



Discover one of many ways Catholics meditate on the Holy Scriptures

Christians uniting in prayer through the Holy Rosary

What is the Rosary?
What is the history of the Rosary?
Questions about the Rosary
Addressing the biases and untruths
Send me mine today!

In My Own Words

What is the Rosary?

The Rosary is the Prayer of the Gospels, a meditation on 20 primary events in the Life of Our Blessed Lord Jesus and His Blessed Mother Mary.

If you have something against the Rosary, you have something against the Holy Bible! Like the Holy Scriptures, it is the Good News of Jesus! It's a Scriptural prayer.

We

- pray as Our Lord Jesus tells us to in Matthew 6:9-13 and
- meditate on God becoming truly man like us in all things except sin for our salvation in Luke 1:28, Luke 1:42! The Church formalizes this in the Hail Mary:

Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord is with you. [Luke 1:28]

Blessed are you among woman and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. [Luke 1:42]

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen. [The Church]

The Five Joyful Mysteries with the Fruit of the Mystery and the days each set of five mysteries are said.

Monday & Saturday

- 1.The Annunciation: Humility
- 2.The Visitation: Charity
- 3.The Birth of Our Lord: Poverty, or detachment from the world
- 4.The Presentation of Our Lord: Purity of heart, obedience
- 5.The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple: Piety

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

Tuesday & Friday

1. The Agony in the Garden: Contrition for our sins
2. The Scourging at the Pillar: Mortification of our senses
3. The Crowning with Thorns: Interior mortification
4. The Carrying of the Cross: Patience under crosses
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord: That we may die to ourselves

The Five Glorious Mysteries

Wednesday & Sunday

1. The Resurrection: Conversion of heart
2. The Ascension: A desire for heaven
3. The Coming of the Holy Ghost: The Gifts of the Holy Ghost
4. The Assumption of our Blessed Mother into Heaven: Devotion to Mary
5. The Coronation of our Blessed Mother: Eternal happiness

The Five Luminous Mysteries

Thursday

1. The Baptism in the Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

What is the history of the Rosary?

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, **plus my two cents** :)

An Outgrowth of the 150 Psalms of David

Most historians trace the origin of the Rosary as we know it today back to the so-called Dark Ages of ninth century Ireland. In those days, as is still true today, the 150 Psalms of David were one of the most important forms of monastic prayer. Monks recited or chanted the Psalms day-after-day as a major source of inspiration.

The lay people who lived near the monasteries could see the beauty of this devotion, but because very few people outside the monasteries knew how to read in those days, and because the 150 psalms are too long to memorize, the lay people were unable to adapt this prayer from for their own use.

So one day in about the year 800 A.D., one of the Irish monks suggested to the neighboring lay people that they might like to pray a series of 150 Our Fathers in place of the 150 Psalms. Little did he know that his simple suggestion was

the first step in the development of what would one day become the most popular non-liturgical prayer form of Christianity.

At first, in order to count their 150 Our Fathers, people carried around leather pouches which held 150 pebbles. Soon they advanced to ropes with 150 or 50 knots; and eventually they began to use strings with 50 pieces of wood.

Shortly afterwards the clergy and lay people in other parts of Europe began to recite, as a repetitive prayer, the Angelic Salutation, which makes up most of the first part of our Hail Mary. St. Peter Damian, who died in 1072, was the first to mention this prayer form. Soon many people were praying the fifty Angelic Salutations while others favored the fifty Our Fathers.

1214 and the Albigensian heresy. (Origin of the Mysteries)

It was in the year 1214 that the Church received the Rosary in its present form and according to the method we use today. It was given to the Church by St. Dominic, who had received it from the Blessed Virgin as a means of converting the Albigensians and other sinners. Saint Dominic, seeing that the gravity of people's sins was hindering the conversion of the Albigensians, withdrew into a forest near Toulouse, where he prayed continuously for three days and three nights. During this time he did nothing but weep and did harsh penances in order to appease the anger of God. At this point our Lady appeared to him, accompanied by three angels, and she said,

"Dear Dominic, do you know which weapon the Blessed Trinity wants to use to reform the world?"

"Oh, my Lady," answered Saint Dominic, "you know far better than I do, because next to your Son Jesus Christ you have always been the chief instrument of our salvation."

Then Our Lady replied, "I want you to know that, in this kind of warfare, the principal weapon has always been the Angelic Psalter, which is the foundation-stone of the New Testament. Therefore, if you want to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God, preach my Psalter."

So he arose, comforted, and burning with zeal for the conversion of the people in that district, he made straight for the cathedral. At once unseen angels rang the bells to gather the people together, and Saint Dominic began to preach.

During this period of time the Blessed Virgin revealed to Saint Dominic in a private revelation 15 promises to those who would devote themselves to praying the Holy Rosary on a regular basis. A few hundred years later these same promises were revealed to Blessed Alan de la Roche (also known as Blessed Alan De Rupe) in a private revelation. Because these promises were "handed down" to the Church in a private revelation, Catholics are not bound to believe them at all.

