

How to Say the Rosary

The Pope has asked that believers meditate on the joyful mysteries on Mondays and Saturdays; the sorrowful mysteries on Tuesdays and Fridays; the glorious mysteries on Wednesdays and Sundays; and the mysteries of light on Thursdays.

The following is an excerpt taken from Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter ***Rosarium Virginis Mariae***

The new mysteries of light

Of the many mysteries of Christ's life, only a few are indicated by the rosary in the form that has become generally established with the seal of the Church's approval. The selection was determined by the origin of the prayer, which was based on the number 150, the number of the Psalms in the Psalter.

I believe, however, that to bring out fully the christological depth of the rosary it would be suitable to make an addition to the traditional pattern which could broaden it to include the mysteries of Christ's public ministry between his Baptism and his Passion.

In the course of those mysteries we contemplate important aspects of the person of Christ as the definitive revelation of God. Declared the beloved Son of the Father at the Baptism in the Jordan, Christ is the one who announces the coming of the Kingdom, bears witness to it in his works and proclaims its demands. It is during the years of his public ministry that the mystery of Christ is most evidently a mystery of light: "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (Jn 9:5).

Consequently, for the rosary to become more fully a "compendium of the gospel," it is fitting to add, following reflection on the Incarnation and the hidden life of Christ (the joyful mysteries) and before focusing on the sufferings of his Passion (the sorrowful mysteries) and the triumph of his Resurrection (the glorious mysteries), a meditation on certain particularly significant moments in his public ministry (the mysteries of light, luminous mysteries).

This addition of these new mysteries, without prejudice to any essential aspect of the prayer's traditional format, is meant to give it fresh life and to enkindle renewed interest in the rosary's place within Christian spirituality as a true doorway to the depths of the heart of Christ, ocean of joy and of light, of suffering and of glory.

Moving on from the infancy and the hidden life in Nazareth to the public life of Jesus, our contemplation brings us to those mysteries that may be called in a special way "mysteries of light." Certainly the whole mystery of Christ is a mystery of light. He is the "light of the world" (Jn 8:12). Yet this truth emerges in a special way during the years of his public life, when he proclaims the gospel of the Kingdom.

In proposing to the Christian community five significant moments—"luminous" mysteries—during this phase of Christ's life, I think that the following can be fittingly singled out: 1) his Baptism in the Jordan, 2) his self-manifestation at the wedding of Cana, 3) his proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with his call to conversion, 4) his Transfiguration and finally 5) his institution of the Eucharist as the sacramental expression of the paschal mystery. Each of these mysteries is a revelation of the Kingdom now present in the very person of Jesus.

Baptism in the Jordan is first of all a mystery of light. Here, as Christ descends into the waters, the innocent one who became “sin” for our sake (2 Cor 5:21), the heavens open wide and the voice of the Father declares him the beloved Son (Mt 3:17 and parallels), while the Spirit descends on him to invest him with the mission which he is to carry out.

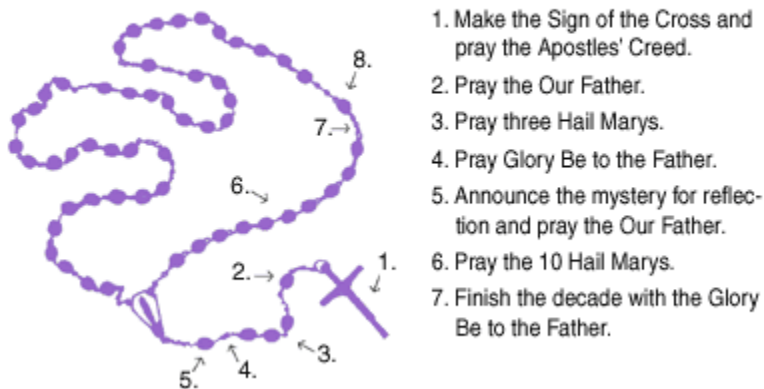
Cana Wedding. Another mystery of light is the first of the signs, given at Cana (Jn 2:1-12), when Christ changes water into wine and opens the hearts of the disciples to faith, thanks to the intervention of Mary, the first among believers.

Proclamation of the Kingdom. Another mystery of light is the preaching by which Jesus proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God, calls to conversion (see Mk 1:15) and forgives the sins of all who draw near to him in humble trust (see Mk 2:3-13; Lk 7:47-48): the inauguration of that ministry of mercy which he continues to exercise until the end of the world, particularly through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which he has entrusted to his Church (see Jn 20:22-23).

Transfiguration. The mystery of light par excellence is the Transfiguration, traditionally believed to have taken place on Mount Tabor. The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ as the Father commands the astonished apostles to “listen to him” (see Lk 9:35 and parallels) and to prepare to experience with him the agony of the Passion, so as to come with him to the joy of the Resurrection and a life transfigured by the Holy Spirit.

First Eucharist. A final mystery of light is the institution of the Eucharist, in which Christ offers his body and blood as food under the signs of bread and wine, and testifies “to the end” his love for humanity (Jn 13:1), for whose salvation he will offer himself in sacrifice.

How to Pray the Rosary



1. Make the Sign of the Cross and pray the Apostles' Creed.
2. Pray the Our Father.
3. Pray three Hail Marys.
4. Pray Glory Be to the Father.
5. Announce the mystery for reflection and pray the Our Father.
6. Pray the 10 Hail Marys.
7. Finish the decade with the Glory Be to the Father.

The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Joyful Mysteries (Mondays and Saturdays).

1. The annunciation to Mary that she is to be Mother of the Savior (Luke 1:26-38).
2. The visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-47).
3. The nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 2:1-7).
4. The presentation of the Infant Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:22-32).
5. The finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52).

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesdays and Fridays)

1. The agony of Christ in the garden (Mark 14:32-36).
2. The scourging of Jesus at the pillar (John 18:28-38;19:1).
3. The crowning with thorns (Mark 15:16-20).
4. The carrying of the cross (John 19:12-16).
5. The crucifixion and death of Jesus (Luke 23:33-34; 39-46).

The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesdays and Sundays)

1. The resurrection of Jesus (Luke 24:1-6).
2. The ascension of our Lord into heaven (Luke 24:50-53).
3. The descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).
4. The assumption of Mary into heaven (Song of Songs 2:8-14).
5. The coronation of our Lady in heaven (Revelation 12:1-6).

The Luminous Mysteries (Thursdays)

1. Baptism in the Jordan (2 Cor 5:21).
2. The Wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1-12).
3. Proclamation of the Kingdom. (Mk 1:15; 2:3-13; Lk 7:47-48; Jn 20:22-23).
4. Transfiguration. (Lk 9:35).
5. First Eucharist. (Jn 13:1).