

## THE ROSARY: PEACE PRAYER

It was to three young children, less than 100 years ago that Our Blessed Lord revealed through his mother a profound message for modern times. As Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta tended their sheep that Spring day in 1917, they looked up and saw a beautiful woman clothed in the sun, sent by God. She told them, "Say the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world, and the end of the war." She asked them to return on the 13th of each month for five months and promised a sign in her final appearance.

The children responded faithfully to her request, and on October 13, 1917, in a field near the little town of Fatima, Portugal, 70,000 people stood by as the sun lost its brilliance, changed color, rotated like a fire-wheel and plunged toward the earth. This was the dramatic climax of the six Fatima apparitions, the message of which was plain: "Say the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world.... I come to ask the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the communion of reparation on the first Saturdays. If they listen to my requests Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not she will scatter her errors through the world, provoking wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will suffer much, various nations will be annihilated."

What was the situation in Russia in 1917? It was in ruins. The imperial czar had abdicated in disgrace; the government was split by factions and civil war; her cities were set aflame by riotous mobs; the Russian army was falling apart, deserting before the invasion of the Kaiser, and the people were starving by the thousands. And yet, Mary made her prediction.

Has Mary's prediction come true? Since 1917, 64

formerly free nations have fallen behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains of Communistic Russia and China. 60% of our world is now under the yoke of Marxist Communism. Since 1917 the communists have been behind over 250 wars and revolutions throughout the world. The evidence is strong.

During his term as head of Russia from 1917 to 1924, Vladimir Lenin predicted that the last capitalistic state to fall to Communism would be the United States. He stated that the Russians would not have to fire one shot because they would so corrupt America from within by drugs and sexual perversion that it would no longer have the will to resist. The U.S. would fall into their hands like a ripe pear, he said.

Only one country was ever able to make it out from under Communism. That country was Austria. Following World War II, the Red Army invaded Austria and most observers believed this would bring about the end of that country's freedom. However, a rosary crusade was mounted in that country and over a tenth of the population signed a pledge to pray the rosary daily. On May 13, 1955 the Soviet troops were withdrawn from Austria, much to the surprise of the free world. But, Therese Neumann, the stigmatist, was not surprised. She stated simply, "It was the rosaries..."

The Rosary: A meditation on the unfolding mystery of Jesus Christ in the world. A veneration of Mary, centered, as is all Marian devotion, on her Son, Jesus. Through it we deepen our awareness of the meaning of her Son's life, death, resurrection and ascension. Not until enough people turn to daily meditation on these mysteries will there be peace in the world.

Do you want peace?

## **WORLD'S MOST PRACTICAL PRAYER**

The Rosary is a most practical because:

- It is meditation, one of the highest forms of prayer.
- It is based on Sacred Scripture. Each mystery can be found either literally or figuratively, in Scripture.
- It can be prayed using Sacred Scripture as a guide. Once the meditations are learned, it can be said anywhere, anytime, from memory.
- It is one of the few meditative prayers that can be said in community.
- The Rosary beads are a psychological aid to concentration.
- Use a ring rosary while driving or for discretion.
- It can be said in three minute segments: A decade takes less than three minutes to say. This makes it ideal for introducing it to young children—or busy adults!—who may find it too much to pray five mysteries daily at first. Two mysteries a day makes a nice introduction.
- Parents can use pictures and tell the story to the children before and/or after praying, thus making prayer more interesting and providing a learning experience as well. Children are often delighted with the stories of the mysteries and eager to learn more.
- It contains the essential mysteries of our faith and thus leads into the Mass, the "source and summit of the Christian life."
- It includes the Apostles' Creed, the summary of our faith.
- It includes the Our Father, the "perfect prayer."
- It includes 20 mysteries, thus providing variety.

- It lends itself to different methods of meditation: First, you can meditate on the event, using Sacred Scripture or the meditations which follow herein in Part I. Second, you might reflect on one or two aspects of the event, as exemplified by the short reflections in Part II. Third, you might simply think of a one or two word summary theme of the event as found in Part III.

### **PLENARY INDULGENCE**

According to the revised regulations issued by the Holy See in 1968, a plenary indulgence may be obtained by reciting the Rosary with the following conditions:

1. Sacramental confession (within 20<sup>1</sup> days).
2. Eucharistic communion (same day).
3. Prayer for the intention of the Pope (usually at least one Our Father and one Glory Be).
4. The Rosary must be said in Church or public oratory, in the family, in a religious community, or in a pious association. Five decades must be said continuously, without interruption. There must be devout meditation on the mysteries. In public meditation the mysteries must be announced according to approved custom. In private meditation this is not required.

In addition to these conditions, it is required that all attachment to sin, even venial sin, be absent. This, of course, is the most difficult condition.

This does not mean that a person never commits a venial sin. Rather it means that one is willing to strive to overcome any sin in his life, however small. An attachment to sin would be an unwillingness to

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<sup>1</sup>The traditional period of eight days was expanded to 20 days in the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary in the Jubilee year 2000, *The Gift of the Indulgence* (n. 5) ([www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/apindlg.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/apindlg.htm)). See too ([www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/APCONFES.HTM](http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/APCONFES.HTM)).

overcome it.

*Study the familiar so frequently, so closely, that it becomes unfamiliar. Then you have seen it for the first time.*

–G. K. Chesterton

*When you give yourself to prayer, do nothing else. When you do other things, try to pray at the same time.*

## HOW TO SAY THE ROSARY

1. Make the Sign of the Cross with the crucifix in hand, kiss the crucifix, and say the Apostles' Creed.

2. On the first bead say the Our Father, then, on the three beads, three "Hail Marys" and, on the chain say a "Glory Be."

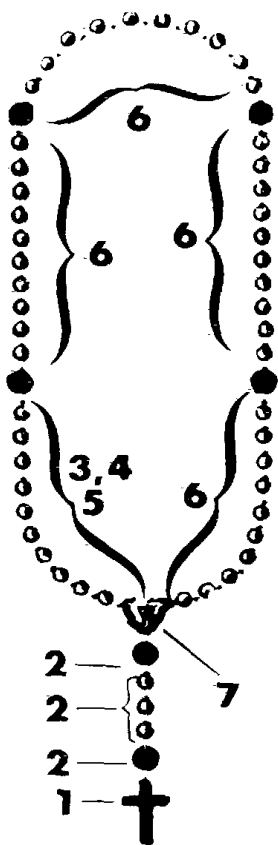
3. Announce the first mystery (for example, "The Agony in the Garden").

4. On the first bead say the Our Father; on the ten beads say ten "Hail Marys" **WHILE MEDITATING ON THE MYSTERY**; and on the chain, a "Glory Be."

