

A. Praying the Rosary



Meditation

Dear Pilgrim,

All along this pilgrimage, you are invited to recite the Rosary. What exactly is it?

A Rosary is a crown of roses, whereas a chaplet is a small hat with flowers. Praying the Rosary is to **give our Blessed Lady a crown of prayers.**

This being said, and as St John Paul II reminds us “...*even though it is a Marian, the Rosary is a prayer centered on Christ...It embodies the depth of the evangelical message, of which it is almost a summary.*”

I. How do you pray the Rosary?

Traditionally a Rosary is made up of three Chaplets, each made up of five mysteries, or meditations on the main events of the lives of Jesus and Mary.

- Five Joyful Mysteries: about the childhood of Jesus
- Five Sorrowful Mysteries: about the Passion of Jesus
- Five Glorious Mysteries: about God’s glory

To the above fifteen Mysteries, which traditionally make up the entire Rosary, St John Paul II proposed – but did not impose – adding the five Luminous Mysteries about the main events of the Life of Jesus, a practice dating from the Middle Ages. It would, according to him, be a true summary of the Gospel.

II. How do we pray the Chaplet?

In the words of St John Paul II “ *the Rosary is both a meditation and a supplication...it is also a journey of statements and increasing deepening of our faith*”

We start each Chaplet by praying one ‘I believe in God’ as if “*to put the profession of faith as a starting point to the journey of contemplation we are about to undertake*” as St John Paul II would say. Then we recite (or sing) one ‘Our Father’, followed by three ‘Hail Mary’ and then a ‘Glory Be’.

In order to properly introduce the first mystery – which will be the background of the first meditation – St John Paul II noted that “*in order to give it a biblical basis and a deeper meditation, it is worthwhile for the introduction of the mystery to be followed by the reference and reading of a corresponding bible passage*”.

Following the reading, “*it is recommended to pause for a significant amount of time in order to fix our eyes on the mystery to be meditated upon, prior to starting our vocal prayer*”

This vocal prayer consists of the recitation (or singing), in Latin or in English of:

- one ‘Our Father’ (Pater)
- ten ‘Hail Mary’ (Ave)
- one ‘Glory Be’ (Gloria” followed by the very short prayer given to us by Our Blessed Mother at Fatima “Dear God, *forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of Hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy Mercy*”

About the above prayers, St John Paul II makes the following recommendations “*the point of focus of the Ave Maria...is the name of Jesus. It is specifically by the accent that we give to His name and His mystery that we can determine whether our recitation is meaningful and fruitful*”. And so, “*we may add depth to the name of Christ by adding a ____ reminding us of the mystery. It is very fitting, especially with public recitation.*” Furthermore “*it is important that the Gloria, apex of our contemplation, gets a very special focus in the Rosary*”. And finally, it should be that “*each mystery ends with a short prayer asking for the specific fruits associated with the meditation of the very mystery*” so that “*we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise*”

The Our Father (Pater)

For proper respect for God Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, we use 'Thy' as the formal form of 'your'. Mystics might have used 'your' in the past, but they were just that: mystics, and we are not!

"Lead us not into temptation" as a direct translation from the Greek, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2846).

III. Meditation and grace to be asked for

1. As we just saw, each meditation will focus on a moment of the life of Christ. But in order to derive benefits for our present life and keep with the each daily theme of the pilgrimage, we need to ask for special graces and the fruits associated with each mystery.

This is what St John Paul II meant when he said "*each mystery of the Rosary, when properly meditated upon, sheds light on the mystery of man...Meditating on the Rosary is the equivalent of giving our burdens to the merciful hearts of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother*"

What are these meditations and graces we should be asking for as fruits of these mysteries

Joyful Mysteries

- Annunciation – fruit of this mystery: humility
- Visitation – fruit of this mystery: charity
- Nativity – fruit of this mystery: poverty
- Presentation of the Child Jesus at the temple – fruit of this mystery: obedience and purity
- Finding of the Child Jesus at the Temple - fruit of this mystery: seeking God in all things

Luminous Mysteries

- Baptism of Jesus - fruit of this mystery: penitence
- Wedding at Cana - fruit of this mystery: trust in prayer and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Call for Conversion and Predication of the Kingdom - fruit of this mystery: courage and fortitude
- Transfiguration of Jesus - fruit of this mystery: spirit of prayer and gift of wisdom
- First Eucharist – fruit of this mystery: Eucharistic devotion

