

*Poetic Meditations on
The Mysteries of The Rosary*



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Introduction

This meditation is designed to provide a rhythmic backdrop to accompany the deeply reflective prayer of the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

We are encouraged to follow this way of praying the Rosary by Pope John Paul II, in his recent Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae:

“Mary constantly sets before the faithful the 'mysteries' of her Son, with the desire that the contemplation of those mysteries will release all their saving power. In the recitation of the Rosary, the Christian community enters into contact with the memories and the contemplative gaze of Mary... The Rosary, precisely because it starts with Mary's own experience, is an exquisitely contemplative prayer. ... By its nature the recitation of the Rosary calls for a quiet rhythm and a lingering pace, helping the individual to meditate on the mysteries of the Lord's life as seen through the eyes of her who was closest to the Lord. In this way the unfathomable riches of these mysteries are disclosed.” (Pope John Paul II, Rosarium Virginis Mariae)

May Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, join with us as we enter into this guided experience of one of the Church's greatest prayers.

The Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation

“And the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the Child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.' And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her.” (Luke 1.35,38)

Hail Mary, Queen of Purity,
Woven with grace on Spirit's loom,
Your soul, veiled with obscurity,
Wrought Word Made Flesh within your womb.

The Visitation

“In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!'...And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.” (Luke 1.39-42,56)

Your fiat to the Father's will
Led your heart to pay careful heed:
You bore your Son with haste uphill,
To serve your cousin in her need.

The Birth of Our Lord

“And the angel said to them, 'Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!’” (Luke 2.10-14)

The Word Made Flesh became our kin;
Your womb bore our salvation.
To hail our Victor over sin,
Earth joined heaven's ovation.

The Presentation

“And His father and His mother marveled at what was said about Him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed.’” (Luke 2.33-35)

Your Son would be our offering --
The Prince of Peace would pay the price;
And you would share His suffering --
Two hearts pierced in the sacrifice.

The Finding Of Jesus In The Temple

“After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw Him they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, 'Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.' And He said to them, 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?'” (Luke 2.46-49)

Where had your Son gone from your side?
For three days, He was not in sight.
Until the Spirit came as guide,
Your soul endured its darkest night.

The Luminous Mysteries

The Baptism in the Jordan

“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him...And when Jesus was baptized, He went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'”
(Matthew 3.13,16-17)

At the start of His ministry,
For us, He was baptized by John:
Submitting with humility;
While over Him, the Spirit shone.

The Wedding At Cana

“When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine.' (And) Jesus said to her, 'Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servers, 'Do whatever he tells you.'...the water that had become wine...Jesus did this as the beginning of His signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed His glory, and his disciples began to believe in Him.” (John 2.3-5,9a,11)

You interceded in their need:
You showed the servants to your Son,
To follow Him with careful heed --
By faith, this miracle was done.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom

“And when the men had come to Him, they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?'...And He answered them, 'Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.’” (Luke 7.20,22)

Far greater than raising the dead,
Good news is proclaimed to the poor.
The poor heart hears what has been said:
His mercy saves! Our hope is sure!

The Transfiguration

“After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; His face shone like the sun and His clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him.” (Matthew 17.1-3)

His glory shone in human form:
The law and prophets are fulfilled
In Him who will cleanse and transform
Us to Himself as He has willed.

The Institution of the Eucharist

“And He took bread, and when He had given thanks He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.' And likewise the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.’” (Luke 22.19-20)

The Bread of Life and Blood offered
For love, condemned without a crime,
The Lamb of God, who has suffered,
Remains with us throughout all time.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony In The Garden

“After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, He prayed, saying, 'Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from Me; still, not My will but Yours be done.' (And to strengthen Him an angel from heaven appeared to Him. He was in such agony and He prayed so fervently that His sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.”
(Luke 22.41-44)

A night of anguish fell on Him;
The weight of failed humanity.
He buckled; as all hope grew dim,
With faith, He drank His destiny.

The Scourging At The Pillar

“Pilate said to them, 'Why? What evil has He done?' They only shouted the louder, 'Crucify him.' So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed Him over to be crucified.” (Mark 15.14-15)

The Lamb was lashed with whips and bled;
His torn flesh fell horrendously.
For Love, to slaughter He was led
To suffer pain prodigiously.

The Crowning Of Thorns

“They stripped off His clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about Him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And kneeling before Him, they mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat upon Him and took the reed and kept striking Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the cloak, dressed Him in His own clothes, and led Him off to crucify Him.” (Matthew 27.28-31)

Our selfish pride, woven with thorn,
Disgraced the crown of mercy's King.
We answered His love with our scorn;
Our disdain dealt Him death's worst sting.

The Carrying of the Cross

“Then he handed Him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross Himself He went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha.” (John 19.16-17)

Cross-beams of our tepidity --
Rough-hewn with doubt; splintered with fear
Weighed on Him. He struggled greatly;
With love's own strength, he'd persevere.

The Crucifixion

“And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left. And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' And they cast lots to divide his garments...It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit!' And having said this He breathed his last.” (Luke 23.33-34,44-46)

He forgave all who had a part.
With love, He breathed out His last breath.
For love, the lance had pierced His heart;
For love, He entered into death.

The Glorious Mysteries

The Resurrection

“While they were puzzling over this, behold, two men in dazzling garments appeared to them. They were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. They said to them, “Why do you seek the Living One among the dead? He is not here, but He has been raised. Remember what He said to you while He was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day.” (Luke 24.4-7)

The stone of death is rolled away;
The tomb's empty; Love's vict'ry reigns!
Christ's glory dawns on this first day;
“He is risen!” fills our refrains.

The Ascension

“And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned'...So then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it. Amen.” (Mark 16.15-16,19-20)

To Father's right hand He ascends;
Heaven and earth hail their new Lord.
Creation's King sends us as friends
To share His love and its reward.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

“(Jesus) said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the holy Spirit.’”
(John 20.21-22)

He sends His Spirit, who descends
With gifts of grace -- a gentle Dove;
He enters the souls of His friends
And guides them in the ways of love.

The Assumption Of Mary

“And Mary said: ‘My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my savior. For He has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name.’” (Luke 1.46-49)

Immaculate, born full of grace,
Your Blessed Mother lived the Way;
From Your birth, she beheld Your face;
In death, she would not know decay.

The Coronation Of The Blessed Virgin Mary

“A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” (Revelation 12.1)

The lowly handmaid of the Lord
Is crowned the Queen of His domain;
The faithful one, who held the Word,
Now shares His glory and His reign.

References

Scripture quotations are adapted from several Catholic editions

from *Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, Pope John Paul II, delivered at the Vatican on October 16,2003 in the Year of the Rosary

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