How to Pray the Rosary

*****\* If you do not know the prayers of the Rosary, you will find them on the next page.*

1. Holding the crucifix of the Rosary with your right hand, make the Sign of the Cross and then kiss the crucifix.
2. It is good to begin your Rosary by offering it for some intention.
Example: “I offer this Rosary for all my spiritual needs and those of my family, for the conversion of sinners, in reparation for my sins and those of all sinners, for world peace and the triumph of Mary's Immaculate Heart.”
3. On the crucifix, pray the Apostles’ Creed.
4. On the first single bead after the crucifix, pray an Our Father.
5. On each of the next three beads, which are grouped together, pray a Hail Mary.
6. After the three Hail Marys, pray the Glory be. Now this is where the “decades” begin.
7. On the next single bead, announce the decade and then pray an Our Father. (Example: “The First Joyful Mystery, the Annunciation. Our Father, Who art...”)
8. On each of the ten beads that follow, pray a Hail Mary while reflecting upon the mystery assigned to this decade (see list of mysteries below). Some people find that looking at a picture depicting each mystery helps them meditate on the mystery.
9. After the ten Hail Marys, pray the “Glory be” and “O my Jesus...”
10. Repeat steps 6 and 7 until you have prayed all 5 decades.
11. Many Catholics also pray the “Hail Holy Queen,” the Prayer to St. Michael, and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin at the end of the Rosary. (The Litany is not listed with the prayers below.)

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| **THE PRAYERS OF THE ROSARY****The Sign of the Cross**IN THE NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. (When you say “of the Father, ” touch your forehead; when you say “of the Son,” touch your breastbone; when you say “of the Holy Ghost,” touch your left shoulder and then your right shoulder.**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 Ghost, 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 sits 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 Ghost, 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**GLORY BE to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**O My Jesus***(Requested by Our Lady at Fatima in 1917; pray after each decade)*O MY JESUS, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who have most need of Thy mercy.**Concluding Rosary 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, by meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.**Hail Holy Queen**Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, 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 valley 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!**Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel**St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our defense against the malice and wickedness of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and the other evil spirits who prowl about the world for the ruin of souls. Amen. |
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More About the Holy Rosary

The diagram above shows a five-decade Rosary such as those most commonly used by Catholics. The purpose of the beads is to keep track of the prayers, especially the sets of 10 Hail Marys. As seen in the chart, the single beads are the Our Fathers, while the group of three beads and the five groups of ten beads are the Hail Marys. As we pass each bead through our fingers, we pray the appropriate prayer, and then move to the next one. By doing this, we simply work our way around the Rosary, beginning at the Crucifix and ending at the centerpiece.

It is best to use a Rosary that has been blessed by a priest, but this is not absolutely necessary. In times of persecution, for example, Catholics have been known to use stones or pebbles, or even their fingers or toes to count the Hail Marys.

The Rosary should be prayed in a reverent position of the body. For example, we are encouraged to kneel before an image of our Blessed Mother or the Crucifix, or in a church or chapel before the Blessed Sacrament while praying the Rosary, but this is not mandatory. Kneeling is a sign of reverence and it also helps the mind stay alert and free from distraction during prayer. Some people, however, are not physically able to kneel, at least for the entire Rosary, and it is certainly acceptable to sit in a reverent, alert position. The Rosary may also be prayed while walking, whether in procession or on a simple walk alone or with others. The sick may pray it while lying in bed, and many Catholics pray extra decades until they fall asleep in bed at night.

A very important point is that the **heart of the Rosary is not the repetition of these prayers, but our meditation upon the mysteries of the lives of Jesus and Mary** during each decade. As we pray each set of Hail Marys, we should meditate upon the event in the lives of Jesus and Mary assigned to that decade, and on the grace or virtue manifested in that mystery, praying humbly for the grace to imitate Their example in our lives.

The mysteries are divided into four groups:

**The Joyful Mysteries:** (Monday & Saturday, and Sunday during Advent)\*
1st Mystery: The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) – Fruit Humility
2nd Mystery: The Visitation (Luke 1:39-56) – Fruit Love of Neighbor
3rd Mystery: The Birth of Our Lord (Luke 2:1-21) – Fruit Poverty
4th Mystery: The Presentation (Luke 2:22-38) – Fruit Obedience
5th Mystery: The Finding in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52) – Fruit Jo in Finding Jesus

**The Sorrowful Mysteries** (Tuesday & Friday, and Sunday during Lent)\*
1st Mystery: The Agony in the Garden (Matt. 26:36-56)Fruit – Sorrow for Sin
2nd Mystery: The Scourging at the Pillar (Matt. 27:26) Fruit - Purity
3rd Mystery: The Crowning with Thorns (Matt. 27:27-31) Fruit - Courage
4th Mystery: The Carrying of the Cross (Matt. 27:32) Fruit - Patience
5th Mystery: The Crucifixion (Matt. 27:33-56) Fruit - Perseverance

**The Glorious Mysteries** (Wednesday and Sunday)\*
1st Mystery: The Resurrection (John 20:1-29) – Fruit Faith
2nd Mystery: The Ascension (Luke 24:36-53) – Fruit Hope
3rd Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:1-41) Fruit – Love of God
4th Mystery: The Assumption of Our Lady Fruit – Grace of a Happy Death
5th Mystery: The Coronation of Our Lady Fruit – Trust in Mary’s Intercession

**The Luminous Mysteries** (Thursday)\*

1st Mystery: The Baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:16 - 17) – Fruit – Openness to the Holy Spirit
2nd Mystery: Wedding at Cana (John 2: 5-7) – Fruit - To Jesus through Mary
3rd Mystery: Proclaiming the Kingdom (Matt. 10:7-8) Fruit – Repentance and Trust in God
4th Mystery: Transfiguration (Luke 9:29-35) Fruit – Desire for Holiness
5th Mystery: The Institution of the Eucharist (Luke 22:19 – 20) Fruit - Adoration

\* These days are **suggested** for praying these sets of mysteries, but they can be prayed any day. Those who are able are encouraged to pray all 20 decades every day.

Benefits of the Holy Rosary

According to St. Louis Marie de Montfort, the Rosary recited with the meditation of the mysteries brings about the following marvelous results:

1. it gradually brings us a perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ;
2. it purifies our souls from sin;
3. it gives us victory over all our enemies;
4. it makes the practice of virtue easy;
5. it sets us on fire with the love of our Lord;
6. it enriches us with graces and merits;
7. it supplies us with what is needed to pay all our debts to God and to our fellow-men;
8. and finally, it obtains all kinds of graces from God.

Promises Made by the Blessed Virgin Mary to Those Who Pray the Rosary

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall receive signal graces.
2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell, it will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.
4. It will cause virtue and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God; it will withdraw the hearts of people from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall not perish.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its Sacred Mysteries shall never be conquered by misfortune. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just, he shall remain in the grace of God, and become worthy of eternal life.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary shall not die without the Sacraments of the Church.
8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have during their life and at their death the light of God and the plentitude of His graces; at the moment of death they shall participate in the merits of the Saints in Paradise.
9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.
10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in Heaven.
11. You shall obtain all you ask of me by the recitation of the Rosary.
12. All those who propagate the Holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death.
14. All who recite the Rosary are my children, and brothers and sisters of my only Son, Jesus Christ.
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a great sign of predestination.