



THE ROSARY IN TIMES OF EPIDEMIC DISEASE

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Introduction

At the time of this writing, COVID -19 has circled the globe; some countries have been hit harder than others, but it has been tragically impacting everywhere. Its source is not important. Coronaviruses have been everywhere since before time, but this particular recent mutant form can be tragic to human beings. The commonality has proved to be part of the problem. Some countries anticipated more proactively than others, while others devalued or delayed responding, heightening the anxiety of some citizens while others have not seemed to understand the gravity of the situation. Countless people are making efforts on many fronts. Some are testing for potential cases, some are treating the sick. Some are researching for vaccines and medicines to halt its decimation. Some are continuing to keep the public supplied with food and essentials. Some are providing much needed leadership. They all need our prayers

Solutions, vaccines, treatments all require research, testing, and then production and distribution through public health. We have done this before, but never before has it all been so widespread in such a short time, impacting so many so quickly. The miracles, in most cases, come about because someone takes on the responsibility to be cognizant of scientists and physical laws and processes God created to control His Creation. The researchers will be open to looking for those critical hints and keys. They need our prayers as much as the sick, the health care personnel, the doctors, the nurses, and any others working on the front lines of the crisis.

These are times that try our souls. These are times that we all need to pray. The Holy Father, Pope Francis, has reminded us that the Rosary is by far one of our most powerful prayers outside of the Mass. In consideration for all we are facing, these reflections hopefully focus our spiritual energy toward contemplating God, and away from the crisis and turmoil that clouds our sight from what is truly important and truly lasting. We all need prayer to keep this focus in sight.

This is not the only crisis many of us will face. But for some, it will be the ultimate crisis. We know not the day nor the hour at which our own lives will be required of us. We also know the power of prayer, yet we always underestimate it. In this light, it is important to remember who are and who God is, and His grace and His mercy are without limit; all we have to do is ask for it contritely, humbly, and genuinely contiguous with who God created us to be.

Praying the Rosary

It should be understood that although some people pray the Rosary frequently, not all have used those skills, and some may never have gotten into the habit of regular prayer. In times of crisis, many are compelled to pray even though they had set it on a back burner for some time and may not remember the prayers and the process. God calls each of us in His time and in His method and means.

In this regard, the prayers and a guide are included. Please feel free to pray and to share this with others. Each section can be used separately, or even copied. Feel free to copy any part of this document and give it freely to anyone who may either wish to pray the Rosary, or is curiously interested in it and its strength as a mode of prayer. The sets of Mysteries are usually designated for particular days, and they are listed with each. However, personal discretion may be used if a certain set is applicable to certain circumstances, such as praying the Sorrowful Mysteries in the event of illness of a loved one, or the Joyful or Glorious Mysteries for thankful happenings; personal discretion is encouraged.

In beginning each Mystery, the reflection helps to develop intentions of the prayers of each particular Mystery. Read the appropriate reflection after announcing the particular Mystery. Then pray the Our Father for that decade.

Sign of the Cross

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

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.

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.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are 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.

Glory Be To the Father

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.

Fatima prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.

Hail Holy Queen

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 merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Closing Prayer

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, meditating upon 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.



Joyful Mysteries – *Usually Mondays and Saturdays*

- The Annunciation
 - The Angel Gabriel announced the coming of the Christ. Mary may have been young, but she was far from naïve as evidenced by her question to Gabriel, “How is this, as I have not had relations?” Mary and God both knew that what she would face would not be easy. Let us pray that we be cognizant of all that God permits. Although some things may be daunting, let us remember that trials always present opportunities to come closer to God. Only in choosing God’s way do we find true freedom of our own free will, unhampered by the limits we place upon ourselves. With God, all things are possible. Amen.
- The Visitation
 - Mary visits Elizabeth. God made us to be social beings. Everything we do impacts someone else. Acts of kindness are never wasted. So we should pray that in this time of necessary restriction, we hope to find constructive ways of enhancing our levels of human contact through phone calls, smiles, emails, and other ways that remove the physical touch, but still fulfill the need for human interaction. Amen.
- The Birth of Our Lord
 - The birth of the Savior offers hope. In the midst of the troubling times, we look for confidence and hope that things will get better in God’s time and at God’s direction. We pray that in the face of disease all may come to respect and value life for the great gift it is, and to reflect that in word and action. Amen.
- The Presentation
 - Mary and Joseph present the Baby Jesus in the Temple. Simeon and Anna embraced God in the simplicity of a little child. So we pray to embrace God and each other in the more simple things and to abandon glitz, glamour, and popularity that damages society and our ability to see value in all others. We pray also for equal value of the experience of age well as the promise of youth. Amen.
- The Finding in the Temple
 - Jesus teaches the scholars, but returns to His family at the request of His parents. As we are faced with necessities and demands of the pandemic, we pray that we may we find our greatest comfort in our families, be they by blood or by spirit. We pray that we all are open to learn new and constructive things from all we encounter, even from points we may least expect. Amen.

