

Pray the Rosary



A Walk with
Jesus and Mary

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Introduction

So, you want to pray the Rosary? You're in good company. The Rosary has been the prayer of saints and sinners for centuries!

The Rosary is a powerful prayer because meditation on the life of Jesus brings us closer to him and helps us to grow in love. Mary is the person who is closest to Jesus, so when we ask her to pray for us, she helps us to grow in love for him.

The Rosary has various elements or components that are adaptable to each person's needs. The combination of vocal prayer (prayers spoken aloud) and mental prayer (reflection or meditation) means one can shift one's focus to whichever aspect is helpful at the moment one is praying.

Meaning of the Words: Some people focus on the meaning of the words in the prayers of the Rosary, including the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory, especially when they are still becoming familiar with the prayers. The two prayers that make up most of the Rosary have their basis in Scripture. Matthew 6:9–13 is where we find the Our Father,

and Luke 1:28 and 1:42 contain the words of the first half of the Hail Mary. The words themselves are beautiful and can fuel our prayer for a long time.

Meditation on the Mysteries: Often the words of the Our Father and Hail Mary gradually fade into the background and provide a setting or atmosphere for reflection on the mysteries. The mysteries are events in the life of Jesus and Mary, and there are four sets: Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious. We call them mysteries not because we are trying to solve or figure them out, but because they are mysterious—we can never grasp them completely. While praying each decade (set of 10 Hail Marys) some people try to imagine the scene of that particular mystery, as if they were part of it or watching from nearby. One can also reflect on a word, attitude, or desire of Jesus, Mary, or another character in the mystery. The art for each mystery in this booklet, as well as the quotations from Scripture, can help this meditation.

Fruit of the Mysteries: Another way to pray the Rosary involves focusing on the “fruit” of each mystery. The fruit is a certain virtue or grace that flows from meditation on that mystery, since it is lived in some way by Jesus or Mary in that particular event.

Focusing on a certain fruit can help us to desire it and open our hearts to it. In this booklet, there is a suggested fruit for each decade: for example, gratitude, confidence in Jesus, or increase of hope.

Intercessory Prayer: The Rosary is a very powerful form of intercessory prayer, which is prayer to God on behalf of others. While praying the Rosary, you can choose to pray for particular people, needs, or situations (prayer intentions). The words and mysteries may both fade into the background as you focus on asking Mary to lift up to God a particular person or situation that you have at heart. In this booklet, you will see one prayer intention provided for each mystery, but these, of course, are simply suggestions. You can choose to devote an entire Rosary to one intention, or each decade to a different intention, or you can pray each Hail Mary for different intentions.

Different methods and approaches to praying the Rosary work for different people or for the same person at various stages of life—or even for the same person during the praying of a single Rosary! Let the Holy Spirit lead you into new, different, or deeper forms of prayer.

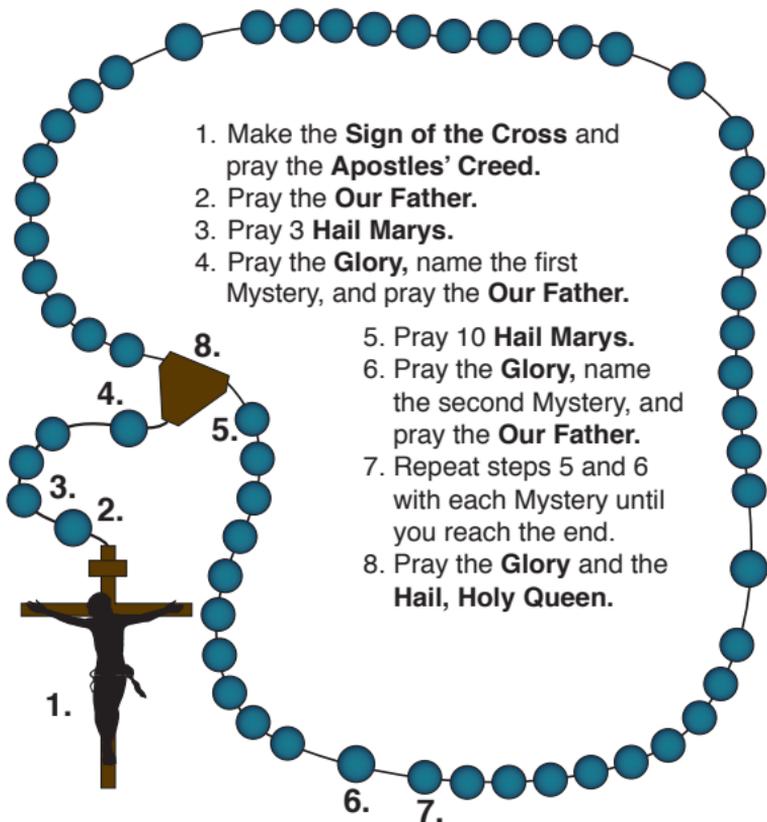
How to Pray the Rosary

Begin by making the Sign of the Cross; then, while holding the crucifix of your rosary, pray the Apostles' Creed (p. 6). On the beads of the small chain, pray one Our Father (p. 6), three Hail Marys (p. 7), and one Glory (p. 7). Next, read the mystery and pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and a Glory. This completes one decade. The Fatima Prayer (p. 7) and the short prayer at the end of each mystery are optional additions to conclude each decade. All of the other decades are prayed in the same manner, while meditating on the mystery for each decade. At the end, pray the Hail, Holy Queen (p. 56) and/or the Memorare (p. 56), and, if you wish, the Litany of Loreto (p. 57).

Although you can pray any of the mysteries of the Rosary on any day, they are traditionally prayed on certain days of the week:

<i>Joyful</i>	Monday and Saturday
<i>Luminous</i>	Thursday
<i>Sorrowful</i>	Tuesday and Friday
<i>Glorious</i>	Wednesday and Sunday

Rosary beads provide a physical way to keep track of the prayers so that one's mind is free to meditate on the mysteries. The diagram that follows shows how to pray the Rosary, step by step.



The Prayers of the Rosary

The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those

who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with 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.

Glory

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 Prayer

(Often prayed at the end of each decade of the Rosary.)

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of your mercy. Amen.

The prayers that can be used at the end of the Rosary can be found on pp. 56–60.



**JOYFUL
MYSTERIES**



FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Annunciation

The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.” (Lk 1:30–31)

The first word the Angel Gabriel says to Mary is “Hail,” which literally means “Rejoice!” (Lk 1:28, NABRE). The great moment had arrived. Sent by the Father, the Son of God was about to become incarnate, to become one of us, to save us from our sins. Mary joyfully consented to this invitation from God through the angel. “Here am I, the servant of the Lord” (Lk 1:38). The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and the Incarnation took place.

Fruit of the Mystery: Courage and trust in God

Intention: For those who are fearful and suffer from anxiety.

Holy Mary, you trusted God even though the path before you was not fully clear. Pray for me that I also may trust God in the difficulties of life and face the future with serene trust.