Don't read the entire list of mysteries but illustrate with examples

Sorrowful Mysteries

- Agony in the Garden – fruit of this mystery: contrition for our sins
- Scourging at the Pillar – fruit of this mystery: sorrow for our sins of the flesh
- Crowning with the Crown of Thorns – fruit of this mystery: sorrow for our sins of pride
- Carrying of the Cross – fruit of this mystery: courage in our daily trials
- Crucifixion and Death on the Cross – fruit of this mystery: stronger desire and love for God

Glorious Mysteries

- Resurrection – fruit of this mystery: Faith
- Ascent into Heaven - fruit of this mystery: s stronger desire for Heaven
- Descent of the Holy Ghost - fruit of this mystery: zeal for souls
- Assumption of our Blessed Virgin Mary – fruit of this mystery: grace associated with a holy death
- Crowning of our Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven - fruit of this mystery: stronger devotion to Mary

IV. Benefits of the Rosary

This is what St John Paul II had to say about the Rosary: “Thanks to Mary, the Rosary allows for the salvaging light of all the Mysteries of Christ to descend on our circumstances and difficulties associated with our everyday life, work, tiredness, doubt, sufferings, social and familial activities and transfigures everything, elevates everything and purifies everything.”

He also said “The Rosary is my favorite prayer. This is a wonderful prayer filled with simplicity and depth to exhort for the contemplation of the Face of Jesus in the company of His Blessed Mother

1. The Rosary: a family prayer for unity and peace

- a. Recited as a family, it is a source of union and agreement. This is what Pope Pius XII had to say about it *“By reciting the Rosary, families pray together...If a family prays, it inherently is alive; and if they pray together, they live together. Very few means appear as efficacious – in order to promote and salvage the union of spirits - as reciting the Rosary together, under the tender and smiling gaze of our Blessed Mother”*. And also, *“It is especially with families that we wish the practice of the recitation of the Rosary to be spread, religiously maintained intact and continually developed.”*

It is in vain that we try to stop the decline of civilization if we do not bring back the family to the law of the Gospel, foundation and principle of society”. And St John Paul II would exhort us with the following: *“I hereby repeat to all, what have said to the families, a large prayer for life – that spreads all over the world – is an urgency”*

- b. The Rosary is also a remedy to all the ills of our times. In 1969, Blessed Paul VI said: *“We exhort the clergy and the faithful to ask God, through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, peace and reconciliation between all peoples. Peace is certainly in the business of men...but it most certainly is also God’s business. The prayer – reciting the Rosary – through which we ask for the gift of peace, is therefore an irreplaceable contribution to the instauration of peace.”* And St John Paul II said: *“The Rosary is, by nature, a prayer oriented towards peace. Truth be told, the Rosary allows us to build peace throughout the world, while keeping our eyes fixed on Christ.”*

2. The Rosary: a prayer recommended by our Blessed Mother

Every single time, our Blessed Mother appeared at Fatima, she is wearing a rosary and recommends its recitation:

- *“Recite the Rosary every single day in order to obtain world peace and the end of war”*

- *“I want you...to pray the Rosary each day”*
- *“I am the Lady of the Rosary. May everyone continue to recite the Rosary each day.*

And finally, while appearing to Sister Lucy, at the convent of Pontevedra, on December 10 1925, the Holy Mother of God, accompanied by the Child Jesus, said, while pointing to Her Blessed Heart: *“Daughter, behold my heart surrounded by thorns, that ungrateful men push in deeper through their blasphemies and ungratefulness. Please try to console me and tell everyone who will go to confession, receive Holy Communion, pray the Rosary and spend fifteen minutes with me – with a spirit of reparation - on the first Saturday of the month, for five months, that I will assist them at the hour of their death and obtain for them all the necessary graces for the salvation of their souls.”*

Dear pilgrim, please remain silent for a few moments in order to meditate on these very last words from our Blessed Mother and take the resolution to follow her recommendations: for word peace and the salvation of our soul.

‘This angelic salutation is always agreeable to our Blessed Mother because, through it, each time we renew the happiness she experienced when the Angel Gabriel announced to Her that she had been chosen to be the mother of God: we must therefore, in this intention, greet her with an Ave Maria..’ St Alphonse-Marie de Liguori

“Give me an army that prays the Rosary and I would the world”
Blessed Pius IX

“After Holy Mass, there is no more powerful prayer than the Rosary” Saint Pius X

“Amongst all prayers, the Rosary is the most beautiful, the richest and touches the Blessed Heart of Mary the most; if you want peace in your homes, please pray the Rosary together” from the will of Saint Pius X