

DEVOTIONS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

THE MOST HOLY ROSARY

The Rosary is a form of prayer in which the fifteen chief historical events upon which our faith is based are contemplated. To recite the Rosary, the Our Father is said on every large bead and the Hail Mary on every small bead, each decade being terminated with the Glory Be. Each decade is said in honor of some mystery which is set apart for contemplation during the recitation of the prayers.

Manner of saying the Rosary.

1. Hold the cross in the right hand and bless yourself with the cross, saying, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

2. Still holding the cross, say the Apostles' Creed.

3. On the first large bead after the cross, say the Our Father; on the next three small beads, say the Hail Mary; after the third Hail Mary, say the Glory be, on the chain.

4. Then name the mystery upon which you are to meditate; e.g. "The Annunciation."

5. While meditating on this mystery say the Our Father on the large bead just before the medal and the Hail Mary on the next ten small beads after the medal; adding after the tenth Hail Mary, Glory be, on the chain.

6. Then proceed to the second mystery, saying Our Father on the large bead and ten Hail Mary's on the small beads, ending with Glory be. Continue until the set of mysteries has been finished.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

I. The Annunciation

St. Luke i. 26-38

Contemplate the Blessed Virgin rapt in silent prayer in the holy house at Nazareth. The chamber suddenly filled with heavenly splendor. The angelic messenger appearing, crying, "Hail, Full of Grace." The wondrous Announcement,—the Virgin's fear,—the words of comfort and reassurance, "Be it unto me according to thy word," "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

(After the meditation on each Mystery, say one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory be).

Resolution: To meet God's calls with our Lady's reply.

II. The Visitation

St. Luke i. 39-56

Arise, my soul, in haste and go with the Blessed Mother to the hill country. She bears beneath her heart the Incarnate God. Her immaculate womb is the shrine where God is dwelling. There the Sacred Heart beats with a mighty love for those he longs to redeem,—yes, for you. Picture the house in the hill country. Mary's entrance, the manifestation of the Holy Ghost, the loud

and joyful cry of the aged Elizabeth. The unborn Baptist leaping in his mother's womb. Mary magnifying God.

Resolution: To magnify God, saying Magnificat.

III. The Birth of Our Lord

St. Luke ii. 4-20; St. Matt. ii. 1-11

Bethlehem, with its crowded streets; the Holy Mother begging a shelter: "No room for them"; shut out in the winter night. Follow them to the stable. The bitter cold; the keen night wind; the shivering Infant in the straw. Kneel with Blessed Mary and St. Joseph and worship him. He smiles up into your face. Kiss those little hands reaching out in love to you. Lift him to your bosom, warm him with your heart's best love. But hark!—a burst of heavenly music. Angels singing high amongst the Christmas stars. Swift steps approach. Shepherds throng the manger-throne, kneeling in love and worship at his feet. Beneath a flaming star a stately caravan draws near. Kings from far-off lands kneel and offer gold, frankincense and myrrh. What shall I offer?

Resolution: I pledge to the Infant Jesus the gold of my heart's love, the incense of my prayers, the myrrh of my willingness to bear my cross.

IV. The Presentation

St. Luke ii. 22-28

A humble procession to the Temple gates, —St. Joseph, Mary the Blessed of the Father, in her arms the tender Infant who is Incarnate God Most High. Purer than the seraphim, she makes her offering for her purification. The aged priest draws near; he clasps the Infant to his heart; "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Rejoice with Simeon in the Light of the Gentiles, in the Glory of Israel.

Resolution: To say, "Come to my heart, Lord Jesus."

V. The Finding in the Temple

St. Luke ii. 41-52

The Child Jesus lost in the great city! Meditate upon the search by Blessed Mary and St. Joseph through three agonizing days. "Verily, Thou art a God, that hidest Thyself." What is my search for him when he seems to withdraw himself and my soul is dark? How can I find him again? "I went into the temple of God; then understood I these things." Linger over the joy of this Finding,—the Mother folding

the divine boy to her heart again. He is on his Father's business, to love us, to teach us, to redeem us. Like Blessed Mary, take this Holy Child to your heart. "I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him and would not let him go."

Resolution: "I will seek him whom my soul loveth."

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

I. The Agony in the Garden

St. Matt. xxvi. 36-46

Picture the midnight scene. The paschal moon flooding the world with silver light,—the deep shade of the olive grove,—the sleeping disciples,—Jesus our God and Lord, bowed down in mortal agony. See the blood-drops falling. Hear the cry wrung from his Heart: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt." He suffers for my sins. The cup which he drinks to the bitter dregs my self-will filled for him. O God, have mercy upon me and forgive. O Jesus, with Thy Precious Blood, blot out my sins, my many sins.

