PRAYING THE ROSARY

with St. Josemaría Escrivá
GUIDE TO PRAYING THE ROSARY

The Rosary is divided into four parts and each part into five mysteries. One prays a “decade” for each mystery consisting of one Our Father, ten Hail Marys and one Glory Be.

Make the Sign of the cross:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There are, at present, many legitimate ways of introducing the Rosary. They should all appropriately prepare the mind for contemplation. The beginning of Psalm 70 is frequently used: O God, come to my aid; O Lord, make haste to help me. Also common is the recitation of the Apostles’ Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.
You may pray for an increase in the virtues of faith, hope, and charity:

**Our Father. Three Hail Marys. Glory Be.**

Now, begin the mysteries of the day. Start each decade by announcing the mystery and directing your imagination and attention towards that particular episode in the life of Christ or our Lady. It can be useful to look at a pictorial representation of the mystery and read a related scriptural passage (see page 8) and the meditations by St. Josemaría (page 9–29).

Then proceed to the recitation of the decade. On the large bead say the Our Father. On each of the ten small beads, say a Hail Mary. Then pray the Glory Be.

Between mysteries you can say:

**O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy.**

or:

**Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy, shield me from the enemy and receive me at the hour of my death. Amen.**

At the end of the Rosary any suitable prayers may be said, though the following are the most common: the prayer We Fly to Your Patronage and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (p. 30) followed by the Hail Holy Queen (p. 35).

**WE FLY TO YOUR PATRONAGE**

We fly to your 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.

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

**R.** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY AND MEDITATIONS

“The Rosary is one of the traditional paths of Christian prayer directed to the contemplation of Christ's face. . . .

“After the announcement of the mystery and the proclamation of the word, it is fitting to pause and focus one's attention for a suitable period of time on the mystery concerned, before moving into vocal prayer. A discovery of the importance of silence is one of the secrets of practicing contemplation and meditation. One drawback of a society dominated by technology and the mass media is the fact that silence becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. Just as moments of silence are recommended in the Liturgy, so too in the recitation of the Rosary it is fitting to pause briefly after listening to the word of God, while the mind focuses on the content of a particular mystery (John Paul II. Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariæ, October 16, 2002. nos. 18, 31).”

The meditations that follow are from Holy Rosary, written in 1931 by St. Josemaría Escrivá.

A meditation on the Luminous Mysteries did not appear in Holy Rosary, but throughout his life St Josemaría lovingly contemplated and preached on these scenes, just as he did with every chapter of the Gospels.

Therefore we have included here some excerpts from his many writings of the Founder of Opus Dei, from among many that make reference to the Luminous Mysteries, to help readers meditate on the complete Rosary.
JOYFUL (p. 9)  
1. The Annunciation (Lk 1: 26-38)  
2. The Visitation (Lk 1: 39-56)  
3. The Nativity (Lk 2: 1-20)  
4. The Presentation (Lk 2: 22-38)  
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple (Lk 2: 41-52) 

LUMINOUS* (p. 14)  
1. The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan  
   (Mt 3: 13-17 / Mk 1: 4-11)  
2. The Manifestation of Christ at the Wedding of Cana  
   (Jn 2: 1-11)  
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God  
   (Mt 4: 12-25 / Mk 1: 15 & 2: 3-13 / Lk 7: 47-48 / Jn 20: 22-23)  
4. The Transfiguration  
   (Mt 17: 1-13 / Lk 9: 28-36)  
5. The Institution of the Eucharist  
   (Lk 22: 14-20 / Jn 13: 19) 

SORROWFUL (p. 20)  
1. The Agony in the Garden (Mt 26: 36-56)  
2. The Scourging at the Pillar  
   (Is 53: 1-12 / Mk 15: 1-15)  
3. The Crowning with Thorns  
   (Mk 15: 16-20 / Mt 27: 27-31)  
4. The Carrying of the Cross  
   (Lk 23: 26-32 / Mk 10: 17-21)  
5. The Crucifixion (Jn 19: 17-30 / Mt 27: 35-56) 

GLORIOUS (p. 25)  
1. The Resurrection  
   (Mt 28: 1-15 / Lk 24: 1-49 / Mk 16: 1-18)  
2. The Ascension (Acts 1: 3-11)  
4. The Assumption (Rev 12: 1)  
5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
   (Lk 1: 46-55)
JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. THE ANNUNCIATION

Don’t forget, my friend, that we are children. The Lady of the sweet name, Mary, is absorbed in prayer. You, in that house, can be whatever you wish: a friend, a servant, an onlooker, a neighbor. . . . For the moment I don’t dare to be anything. I hide behind you, and, full of awe, I watch what’s happening.

