

The Mysteries of Love



Introduction

For centuries, the Church offered three sets of mysteries for the Rosary. In the late 20th century, a monk wrote the Luminous Mysteries featuring events in Jesus' adult life, and in 2002, Pope John Paul II approved them for the Church.

For some years now, many devout people have been praying all three or four sets of Mysteries daily, and some have wished for more sets of mysteries. Others tried praying combinations of the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, and Luminous Mysteries. And others wished for a comprehensive set of mysteries that would give an overview of Jesus' life as He fulfilled His purpose here on earth.

We have tried to assemble such an overview of His earthly mission, from His coming to earth as a tiny infant to His miraculous rising from the dead. When assembling these five mysteries, we felt that each one could be considered a gift from God. And what is a gift but an act of love? Hence the name, "The Mysteries of Love."

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PRAYING THE ROSARY WITH THE MYSTERIES OF LOVE

The Sign of the Cross

The Prayer After the Hail Holy Queen is such a perfect accompaniment to the holy Rosary that praying it beforehand seems to be appropriate. Of course, it can be prayed afterward, as has been done for centuries. Either way, we can call it...

THE ROSARY PRAYER

LET US PRAY: O God, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life. Grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating on 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.

The Apostles' Creed

PRELUDE: THE ANNUNCIATION

When God the Father sent His Son to become one of us, He needed a pure vessel through which Jesus would receive His human nature, so God sent the archangel Gabriel to ask Mary, a humble young woman, to be the mother of God in human form. She said, "Yes," to Gabriel, and from giving birth in a stable to watching her precious Son die an excruciating death, she fulfilled the Father's will with gracious, obedient love. And the gates of heaven were opened through Jesus' death and Resurrection because of Mary's "Yes."

The Lord's Prayer

Three Hail Marys

The Glory Be

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1. JESUS' BIRTH: The Gift of God's Son

It is difficult to imagine a humbler birth for the Savior of the world than in a cold, part-cave, part-barn, witnessed by farm animals amid a setting of hay, manure, insects, cobwebs, and odors. After Jesus' birth, Mary places Him in a manger, ironically a food trough, in a town called Bethlehem, which means "House of Bread." The only concession to Jesus' royalty is the choir of angels that sang, not to kings and princes, but to humble shepherds. After the young Jesus' Finding in the Temple, "Jesus, for His part, progressed steadily in wisdom and age and grace before God and man."

2. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD: God's Gift of Faith

Jesus first chose 12 Apostles. Then, through His teachings, healings, and miracles, He built a veritable army of disciples to spread His message to others, one by one. After His Resurrection, God sent the Holy Spirit to empower the Apostles with all the graces they would need to complete their mission. And the Blessed Mother supported and encouraged them to its completion. All were martyred except John, who had suffered greatly at the foot of the Cross. The result of all this? Jesus' name has been spoken in every corner of the world!

3. THE EUCHARIST: Jesus' Gift of Himself

Actions speak louder than words. Jesus gave us the gift of the Eucharist, a new rite of the New Covenant, while celebrating the Passover, an Old Testament ritual. And this was just before His execution. By saying, "This is my body, this is my blood," He simply gave Himself as spiritual food to strengthen us for the challenges that life will surely bring.

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4. JESUS' PASSION AND CRUCIFIXION: The Greatest Gift of Love the World Has Ever Seen

(You may meditate on one or more of the original Sorrowful Mysteries.)

Jesus' Agony in the Garden was so intense that He sweated blood, a condition called hematidrosis, in which capillaries burst, causing blood to ooze from the pores. In turn, it rendered Jesus' skin extremely sensitive to any further punishments, which were to follow, in abundance.

By law, a Scourging was limited to "40 lashes less one," as 40 or more could kill a man. Pilate tried to appease the angry mob, thinking that when they saw Jesus being scourged to the extreme, they would cease their cries to "Crucify Him!" Sadly, Pilate was wrong.

The Crown of Thorns was a torture possibly unique to our Savior. The thorns constantly scraping His flesh added greatly to His already indescribable agony. When Jesus carried His cross, the soldiers constantly poked and prodded His weakened, inflamed body with jabs from spears and swords. All the while, the angry mob, some of whom had been His followers, screamed obscenities, spat in His face, and tore chunks of hair and flesh from His beard. The falls, the heat, the blood mixed with sweat and dirt, as well as a wide, bloody gash on His shoulder, were all too much to bear. Yet, somehow, He bore it.

And finally, the Crucifixion. Thick, cruel spikes smashed and tore muscles, ligaments, tendons, and bones. Yet, while causing indescribable pain, these massive wounds bore the weight of Jesus' body for three long hours, while nearby, His Mother's heart was rent asunder.

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5. THE RESURRECTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RECONCILIATION: The Gifts of Opening the Gates of Heaven and the Forgiveness of Sins

Jesus' followers had been devastated by His incredible suffering and death. His words had brought much-needed hope into their lives. Now suddenly, hope was gone, taken away, their lives shattered. So, when Jesus appeared, first to Mary Magdalene and then to many others, their depth of sorrow was suddenly replaced by extreme elation.

Before ascending to Heaven, Jesus appeared to the Apostles, clarifying His teachings. Then He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you retain, they are retained." He gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Was this important? Consider that this was His first act after the Resurrection. And it has been one of God's greatest gifts!

POSTLUDE, THE CORONATION

Looking down from the cross, Jesus entrusted His mother to the young Apostle, John, and thereby to us, as a mother and as our Queen. Just as she had taught the child Jesus and aided the Apostles in their ministry, she is here, now, to help us. All we have to do is ask, "Mary, Mother of Jesus, please come to me now as my mother."

Hail Holy Queen

OPTIONAL: The Rosary Prayer

Any Other Concluding Prayers

(Some call these concluding prayers "the trimmings" of the Rosary.)