Resolution: To say, "Have mercy on me, O God"

II. The Scourging

St. Luke xxiii. 13-16

Pilate, hoping to pacify the Jews, delivers Jesus to the torture of the Roman scourge. See him bound to the pillar. Stroke falls upon stroke, the leathern thongs, laced with steel, sink deep into the flesh at every blow. O my soul, hear the piteous moans of thy Saviour. Behold the stripes by which thou art healed. See the Precious Blood starting from the red track of the whip as the keen lash is withdrawn. Not Pilate, but my sins deliver him to the torture.

Resolution: An Act of love in reparation to Jesus.

III. The Crowning with Thorns

St. John xix. 2-3

See the Son of God crowned, robed, and sceptered. Men kneel in mockery,—“Hail, King of the Jews!”—then with brutal laughter they spit upon his sacred Face, once so fair and comely. Beneath the cruel thorns great blood-drops flow. His face is marred with blood. Patient, silent, he suffers. His Sacred Heart is breaking with love. And who is it who treats the loving Saviour thus? Look up into his eyes, all dimmed with blood, and ask, “Lord, is it I?”

Resolution: To say, "Thy Kingdom Come," three times.

IV. Bearing the Cross

St. John xix. 17

Follow with Mary along the Way of Sorrows. See Jesus as he toils up the steep ascent, burdened with the cross. He makes no reply to the jeers, the curses, the blows and spitting. Thrice he sinks beneath the heavy load. Hell roars in horrid triumph as Incarnate God falls down upon the way. His feet are cut by the stones. Here, as everywhere, he is prodigal of his Precious Blood in his longing to cleanse our souls.

Resolution: To say, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus."

V. The Crucifixion

St. Mark xv. 23-38

See Jesus transfixed upon the Cross. Hear the hammer blows as the nails are driven through his tender flesh. The Precious Blood flows forth. Hear his cry: "Father, forgive them!" For six hours amid darkness and earthquake, he hangs. "Come down from the cross," they cry, "Save thyself." But he came not to save himself, but me, a poor sinner. Stand close beside the

Cross with the Holy Mother and St. John. Give him your heart. Only that gift can ease his pain. He longs so for it. Can you keep it from him?

Resolution: Say thrice, "Knit my heart unto thee."

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

I. The Resurrection

St. Matt. xxviii: 1-10

Again, night in her silent course. The world in slumber lies. Jesus, dead and buried, sleeps in the tomb. Suddenly a flash of heavenly glory. An angel leaps down from heaven, and the earth quakes beneath his mighty touch. The Incarnate Son takes once more the life he had laid down of himself, breaks the bars of death, and rises in triumph from the tomb. Hear his joyful greeting to the holy woman. "All hail!" Hear his loving greeting to your soul, "Peace be unto you."

Resolution: To kneel and kiss his sacred feet.

II. The Ascension

St. Luke xxiv. 50-51

See the vast cohorts of angels coming to hail him as their King; the hosts of

patriarchs and prophets, caught up from their place of waiting to greet the Lord in the air. What march of heavenly splendor as they sweep upward to the everlasting gates with mighty shout: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates and the King of Glory shall come in." Closed to man by man's sins, heaven flung wide open at the approach of the God-Man, never again to be shut against the sons of men.

Resolution: Not to disappoint him as he waits for me at the gates of Paradise.

III. The Coming of the Holy Ghost

Acts i. 13-14 and ii. 1-4

The disciples gathered with Mary the Mother of Jesus for the first Christian novena and retreat. What reward for perseverance in prayer! The "Power of the Most High" is liberated, God the Holy Ghost comes down to crown with living Flame of Love his faithful ones. Is thy heart cold? Pray the fire of the Holy Ghost into it. Rejoice with Blessed Mary and all the Saints in his power, his love, his tender guiding care.

Resolution: Yield today to every call of conscience.

IV. The Assumption of the B. V. M.

Rev. xxii. 1

She who called herself "the handmaid (literally slave-maid) of the Lord," now exalted as Queen of Heaven. That holy, undefiled flesh from which God the Son took his human body, could not see corruption. Although without sin, she died the death common to all; but her divine Son would not permit death to hold her, but "in the beloved city he gave her rest, and in Jerusalem was her power." Raised up to reign with Christ in Glory, she shares his work of intercession. O happy thought! The Mother of God prays for me!