5. Say the "Fatima prayer" ("O my Jesus..." - see below) after each decade.

6. Repeat #'s 4 and 5 above for the second through the fifth mystery. (If you are saying all 20 mysteries, simply continue the first through the 20<sup>th</sup> mystery as in #'s 4 and 5.)

7. After the five (or twenty) mysteries are completed, say the "Hail Holy Queen" followed by the closing prayer (given below) and any other optional prayers.



## **Prayers of the Rosary**

### **THE 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; 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 arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall 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.

### **THE 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.

### **THE HAIL MARY**

HAIL, MARY, full of grace; the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

### **THE GLORY BE**

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.

FATIMA ASPIRATION (At the close of each decade)

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your mercy!

THE 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 so 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. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

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

CLOSING PRAYER (Usually said after the Hail Holy Queen)

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 you, that meditating upon 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.

The Joyful mysteries are said on Monday and Saturday, the Luminous on Thursday, the Sorrowful on Tuesday and Friday, and the Glorious on Wednesday and Sunday.



## Part I

### MEDITATIONS

The attached meditations are meant as an aid in contemplating the mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary. They should be read **WHILE** saying the Hail Marys and other prayers, not before or after (to avoid 30 minute Rosaries). The first meditation of each mystery is poetry, meant to summarize the mystery. This is followed by a meditation for each of the ten Hail Marys.

Keep in mind that the fifty Hail Marys of the Rosary are not prayed as one would ordinarily pray Hail Marys, i.e., thinking of the words as they are said. These Hail Marys are primarily for the purpose of measuring the time during which one meditates on each mystery.

If a person has difficulty meditating on the mysteries while saying the prayers, rather than forego the mysteries it would be better to omit the prayers for a time and simply meditate on each mystery for three minutes. Later, when more familiar with the mysteries, add back in the gentle background music of the Hail Marys.

The Rosary lends itself to increasing your meditative powers and minimizing the universal problem of the mind wandering (a problem even the saints had), by a technique which might be called "retracing". This involves making a commitment to meditate on at least three or four beads (Hail Marys) per decade.

After completing a decade in private meditation and finding that you have not meditated for at least that minimum commitment, you would retrace the number of beads necessary to complete your commitment. This not only allows you to perfect your prayer offering, but it will also discipline your mind to meditate well, knowing you are committed to keep retracing the prayers until you complete your minimum.

## SOURCES

The primary source for these meditations is Sacred Scripture. In those mysteries for which Scripture provides few details (for example, the scourging), the visions of four mystics were used to augment scriptural data. Each meditation is preceded by a letter indicating the source upon which it is based, according to the following code:

S - Sacred Scripture

A - Ann Catherine Emmerich

B - St. Bridget of Sweden

M - Mary of Agreda

T - Therese Neumann

The scripturally based meditations have been put in the present tense to facilitate placing oneself in the mystery as a here and now event. The meditations were adapted from the Greek New Testament.

With regard to the private revelations which served as the basis for some of the non-scriptural meditations, the following words of Cardinal Lambertini (later Pope Benedict XIV) could be applied: "Though an assent of Catholic faith be not due them [private revelations], they deserve a human assent according to the rules of prudence, by which they are probable and piously credible, as the revelations of [St.] Hildegard, St. Bridget and St. Catherine of Siena." They do not pretend to be history, and in some cases are simply pious meditations.

First Joyful: THE ANNUNCIATION  
(Luke 1:26-38; John 1:14; Mt. 1:20-23)

Salvation's dawn, the light, which sought a thousand  
years  
shines forth as Gabriel bright does calm a virgin's  
fears.

O chosen woman fair you pause, and then agree.  
Your "yes" gives mankind hope, to live eternally.

1. (S) The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph of the House of David.
2. (S) Gabriel enters and says to Mary, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you." She is deeply distressed by this and asks herself what it could mean.
3. (S) But the angel says, "Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favor. You are to conceive and bear a son and you must name him Jesus."
4. (S) Gabriel continues, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David.
5. (S) "He will rule over the house of Jacob forever; and his reign will have no end." Mary replies, "But how can this happen, since I am a Virgin?"
6. (S) "The Holy Spirit will come upon you," he answers, "and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be called holy and called Son of God."
7. (S) "Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month...
8. (S) "For nothing is impossible to God." Mary

responds, "I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word." And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

9. (S) An angel later appears to Joseph in a dream saying, "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife for she has conceived by the Holy Spirit."

10. (S) The angel continues, "She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus,<sup>2</sup> because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.

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<sup>2</sup>"Jesus" means "Yahweh saves."

Second Joyful: THE VISITATION  
(Luke 1:39-58)

Great gifts cannot be hid, and so you wish to share;  
To cousin new with child, you go, your secret bare;  
The Child you hold within, you humbly celebrate  
With John let us rejoice, such Gift appreciate.

1. (S) Mary sets out and goes as quickly as she can to a town in the hill country of Judah. She goes into Zechariah's house and greets Elizabeth.

2. (S) Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and cries out, "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! Why is it granted that the mother of my Lord should visit me?"

3. (S) "For, the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed the Lord's word to her would be fulfilled."

4. (S) Mary says, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant."

5. (S) "From this day all generations will call me blessed. The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation."

6. (S) "He has shown the strength of his arm and has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly."

7. (S) "He has filled the hungry with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy...."

8. (S) "...The promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever. (M) Elizabeth responds, "May God save you and may he communicate grace and life to you."

9. (M, A) Mary serves and assists Elizabeth as a handmaid, taking part in all her household work, for this was her purpose in coming to visit her.

10. (S) After having stayed with Elizabeth for about three months, Mary returns home to Nazareth. When Elizabeth's time arrives, she gives birth to a son.

Third Joyful: THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD  
(Luke 2:1-20; Mt. 2:1-12)

This Gift you've borne within your womb nine months  
concealed,

In lowly stable now, O Mary, is revealed.  
The shepherds, angels send, and kings bring gifts  
from far,

With them let us rejoice, by light of holy star.

1. (S) Caesar Augustus has issued a decree for a census of the whole world, so Joseph sets out from Nazareth in Galilee to be registered with Mary, his betrothed.

2. (S) Mary, who is with child, and Joseph travel up to Judea to the town of David called Bethlehem, since Joseph is of David's house and line.

3. (S) While there, Mary gives birth to a son. She wraps him in swaddling clothes and lays him in a manger,<sup>3</sup> for there is no room for them at the inn.

4. (S) In the countryside close by, there are shepherds who live in the fields and take turns watching their flocks during the night.

5. (S) The angel of the Lord appears to them and the glory of the Lord shines round them. They are terrified, but the angel says, "Do not be afraid.

6. (S) "Listen," continues the angel, "I bring you news of great joy. Today in the town of David a savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord."

7. (S) Suddenly with the angel there is a great throng of the heavenly host singing:

"Glory to God in highest heaven

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<sup>3</sup>A manger is a kind of box or trough for feeding animals.

and peace to men who enjoy his favor."

