

Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary
from Ascension Press.

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Joyful Mysteries

Mondays, Saturdays & Sundays of Advent & Christmas

The Annunciation

Mary said yes. God was asking a great amount of her. She could face disapproval. Joseph could abandon her. She might not be believed. Mary risked a lot because she had faith in God's goodness. I imagine her kneeling in wonderment at the angel Gabriel, his hands encompassing hers, his forehead pressed against hers as he tells her of God's great plan. She whispers "yes" knowing that her life is forever changed and possibly going to be much harder. She allows God's will to be done and with that *fiat* the salvation of the world is set in motion. I pray that I can put God's will before my own.

The Visitation

Newly pregnant, Mary walks several days to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She is greeted with great joy and exclaims her *Magnificat*. While knowing that all will call her blessed, she spends several months serving Elizabeth. I imagine her performing the tasks of life so that Elizabeth, in her third trimester when the physical burden of pregnancy is greatest, can rest. Despite her own possible exhaustion and morning sickness, she serves her cousin. I imagine them at the end of the day sitting together and sharing their feelings about these two miraculous babies. I pray that I can serve as Mary did.

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The Nativity

Mary and Joseph are far from home and she is about to give birth. They find nowhere to stay. Rather than panicking, they rely on God who leads them to a safe, warm place for his son's birth. I imagine their worry but also their sense of calm. They know God cares for them and he will not abandon them on this holy journey. As the angels announce Jesus' birth and the shepherds come to pay him homage, Mary and Joseph are surrounded by God's love. I pray for the grace to depend on God completely.

The Presentation

Mary and Joseph obey the law and bring their newborn son to the temple and offer a sacrifice. There they meet Simeon who has waited many years to meet the Messiah. I imagine Simeon gazing at Jesus. The Christ for whom he has waited has arrived just as God promised. He raises his eyes to heaven in thanks. He also warns Mary that her own heart will be pierced. She continues to trust God, not knowing what lies ahead. I pray for trust in God's plan and patience in waiting for it to unfold.

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

After not knowing where he was for three days, Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the temple. I imagine the fear they felt when they realized Jesus was not with them as they returned from Jerusalem. I imagine how scared they felt as they looked for him and the increasing anxiety they experience as time passed. At last they find him in his father's home. What relief and joy. We look for Jesus too and we can always find him in church. He is there waiting for us. I pray that I will not find reasons to avoid visiting Jesus regularly.

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Sorrowful Mysteries

Tuesdays, Fridays & Sundays of Lent

The Agony in the Garden

Jesus knows torture and death lie ahead and he prays that the cup will pass. He also prays God's will be done. In his agony, he carries the weight of our sins so that we may be saved. I imagine the courage it took to give himself to God's plan. We too suffer and while we may pray the suffering will end, we are given support from Our Lord to endure, as Jesus received strength from the angel in the garden. I pray for the courage to conform to God's will especially when it may be difficult.

The Scourging at the Pillar

Jesus is brutally tortured to near death. Scourging was more than mere beating; it involved using instruments to inflict the most pain and blood loss possible without actually killing. Jesus was beaten for our sins. His mother watched as her son's blood spilled on the ground. I imagine the horror she felt watching her precious child be brutalized, and how hard it must have been to not run to his rescue. I pray for forgiveness for my sins, the sins that contributed to the torture of my Lord.

The Crowning with Thorns

Jesus is stripped, reclothed with a scarlet robe and crowned with thorns. He is mocked and spit upon by the soldiers. The people demand his crucifixion. Despite his innocence, he does not defend himself. He is strong in the face of hatred. I imagine his sadness at the people's ignorance, his sorrow at their contempt. I pray for courage to defend God's truth and strength to withstand the criticism and hatred of others.

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The Carrying of the Cross

Jesus' humiliation continues as he carries the Cross he will be crucified on through the town and people continue to mock him. I imagine the pain of the heavy wood against his back, rubbing against the open wounds from the scourging, the hot sun on him, the thirst, and hunger. I imagine his grief at seeing Mary, knowing she is watching her son die. Jesus is patient in enduring this suffering for us. I pray for more forgiveness, knowing my sins add to the weight of that Cross. I pray for patience in my own times of difficulty.

The Crucifixion

Jesus arrives and is nailed to the cross. As he hangs, slowly dying, he is comforted by the presence of Mary, her sister, John and Mary Magdalene. Mary is strong. She has watched him suffer and now die and she never leaves him. I imagine her heartache. In his words to Mary, "Woman, behold, your son" all of us are entrusted to her love. I pray in thanksgiving for Christ's suffering and sacrifice so that I may be saved.

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Glorious Mysteries

Wednesdays & other Sundays

The Resurrection

Jesus did as he foretold, he rose from death, thus securing for us everlasting life in heaven with him and his father. The women who went to visit him are greeted by an angel who gives them this good news. They see him on their way to Galilee and he tells them to tell the disciples of his resurrection. I imagine the joy they feel when they see the one they love living again, the celebration of the disciples and Mary when they are able to touch him and talk to him. I pray for faith that I too may one day be with Jesus in heaven.

