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Calvary

a Lenten Rosary Reflection

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First Edition

Through his apostolic letter, *On the Most Holy Rosary* (2002), Pope St. John Paul II enriched devotion to the rosary. Through this encyclical he offered us four gifts:

1. He added the Mysteries of Light.
2. He suggested a creative style of praying the Hail Mary beads, a style that aids contemplation of Jesus through Mary.
3. He called us to adapt the rosary to different spiritual traditions.
4. He invited continued experimentation aimed at leading the praying person to imitate the core values that are contained in the mysteries.

This Stations of the Cross rosary blends three prayer forms:

- The fifteen stations provide a visual focus and body movement.
- The Hail Mary bead incorporates a “Jesus clause” that gives a detail of the mystery. Pope St. John Paul II explained that “the center of gravity in the Hail Mary” is the name of Jesus. And so adding a “who clause” to the name of Jesus becomes a contemplative exercise. For instance:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who was given the help of Simon because the soldiers feared he would die along the way and escape the torture of crucifixion.

- Each bead adapts the Ignatian tradition of naming a desired grace that is particular to the mystery. This grace or fruit applies to our own living of the Gospel value that we are contemplating. For example:

Increase my faith in God's ability to make all things work together for good, even the impure motivations of others.

Walk the Stations of the Cross with your rosary in hand, using the “who clauses” and prayers provided in this pamphlet. Or use the visual aid of the station to prompt your own Jesus meditations. Accompany Jesus through his suffering. Be there for him.

During some prayer occasions, situate your own experiences of rash judgment, undeserved

punishment, betrayal, abandonment, torments, falls, mistreatment, cruelty, vulnerability, scapegoat occasions, and emotional or physical deaths within Jesus' passion. Join your suffering to the suffering of Jesus. Take on the mind of Christ. Bury your hurts in his tomb. Pray for the grace of forgiveness.

At other prayer times, stand in the sandals of Pilate, the scourging soldiers, the crucifixion soldiers, the religious leaders, a person in the mob, or the tomb guards. Acknowledge the occasions when you have filled such roles.

Then humbly thank Jesus for the occasions of grace when you behaved like his Mother Mary, Veronica, Simon, the "good thief," the sorrowful women, John, Mary Magdalene, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, or the soldier who proclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Seek the grace to recognize the ways you are (or have been) each of these characters. Strive to put on the mind of Jesus and Mary. Ask them to develop within you whatever would make you a more dependable companion on the road to Calvary.

How to Pray the Stations of the Cross Rosary

The traditional fourteen Stations of the Cross are the focus of this rosary. The stations are divided into five themes to form the five decades. Hail Mary meditations will lead you to contemplate Jesus' passion by using the "who clausal" style of prayer recommended by Pope St. John Paul II. Each bead ends by asking for a specific grace (written in italics), a practical way to imitate Jesus in your daily living. These petitions for grace are merely suggestions. Feel free to replace them with petitions of your own choosing. Also, pages 29–31 feature the words of these prayers: the Sign of the Cross; Apostles' Creed; Our Father; Glory Be; Fatima; Hail, Holy Queen; and Hail Mary, followed by the traditional closing prayer of the rosary.



1. On the crucifix, pray the Sign of the Cross.
2. On the introductory beads, pray the:
(A) Apostles' Creed, (B) three Hail Marys (for an increase in faith, hope, and charity), and a (C) Glory Be.

6

5

4

3

2C

2B

2A

1

3. On the large bead that starts each decade, pause to read the meditative thought that introduces the decade. When you are ready to begin the decade, pray the Our Father.
4. Focus on the image of the Station of the Cross. On each small bead pray:
 - Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who...
 - the “who clause” that refers to Jesus
 - pray the petition for grace.
5. On the tenth bead of the decade, add:
 - “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.”
 - the Glory Be.
 - the Fatima Prayer, if desired.
6. Announce the next decade and repeat steps three through five.

First Decade

Be Nondefensive in the Face of Mistreatment

Jesus was subjected to betrayal, perjury, unjust sentencing to capital punishment, scourging, and mockery. He was abused physically and emotionally. Regardless, Jesus did not accept the identity of victim. He looked instead to his Father for definition. He was the beloved Son in whom the Father was well pleased. His self worth and dignity came directly from his Father. So does ours! When we know who we are and whose we are, there is no need for defense or explanation.

Pray the Our Father

Station 1: Jesus Is Condemned

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who was taken to Pilate by the religious leaders and accused of treason since they did not have the power to put him to death. *Teach me to act justly.*

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who remained silent throughout Pilate's interrogation. *Develop in me a nondefensive attitude.*
- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who was mocked, scourged, tormented, spat upon, and less valued than Barabbas. *Root my self-image in the opinion God the Father holds of me.*
- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, of whom Pilate said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man." *Establish within me unity in speech and action.*

Station 2: Jesus Takes His Cross

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who accepted the cross and began the journey through the narrow streets to Golgotha. *Teach me how to grow through the crosses in my life.*

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who carried his cross through the streets while merchants continued business as usual, oblivious to, or unconcerned for, his unjust suffering. *Move me away from focusing on “me, myself, and I.”*
- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, whose weakened physical condition continued to deteriorate, making the cross unmanageable. *Give me the humility to resign myself to personal inadequacy.*

Station 3: Jesus Falls for the First Time

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who, despite his desire to embrace the cross, fell under the weight of it. *Tutor my heart to value effort more than achievement.*

- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who accepted his human inadequacy and renewed his effort to embrace the cross. *Strengthen my will in the face of challenge and temptation.*
- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus, who modeled that the spirit can be strong though the body may be weak. *Enkindle in me a desire for God that surpasses the limitations of body, mind, and spirit.*

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

Pray the Glory Be

Optional: Pray the Fatima Prayer