8. (S) The shepherds hurry off and find Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus. When they see the child they repeat what they have heard, and all are astonished.

9. (S) After Jesus was born, magi come from the east to Jerusalem asking, "Where is the king of the Jews? We saw his star rise and have come to worship him."

10. (S) Herod directs them to Bethlehem where they find the child with his mother, Mary. Falling to their knees, they worship him and offer gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



Fourth Joyful: THE PRESENTATION  
(Luke 2:22-39)

What this, redeemer child with doves you do redeem?  
By Simeon now discerned the saving Gift supreme.  
This child will bring a sword to pierce a mother's  
heart.  
We too, to share the gift, his cross, must bear a part.

1. (S) When the day comes for them to be purified<sup>4</sup> as laid down by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary take Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.
2. (S) They observe what stands written in the Law of the Lord: "Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord." They offer in sacrifice two turtle doves.
3. (S) Now, in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon, an upright and devout man. He looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested upon him.
4. (S) It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had seen the Messiah... Prompted by the Spirit, he comes to the temple.
5. (S) When the parents bring in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law requires, Simeon takes him in his arms and blesses God, and he says:
6. (S) "Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled. My eyes have seen the salvation you have prepared in the sight of every people...
7. (S) "...a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel." The child's father and mother wonder at the things being said about him.

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<sup>4</sup>Only Mary was purified; the child was "redeemed" (Lv 12:2-6).

8. (S) Simeon blesses the parents of Jesus and then says to Mary, "You see this child; he is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel.

9. (S) "He is destined to be a sign that is rejected--a sword will pierce your own heart too--so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare."

10. (S) The prophetess Anna, a widow, comes by just then, and praises God; she speaks of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

Fifth Joyful: THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE  
(Luke 2:41-52)

What darkness fills your soul, your Son discovered  
lost.

You search and find at last this Treasure past all cost.

The lesson clear for us; to shun this error rife:

Once held, to lose the Gift, of everlasting Life.

1. (S) Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he is twelve years old they go up for the feast as usual.
2. (S) When they are on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stays behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing; they assume he is with the caravan.<sup>5</sup>
3. (S) It is only after a day's journey that they go back to seek him among their relatives and friends. Failing to find him, they return to Jerusalem looking for him.
4. (M) They are overcome with self-reproach as they frantically search for their son. Mary is unable to sleep or eat anything during this three day ordeal.
5. (S) On the third day they find him in the temple, among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. All are astounded at his intelligence...
6. (M) The rabbis had been debating the question of the Messiah: Had he already come? Would he be an earthly king or a suffering servant? Which would he be?
7. (M) Jesus had gently offered: "Could it not be that the Messiah will come twice, once to redeem the world, and again to judge it?" Then his parents had entered.

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<sup>5</sup>Since the men and women often traveled in separate groups Mary might have presumed Jesus was with Joseph and vice versa.

8. (S) They are overcome when they see him, and his mother says to him, "Son, why have you done this? Your father and I have been frantically seeking you"

9. (S) "Why were you looking for me?" he answers. "Did you not know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they do not understand what he means.

10. (S) He goes down with them then and returns to Nazareth and lives under their authority. His mother, meanwhile, stores up all these things in her heart.

First Luminous: THE BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN  
(Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-13; Lk 3:21, 22; Jn 1:31-34)

For those who came to seek, forgiveness of their sin,  
The Father showed the light, that Jesus held within.

So oft, when we repent, our sins to Him confess,  
He gives a glimpse of His, own filial blessedness.

1. (S) Then Jesus comes from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John tries to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?"
2. (S) But Jesus answers him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consents.
3. (S) And when he comes up out of the water, immediately Jesus sees the heavens open and the Holy Spirit descend upon him in bodily form, as a dove...
4. (A) The Father appears above Jesus and thunderously proclaims, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
5. (A) Jesus appears to glow, with his body translucent, and surrounded by angels. He is almost too bright to look at.
6. (A) John addresses the crowd, saying that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah. He points out that the Old Testament prophecies are now being fulfilled in Jesus.
7. (A) Jesus confirms the words of John and indicates he will retreat for a time and then return, at which time they could bring him their sick to be healed.
8. (A) Jesus invites them to prepare for his return by penance and acts of charity. John promises that when Jesus returns, he himself will step back.
9. (S) [Some time later John says] "I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that

he might be revealed to Israel.

10. (S) "...the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

Second Luminous: JESUS' MIRACLE AT CANA  
(Jn 2:1-10)

You bless a couple's love, and make of water wine,  
Foreshadowing how You, turn our love to divine.  
And more, you take this bond, and make of it a sign,  
Of love 'tween You and us, a marriage true, divine.

1. (S) There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus is there; Jesus also has been invited to the wedding, with his disciples.
2. (A) It seems that Jesus had agreed to provide one course of the meal as well as the wine for the banquet. Lazarus covered the expense for these.
3. (S) When the wine runs out, the mother of Jesus says to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus says to her, "O woman, what is that to you and me? My hour is not yet come."
4. (S) His mother says to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification.
5. (S) Jesus says to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they fill them up to the brim. He says to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast."
6. (S) When the steward... tastes the water now become wine, not knowing where it came from (though the servants knew) the steward calls the bridegroom.
7. (S) He says to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."
8. (S) This was the first of Jesus' [miraculous] signs. He performed it at Cana in Galilee, and thus manifested his glory. And, his disciples believed in him.
9. (A) By way of parables, Jesus explains the symbolism of the miracle: the world provides better wine first, and

then, once we are mellowed, lesser.

10. (A) Years before, Jesus had told a parable of a wedding where the water of lukewarmness would be transformed into the wine of zeal. This, he says, is fulfilled. The guests are indeed stirred to zeal over this miracle.



Third Luminous: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE  
KINGDOM

(Mt 7:13,14; 13:45, 46; 19: 23, 24; Mk 1:14-16; 8:34,  
35; Lk 10:25, 27; 18:10, 11; 18:15-25, 28-30; 1 Cor  
6:9-11)

God's kingdom is of love, for Him and neighbor too,  
And it commences here, for those its subjects few.  
The way is lowliness, the Cross and poverty,  
Unfettered love must reign, to live eternally.

1. (S) Jesus comes into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "...The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the good news."
2. (S) A Pharisee and a tax collector went to pray... The Pharisee prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like others... evil doers, or even this tax collector.'
3. (S) But the tax collector... beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ...He went home justified: he who humbles himself will be exalted...
4. (S) "Wide is the gate and broad the road leading to ruin and many enter it. Narrow is the gate and hard the way leading to life, and those who find it are few."
5. (S) Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? "...You shall love the Lord with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and your neighbor as yourself."
6. (S) Jesus says to his disciples, "Amen, I tell you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."
7. (S) Jesus says, "...[Whoever] gives up house, wife, brothers, parents or children, for the kingdom of God, [will] receive much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life."
8. (S) "Do not be deceived; neither [unrepentant] forni-

cators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards... will inherit the kingdom of God." [St. Paul]

9. (S) "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, goes and sells all he has and buys it."