The Ascension

As Jesus ascends to heaven he tells his followers to go and make disciples. He sends them to the world to share his story and he promises he will always be with them. I imagine their surprise to see him lifted up and away to the clouds and their wonderment as all that occurred. I imagine them considering what will happen next and how they will do as he told them. They are filled with hope and maybe fear. I pray for hope when I don't know the way forward or when times seem dark.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

The apostles and Mary are hiding in the upper room in fear of the future. When the Holy Spirit, the Advocate Jesus said he would send, comes to them they are filled with the gifts they need to go out into the world: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We receive these same gifts at our baptism and confirmation. I pray that I can use these gifts to share the love of Jesus and the story of his good news.

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The Assumption of Mary

Mary is taken to heaven to her rightful place with Jesus where she intercedes for us in prayer. I imagine her excitement at being with her son again, and her pleasure at being in heaven with God. I pray for her intercession and help in growing closer to Jesus, while asking her to help me love him more. She will keep pointing the way toward her son.

The Coronation of Mary

Mary is the Queen of Heaven and Earth. She listened to God's will and stayed true to his plan for her life. Mary was not spared suffering but her reward in heaven is great. She is our queen too, and if asked she will help us in all facets of our life. I imagine her lovingly looking down at us and her happiness at our requests for help. I pray for her humility, patience, and trust.

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Luminous Mysteries

Thursdays

The Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan

Though Jesus is without original sin, John baptizes him and God announces that Jesus is his son and he is pleased. I imagine standing in that cool river, feeling the water rush past me. The sounds of the crowd are muffled as my head goes below the surface. I imagine hearing God's great voice proclaiming he is pleased with his son. I desire God to be pleased with me too, and pray that I can accept the movement of the Holy Spirit in my life.

The Wedding Feast at Cana

It is here Jesus' public life is put into motion. I imagine Mary noticing that the wine is running out and hearing her ask Jesus for help, confident in his assistance. His respect for Mary is so high, he performs his first miracle at her request. Her command, "Do whatever he tells you" is for us too. The wine stewards listen and water is turned into wine. When we pray the Rosary she intercedes with her Son on our behalf. I pray to grow closer to Jesus with Mary's help.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God

Jesus went about the land preaching the coming of the kingdom of heaven. He healed the sick and cast out demons. I imagine the awe of the people watching this man proclaim the importance of repenting of our sins as he healed people of their paralysis or leprosy. He preached about love and forgiveness. We too need healing and repentance. I pray for the ability to be humbly and genuinely sorry for my sins against others and against the God who loves me and made me.

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The Transfiguration

Peter, James and John accompany Jesus up Mount Tabor where Jesus is transformed before them in glorious light and Moses and Elijah appear. Peter desires to build tents for them so they may stay. God again proclaims pleasure in Jesus, his beloved Son and tells them to listen to him. I imagine the disciples seeing Jesus with the prophets of the past and hearing God's voice. They received a beautiful gift from God and comforting words from Jesus to not be afraid. I pray for the desire to spend time with Christ thinking about his message and striving for holiness.

The Institution of the Eucharist

Jesus gives us the greatest of gifts in his presence in the Eucharist—body, blood, soul and divinity. I imagine the disciples hearing these words of the New Covenant and the directive to do this in his remembrance. We reflect on this at every Mass as we genuflect before the tabernacle. We are also invited to visit Jesus in adoration. It takes great faith to believe in the Real Presence. I pray for the grace to have that faith, to seek him in adoration and surrender myself humbly to his service.

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The prayer leader prays the words in **blue**
& everyone else responds with the rest of the prayer.

The Sign of the Cross

(said to start the rosary prayer)

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

The Apostles' Creed

(said at first, holding the crucifix)

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.**

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The Lord's Prayer (said holding the single large bead before each decade)

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 (said holding each of the 10 beads in the decade)

Hail Mary full of Grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed are thou amongst 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.**

The Glory Be *(said at the end of each decade)*

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.**

The Fatima Prayer *(said after the Glory Be at the end of each decade)*

**O my Jesus, forgive us our sins,
save us from the fires of hell;
lead all souls to heaven,
especially those who have most need of your mercy,
the born and the unborn Amen.**

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The Hail, Holy Queen

(said after the final decade)

(The Salve Regina)

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
to you we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy toward us;
and after this, our exile,
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

The Final Prayer

(said after the Hail, Holy Queen)

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

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 purchase for us the rewards of eternal life.
Grant, we beseech Thee,
that by meditating on these mysteries
of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
we may imitate what they contain
and obtain what they promise,
through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help,
or sought thy intercession
was left unaided.
Inspired with this confidence,
I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother;
to thee do I come;
before thee I stand,
sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me.
Amen.