1917 and Our Lady of Fatima.

Between May and October of 1917, three shepherd children, Lúcia dos Santos and her cousins Jacinta and Francisco Marto reported visions of the Virgin Mary in the Cova da Iria fields outside the hamlet of Aljustrel, very close to Fatima, Portugal. They had this experience on the 13th day of each month at approximately the same hour.[1] Lúcia described seeing Mary as "brighter than the sun, shedding rays of light clearer and stronger than a crystal glass filled with the most sparkling water and pierced by the burning rays of the sun." [1]



A photo static copy of a page from Ilustração Portuguesa, October 29, 1917, showing the crowd looking at the miracle of the sun during the Fatima apparitions (attributed to the Virgin Mary) According to Lúcia's account, Mary confided to the children three secrets, known as the Three Secrets of Fatima. [1]

She exhorted the children to do penance and to make sacrifices to save sinners.[1] The children wore tight cords around their waists to cause pain, abstained from drinking water on hot days, and performed other works of penance.[1] Most important, Lúcia said **Mary asked them to say the Rosary every day, reiterating many times that the Rosary was the key to personal and world peace.** Many young Portuguese men, including relatives of the visionaries, were then fighting in World War I.

Thousands of people flocked to Fatima and Aljustrel in the ensuing months, drawn by reports of visions and miracles.[1] On August 13, 1917, the provincial administrator Artur Santos[2] (no relation), believing that the events were politically disruptive, intercepted and jailed the children before they could reach the Cova da Iria that day.[1] Prisoners held with them in the provincial jail later testified that the children, while upset, were consoled by the inmates, and then led the inmates in saying the Rosary.[1] Administrator Santos interrogated the children primarily about the alleged secrets, but was unsuccessful in his attempt to discover what those secrets were.[1] Santos went so far as to feign the preparation of a pot of boiling oil, and then removed the children one by one from his interrogation room, claiming that each removed child had been boiled to death in the oil, and urging the remaining child to divulge the secret so as to avoid a similar fate.[1] That month, instead of the usual apparition in the Cova da Iria on the 13th of the month, the children reported that they saw Mary on August 19 at nearby Valinhos.[1]

On October 13, 1917, the final in the series of the apparitions of 1917, a crowd believed to be approximately 70,000 in number[3], including newspaper reporters and photographers, gathered at the Cova da Iria in response to reports of the children's prior claims that on that day a miracle would occur "so that all may believe".[1] It rained heavily that day, yet, countless observers reported that the clouds broke, revealing the sun as an opaque disk spinning in the sky and radiating various colors of light upon the surroundings, then appearing to detach itself from the sky and plunge itself towards the earth in a zigzag pattern, finally returning to its normal place, and leaving the people's once wet clothing now completely dry. The event is known as the "Miracle of the Sun".[4].

Columnist Avelino de Almeida of O Século (Portugal's most influential newspaper, which was pro-government in policy and avowedly anti-clerical)[1], reported the following "Before the astonished eyes of the crowd, whose aspect was biblical as they stood bare-headed, eagerly searching the sky, the sun trembled, made sudden incredible movements outside all cosmic laws-the sun 'danced' according to the typical expression of the people."[5] Eye specialist Dr. Domingos Pinto Coelho, writing for the newspaper Ordem reported "The sun, at one moment surrounded with scarlet flame, at another aureoled in yellow and deep purple, seemed to be in an exceeding fast and whirling movement, at times appearing to be loosened from the sky and to be approaching the earth, strongly radiating heat".[6] The special reporter for the October 17, 1917 edition of the Lisbon daily, O Dia, reported the following, "...the silver sun, enveloped in the same gauzy grey light, was seen to whirl and turn in the circle of broken clouds...The light turned a beautiful blue, as if it had come through the stained-glass windows of a cathedral, and spread itself over the people who knelt with outstretched hands...people wept and prayed with uncovered heads, in the presence of a miracle they had awaited. The seconds seemed like hours, so vivid were they."[7]

Depiction of the three children receiving the vision. This tilework is from Ironbound, a Portuguese neighborhood in Newark, New Jersey.No movement or other phenomenon of the sun was registered by scientists at the time.[1] According to contemporary reports from poet Afonso Lopes Vieira and schoolteacher Delfina Lopes with her students and other witnesses in the town of Alburita, the solar phenomena were visible from up to forty kilometers away.[1] The three shepherd children, in addition to reporting seeing the actions of the sun that day[8], also reported seeing a panorama of visions, including those of Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of Saint Joseph blessing the people.[1] The Benedictine historian of science, Fr. Stanley Jaki, has suggested that the apparent movement of the sun was a hallucination caused by an atmospheric inversion, but that the children's foreknowledge of the apparent sign was miraculous.