10. (S) [Jesus] says to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."

Fourth Luminous: THE TRANSFIGURATION  
(Matt. 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-9; Luke 9:28-36; 2 Pet. 1:18,  
19)

Now Peter, James and John, on high your glory see,  
To strengthen them against, the shame of Calvary,  
But, consolations all, must yield to holy strife,  
The Cross must yet be borne, to share eternal life.

1. (S) And he says to them, "Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."<sup>6</sup>

2. (S) Six days later, Jesus takes Peter, James and John, and leads them up a high mountain apart by themselves to pray. And he is transfigured before them...

3. (S) ...And his face shines like the sun and his garments become glistening, intensely white, as no bleach-er on earth could make them.

4. (S) Two men appear, talking with Jesus—Moses and Elijah. They appear in glory and speak of his departure, which he will accomplish at Jerusalem.

5. (S) Now Peter and those who were with him are very sleepy, and when they awaken they see his glory and the two men.

6. (S) As the men leave Jesus, Peter says to him, "Mas-ter, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"

7. (S) As he says this, a cloud overshadows them... A voice from the cloud, says, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!"

8. (S) When the disciples hear this, they fall on their

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<sup>6</sup>Some scholars see the transfiguration as the fulfillment of this prophecy.

faces, and are filled with awe. But Jesus comes and touches them, saying, "Get up,, and do not fear."

9. (S) And when they lift up their eyes, they see only Jesus. He commands them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead."

10. (S) We heard this voice from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. Pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in the dark, until the day dawns...

Fifth Luminous: INSTITUTION OF THE  
EUCCHARIST

(Mt 26:17-29; Mk 14:12-25; Luke 22:14-23; Jn 6:35-65; 1 Cor 11:23-29)

You make of bread your body, true blood you make  
of wine,

Remembrance of your death, a kiss of love divine,  
A crown and source for love, to draw us to commit,  
To You in spousal love, eternal, intimate.

1. (S) Jesus says to the crowd, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you..."
2. (S) "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst... You have seen me and yet do not believe.
3. (S) "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat and not die.
4. (S) "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live for ever; the bread I give is my flesh for the life of the world.
5. (S) "Amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."
6. (S) When the hour arrives, he sits at table with the apostles. And he says to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer..."
7. (S) He takes a cup, and when he has given thanks he says, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of

the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

8. (S) Jesus takes bread, and having given thanks, he breaks it and gives it to them, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

9. (S) Likewise [he takes] the cup saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

10. (S) "As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, [takes this] unworthily will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord." (St. Paul)

First Sorrowful: THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN  
(Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46)

With weary friends you go, to pray in garden drear,  
Your human will recoils at cruel strife so near.  
Yet then you turn your sights, to Father's will uplift,  
and show, denying self, how we become a gift.

1. (S) Jesus and his eleven apostles come to a small estate, a garden called Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where they had often come to pray.
2. (S) He says to his disciples, "Stay here while I go over there to pray." He takes Peter, James and John with him. And sadness and distress come over him.
3. (S) "My soul is sorrowful to the point of death," he says to them. "Wait here and keep awake." Going on a bit further, he falls on his face and prays.
4. (S) "My Father," Jesus says, "if it is possible, let this cup pass me by. Nevertheless, let it be as you, not I, would have it."
5. (A) Jesus sees all the sins of mankind as he prays. Satan displays increasingly horrible visions before him, taunting, "Would you take even this sin on yourself?"
6. (S) Jesus returns to the apostles and finds them sleeping. He says to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Were you not able to watch with me one hour?"
7. (S) "You should be awake and praying to not be put to the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Again, a second time he goes away and prays.
8. (S) "My Father, if this cup cannot pass by without my drinking it, your will be done." An angel appears to him from heaven, to give him strength.
9. (S) Entering deeply into his agony, Jesus prays even

more earnestly, and his sweat becomes like drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

10. (S) He goes back and finds the apostles sleeping again, their eyes are so heavy. And they can find no answer for him. He goes off and prays for a third time.



Second Sorrowful: THE SCOURGING AT THE  
PILLAR

(MT 27:15-26; Mk 15:6-15; Jn 18:38-19:1)

They tie you fast to pillar, there to cruelly scourge,  
Your back and front to bloody grid, while others urge.  
You teach us thus to fleshly joys and comforts sift,  
To start our journey long, to end as worthy gift.

1. (S) On the occasion of a festival the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd any one prisoner whom they chose. They had at the time a notorious prisoner named Barabbas.

2. (S) Therefore, having them all assembled there, he says to them, "Which one do you wish me to release to you, Barabbas or Jesus, the so-called Messiah?"

3. (S) The chief priest and elders have convinced the crowd to ask for Barabbas so they shout, "Not this man but Barabbas!" So Pilate sends Jesus off to be scourged.

4. (A,M,T) Our Lord is led to a pillar where often criminals have been scourged to death. Three pairs of drunken executioners prepare for their brutal task.

5. (A,M,T) Jesus is ordered to remove his clothing before a great multitude, including his grief-stricken mother. Our Lord stands naked before this crowd.

6. (A,T) His bound hands are raised up by a rope to a ring at the top of a pillar, so that his feet just barely touch the ground. He is facing the pillar.

7. (A,M) The first two scourgers begin their violent assault with relish, using hard, thick cords, full of knots. Their fifteen minute ritual exhausts them.

8. (A,M) Jesus' body is now black and blue, and red, and covered with welts and tumors. Two more scourg-

ers take over, using harder, more piercing whips.

9. (A,M) The blows from these weapons tear Jesus' flesh to pieces. His blood pours out, staining their arms. He groans, prays and shudders.

10. (A) Two more executioners take over using metal tipped scourges. These penetrate to the bone, tearing off pieces of sacred flesh with each blow.

Third Sorrowful: CROWNING WITH THORNS  
(Mt 27:27-31; Mk 15:16-20; Jn 19:2-5)

Not sated yet they robe you in a royal gown,  
And try to crush your spirit 'neath a thor-ned crown.  
Herein you manifest the need to dash all pride,  
Would we become yet humbler gift, in you abide.