Luminous Mysteries – Usually Thursdays

- **Baptism of Jesus Christ**
 - John Baptizes Jesus in the Jordan. Jesus showed us that true humility has a place in the life of each and every person. No one is above God; rather we all find our greatest strength when we freely embrace the Father's will. We pray that we may replace vanity with humility, anger and animosity with gracious love and genuine concern for others, especially when we are tried by crisis and the dangers it presents. Amen.
- **Christ Reveals Himself at Cana**
 - Jesus performs His first public miracle that addressed a genuine human need. Perhaps in the midst of this health crisis, now is the time to increase research into the innovations that address the genuine needs of human health. We pray for those who conduct such research that they will also remember a dedication to ethical and moral answers to those human needs. Amen.
- **Proclamation of the Kingdom and Call to Conversion**
 - In His Sermon in the Mount, Jesus set in motion the message that the Kingdom of God is at hand. In the Sermon, Jesus assured us the human characteristics God finds most desirable. It is not physical prowess, wealth, or political power. Rather, as St Paul wrote, "It is in weakness that we are strong." We pray for the fortitude to not only know that God's priorities are more important than our own, but also the joy that comes when we put them before our own. Amen.
- **The Transfiguration**
 - Peter, James, and John saw Jesus as He truly is as He discusses His inevitable sacrifice with Moses and Elijah. Sometimes a crisis can bring out either the best or the worst in us, as we are forced to face results that may be inconvenient or uncomfortable. We pray that no matter what we may face, that God give us the strength and forbearance to stay positive that the outcome will be in the best interest for fulfillment of God's will. We pray that we recognize that privilege to have been a key part of it, either in being Christ to others, or allowing others to be Christ to us. Amen.
- **Institution of the Eucharist**
 - The Last Supper was officially when the sacrifice of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the "Living Bread Come Down From Heaven" is truly realized and given to us as the continuing ultimate sacrifice. The Mass is our perfect prayer. But sometimes during adversity – sickness, epidemic, political

and social upheaval, natural disasters – we will try to attend Mass, not because of obligation, but because we value beyond all else God’s physical and spiritual union with each of us individually. Yet, in those times, when we might benefit most readily, it may be impossible under the circumstances. We pray that all those who cannot attend Mass may still benefit from God’s grace; in times of restriction we all may attain spiritual union with Christ even in face of physical absence and our lack of control. Amen.



Sorrowful Mysteries – *Usually Tuesdays and Fridays*

- **The Agony in the Garden**
 - Jesus, faced with knowing the pain and suffering He will soon encounter, underwent great psychological turmoil. Would anyone not abandon Him? Times of isolation can bring untold anxiety. What will we encounter should we leave our place of seclusion? For all the precautions, will we still be affected by the disease, and if so, how will our health be affected? And if so, will any of our friends be there to help provide needed support? Just as Jesus did on the fateful night in the Garden, we pray God gives us the strength to endure in spite of the physical and emotional challenges, that our spiritual selves will emerge stronger and joyfully accept God's will whatever it may demand of us. Amen.
- **The Scourging**
 - Jesus was whipped. Studies on the Holy Shroud indicate that there were possibly several different whips and three different torturers. Five to ten times the normally sentenced lashes were administered. We pray that what we will encounter will not exceed what we are able to endure. We also pray that we remember that others are isolated as well and that we be empathetic to the challenges others are facing just as we face them ourselves, and remember the commonality of our mutual crisis is in the good to be gained, be it physical, spiritual, or both. Amen.
- **The Crowning With Thorns**
 - The soldiers decided to mock Jesus further by crowning Him with thorns and then striking His head repeatedly. No matter what we may encounter, endurance and toleration become more difficult in the absence of empathy. Some will see our afflictions as penance for our past indiscretions. Some will try to coerce us away from our faith. We pray that in spite of what we are going through in our own isolation. We pray for those who are not understanding, for those who may endorse practices that have enhanced the crisis, or who make the crisis worse by arrogance, inability, or any other reason. Amen.
- **The Carrying of the Cross**
 - Having been through a torturous night, weakened by physical and psychological abuse and loss of blood, Jesus was condemned to die on the cross; He would first have to carry the timbers strapped to His shoulders, about a mile from the Praetorium to Calvary. How much more disrespect should one innocent person endure? Yet He did so for each of us, as He loves us individually

for who we are. He would pass by own His mother who would suffer the greatest anxiety any parent should never have to. He would pass by those who were empathetic and even helpful, like the Cyrenean, Veronica, and the townswomen. Those who would try to interact with Him would have certainly been whipped back into the sidelines. His route would also be rife mostly with hecklers. We pray that during whatever we might be called to endure that we will not be intimidated by those who might not empathize, or to those who hinder our progress or passage. We pray also that those who have been with us before will be with us, but we also pray that we can be there for others as well as circumstances allow. Amen.

