

The Rosary

1. What is the Rosary?

The Rosary is a Scripture-based prayer in which we pray to God with Mary by reflecting on key episodes in the life of Jesus or Mary. The prayers of the Rosary are said in a particular order, which is repetitive and operates like a chant so as to lead one into restful contemplation on each Mystery [see below]. The Rosary can be said individually or with a group.

2. The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Rosary is divided up into sections known as decades (each has ten beads). When praying each decade, those praying focus on a particular episode (Mystery) in the life of Jesus and/or Mary. There are four sets of Mysteries (five Mysteries in each), and they are known as the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries. Most Catholics, when praying the Rosary, complete a full circuit of the Rosary and thus pray five decades at a time. Thus they focus on one set of Mysteries according to which day it is:

The *Five Joyful Mysteries* (usually prayed on Mondays and Saturdays)

- The Annunciation
- The Visitation of Our Lady to Elizabeth
- The Nativity (the Birth) of Jesus
- The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple
- The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

The *Five Sorrowful Mysteries* (usually prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays)

- The Agony in the Garden
- The Scourging at the Pillar
- The Crowning with Thorns
- The Carrying of the Cross
- The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

The *Five Glorious Mysteries* (usually prayed on Wednesdays and Sundays)

- The Resurrection
- The Ascension
- The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
- The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
- The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven

The *Five Luminous Mysteries*: (usually prayed on Thursdays)

- The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan
- The Wedding Feast at Cana
- Jesus Proclaims the Coming of the Kingdom of God
- The Transfiguration of Jesus
- The Institution of the Eucharist

3. The Prayers of the Rosary

[When a group prays the Rosary, it is customary that the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary* and *Glory Be* are divided into two parts. (The end of the first part of each is marked below thus ##). Usually a leader (or one half of the Group) recites the first half of these prayers and then the other participants recite the rest.] All other prayers are said together with the exceptions marked below which are said by whoever is leading the Rosary.

The usual format of the Rosary is as follows:

The Sign of the Cross

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

A Prayer for Protection (optional)

Holy Michael Archangel, defend us in the day of battle;
Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou, prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God,
thrust down to hell Satan and all wicked spirits
who wander through the world for the ruin of souls, Amen.

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; on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will 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.

The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ##
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. ##

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

The Glory Be (The Doxology)

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

The Fatima Prayer (optional)

Oh 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. Amen

The Hail Holy Queen (The Salve Regina)

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
hail our life, our sweetness, and our hope.
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
to thee do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us;
and after this, our exile,
show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Closing prayers (optional)

Leader: Pray for us, O holy mother of God

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Leader: 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 upon these mysteries
of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
we may both imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise,
through the same Christ Our Lord, Amen.**

Leader: May the Divine Assistance remain always with us

**And may the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace, Amen.**

4. Using the Rosary beads to aid the prayer

[the picture to the right may help]

- a. Make *The Sign of the Cross* to begin the Rosary. [1]
- b. Holding the Crucifix, say the *Apostles' Creed*. [2]
- c. On the first bead, say the *Our Father*. [3]
- d. Say the *Hail Mary* on each of the next three beads. [4]
- e. Say the *Glory Be* on the lone bead. [5]
- f. Holding the medallion bead, begin the first decade. [6]
 - a. For each of the five decades, announce the particular Mystery then say the *Our Father*. [6a, 7a, 8a, 9a & 10a]
 - b. While holding one of the ten beads of the decade say the *Hail Mary* and then move to the next bead and repeat (until ten *Hail Marys* are prayed consecutively). [6b, 7b, 8b, 9b & 10b]
 - c. Say the *Glory Be* on the lone bead. [6c, 7c, 8c, 9c & 10c]
 - d. Some then say the *Fatima Prayer* on the same bead.
- g. On the same bead, begin the next decade by repeating step F.
- h. After saying five decades (i.e. a full circuit of the Rosary), say the *Hail Holy Queen* on the medallion. [10c]
- i. The *Closing Prayers* usually follow this (some people use the five beads between the medallion and the Crucifix for this). [11]
- j. Make *The Sign of the Cross* to conclude the Rosary. [12]

5. Personal devotions when praying alone (or in a regular group)

If you wish, you can dedicate the different decades of the Rosary for particular intentions or something for which you give thanks: e.g. the healing of a sick relative; in thanks for a baby; for the comfort of someone who is dying; for peace between two groups etc. If so, this is usually announced at the start of each decade.

6. Praying the Rosary online

If you wish to pray the Rosary online there are several resources you can use:

- <https://therosary.online/>
- countless Rosary groups and channels on YouTube;
- <https://prayasyougo.org/series/rosary-reflections-7>
- the full version of the Universalis app.

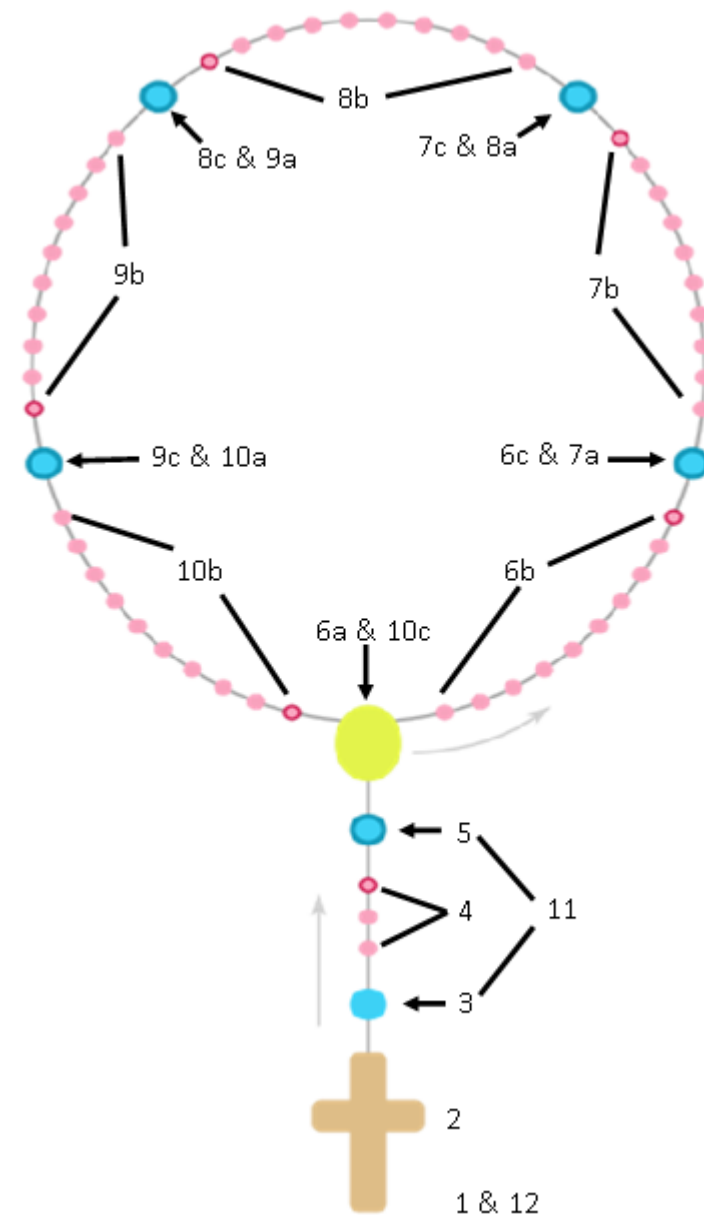


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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosary#/media/File:Rosary_-_usage.svg