

THE HOLY ROSARY

“contemplating the face of Christ at the school of Mary”

One of the many gifts left to us by Pope John Paul II is his 2002 Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* where he places before us the value of praying the Rosary and advocates our faithfulness in praying the same in order to know Christ more intimately. For many the Rosary is just the prayer they need: it is short, to the point, and consistent with sacred Scripture and Tradition. For others, it is drudgery. And yet reality demonstrates that there is no substitute in learning the gospel and contemplating the works of God in salvation history without the Rosary. Two paragraphs from *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* give us the perspective we need to sit with the Blessed Mother in seeking the face of Christ. The Pope writes:

The Rosary, precisely because it starts with Mary’s own experience, is an *exquisitely contemplative prayer*. Without this contemplative dimension, it would lose its meaning, as Pope Paul VI clearly pointed out: “Without contemplation, the Rosary is a body without a soul, and its recitation runs the risk of becoming a mechanical repetition of formulas, in violation of the admonition of Christ: ‘In praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think they will be heard for their many words’ (Matthew 6:7). By its nature the recitation of the Rosary calls for a quiet rhythm and a lingering pace, helping the individual to meditate on the mysteries of the Lord’s life as seen through the eyes of her who was closest to the Lord. In this way the unfathomable riches of these mysteries are disclosed.”¹

In effect, the Rosary is simply a *method of contemplation*. As a method, it serves as a means to an end and cannot become an end in itself. All the same, as the fruit of centuries of experience, this method should not be undervalued. In its favor one could cite the experience of countless Saints.²

Introductory Prayers:

1. The Apostles’ Creed
2. Our Father
3. Three Hail Marys, followed by a Glory be

Rosary Proper:

4. Recall the First Mystery, followed by Our Father
5. Ten Hail Marys
6. Glory be, followed by Second Mystery and Our Father
7. Ten Hail Marys (repeat as above until five Mysteries are said)

¹ *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 12.

² *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 28.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES (Monday and Saturday)

The Annunciation	(Luke 1:26-38)
The Visitation	(Luke 1:39-56)
The Nativity	(Luke 2:1-21)
The Presentation	(Luke 2:22-38)
The Finding in the Temple	(Luke 2:41-52)

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES (Thursday)

The Baptism of the Lord	(Matthew 3:13-17)
The Wedding Feast at Cana	(John 2:1-11)
The Preaching of the Kingdom	(Mark 1:14-15)
The Transfiguration	(Matthew 17:1-13)
The Institution of the Holy Eucharist	(Matthew 26:17-29)

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES (Tuesday and Friday)

The Agony of Jesus in the Garden	(Matthew 26:36-56)
The Scourging at the Pillar	(Matthew 27:24-26)
The Crowning with Thorns	(Matthew 27:27-31)
The Carrying of the Cross	(Matthew 27:32-34)
The Crucifixion	(Matthew 27:35-56)

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES (Wednesday and Sunday)

The Resurrection	(John 20:1-29)
The Ascension	(Luke 24:36-53)
The Descent of the Holy Spirit	(Acts 2:1-47)
The Assumption	(Song of Solomon 2:10-11,14)
The Coronation	(Revelation 12:1-6)

After the Rosary:

8. Hail, Holy Queen

ROSARY PRAYERS

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father

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

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.

Doxology

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.

Hail, Holy Queen

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, 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.

V. Queen of the most holy Rosary, pray for us.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

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 meditating on these mysteries in 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.