- **The Crucifixion**

- Jesus was stripped, nailed, and left to die on the cross, one of the worst forms of execution ever devised in human imagination and sin. He went through a wide spectrum of pain and emotions, even feeling abandoned by God. Yet, in His own death, all was not lost; He recognized that some had not abandoned Him, and through John, He gave His mother to be our own. In the end, He cast aside all feelings of despair, of abandonment, of self-entitlement or position, and forgave even those who had brought Him such an ignominious death. In the end, He forgave those who did Him any injustice or contributed to His suffering and death. But He also forgave us for our sins, not yet then committed. We pray for forgiveness for our own sins and unjust acts, and any responsibility we have refused. More so, we pray to find forgiveness for others who have done us any injustice especially in crisis. We also pray to remove all bitterness and animosity from our hearts for anything we have found to be objectionable. Lastly, we pray for those who have abandoned responsibility that has resulted in hardship or the demise of the innocent and vulnerable. Forgive them for they know not what they do. Amen.

Glorious Mysteries - Usually Sundays and Wednesdays

- **The Resurrection**

- Jesus rose from the dead. It is in the Resurrection that the perfect sacrifice for all sin, great or small, is fulfilled. In that fulfillment is the assurance that everything Jesus taught is true. The Kingdom of God is truly at hand. God does not forsake us in suffering or in death. Death is not the end. Jesus Christ modeled, as the Father has intended for us, loving all others as the Father loves us, as we love ourselves. In this is our real and genuine salvation, just as we were told directly for the Word. This is the end to which we live our lives. Amen.

- **The Ascension**

- Jesus left Earth and ascended to Heaven. But in leaving, Jesus left the Eucharist, and in the Eucharist will be with us until the end of time. But in His place, He left us to be His hands and His feet, to be Christ to others, to those vulnerable to anything that challenges God's greatest of all gifts – LIFE- without which nothing else is possible. We pray that we may always be ready to act as Christ would in all things, that He is our model to be emulated. May we always keep the Son's way of LOVE and the Father's gift of life as our conjoined focus for our salvation and the salvation of others. Amen.

- **The Coming of the Holy Spirit**

- When Jesus left, He sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. Since the crucifixion, the apostles had been in a self-imposed isolation. The resurrection had helped, but then Jesus was not with them completely as before, and now that He had ascended to the Father, there was joy, but also some disillusionment. What had the last three years really meant? Had it all been a waste? With the descent of the Holy Spirit, everything now became as clear as day. The purpose, the principles, the teachings, all made sense. The command to evangelization caught fire. Strengthened in the Spirit, no one ever pulled back from the renewed commitment. We pray that in the midst of crisis, that the teachings of Christ, the will of the Father, remain as clear as day. We pray that in living the Gospel, we make a positive impact on all who experience our witness of faith, that they instill hope from the presence of Christ's love in all our words, reflected in our actions, contiguous with a strengthened commitment in the Spirit. Amen.

- **The Assumption of Our Lady**
 - Following her death, Mary was assumed, body and soul, into Heaven. None of us, even Mary, having been born and having lived without sin, is removed from the given that we will physically leave this physical life. But we know that the physical end is not the finality of who we are. This is the hope that drives our faith, and why we love all others, particularly when it is difficult and challenging. We pray that the love of Christ we may bring to others in their need for reassurance may bring true peace and contentment. We pray that we may find strength in what we have done for others in their critical time may help us remain assured of the Father's divine and infinite mercy. We also pray that in our times of doubt that others do the same for us. Still, we pray to always remember that our greatest strength will come in knowing that Christ will never abandon us. Amen.
- **The Coronation of Our Lady**
 - Mary is crowned queen of Heaven and Earth. How else should the Mother of God be honored? But, as Jesus gave care of Mary over to John at the foot of the cross, He also permitted us to call her our mother, and we, her children. There is no greater privilege in this life. Nothing life can offer has any greater weight in our favor, and when it comes to the everlasting life with God that we anticipate in following Christ, political and social connections can tragically fail. We pray that we always remember God's way is most important, even in the face of disease, crisis or turmoil. We pray that Mary will intercede on our behalf when we, requesting contritely, humbly and genuinely contiguous with whom God made us to be, come before the Father in our time of need. Lastly, we pray that in our time or the time of others for serving God comes to an end, the transition from this life will be joyful and peaceful, and in accordance with the will of the Father. Amen.

Extra Closing Prayers

- Most Holy Mother, we come before you as your children, facing this global crisis, the odds which astound us. We ask for your intercession on our behalf for those whose lives are challenged or demanded. We also ask for your intercession on our behalf for those who are working to maintain the precious gift of life, to find the means of dealing with this seemingly insurmountable condition both in these times and in times to come. Through this crisis, may we come to know the Father's love as only you know it, through the love of your Son. Amen.
- Heavenly Father, you are all-knowing and all-powerful, but you are also all-loving. At this difficult time of great global concern we pray for the health and safety of all human beings in all countries, of all cultures. We ask you to help those suffering from coronavirus and any other terrible diseases and those who care for them, and for the many scientists to find the answers, to know what You know. We are trying to slow the tragedy by limiting our daily lives. We accept our different parts of this enormous responsibility for the health and safety of all of us who You love so much. Please help us to see as You see, to know as You know, that we may find answers, and share them freely, simply for our love of You through our love of others as You have loved each of us. We humbly ask this in Name of Your only begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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