switch movement is in the forward direction from the lower numbered switch to the higher numbered switch; wherein the computer has at least two states, namely a first state, and a second state, wherein the prayer bead advance input advances the computer from the first state to the second state;
- d. an output signal confirming prayer bead advance input and confirming the computer advancing from the first state to the second state.

2. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the output signal is a liquid crystal display or other like display type.

3. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the output signal is a speaker.

4. The electronic prayer head counter of claim 3, wherein the speaker provides a voice output identifying one of the at least two states.

5. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the output signal is a speaker and a liquid crystal display or other like display type.

6. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the output signal further comprises a vibrator.

7. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 6, wherein vibration activates after a prayer bead advance input.

8. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the at-least-two-states correspond to a prayer status in a Catholic Rosary or to a prayer status in another religion's set of prayer beads.

9. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 8, wherein the electronic prayer bead counter housing has a snug fit.

10. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the display has a prayer count and a prayer status shown on one to approximately four characters, wherein a prayer name is displayed, followed promptly after completion of that named prayer by a next prayer name in the predetermined prayer sequence; and wherein the display shows the next prayer name after the display of the prayer name.

11. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, wherein the display has a prayer count and a prayer status shown on about four to seven characters, with a growth feature displaying content-aid, for meditations comprising the Mysteries of the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, other religious mysteries, or for appropriate text for other religions.

12. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, further including a reset-forward button to forward to a next sequence of prayers, further including a reset-back button or other mechanism to restart that prayer sequence.

13. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 1, further including a double action input of the reset-forward button to skip forward to the next group of prayer or meditation sequences, and also including a double action input of the reset-back button to skip back to a start of a prior group of prayer or meditation sequences.

14. An electronic prayer bead counter comprising:

- a. a housing defining a tube having a cavity fitting on one or more fingers;
- b. a plurality of prayer bead switches comprising at least a first prayer bead switch and a last prayer bead switch, wherein the plurality of prayer bead switches are mounted on the housing; wherein the at least two switches register a prayer bead advance input when sequentially depressed and when switch movement is in a forward direction from a lower numbered switch to a higher numbered switch;
- c. a computer mounted on the housing, receiving the prayer advance input; wherein the computer has at least two states, namely a first state, and a second state, wherein the prayer advance input advances the computer from the first state to the second state;
- d. an output signal confirming prayer bead advance input and confirming the computer advancing from the first state to the second state; wherein the output signal is a liquid crystal display or other display type; wherein the at-least-two-states correspond to a prayer status in a Catholic Rosary or to a prayer status in another religion's set of prayer beads; wherein the display has a prayer count and a prayer status shown on one to about four characters, wherein a prayer name is displayed, followed promptly after completion of that named prayer by a next prayer name in the predetermined prayer sequence; and wherein the display shows the next prayer name after the display of the prayer name.

15. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 14, further comprising a second prayer bead switch and a third prayer bead switch.

16. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 14, wherein the display has a prayer count and a prayer status shown on about four to seven characters, with a growth feature displaying content-aid, for meditations comprising the Mysteries of the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, other religious mysteries or for appropriate text for other religions.

17. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 14, further comprising a reset-back button or other mechanism to restart that prayer sequence, further comprising a reset-forward button to forward to a next sequence of prayers.

18. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim 14, further comprising a double action input of the reset-forward button and that skips to a start of the next series of prayer or meditation sequences and also a double action input of the reset-back button that skips to a start of a prior group of prayers or meditation sequences.

19. An electronic prayer bead counter comprising:

- a. a housing defining a cavity fitting on one or more fingers on either hand;
- b. a plurality of prayer bead switches comprising at least a first prayer bead switch, a middle prayer bead switch,

and a last prayer bead switch, wherein the plurality of prayer bead switches are mounted on the housing;

c. a computer mounted on the housing, receiving a prayer bead advance input when at least two switches are sequentially depressed and switch movement is in the forward direction from the lower numbered switch to the higher numbered switch; wherein the computer has at least two states, namely a first state, and a second

state, wherein the prayer bead advance input advances the computer from the first state to the second state;

d. an output signal confirming prayer bead advance input and confirming the computer advancing from the first state to the second state.

20. The electronic prayer bead counter of claim **19**, wherein the output signal is a liquid crystal display.

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