1. (S) Pilate's soldiers lead Jesus into the praetorium and all gather round. (A) They tear off his clothes, reopening his wounds, and dress him in a purple cloak.
2. (A) In the middle of the courtyard stands a low stool, upon which the soldiers have strewn sharp flints and potsherds. Jesus is roughly pushed down on this stool.
3. (S) Weaving a crown out of thorns they fix it on his head, and place a reed in his hand. They mock him, falling on their knees saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
4. (A) The crown is in the shape of a bowl, with the majority of the thorns purposely turned inward so as to pierce the head of Our Lord. His eyes fill with blood.
5. (S) They spit on him and take hold of the reed, striking him on the head. They continue to ridicule him saying "Hail, King of the Jews", slapping him on the face as they do so.
6. (A) The soldiers on guard keep their ranks, but do their utmost by laughter and applause to incite the executioners to further insult and humiliate Jesus.
7. (A) Then they overturn the stool, thereby throwing Jesus to the ground. They pull Our Lord up again and reseal him with the greatest possible brutality.
8. (A) His sufferings from thirst (due to the fever caused by his scourging and other maltreatment) are intense; his lips and tongue are parched, contracted.

9. (A) Our Lord trembles all over. His flesh is torn to pieces. His only relief from his severe thirst is the blood which trickles down his head to his lips.

10. (A) This brutal scene lasts for a full half-hour, while the Roman soldiers continue to cheer and encourage the executioners to greater and greater savagery.

Fourth Sorrowful: CARRYING OF THE CROSS  
(Mt 27:32-34; Mk 15:21-23; Lk 23:26-31; Jn  
19:5-17)

You strive to drag uphill that rough-hewn piece of  
tree,  
‘Midst mother's love and soldier's scorn to Calvary.  
You urge us thus to virtue daily struggle toward,  
To image you as gift, in goodness self-outpoured.

1. (S) Pilate brings Jesus out before the crowd in his pitiable state and says, "Behold the man." When they see him, they shout, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"
2. (S) "...Do you want me to crucify your king?" asks Pilate. The crowd answers, "We have no king but Caesar." Finally, Pilate hands Jesus over to be crucified.
3. (A) Jesus' cross is thrown at his feet. He kneels before it and kisses it, offering a prayer of thanksgiving to the Father for the work of redemption he has begun.
4. (A) Jesus takes up his cross and begins his journey to Calvary. His bare feet are swollen and bleeding; he appears half fainting from exhaustion, and is suffering from loss of blood and severe thirst.
5. (A) Mary, her eyes red with weeping, her cheeks deathly pale and her lips nearly blue, awaits the procession. The Romans discover who she is and mock her.
6. (A) Jesus sees his mother, staggers and falls. Mary, moved beyond restraint, runs to his side and embraces him. The sword (of Simeon) pierces her heart.
7. (S) Jesus continues, weaker at each step. Fearing he will die before they get to Calvary, the soldiers force a reluctant Simon of Cyrene to help Our Lord.
8. (A,T) A woman of "majestic appearance" emerges

from a house on the road, walks over and offers Jesus her veil, saying, "Allow me to wipe my Lord's face."

9. (A) Veronica, the name she is later known by,<sup>7</sup> returns to her house and discovers the image of Jesus on her veil. She falls to her knees before it.

10. (S) Jesus sees the women mourning for him. He turns to them and says, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but for yourselves and for your children..."

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<sup>7</sup>The name Veronica comes from *ver icon*, meaning "true image."

Fifth Sorrowful: THE CRUCIFIXION  
(Mt. 27:33-54; Mk. 15:22-39; Lk. 23:32-49; Jn.  
19:18-30)

What God are you to hang three hours twixt earth and  
sky?

To teach us selfless love; our sins to nullify.  
O make us such true gift, to count this world as loss,  
And nail last vestige of... self-will upon thy cross.

1. (S) When they arrive at Golgotha, they offer Jesus some wine... but he declines. The soldiers remove his clothes and prepare to cast lots for them.
2. (S) He is crucified between two robbers. Jesus says, "Father forgive them. They know not what they do." Pilate has a notice attached to the cross which reads, "Jesus the Nazarene, king of the Jews."
3. (S) The passers-by jeer at him, "So you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!"
4. (S) The chief priests and scribes add, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the king of Israel, come down from the cross and we will believe in him."
5. (S) One of the criminals hanging there abuses him: "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." The other rebukes the first: "Have you no fear of God at all?"
6. (S) "You got the same sentence he did but in our case we deserved it; we are paying for what we did... ..but this man has done no wrong."
7. (S) He adds, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus responds, "Indeed, this day you will be with me in paradise."
8. (S) Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved

nearby, Jesus says, "Woman, behold your son," and to the disciple, "Behold your mother."

9. (S) From noon until three there is darkness over the land. Toward three Jesus calls out, "I thirst"; and then, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

10. (S) Finally, Jesus cries out, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit," and he expires. At this, the veil of the temple is torn in two.



First Glorious: THE RESURRECTION

(Mt. 28:1-10; Mk. 16:1-14; Lk. 24:1-49; Jn. 20:1-29)

As pre-dawn dark is pierced by rays of morning sun,  
You burst triumphant forth; o'er death the vict'ry won.  
You call us to this glory, your cross once shared, we  
can,  
Become the perfect gift, by grace, St. Paul's "new  
man."

1. (S) Towards dawn on the first day of the week, the women go to the tomb. All at once there is a violent earthquake; an angel comes and rolls away the stone.
2. (S) The angel says to them, "Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."
3. (S) With awe and great joy the women run to tell the disciples, who refuse to believe. Later, at the tomb, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and the other women.
4. (S) That same day Jesus appears to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, but they are kept from recognizing him. He asks them what they are discussing.
5. (S) They reply, "About Jesus of Nazareth, who proved he was a great prophet by what he said and did, and how our chief priests had him crucified. We had hoped he would set Israel free..."
6. (S) Jesus says, "How foolish you are! So slow to believe all the prophets said! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?"
7. (S) Then, starting with Moses and all the prophets, he explains the scriptures about himself. When they arrive at Emmaus, they invite the Lord to stay with them.
8. (S) They recognize Jesus at the breaking of the bread,

and then he disappears. Amazed, they hurry back to Jerusalem where they are told, "Yes, the Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."

9. (S) While they are still talking, Jesus stands among them. Joyfully, they come to believe. Thomas, who was not with them, refuses to believe their story.

10. (S) Eight days later Jesus comes again. He says to Thomas, "Put your finger here; put your hand into my side. Doubt no longer, but believe."

## Second Glorious: THE ASCENSION

(Mt. 28:20; Mk. 16:15-20; Lk. 24:50-53; Acts 1: 1-11)

Last words of life to your apostles You commend,  
O'er forty days and then, on mission wide You send.  
So we, new men in You, must linger on in prayer,  
To 'wait the promised strength, the Spirit's Gift to  
share.