Resolution: To try to be worthy of Mary's love.

V. The Coronation of the B. V. M.

Rev. xii. 1, and 2 Timothy iv. 8

The Coronation of the Mother of God follows upon the reception into heaven. But not only is a crown given to her, but he who crowned her is waiting to crown us, if we follow the example of the Holy Mother. A crown is prepared for me and for all those who love his appearing. "Come quickly, Lord Jesus."

Resolution: To say when next tempted:
 "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no
 man take thy crown."

LITURGICAL PRAYERS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

The Antiphons of the Blessed Virgin

*(Translated by the REVEREND WINFRED
 DOUGLAS, Canon of Fond du Lac)*

Alma Redemptoris

*From the beginning of Advent to the Feast
 of the Purification, February 2nd.*

GRACIOUS Mother of our Redeemer,
 for ever abiding

Heaven's gateway, and star of ocean, O
 succour the people,

Who, though falling, strive to rise again.

Thou Maiden who barest thy holy Creator,
 to the wonder of all nature;

Ever Virgin, after, as before thou re-
 ceivedst that Ave

From the mouth of Gabriel; have com-
 passion on us sinners.

In Advent.

V. The Angel of the Lord announced unto
 Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts: that, as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

After Christmas.

V. After Childbearing, O Virgin, thou didst remain inviolate.

R. Intercede for us, O Mother of God.

O GOD, who by the fruitful virginity of blessed Mary hast bestowed upon mankind the reward of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech thee, that we may know the help of her intercession, through whom we have been accounted worthy to receive the Author of our Life, Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. Amen.

Ave, Regina coelorum

From February 2nd to Maundy Thursday.

QUEEN of the heavens, we hail thee,
Hail thee, Lady of all the Angels;
Thou the dawn, the door of morning
Whence the world's true light is risen:
Joy to thee, O Virgin glorious,
Beautiful beyond all other;
Hail, and farewell, O most gracious,
Intercede for us alway to Jesus.

V. Vouchsafe that I may praise thee, O holy Virgin.

R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

GRANT us, O merciful God, protection in our weakness: that we who celebrate the memory of the holy Mother of God may, through the aid of her intercession, rise again from our sins. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Regina coeli

During Eastertide.

O QUEEN of heaven, be joyful, alleluia;
Because he whom so meetly thou barest,
alleluia,

Hath arisen, as he promised, alleluia:
Pray for us to the Father, alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.

R. For the Lord is risen indeed, alleluia.

O GOD, who, by the resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ, didst vouchsafe to give gladness unto the world: grant, we beseech thee, that we, being holpen by the Virgin Mary, his Mother, may attain unto the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Salve Regina

During the Trinity season.

MARY, we hail thee, Mother and Queen compassionate; Mary, our comfort, life, and hope, we hail thee. To thee we exiles, children of Eve, lift our crying. To thee we are sighing, as mournful and weeping, we pass through this vale of sorrow. Turn thou, therefore, O our intercessor, those thine eyes of pity and loving-kindness upon us sinners. Hereafter, when our earthly exile shall be ended, shew us Jesus the blessed fruit of thy womb. O gentle, O tender, O gracious Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

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

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother Mary to become a habitation meet for thy Son: grant that as we rejoice in her commemoration, we may be delivered by her loving intercession from our present evils and from eternal death. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMNS TO OUR LADY

1

Ave, maris stella

STAR of ocean fairest,
Mother, God who barest,
Virgin thou immortal,
Heaven's blissful portal.

Ave thou receivest,
Gabriel's word believest,
Change to peace and gladness
Eva's name of sadness.

Loose the bonds of terror,
Lighten blinded error,
All our ills repressing,
Pray for every blessing.

Mother's care displaying,
Offer him thy praying,
Who, when born our Brother,
Chose thee for his Mother.

Virgin all-excelling,
Gentle past our telling,
Pardoned sinners render
Gentle, chaste, and tender.

In pure paths direct us,
On our way protect us,
Till, on Jesus gazing,
We shall join thy praising.

Father, Son eternal,
Holy Ghost supernal,
With one praise we bless thee,
Three in One confess thee. Amen.

2

HAIL Mary, blest Mother,
Our hearts are on fire;
May thy praying mighty
Gain our hearts' desire.

Ave, Ave, Ave, Maria!
Ave, Ave, Maria!

In grief and temptation,
In joy and in pain,
We'll seek thee, our Mother,
Nor seek thee in vain.

We pray that God's glory
Be spread all abroad;
We pray for our bishops,
Our Fathers in God.

