

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

Sign of the Cross: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 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; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from thence He shall 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.

(3 times) 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 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.

First Mystery: The Annunciation

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). With those words—her *fiat*—the Virgin Mary placed her trust in God. She was only 13 or 14; betrothed, but not yet married; and God was asking her to become the Mother of His Son. How easy it would have been to say no, or at least to ask God to choose someone else! Mary had to have known what others would think, how people would look at her; for most people pride would prevent them from accepting God's Will. In humility, she knew that her entire life depended on God; how could she turn down even this most remarkable of requests? How, then, can we refuse God anything He asks of us? How can we let our pride stand in the way? If Mary can give up all worldly reputation to bear His Son, and His Son can empty Himself and, though sinless, die the death of sin on our behalf, how can we refuse to take up our cross and follow Him?

Our Father...
10 Hail Mary's
Glory be...

Second Mystery: The Visitation

"And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43). Mary has just received life-changing news, news that no other woman will ever receive: She is to be the Mother of God. Yet in announcing this to her, the angel Gabriel also revealed that Mary's cousin Elizabeth is six months' pregnant. Mary does not hesitate, does not worry about her own situation; her cousin needs her.

As the body of our Lord is growing in her own womb, Mary spends three months caring for Elizabeth, leaving only shortly before the birth of Saint John the Baptist. She shows us what true love of neighbor means: placing the needs of others above our own, devoting ourselves to our neighbor in his or her hour of need. Truly, as Mary responds to her cousin's greeting in the canticle we call the Magnificat, her soul does "magnify the Lord," not least through her love of neighbor.

Our Father...
10 Hail Mary's
Glory be...

Third Mystery: The Nativity of Our Lord

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). God has humbled Himself to become man and the Mother of God gives birth in a stable.

When we think of that holy night, we tend either to idealize it—to imagine it as neat and tidy as the Nativity scenes on our mantels on Christmas Eve—or we think of the physical poverty that Jesus and Mary and Joseph endured. On this night, Heaven and earth have met in a stable, but also in the souls of the Holy Family. Here among the sights and sounds and stench of the stable, their souls are one in perfect happiness, because they are poor in spirit. How wonderful is this poverty! How blessed we would be if we, like they, could unite our lives so fully to Christ that we could see the fallen world around us in the light of Heaven!

Our Father...
10 Hail Mary's
Glory be...

Fourth Mystery: The Presentation in the Temple

"And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord" (Luke 2:22). Mary had conceived the Son of God as a virgin; she gave birth to the Savior of the World, and her virginity remained intact. Mary and Joseph offered a sacrifice, in accordance with the Law: "a pair of turtledove or two young pigeons" (Luke 2:24), to redeem the Son of God, Who needed no redemption.

How often do we think that we don't need all the regulations and rituals of the Church! "Why do I have to go to Confession? God knows I'm sorry for my sins". Yet here are the Son of God and His Mother, both purer than any of us

will ever be, abiding by the Law that Christ Himself came not to abolish but fulfill.

Our Father...
10 Hail Mary's
Glory be...

Fifth Mystery: The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

"Did you not know that I must be about my father's business?" (Luke 2:49). To begin to understand the joy that Mary and Joseph felt on finding Jesus in the Temple, we must first imagine their distress when they realized He was not with them. For 12 years, they had been always at His side, their lives dedicated to Him in obedience to the Will of God.

But here He is, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions" (Luke 2:46). "And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48). And then those wondrous words emerge from His lips, "Did you not know that I must be about my father's business?"

We are not called as Christ was, but we are called to follow Him, to take up our own crosses in imitation of Him and in obedience to God the Father. Like Christ, we must be about the Father's business in our own lives—at every moment of every day.

Our Father...
10 Hail Mary's
Glory be...

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

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

Prayer at the end:

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 Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (*Hail Mary*)

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word. (*Hail Mary*)

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us. (*Hail Mary*)

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

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

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech You, O Lord, Your grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Your Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His resurrection. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord

and let perpetual light shine upon them (*three times*)

May they rest in peace. Amen.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

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