1. (S) The risen Jesus shows his disciples he is alive by many proofs, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking of the kingdom of God.
2. (S) Jesus tells them, "Go out to the whole world and tell the Good News. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not will be condemned."
3. (S) "...Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world. I will send down to you what the Father has promised. Stay in Jerusalem then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.
4. (S) "It is, what you have heard me speak about. John baptized with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."
5. (T, M) Now they all go out from the house, cross the brook of Kedron, and climb to the highest point of the Mount of Olives from where Jesus is to ascend.
6. (S) They ask him, "Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus replies, "It is not for you to know the time..."
7. (S) "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem, but throughout Judea, Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth."
8. (S) The Lord lifts up his hands and blesses them. As

he blesses them he leaves them. He is taken up into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God.

9. (S) While they are still staring into the sky, suddenly two men in white are standing near them and ask, "Why are you men from Galilee looking into the sky?"

10. (S) "This same Jesus who has been taken up into heaven will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there."

Third Glorious: THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY  
SPIRIT  
(Acts 2:1-41)

The first novena prayed by tiny Church, in fear;  
You come, O Holy Ghost, with flames of power sear.  
So, spirit-filled, new men, are we empowered to  
Go forth and speak the Word, the face of earth  
renew.

1. (S) On Pentecost the disciples, together in one room, hear a powerful wind, and tongues of fire come to rest over each of them. They are filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. (S) Staying in Jerusalem were devout Jews from every nation. At this sound they all come together, each one bewildered to hear the men speaking his own language.
3. (S) Everyone is amazed and unable to explain it. Some laugh it off saying, "They have been drinking too much new wine." But Peter stands up and addresses them in a loud voice...
4. (S) "Men of Judea, these men are not drunk—why it is only nine in the morning! No, this is what the prophet Joel spoke of: 'In those days I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind...'
5. (S) "Men of Israel, Listen: Jesus of Nazareth was commended to you by the miracles and signs God worked through him when he was among you...
6. (S) "This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention of God, you took and had crucified. But God raised him to life, freeing him from... death.
7. (S) "Now, raised to the heights. he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit who was promised, and what you see and hear is the outpouring of that Spirit...

8. (S) "For this reason the whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah." Hearing this, they are deeply moved.

9. (S) "What must we do, brothers?" They ask. "You must repent," Peter answers, "and every one of you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ..."

10. (S) Peter urges them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accept his word are baptized, and about three thousand souls are added.

Fourth Glorious: THE ASSUMPTION  
(Revelation 11:19)

O Mary, Jesus brings to end your earthly fast;  
Your holy body raised to heavenly feast at last.  
And we, your children, hope, to one day follow you,  
To share divine communion, clothed in body new.

1. (A, T, M) After the Ascension, Mary lives with St. John for a few years in Jerusalem; then they both move to Ephesus. It is revealed to Mary that her earthly life is nearing its end.
2. (T, M) Mary expresses to John a desire to journey to Jerusalem one last time, to venerate the places where Jesus suffered. John readily agrees.
3. (T, A, M) As the time for Mary's reunion with her Son approaches, the apostles and disciples are inspired to come to Jerusalem to see her one final time.
4. (M) The Lord gives Mary the option of entering Heaven without enduring death. Since she had no sin, she need not have endured its punishment, death.
5. (M) However, recalling that Jesus could have avoided death with a greater right, had he not chosen to satisfy divine justice by dying, Mary too, chooses to die.
6. (T) All the apostles but Thomas are gathered with Mary in one room, talking about Jesus. Suddenly, Mary is filled with a great longing for her Son.
7. (T, A, M) She grows weak and pale, sinks back and dies in the arms of St. John. The women prepare Mary's body and it is buried in a nearby tomb.
8. (T, M, A, B) Within three days of her death and burial, Mary's soul returns to the tomb and emerges reunited with her body, to be assumed gloriously into heaven.

9. (T, A) Thomas arrives the next day and weeps when he hears of Mary's death. He begs to see her body once more. So, they set out for the tomb.

10. (T, A) When they get to the tomb and look inside, they are amazed to find the grave-clothes empty, though still wrapped as before. They look up to heaven, praising God.



Fifth Glorious: THE CORONATION OF MARY AS  
QUEEN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH  
(Psalm 45:11-18; Revel. 12:13)

O woman clothed in sun, with twelve stars all around,  
Exemplar of the Church, in God's love you are  
crowned.

Like crown awaits us all; a marriage yet untold,  
Graced gift exchanged with God, in endless love  
unfold.

1. (S) Hear, O daughter, and see; turn your ear, forget  
your people and your father's house. So shall the King  
desire your beauty; for he is your Lord and you must  
worship him.

2. (S) All glorious is the King's daughter as she enters;  
her raiment is threaded with spun gold. In embroidered  
apparel she is borne in to the King.

3. (S) You shall make your sons princes through all the  
land. Your name will be remembered through all gener-  
ations ...the nations will praise you forever and ever.

4. (M) After enthroning our Blessed Mother at the right  
hand of her Son, the Trinity declares all the privileges  
she should enjoy by virtue of her holiness.

5. (M) The Father speaks to the heavenly court: "Our  
daughter Mary was chosen according to Our pleasure  
from among all creatures, the first to delight us..."

6. (M) "Our true daughter is given a part in Our domin-  
ion which we shall recognize by crowning her as the  
legitimate and unequalled Lady and Queen."

7. (M) Jesus then speaks, "To my true and natural  
mother belong all those created and redeemed by me;  
and over all my subjects she shall be queen."

8. (M) The Holy Spirit adds, "Since she is called my beloved and chosen spouse, Blessed Mary deserves to be crowned as queen for all eternity."

9. (M) Having thus spoken, the Father, Son and Spouse of Mary place on her head a crown of unimaginable beauty and splendor, and her glorious reign begins.

10. (S) "A great sign appears in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars."

## PART II

### The Importance of The First Saturdays

On July 13, 1917 Mary appeared to three young Portuguese children—her third appearance—and showed them a vision of hell. Then she told them, "I have come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays. If [people] respond to my requests, Russia will be converted and there will be peace. If not, she will spread her errors throughout the world, causing wars and persecutions of the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, and various nations will be destroyed." (Wm. Thomas Walsh, OLF, pp. 81, 82). Do we in the Western world think we are immune from this?

The first Saturdays—is this not something we have largely ignored? What does Mary ask? For the first Saturday of each month: Confession (within 8 days before or after); Holy Communion of reparation for the sins of the world; meditation on five decades of the Rosary; 15 [extra] minutes of meditation on the mysteries. It seems like such a small thing to ask for peace in the world.

Of course, this is not magic. We must still lead holy lives. But, should not responding to Mary's request be part of true holiness? Should we not all make every effort to fulfill this request? Please consider saying "yes" to Mary's plea, to bring about world peace.

The following meditations may be used to spend the extra 15 minutes of meditation in your parish, as Mary requested. If each meditation is timed at about 45 seconds, this will add up to "15 minutes of meditation on the mysteries."

