



## Praying the Rosary

### Q: Why pray the Rosary?

**A:** There is much prayer power in the Rosary, because you are offering up the sacrifice of your time. You are sending it into the immaculate and loving heart of the Blessed Mother of Christ, who adds her prayers to yours and sends them to his Sacred Heart that was pierced for love of you. Jesus then intercedes for you in unity with the Holy Spirit and the Father, all of Whom love you dearly and care about your prayer requests much more than you do! As you pray, trust God and let him decide the best way and timing to respond to your requests.

### Q: Why should we pray to Mary when we can go directly to God?

**A:** Think of how often you ask your friends to add their prayers to yours. Mary is a friend you have in Heaven. She is closer to God than anyone else, because when she was conceived in her mother's womb, God created her to be full of grace. Therefore, since you enlist the prayers of your sinful friends here on earth, why not also ask for the prayer support of one who is closer to God than any other human being?



### Q: When was the Rosary invented? It's not in the Bible.

**A:** The command to pray is in the Bible, but there are endless ways to pray. The Rosary relies on prayers that come directly from scripture: the "Our Father" taught by Jesus, the two basic parts of the "Hail Mary", and the meditations upon the life of Christ, for example.

The Rosary is a "prayer of the people" that developed over time and was designed to be easily adopted by both illiterate and educated Christians. The method of praying a formula of prayers using beads for keeping track of one's place began with pious devotions very early in Church history. In the fourth century, a Christian ascetic named Paul the Hermit

made a habit of repeating 300 prayers, according to a set form, every day. To record his progress, he gathered up three hundred pebbles and threw one away as each prayer was finished. Other ascetics devised similar ways of numbering their prayers.

In monastic orders, monks recited all 150 chapters in the Book of Psalms,

sometimes dividing them into three sets of 50 Psalms each. Lay brothers, most of whom were illiterate, substituted a simple form of prayer, usually the "Our Father".

Counting beads on a string became popular by the 11th century. In the mid-12th century, the Hail Mary as a salutation (not a prayer) came into widespread use, accompanied by genuflecting or making some other external act of reverence for Christ.

The additional practice of meditating on certain definite mysteries about Christ and our redemption began with Dominic of Prussia, a Carthusian monk and ascetical writer (1382-1461) and, by the end of the 15th century, many varieties of meditations prevailed. Eventually, the mysteries were narrowed down to three, to teach our most important doctrines, and were promoted by popes; Pope John Paul II added a fourth set.

The word "rosary" comes from *rosarius*, meaning a garland or bouquet of roses. An early legend says that this name came from Mary herself during an apparition when she took rosebuds from the lips of a young monk as he recited the Hail Marys; she wove them into a garland and placed them upon her head.

**Q: Why say the same words over and over again? Isn't this babbling?**

**A:** It can be babbling, but it doesn't have to be. Repeated words make it easier to meditate; we can focus on the mysteries of God's Kingdom while also being aware of the words we're using to connect us to that Kingdom. We can use the time to learn from the mysteries or we can allow our minds to wander and see where God leads us.

**Q: What are the mysteries of the Rosary?**

**A:** There are four sets of mysteries. The first (the Joyful Mysteries) draw our attention to the beginning of Christ's life on earth.

The second (the Sorrowful Mysteries) help us realize the immense passionate love that Jesus had for us as he suffered and died to heal us and set us free from sin.

The third (the Luminous Mysteries) covers the earthly ministry of Jesus.

The fourth (the Glorious Mysteries) teach us about the resurrection power of the Christian life.

In each set, there are five mysteries or lessons for learning about the Kingdom of God. The goal is to be inspired to connect more fully to God's love and open ourselves to his power.

**Q: Why ten Hail Marys for each mystery? Why five mysteries for each Rosary?**

**A:** The numbers come from the book of Psalms. For centuries, people used only three sets of mysteries. The Luminous Mysteries are a recent invention by Pope John Paul II. Because there are 150 Psalms, people prayed 150 Hail Marys (ten for each mystery, times five mysteries, times three sets of mysteries).

**Q: Must we say the prayers exactly the way they are written?**

**A:** No. God is not a legalist. The Rosary is not a magic formula. God answers our prayers because we've turned to him and he loves us and the people for whom we are praying, and because what we ask for is good and in line with his promises in Scripture, not because we do a Rosary. If you want to add some of your own, extra prayers to the Rosary, let yourself be moved by the Holy Spirit and add those prayers!

## The Good News Rosary

### BEGIN YOUR PRAYER:

I offer up this Rosary for \_\_\_\_\_; I do this with full confidence in God's wisdom and unconditional love, because:

#### 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;  
 on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 and is seated at the right hand  
 of God the Father almighty;  
 from there he will come 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.

#### For the gift of Faith from the Holy Spirit:

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.

**For the gift of Hope  
 from Jesus Christ:**  
 Hail Mary, full of grace...

**For the gift of Love  
 from God the Father:**  
 Hail Mary, full of grace...

**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!

**Oh my Jesus**, forgive us our sins,  
 save us from the fires of hell;  
 lead all souls to Heaven,  
 especially those most in need  
 of Your Mercy.

#### AFTER STATING EACH MYSTERY'S INTENTION:

1. One "Our Father..."
2. Ten "Hail Mary..."
3. One "Glory be..."
4. One "Oh my Jesus..."

#### AFTER THE 5 MYSTERIES:

**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 valley of  
 tears.

Turn, then O 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!

## The Joyful Mysteries

### 1. THE ANNUNCIATION

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I ask for the grace to hear You calling me. Help me to say "yes" to whatever it is You have gifted me for, because You have chosen me to be Your partner in ministry. Especially help me to say "yes" to following Your will in the situation I'm currently in, of \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. THE VISITATION

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I ask for the grace to be a friend and encourager to all those around me. Help me to share in their joys, as Mary did with Elizabeth, and help me to give them Your Love, as Mary still does today, especially with \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I ask for the grace to receive a new birth of Jesus in all the areas of my life that have not totally been given over to Him. Help me to identify those areas and turn them over to You. Right now, I especially ask Jesus to become present in my \_\_\_\_\_.

### 4. THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I ask for the grace to present Jesus to the people around me, not so much by talking about Him as by the way I live my life. Help me to purify my life so that I can be a better reflection of Jesus' goodness and caring love. Help me to more compassionately let Jesus shine through me, especially when I am around \_\_\_\_\_.

### 5. FINDING JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I ask for the grace to seek out and find Jesus whenever my troubles get so distracting that I no longer see Him. Help me to know that He is always present with me, helping me, guiding me, and compassionately loving me, especially in the difficulties of \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Luminous Mysteries

### 1. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

"Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.... After Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water, and the heavens opened up for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove. A voice came from the heavens, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Matt. 3:13,17)

The Lord Jesus came to each of us in our baptisms. When you were baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon you, and the Father said, "This is my beloved child, with whom I am well pleased." Thus, you became the light of Christ to shine in the world. You have been invested with the mission of this light!

### 2. JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF IN THE MIRACLE AT CANA