We pray for our mother,
The Church upon earth;
And bless, sweetest Lady,
The land of our birth.

We pray for our loved ones,
Both living and dead;
Help children to follow
Where Jesus has led.

We pray for the needy
And all those in pain;
And bring all the wand'ers
To Jesus again.

Sweet Mother of mercy,
O pray for us here;
And help in the hour
When death draweth near.

O blest Queen of heaven,
Reign o'er us once more;
Be all lands thy dowry
As in days of yore.

Adapted from Lourdes Pilgrim Hymn.

ANTIPHONS

From the Office of the Blessed Virgin

O HOLY Mary, help thou the suffering, strengthen the faint-hearted, comfort the sorrowful; pray for the people, entreat for the clergy, intercede for all women vowed unto God: may all acknowledge the help of thy prayer, who celebrate thy holy festivals.

O BLESSED Mother and spotless Virgin, thou glorious Queen of the world, intercede for us to the Lord.

O EVER blessed Mother of God, Mary ever Virgin, temple of the Godhead, hallowed shrine of the Holy Spirit, thou only, above all others, wast acceptable to our Lord Jesus Christ: pray for the people, entreat for the clergy, intercede for all woman-kind vowed unto God.

BEFORE A PICTURE OR STATUE OF OUR BLESSED LADY

O MOST holy and pure Virgin! O my Mother! Thou who art the Mother of my Lord, the Queen of the world, the advocate and refuge of sinners! I, a most wretched sinner, now come to thee. I honour thee, great Queen, and give thee thanks for the many favors which have come to me in the past through thy intercession. I love thee, Lady most worthy of all love, and by the love which I bear thee, I promise ever in the future to honour thee, and to do what in me lies to win others to thy love. Receive me as thy servant, and cover me with the mantle of thy protection, thou who art the Mother of mercy! And since thou hast so much power with God, implore him to deliver me from all temptations, and to give me the grace ever to overcome them. Pray for me that I may love Christ in this world as thou dost love him

and intercede for me that I may have the grace of a good death. O my Mother! by thy love for God I beseech thee to be at all times my helper, but above all at the last moment of my life. Cease not thy supplications until thou seest me safe in heaven, there for endless ages to bless thee and, in thy holy company, to worship and adore thy Son, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sub tuum praesidium

WE fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God! despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin.

The Memorare

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

See Novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary p. 318.

LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God. Despise not our petitions and our necessities; but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven,

Have mercy upon us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

God the Holy Ghost,

Have mercy upon us.

Holy Trinity, One God,

Have mercy upon us.

Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of divine grace,
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Saviour,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,

Pray for us.

Virgin most merciful,
 Virgin most faithful,
 Mirror of justice,
 Seat of wisdom,
 Cause of our joy,
 Spiritual vessel,
 Vessel of honour,
 Singular vessel of devotion,
 Mystical Rose,
 Tower of David,
 Tower of ivory,
 House of gold,
 Ark of the covenant,
 Gate of heaven,
 Morning star,
 Health of the sick,
 Refuge of sinners,
 Comforter of the afflicted,
 Help of Christians,
 Queen of Angels,
 Queen of Patriarchs,
 Queen of Prophets,
 Queen of Apostles,
 Queen of Martyrs,
 Queen of Confessors,
 Queen of Virgins,
 Queen of all Saints,
 Queen conceived without sin,
 Queen of the most holy Rosary,
 Queen of Peace,

Pray for us.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

278 LITANY OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

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

Let us pray.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so, by his cross and passion, we may be brought unto the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

LITANY TO OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father, of heaven,
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God the Holy Ghost,
Holy Trinity, One God,

} Have
mercy
upon us.

Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother, most sorrowful,
Mother, most tearful,
Mother, afflicted,
Mother, forsaken,
Mother, bereft of thy Child,
Mother, pierced with the sword,
Mother, consumed with grief,
Mother, filled with anguish,
Mirror of patience,

} Pray for us.

Rock of constancy,
 Anchor of confidence,
 Refuge of the forsaken,
 Shield of the oppressed,
 Solace of the afflicted,
 Harbour of the shipwrecked,
 Treasure of the faithful,
 Theme of Prophets,
 Staff of Apostles,
 Queen of Martyrs,
 Light of Confessors,
 Queen of Virgins,
 Consolation of Widows,
 Joy of all Saints,

Pray for us.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

Let us pray.

Imprint, O Lord, thy wounds upon our hearts, that we may read therein sorrow and love; sorrow to endure all suffering for thee; love to despise all love but thine. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.