

# The Rosary

## What is the Rosary?

The rosary is a devotion to Mary. However, as with all devotions to Mary, they lead us to Jesus. Some call the rosary a devotion to Jesus through Mary.

The rosary is a tool that helps us to pray. It is referred to as a powerful "weapon" against evil and Satan (St. Dominic and St. Padre Pio).

When Sr. Lale gave her presentation on the rosary to the Women's Organization two weeks ago, she said that saying the rosary was like crawling into Mary's lap and looking at the Family photo album. And who of us does not want the loving touch of our mother. Mary reveals to us the mysteries of the life of Jesus through her eyes and heart. We are sitting in the school of Mary with Jesus.

At the foot of the cross, Jesus gave Mary to John and John to Mary.

(In the Gospel of) John 19:26-27

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

John represents the church. John represents each of us. Jesus gave Mary to us as our loving mother.

The rosary has been called the psalter of Mary. That is because the number of Hail Mary's in the original 15 mysteries of the rosaries, 150, corresponds to the number of Psalms. These three sets of mysteries are also referred to as the Dominican Rosary. Tradition has it that Mary gave the rosary to St. Dominic. When speaking to the heretics, St. Dominic would say a set of ten Hail Marys after his defense of Catholic teaching. The earliest documentation shows the rosary being said by the Dominicans after Dominic's death.

In 1569, Pope Pius V, a Dominican, established the current form of the Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries. In 2002 Pope John Paul II introduced the last five mysteries of the rosary, the Luminous Mysteries, reflecting on the adult life of Jesus Christ (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, Apostolic Letter on the Most Holy Rosary, Pope John Paul II).

Each mystery reveals to us a corresponding virtue from the life of Mary and Jesus that we can ask for and apply in our lives.

**The Joyful Mysteries:** 1. The Annunciation (faith/humility); 2. The Visitation (charity/love of neighbor); 3. The Nativity (humility/love of God); 4. The Presentation in the Temple (obedience); 5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple (prudence/zeal).

**The Luminous Mysteries:** 1. The Baptism in the Jordan (commitment/obedience); 2. The Wedding at Cana (fidelity/trust in God); 3. Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (conversion); 4. The Transfiguration (promise/spirit of worship); 5. Institution of the Eucharist (grace/heart of thanksgiving).

**The Sorrowful Mysteries:** 1. The Agony in the Garden (repentance/sorrow for sins); 2. The Scourging at the Pillar (temperance/self-denial); 3. The Crowning with Thorns (courage/love of enemies); 4. The Carrying of the Cross (patience/fortitude); 5. The Crucifixion (mercy /final perseverance).

**The Glorious Mysteries:** 1. The Resurrection (faith); 2. The Ascension (hope); 3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (love/the gifts of the Holy Spirit); 4. The Assumption of Mary (eternal happiness/a happy death); 5. The Coronation of Mary (love of Mary).

## **Why should we pray the rosary?**

### **Because it works!**

The rosary is three kinds of prayer in one:

1. Vocal prayer
2. Meditative prayer - prayer of reflection (We meditate on the mystery of the life of Christ as we pray the prayers of that decade.)
3. Contemplative prayer – being in the presence of God (The rhythmic repetition of the Hail Marys can lead to contemplation, union of the soul with God.)

In 1858, Our Lady appeared holding a white rosary to Bernadette Soubirous at a grotto near Lourdes, France. While Bernadette prayed the rosary, the Lady passed the beads of her rosary silently between her fingers. She said only the “Glorias” (Glory Bes) with Bernadette. Our Lady asked Bernadette to “pray for sinners.” Our Lady of Lourdes identified herself, “I am the Immaculate Conception.”

In 1917, Our Lady asked the three shepherd children of Fatima, Portugal (Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta) that the Fatima Prayer be added to the rosary. Our Lady came with a message from God for every man, woman, and child for the century that the rosary be said to stop war. Our Lady promised peace for the whole world and that many souls would go to heaven if her request was followed. She said that God would punish the World for its sins with war, hunger, and persecution of the Church if her request was not headed.

“The Rosary of the Virgin Mary, which gradually took form in the second millennium under the guidance of the Spirit of God, is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium.” “Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.” (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, Apostolic Letter on the Most Holy Rosary, Pope John Paul II).

## How do we pray the rosary?

Before praying the rosary, ask Mary to implore the Holy Spirit to pray in you and to help you to pray as you should. (The Rosary "The Little Summa" by Robert Feeney)

### Luke 1:46-55 (The Magnificat)

And Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;  
behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is from age to age  
to those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm,  
dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.

He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones  
but lifted up the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things;  
the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped Israel his servant,  
remembering his mercy,  
according to his promise to our fathers,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."



IN THE NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. (As you say this, with your right hand touch your forehead when you say Father, touch your breastbone when you say Son, touch your left shoulder when you say Holy, and touch your right shoulder when you say Spirit.)

I BELIEVE IN GOD, the Father almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty. He shall come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

OUR FATHER, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GLORY BE to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

O MY JESUS, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell; lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy. Amen.

HAIL HOLY QUEEN, mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us. And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.

O GOD, WHOSE only-begotten Son by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

ANNOUNCE each mystery by saying something like, "The third Joyful Mystery is the Birth of Our Lord." This is required only when saying the Rosary in a group.

**On Monday and Saturday, meditate on the "Joyful Mysteries"**

- First Decade (Steps 9-22): The Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)
- Second Decade (Steps 23-36): The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)
- Third Decade (Steps 37-50): The Birth of Our Lord (Luke 2:1-21)
- Fourth Decade (Steps 51-64): The Presentation of Our Lord (Luke 2:22-38)
- Fifth Decade (Steps 65-78): The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

**On Thursday, meditate on the "Luminous Mysteries"**

- First Decade: The Baptism of Our Lord in the River Jordan (Matthew 3:13-16)
- Second Decade: The Wedding at Cana, when Christ manifested Himself (Jn 2:1-11)
- Third Decade: The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15)
- Fourth Decade: The Transfiguration of Our Lord (Matthew 17:1-8)
- Fifth Decade: The Last Supper, when Our Lord gave us the Holy Eucharist (Mt 26)

**On Tuesday and Friday, meditate on the "Sorrowful Mysteries"**

- First Decade: The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden (Matthew 26:36-56)
- Second Decade: Our Lord is Scourged at the Pillar (Matthew 27:26)
- Third Decade: Our Lord is Crowned with Thorns (Matthew 27:27-31)
- Fourth Decade: Our Lord Carries the Cross to Calvary (Matthew 27:32)
- Fifth Decade: The Crucifixion of Our Lord (Matthew 27:33-56)

**On Wednesday and Sunday, meditate on the "Glorious Mysteries"**

- First Decade: The Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord (John 20:1-29)
- Second Decade: The Ascension of Our Lord (Luke 24:36-53)
- Third Decade: The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41)
- Fourth Decade: The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
- Fifth Decade: The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

"A woman was once asked why she prayed the Rosary every day. She looked away for a moment, looked back at her questioner, and replied, "All I can tell you is if I say a Rosary, the day works; and if I don't nothing works." It's true because of Mary's maternal intercession and the power of the mysteries of the life of Christ." (33 Days to Morning Glory)