## First Saturday Meditations

### JOYFUL MYSTERIES

#### 1. The Annunciation

The advent of this wondrous new age, awaited a thousand years, was announced to a humble maiden at prayer in her quiet bedroom. "Hail, full of grace..." Words to be repeated thousands of times by all generations to celebrate this joyful mystery of God's love. He will be the "...son of the most high... and will have the throne of David." ...The Messiah! Mary, help us to say with you, "Let [all things] be done to me according to your word."

#### 2. The Visitation

Elizabeth and Mary—two unlikely mothers—share the wonder of their mysterious pregnancies. In the face of God's marvelous plan, Mary can speak only of his greatness, and her own lowliness. The mighty will fall before him, the hungry will eat well but not the rich. To recognize this contrast—how pleasing to God! For all God's gifts—and especially for her humility—Mary will be called blessed. And we **DO** call her blessed.

#### 3. The Nativity

Jesus is the morning star, with a hidden brightness, too wonderful to be shown. He is born in Bethlehem, house of bread—the bread of angels. The God of all comes to us in a stable. We still find him in hardship, obscurity, poverty. He is heralded by angels, discovered by shepherds... And, wise men still seek him. Mary, invite us to the manger's side to worship our infant Lord and Savior.

#### 4. The Presentation

How ironic that Mary, the pure one, brings Jesus, the redeemer to the temple for purification and redemption. Simeon rejoices at seeing the awaited "salvation," a light for the nations, the glory of Israel. God's promise to him fulfilled, Simeon is ready to leave this world in peace. Our choice for or against this child will seal our fate, good or evil. And, he will bring a sword to pierce Mary's heart. Help us to choose you, Lord, and to console Mary's heart.

#### 5. The Finding in The Temple

If Mary and Joseph could err about Jesus being with them how much more might we err about his presence with us? How do we err thus? By all the little "agreements" we make with God to continue our pet sins. We are comfortable, but the Lord is not with us. Better to *FEEL* his absence, however painful. God's absence is not always a punishment, but sometimes an invitation to draw closer to him. Lord, may we joyfully accept the invitation.

### LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

#### 1. The Baptism in The Jordan

The worst thing in the world is not sin, but its denial. There was no denial of sin that day in the Jordan, when so many came to be symbolically washed clean of their sins. To know our sins and admit them is the first step toward healing. To confess them to "another Christ" is the second. And, to make up for them, the third. O that we might do these things, and turn forever from sin, to you, Lord, our true Happiness. And, O that the Father might one day say of us, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

## 2. Jesus' Self-Manifestation at Cana

The choice of a wedding for his first miracle spoke volumes about Jesus' love for marriage. The Church has continued that love. But, he didn't work his miracle before his mother asked him. Mary is still asking Jesus for us, for what we need. As he turned water to wine by Mary's intercession, so by that same intercession, may he turn our human love to divine, to prepare us for our nuptials with God.

## 3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom

What is the Kingdom? Beyond words, St. Paul tells us (1 Cor. 2:9). The two things needed to enter, as Jesus said—to love God and neighbor—are also the essence of the kingdom: to love, and to know the intimacy that follows, the intimacy of a marriage. The lamb will have his "bride" (Rev. 21). St. Gregory the Great wrote, "the husband of every Christian soul is God..." Lord God, by our humility, our poverty, and by embracing our cross, make us worthy of our divine marriage with you.

## 4. The Transfiguration

Earnest money: that's what St. Catherine of Siena calls the transfiguration. It is a glimpse of the glory to come, to strengthen the three apostles against the scandal of Jesus' cross. Every consolation we experience, every good feeling at prayer or worship, every holy person, every miracle, every answered prayer, every powerful retreat, is **OUR** earnest money, against the scandal of our own cross. May we rejoice in these consolations as seeds of hope, but not cling to them; there must yet be a cross.

## 5. The Institution of The Eucharist

To share this unimaginable intimacy with God himself

is both a gift and a promise. It is as if God, in all his beauty and magnificence—which can only be known by those who pray much—reaches down to embrace us so warmly, so tenderly, so slowly as our romantic lover, and whispers in our ear, "I want you for my spouse... forever." O Lord, I am not worthy...

## THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

### 1. The Agony in The Garden

His hour has come, his "glory." On this Holy Thursday, Jesus faces the horrible reality of his passion and he fears it. He asks for relief, but then offers the perfect prayer to his Father: "not my will but thine be done." This agony symbolizes our first invitation to suffer with Jesus for our sins and those of others. Will we run from the cross he promised us, or embrace it, and find peace, as he himself did in the end?

### 2. The Scourging at the Pillar

"By his stripes we are healed" (Is. 53:5). So begins the brutal rending of Jesus' flesh. The executioners carry out their vicious assault with metal-tipped scourges, tearing off pieces of sacred flesh with each blow. His agony is intense... and long. And what was he thinking of then? Of us, and our sins of the flesh as he atoned for them here? Look closely: are we wielding the whips?

### 3. The Crowning with Thorns

The scourging was not enough. The king, the king of the Jews, must have a crown! A crown of humiliation, studded with our sins of pride: intellectual pride; pride over our gifts; pride over our accomplishments; even spiritual pride. O how blessed the poor in spirit, the humble, who never placed a thorn in this crown.

#### 4. The Carrying of The Cross

"...The cross is complete folly for those on the way to ruin, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18) Yet even a non-believer can understand that self-denial and suffering are essential to any lasting love. This way of the cross—what shame! What pain! Veronica wiped his face, Simon helped, the soldiers ridiculed and scourged him on to Calvary. O that we might be more like Veronica or Simon, than the soldiers.

#### 5. The Crucifixion

His final hour. Wounds reopened; penetrating nails; jeering bystanders. At what terrible price, sin! You forgive... you promise paradise... you give your mother... you recall the Psalm of desolation and hope (Ps. 22)... you thirst... you commend your soul... it is finished. The Lamb is dead. The sun hides; Angels cover their faces. His heart is pierced. It pours forth blood and water: sacraments of love. Have we hearts of stone, that we could ever sin again, seeing this?

### THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

#### 1. The Resurrection

The resurrection is the world's greatest upset victory, the impossible triumph against all odds. Yes, he had repeatedly told his followers it would end this way, but it seemed so wildly unreal... The world so often seems to have won, with its commitment to greed, unchastity and the culture of death. But Christ holds the trump card. His victory is assured. His rising guaranteed that. That is why we Christians never, never give up.



## 2 . The Ascension

"As he blessed them, he left from them, and was carried up into heaven. And they... returned to Jerusalem with great joy..." (Lk 24:51, 52). Why were they joyful? Because although they would miss Jesus, they were about to be filled with the Spirit and do God's work **THEMSELVES**. What a joy - to do God's work, with the Spirit's power. And what a power!

