

The Rosary

There is a long history and tradition in the Catholic Church regarding the use of the Rosary as a tool of prayer. It is said that the Rosary was given to St. Dominic by the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1214, and he in turn shared it with the church as a way to convert sinners.

The Rosary is a contemplative prayer. This type of prayer has been described as a “prayer of the heart.” It has also been referred to as being in a state of “gaze” almost like in hypnosis. The goal of contemplative prayer is to lose your self and enter into the presence of God where there are few distractions. The beautiful rhythm of the Rosary seems to facilitate this. Prayer beads help the person keep his or her place, but are not required. The Rosary may be recited privately or with a group.

The Rosary may be prayed at any time and in any place, however it is a special tradition to pray the Rosary at the funeral wake. We pray for the deceased because they can no longer pray for themselves. We hope and expect that they will reach heaven, but we understand that they may pass through a purification process in Purgatory. Our deceased loved ones can pray for us, and they are with us in spirit. Our Blessed Mother is one of those who can intercede for us, as she has a special relationship with her Son.

The Rosary contains 5 groups of 10 recitations called “decades” of the Hail Mary prayer. Each decade has a special focus called a “mystery” to remind the person in prayer about a specific aspect of the life of Christ. It is customary to pray 5 decades together which comprise one of the four sets of Mysteries.

The structure and form of the Rosary are found on the following pages.

The basic outline is this:

1. Opening prayers
2. One of the four sets of Mysteries
3. Closing prayers

A person may “customize” the Rosary by adding a personal prayer or dedication for each mystery. In this way, you make it your own.



Opening Prayers (except for the Fatima prayer) Used at the Beginning of Each Rosary

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 Spirit, 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, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there 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."

Our Father

"Our Father in Heaven, holy is your name. May your kingdom come and your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. Amen."

Hail Mary (x3)

"Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blest 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 Be

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

Fatima Prayer

"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 Joyful Mysteries (Mondays/Saturdays)

The First Joyful Mystery: THE ANNUNCIATION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be filled with the grace to be able to hear and respond to God's messages to us.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Second Joyful Mystery: THE VISITATION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be open to reaching out to others, giving them encouragement and strength for our earthly journey so that none of us feels alone.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Third Joyful Mystery: THE NATIVITY

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may have strong families protected from evil, families fully dedicated to service to God and community.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fourth Joyful Mystery: THE PRESENTATION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That parents will take their responsibility seriously, preparing and presenting their children to God for his great blessings.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fifth Joyful Mystery: THE FINDING OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may find ourselves listening to God in prayer often, making the most intimate connection with our Lord Jesus.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Luminous Mysteries (Thursdays)

The First Luminous Mystery: THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be washed clean of our brokenness and prepared to accept Jesus Christ our Savior into our inmost being.)

Our Father Hail Mary (x10) Glory Be Fatima Prayer

The Second Luminous Mystery: THE WEDDING OF CANA

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may have strong marriages full of healing, love, and joy.)

Our Father Hail Mary (x10) Glory Be Fatima Prayer

The Third Luminous Mystery: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be able to boldly and proudly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News, to others.)

Our Father Hail Mary (x10) Glory Be Fatima Prayer

The Fourth Luminous Mystery: THE TRANSFIGURATION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may experience the grace to be transformed from the inside out, to let go of our false self and to find our true self again.)

Our Father Hail Mary (x10) Glory Be Fatima Prayer

The Fifth Luminous Mystery: THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be aware of our communion with the Holy Trinity and with others, particularly our spouses.)

Our Father Hail Mary (x10) Glory Be Fatima Prayer

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesdays/Fridays)

The First Sorrowful Mystery: THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may pray as Jesus prayed, for the knowledge of the will of the Father and the strength to carry it out.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Second Sorrowful Mystery: THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be made humble and aware of our suffering and loss of freedom in those things that we are bound to in our sinful behavior, especially those repeated or compulsive sins, and be able to recall that Christ suffered because of our sins.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Third Sorrowful Mystery: THE CROWNING WITH THORNS

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be aware that in our pain and suffering we are united with Christ in the pain and suffering that he experienced in his Passion.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fourth Sorrowful Mystery: THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may find grace in our sufferings, knowing that they are only a temporary, a necessary part of our earthly journey in this broken world, and that we may have the strength and grace to persevere.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fifth Sorrowful Mystery: THE CRUCIFIXION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be able to crucify and sacrifice our bodies more and more in self-control and self-discipline, so that we may be more worthy of and look forward to a greater reward after death.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesdays/Sundays)

The First Glorious Mystery: THE RESURRECTION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may feel confident that by the process of dying to our old and false self and our sins, God's transforming grace will allow us to be born again into new and eternal life.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Second Glorious Mystery: THE ASCENSION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may have the grace to rise above all of the temptations of this world so that we may find ourselves safely in heaven at the end of our earthly lives.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Third Glorious Mystery: THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be open and accepting of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and realize that God is with us always.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fourth Glorious Mystery: THE ASSUMPTION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be worthy of going to heaven as Mary did, when our time on Earth has ended.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

The Fifth Glorious Mystery: THE CORONATION

(Dr. Ken's dedication for this mystery: That we may be respectful of Our Lady and of all women.)

Our Father

Hail Mary (x10)

Glory Be

Fatima Prayer

Concluding Prayers (Used at the End of each Rosary)

“HAIL, HOLY QUEEN, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do 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 to us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. Oh clement, Oh loving, Oh sweet Virgin Mary!”

V. “Pray for us, Oh Holy Mother of God.”

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

“Let us pray. Oh God, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we ask you, 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.”

