

## THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

God wants us to have complete joy. He created us for it. Jesus came so we could be immersed in complete joy: "I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete" (John 15:11). The Joyful Mysteries celebrate when joy entered the world, when God entered into the mess of the world because of his incredible love for us.



**The First Joyful Mystery:** The Annunciation. This is Mary's moment, the moment when her "yes" changed the world. Imagine the monumental courage that would have required. Think about it. An angel appeared to Mary, and told her she would be the mother of the savior, the mother of God. She was a teenager, only a child. And what the angel said made no earthly sense. What was Mary thinking? What would have happened if she had said no?



**The Second Joyful Mystery:** The Visitation. God turned Mary's world upside down. What did Mary do? She rushed off to serve her cousin, Elizabeth, who was pregnant in her old age. It was Mary's first reaction. Too often our first reaction is one of selfishness: "I don't feel like it," "I'll do it later," "Can't someone else take care of it?" But Mary had an instinct to serve, an entrenched humility.



**The Third Joyful Mystery:** The Birth of Jesus. The world is a mess: war, poverty, corruption, greed, selfishness, violence, abuse, injustice. The face of evil torments ordinary people every day, and yet God chose to put himself in the middle of our mess. The humility of God is incredible. He places himself right in the middle of our mess as the solution to it. We don't deserve it. We have no claim to it. God gives us a new beginning, a fresh start, freely and without merit.

**The Fourth Joyful Mystery:** The Presentation. Mary presented Jesus at the temple in Jerusalem, dedicating him to God according to the Jewish custom. As she did so, a man named Simeon said something astounding, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2:29-30). Have you ever waited for something with great anticipation? Did you wait patiently? What are you waiting for in your life right now? Simeon had waited. He had waited patiently, and prayed patiently for the savior. Now, he took baby Jesus in his arms. Imagine the emotion as he pulled the child to his chest. His face filled with a strange combination of joy and anguish. Joy for the present, anguish for the future he knows the child will face.



**The Fifth Joyful Mystery:** The Finding of Jesus in the Temple. On their way home from celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph actually lost Jesus. God, the Creator of the universe, had entrusted Jesus the Messiah to Mary and Joseph's care—and they lost him. Imagine what they were thinking and how they were feeling: grief, torment, distress, anguish, torture. So often we lose Jesus in our own lives and don't even notice.

## HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY

Rosary beads help Catholics count their prayers. More importantly, Catholics pray the rosary as a means of either asking God for a special favor, such as helping a loved one recover from an illness, or to thank God for blessings received. The Rosary was given by Mary to St Dominic and is a popular way to pray to God while focusing on Jesus' life in the Gospels.

1. On the crucifix, make the sign of the cross and then pray 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 Ghost, 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, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence 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.

2. On the next large bead, say 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.

3. On the following three small beads, pray three **Hail Marys**

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.

4. On the chain, pray the **Glory Be**.

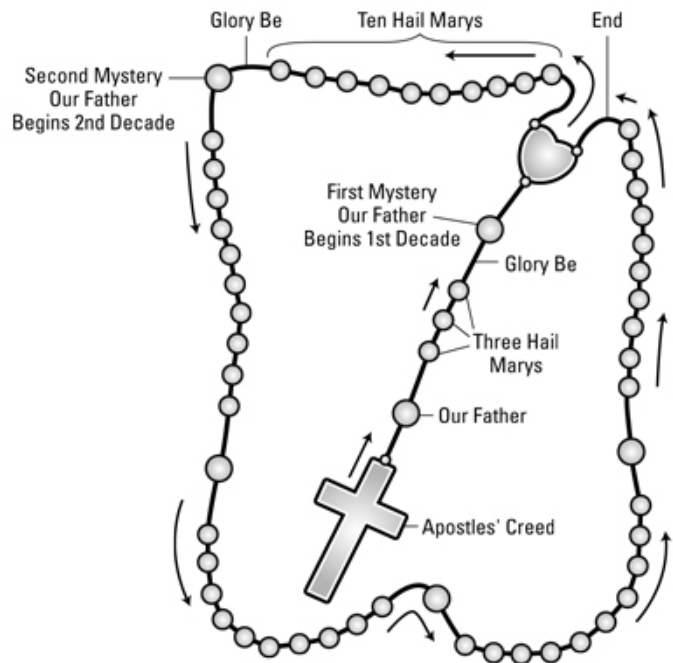
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

5. On the large bead, meditate on the first mystery and pray the **Our Father**. You pray mysteries for each of the five sections (decades) of the rosary according to the day of the week.

6. Skip the centerpiece medallion, and on the ten beads after that, pray a Hail Mary on each bead; on the chain, pray a Glory Be. Although a decade is 10, these 12 prayers form a decade of the rosary.

7. Many Catholics add the **Fatima Prayer** after the Glory Be and before the next **Our Father**:

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 Thy mercy. Amen.



8. Repeat Steps 5 and 6 four more times to finish the next four decades.

9. At the end of your Rosary, say 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 do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

10. After the Hail Holy Queen, you can pray the following prayer:

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation; grant we beseech Thee, that meditating upon 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.