## 3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit

On this Jewish feast of Pentecost, the Spirit came in abundance. But, he had to be invited... by nine days of prayer—the first novena. The twelve were transformed from timorous disciples, to fearless apostles, on fire with zeal for this Good News. There was something remarkably new in Peter's words and 3,000 converted. The Word is just as new today, because where the Holy Spirit breathes, he makes all things new... too new for old wineskins.

## 4. The Assumption

Her heart was eager to return to her Son, so more than anyone, Mary was warmed by the approach of her passing from this world. This short life after all, is about preparing for eternal life—**REAL** life. But her passing from this life was different from others. Mary was raised soul **AND** body into heaven, a privilege which derived from her Immaculate Conception. And her holiness translated into unimaginable beauty. How good these bodies of ours, and by God's grace, how beautiful they will be in heaven!

## 5. The Coronation

Mary embodied the goodness of those who loved their enemies, who courted in a truly Godly way, who did not cheat or lie, who showed kindness to all, who moderated their appetites, who lived marriage by God's plan. Those who live these virtues, however imperfectly, will receive a crown. But, the crown of crowns—the deepest intimacy with God—is for the woman who lived all these to perfection. Mary, our mother, and our queen, teach us the way to perfection, the way to final intimacy with God.

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## **PART III**

### **GLOBAL THEMES**

#### *Joyful Mysteries*

1. The Gift announced.
2. Humbled by the Gift.
3. The Gift revealed.
4. Reflection and awe at the Gift.
5. The Gift, lost and recovered.

#### *Luminous Mysteries*

1. Awareness of Sin and Repentance
2. Love divinized.
3. Unfettered love, for the Kingdom.
4. Consolations: Seeds of hope
5. Divine kiss and promise.

#### *Sorrowful Mysteries*

1. Accepting self-denial to become gift.
2. Renouncing sensuality, to become gift..
3. Renouncing pride, to become gift.
4. Striving for virtue to become gift.
5. Final surrender to become gift.

#### *Glorious Mysteries*

1. The glory of having become gift.
2. Gift in constant prayer.
3. Empowered to share the Gift.
4. Body and soul, gift.
5. Eternal gift exchange.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROSARY

In the latter part of the nineteenth century an upper-middle-class peasant was sitting in a train opposite a young university student. The student observed the man praying the Rosary, with the beads moving through his fingers.

“Sir, do you still believe in such old-fashioned things?” asked the student.

“Why yes, I do. Don’t you?” replied the man.

The student burst out laughing, saying, “I do not believe in such absurdities. Take it from me. You should throw the Rosary out and learn what science has to say about it.”

“Science? What do you mean by this science? Could you explain it?” asked the man, as some tears betrayed his hurt feelings.

The student saw that he had offended the man, so he offered, “If you give me your address I will send you some information on the matter.”

The man reached awkwardly in his coat pocket and produced his card. When the young man read the card he fell silent in shame. The card read, “Louis Pasteur, Director of the Institute of Scientific Research, Paris.”

One is never too learned to pick up the beads and reflect on the mysteries of our faith. Carlo Carretto addressed the modern man, “You have become too intellectual, too cunning. By now you have become more followers of Descartes than [children of Mary]. It is not wrong to be dominated by reason in all that pertains to the visible. It is wrong to pretend to understand the mysteries of God or to pierce the invisible with that instrument. After so many centuries you always return to the same point: confusing reason with faith, wanting to use something limited—such as human reason—to

penetrate heaven” (*The God Who Comes*, p. 216, 217).

St. Francis de Sales, the brilliant bishop of Geneva prayed all fifteen mysteries of the Rosary every day from the age of nineteen. Bishop Sheen, another brilliant leader of the Church, prayed it daily and wrote enthusiastically about it, “The Rosary is the meeting ground of the uneducated and the learned; the place where simple love grows in knowledge and where the knowing mind grows in love . . . The rosary is the book of the blind, where they see, and there enact the greatest drama of love the world has ever known; it is the book of the simple which initiates them into mysteries and knowledge more satisfying than the education of other men; it is the book of the aged, whose eyes close on the shadow of this world, and open on the substance of the next. The power of the rosary is beyond description” (*The World’s First Love*, pp. 188, 189).

Richard Baumann, a German Lutheran minister wrote: “In saying the rosary, truth sinks into the subconscious like a slow and heavy downpour. The hammered sentences of the gospel receive an indelible validity for precisely the little ones, the least, to whom belongs the Kingdom of Heaven . . . The Rosary is a long and persevering gaze, a meditation, a quieting of the spirit in the praise of God, the value of which we Protestants are learning once more.”

Pope Benedict XV said, “The Rosary is a perfect prayer because of the praises it offers, the lessons it teaches, the graces it obtains, and the virtues it achieves. Pope John Paul II called the Rosary “my favorite prayer.” He recommended that families pray the Rosary together. Small wonder that those couples praying the daily Rosary together have a divorce rate of one in 500. In 1980 Pope John Paul II had this to say at Fatima: “Would you like me to tell you a secret? It is simple,

and after all, it is no secret. Pray, pray much. Pray the Rosary every day.”

## **"ARMOR AGAINST HELL, DESTROYER OF VICE AND SIN, AND VICTOR OVER HERESIES"**

The third of the fifteen promises Our Lady gave to Blessed Alan de la Roche regarding the Rosary is the following: *The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin and defeat heresies.*

Goodness knows that in our age sin and vice seem to be everywhere. From the blatant and public sins against chastity and marriage, to the widespread destruction of innocent preborn life, to the violations of religious freedom, it seems man is tempting God to take severe action against our world. One hears the quip, "If God doesn't punish our generation, he owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology."

Philosophical errors or heresies abound as well. We see the acceptance by many of the error of relativism, holding that "If I do what is right for me, that is enough." This, of course, is a denial of objective truth, especially regarding the moral law.

Pope John Paul II wrote,

Although each individual has a right to be respected in his own journey in search of the truth, there exists a prior moral obligation, and a grave one at that, to seek the truth and to adhere to it once it is known... Conscience has

rights because it has duties (Cardinal Newman). (*Veritatis Splendor*, n. 33)

In other words, we must seek the truth from divine sources, such as Scripture and Church teaching, not the culture in which we live, or even our own subjective experience. If we love God, we must do so on his terms, not our own.

Another prevailing error in our age is secularism, seeing all things in relation to worldly values rather than religious values. If God is to be first, the world must be second. "Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (Jas 4:4). In other words, if our first concern is the world rather than God, we are no friend of God.

In this age of sophistication, the humble prayer of the Rosary, championed by so many popes, especially Pope John Paul II, and by Bishop Sheen in the USA as we saw above, will defeat sin and vice, and the errors of our age.

*Long live the Rosary and those who pray it!*