The Archangel delivers his message. . . . Quomodo fiet istud, quoniam virum non cognosco? “But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?” (Lk 1: 34). Our mother’s voice reminds me—by contrast—of all the impurities of men, . . . mine too.

And then how I hate those low, mean things of the earth. . . . What resolutions!

Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum. “Let it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1: 38). At the enchantment of this virginal phrase, the Word became flesh.

The first decade is about to end. . . . I still have time to tell God, before anyone else does, “Jesus, I love you.”
2. THE VISITATION

By now, my little friend, you have no doubt learned to manage on your own. Joyfully keep Joseph and Mary company . . . and you will hear the traditions of the House of David.

You will hear about Elizabeth and Zechariah, you will be moved by Joseph’s pure love, and your heart will pound whenever they mention the Child who will be born in Bethlehem.

We walk in haste towards the mountains to a town of the tribe of Judah (Lk 1: 39).

We arrive. It is the house where John the Baptist is to be born. Elizabeth gratefully hails the mother of her Redeemer: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honored with a visit from the mother of my Lord?” (Lk 1: 42-43).

The unborn Baptist quivers . . . (Lk 1: 41).

Mary’s humility pours forth in the Magnificat. . . .

And you and I, who are proud—who were proud—promise to be humble.
3. THE NATIVITY

Caesar Augustus has issued a decree for a census to be taken of the whole world. For this purpose, everyone must go to the city of his ancestors. And, since Joseph belongs to the house and line of David, he goes with the Virgin Mary from Nazareth to the town of David, called Bethlehem, in Judea (Lk 2: 1-5).

And in Bethlehem is born our God: Jesus Christ! There is no room in the inn; he is born in a stable. And his mother wraps him in swaddling clothes and lays him in a manger (Lk 2: 7).

Cold. Poverty. . . . I am Joseph’s little servant. How good Joseph is! He treats me like a son. He even forgives me if I take the Child in my arms and spend hour after hour saying sweet and loving things to him.

And I kiss him—you kiss him, too!—and I rock him in my arms, and I sing to him and call him King, Love, my God, my Only-one, my All. . . ! How beautiful is the Child . . . and how short the decade!
4. THE PRESENTATION

When the time has come for the mother’s purification, in accordance with the Law of Moses, the Child must be taken to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord (Lk 2: 22).

And this time it will be you, my friend, who carries the cage with the doves (Lk 2: 24).

Just think: She—Mary Immaculate!—submits to the Law as if she were defiled.

Through this example, foolish child, won’t you learn to fulfill the holy law of God regardless of any personal sacrifice?

Purification! You and I certainly do need purification.

Atonement and, more than atonement, love. Love as a searing iron to cauterize our soul’s uncleanness, and as a fire to kindle with divine flames the wretchedness of our hearts.

An upright and devout man has come to the Temple, led by the Holy Spirit (it has been revealed to him that he would not die until he had set eyes on the Christ). He takes the Messiah into his arms and says: “Now, my Lord, you can let your servant go from this world in peace, just as you promised, because my eyes have seen the Savior” (Lk 2: 25-30).
5. THE FINDING OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Where is Jesus?
The Child, my Lady!
Where is he?
Mary is crying. In vain you and I have run from group to group, from caravan to caravan: no one has seen him.
Joseph, after fruitless attempts to keep from crying, cries too. . . . And you. . . . And I.
Being a rough little fellow, I cry my eyes out and wail to heaven and earth. . . . to make up for the times when I lost him through my own fault and did not cry.
Jesus: may I never lose you again. . . . Then you and I are united in misfortune and grief, as we were united in sin. And, from the depths of our being come sighs of heartfelt sorrow and burning phrases, which the pen cannot and should not record.
And, as we are consoled by the joy of finding Jesus—three days he was gone!—debating with the teachers of Israel (Lk 2: 46), you and I will be left deeply impressed by the duty to leave our home and family to serve our heavenly Father.