Questions about the Rosary

Question:

I thought there were only 15 mysteries of the Rosary. Where did you get the other 5 Luminous mysteries from?

The Answer:

Our late Holy Father Pope John Paul II gave them to the Church in his encyclical: *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In it he said:

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). 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.

Addressing biases and un-truths

Objection:

At an evening devotion in a Catholic Church I heard many prayers like these to Mary. I cannot find in Scripture where Mary is to be worshipped in the same way as Christ.

The Answer:

I am not surprised, for such a doctrine is nowhere taught in Scripture. Moreover, if any Catholic dared to worship Mary in the same way as he worships Christ, he would be guilty of a most serious sin, and no Catholic Priest could give him absolution unless he promised never to do it again. But that does not mean that one must deprive Mary of all honor.

Objection:

Why pray to Mary at all?

The Answer:

Because God wills that we should do so, and because such prayers to her are of the utmost value. God often will to give certain favors only on condition that we go to some secondary agent. Sodom was to be spared through the intercession of Abraham; Naaman, the leper, was to be cured only through the waters of the Jordan. Now Mary is, and must ever remain the mother of the Christ. She still has a mother's rights and privileges, and is able to obtain for us many graces. But let us view things reasonably. If I desire to pray, I can certainly pray to God directly. Yet would you blame me if, at times, I were to ask my own earthly mother to pray for me also? Such a request is really a prayer to her that she may intercede for me with God. Certainly if I met the mother of Christ on earth, I would ask her to pray for me, and she would do so. In her more perfect state with Christ in heaven she is not less able to help me.

Objection:

Between each Our Father to God, you throw in ten prayers to Mary!

The Answer:

You've got it the wrong way. Between each ten Hail Mary's an Our Father is said. The Rosary is essentially a devotion to Mary, Jesus' mother, honoring her whom God Himself so honored. It honors her particularly in her relationship to Christ Jesus, Our Lord, whose life is the subject of the meditations. The Our Father abstracts from the incarnation of Christ; the Hail Mary is full of reverence to Our Lord's birth into this world for us. [Luke 1:28, Luke 1:42]

Objection:

The word "Rosary" is not in the Bible.

The Answer:

Correct, the word "Rosary" is not in the Bible, but neither is the word "Bible" in the Bible. The main prayers of the Rosary are the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" and the "Glory Be". The "Our Father" is taken straight from the lips of Our Lord Himself when he was asked, "How should we pray". (Matthew 6:9-13) The "Hail Mary" is taken from Luke 1: 28 and Luke 1:42. If anyone has problems with saying the "Hail Mary", they have problems with the Archangel Gabriel, St. Elizabeth **AND** the Holy Spirit, who moved Elizabeth to say what she did. The "Glory Be" is just a repetition of the words Our Lord used to baptize people and as all Christians know, baptism is necessary for salvation. (Mark 16:16, John 3:5, Acts 16:30, 1 Peter 3:21)

Objection:

Would not the Rosary be just as efficient if said with one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Gloria?

The Answer:

It would not be the Rosary then, but some other type of devotion. Nor would such a devotion be as efficient for inner meditation on each mystery due to the brevity of the prayers. While saying those 10 Hail Mary's aloud, our inner meditation ponders on the various mysteries themselves. In the same way man is made with a viewable body and un-viewable soul; so the Rosary has an outward part, the vocal prayer, and an inner part, the inner meditation on the various mysteries. Your trouble seems to be based on the mere question of numbers. That is quite immaterial.

Objection:

Some Protestants object to saying "Holy Mary" because they claim Mary was a sinner like the rest of us.

The Answer:

Mary was a Christian (the first Christian, actually, the first to accept Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior Luke 1:45). The Bible also describes Christians in general as holy. In fact, they are called saints, which mean "holy ones" (See Eph 1:1, Phil. 1:1 and Col. 1:2). Furthermore, as the mother of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Mary was certainly a very holy woman.

Objection:

Some Protestants object to the title Mother of God.

The Answer:

The title, Mother of God does not mean Mary is older than God; it means the person who was born of her was a divine person, not a human person.

Jesus is one person, the divine person, but has two natures, the divine and human.

It is incorrect to say Jesus is a human person.

Note on the Brown Scapular

Jesus' Mother, Mary has said in miraculous appearances to people that,

"the Rosary and the Brown Scapular are inseparable."

If you are interested in buying more scapulars of a higher quality, I usually recommend the Rose Scapular Company. I encourage you to visit:

<http://www.rosescapular.com>

Tell them Mike Humphrey from AskACatholic.com sent you. I would love to buy from Brown Scapular in bulk at a discounted price, but currently cannot.

If you are interested in a lower quality scapular or buying scapulars in bulk,

I have two suggestions. Either go to <http://www.freebrownscapular.com>

OR just Google using:

Free inexpensive Brown Scapular

as your search words.

Mike Humphrey