
THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

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THE MYSTERIES OF CHRIST IN THE ROSARY

Christ came to earth to be our model.

The Word became Incarnate, not only to bring us the gospel of salvation and to accomplish our redemption, but also to serve as a pattern for our spiritual lives.

Each of Christ's mysteries is a revelation of His virtues. The humility of the crib, the retirement of His hidden life, the zeal of His public life the self-annihilation of His Sacrifice, the glory of His triumph, all these disclose virtues which we must imitate; they are mysteries in which we should participate.

This is the reason why the contemplation of the mysteries of Christ—for instance, while

reciting the Rosary—is so fruitful for the soul. The life, the death, and the glory of Jesus serve as ideal models for our life and death and glory.

Never forget this truth: the Eternal Father is pleased with us only in so far as we imitate His Son and inasmuch as He sees in us the likeness of His Son, for it is in His image that He has predestined us from all eternity.

For us there is no other form of sanctity than that which Christ has shown us. The degree of our perfection is measured by the degree of our imitation of Jesus and of our union with Him.



I. THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

The First Joyful Mystery

The Annunciation - Humility

And the angel said to her: **F**ear not, **M**ary, for thou hast found grace with **G**od. **B**ehold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name **J**esus. **H**e shall be great, and shall be called the **S**on of the most **H**igh; and the **L**ord **G**od shall give unto him the throne **D**avid his father; and he shall reign in the house of **J**acob. **A**nd of his kingdom there shall be no end. (**L**uke 1: 28-33)

1. The Annunciation

Picture the scene of the Annunciation. God proposes the mystery of the Incarnation which He will accomplish in the Virgin Mary—but not until she has given her consent. The accomplishment of the mystery is held in suspense awaiting the free acceptance of Mary. At this moment Mary represents all of us in her own person; it is as if God is waiting for the response of the humanity to which He longs to unite Himself. What a solemn moment this is! For upon this moment depends the decision of the most vital mystery of Christianity.

But see how Mary gives her answer. Full of faith and confidence in the heavenly message and entirely submissive to the Divine Will, the Virgin Mary replies in a spirit of complete and absolute abandonment: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to Thy word." This "Fiat" is Mary's consent to the Divine Plan of Redemption. It is like an echo of the "Fiat" of the creation of the world. But this is a new world, a world infinitely superior, a world of grace, which God will cause to arise in consequence of Mary's consent, for at that moment the Divine Word, the second Person of

the Blessed Trinity, becomes Man in Mary: "And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us."

The Second Joyful Mystery

And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the Infant in my womb leaped for joy. (Luke 1: 41-44)

2. The Visitation

See how the Holy Ghost greets the Virgin Mary through the mouth of Elizabeth: "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb! And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoke to thee by the Lord."

Blessed indeed, for by this faith in the word of God the Virgin Mary became the Mother of Christ.

What finite creature has ever received honor such as this from the Infinite Being?

Mary gives all the glory to the Lord for the marvelous things which are accomplished in her. From the moment of the Incarnation the Virgin Mother sings in her heart a canticle full of love and gratitude.

In the presence of her cousin Elizabeth she allows the most profound sentiments of her heart to break forth in song; she intones the "Magnificat" which, in the course of centuries, her children will repeat with her to praise God for having chosen her among all women:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
Because He has regarded the lowliness of His
handmaid...

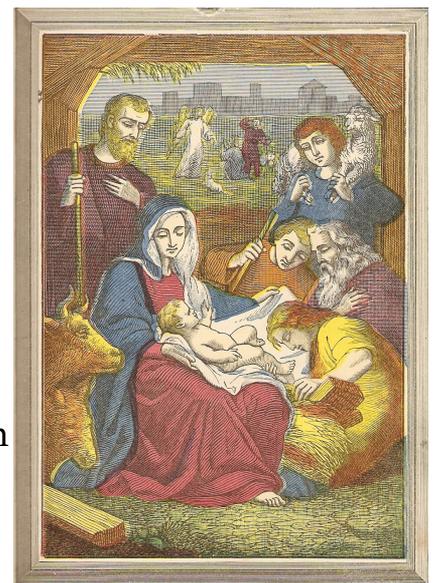
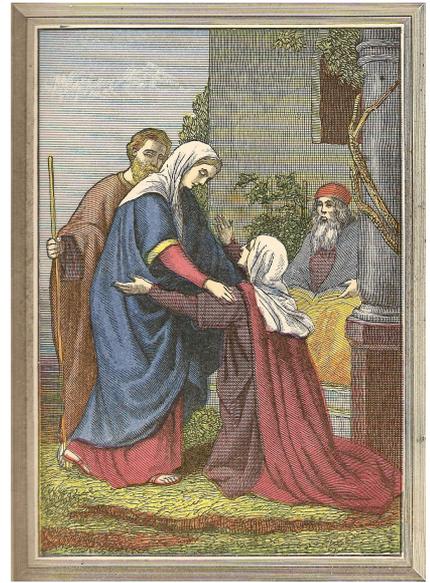
Because He Who is mighty has done great things for
me

And holy is His name."

The Third Joyful Mystery

The Nativity - Poverty

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in the manger; because there was no room at the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds, watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and



the brightness of **God** shone round about them; and they feared with great fear. **And** the angel said to them: **Fear** not; for, behold, **I** bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: **For** this day, is born to you a **Saviour**, who is **Christ** the **Lord**, in the city of **David**. (Luke 2 : 7-11)

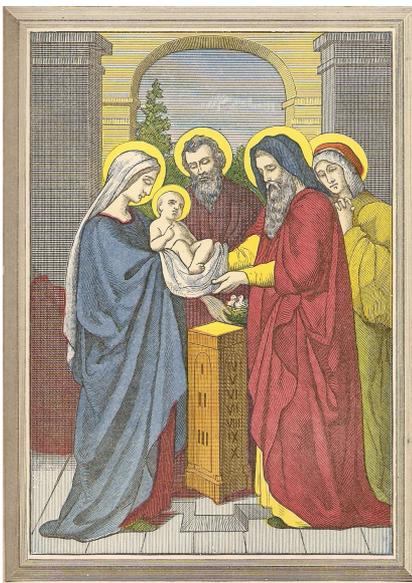
3. The Birth of Jesus

The Virgin Mary sees in the Infant that she has given to the world, a child in appearance like all other children, the very Son of God. Mary's soul was filled with an immense faith which welled up in her and surpassed the faith of all the just men of the Old Testament; this is why she recognized her God in her own Son.

This faith manifests itself externally by an act of adoration. From her very first glance at Jesus, the Virgin prostrated herself interiorly in a spirit of adoration so profound that we can never fathom its depth.

In the heart of Mary are joined in perfect harmony a creature's adoration of her God and a Mother's love for her only Son.

How inconceivably great the joy in the soul of Jesus must have been as He experienced this boundless love of His Mother! Between these two souls took place ceaseless exchanges of love which brought them into ever closer unity. O wonderful exchange: to Mary Jesus gives the greatest gifts and graces, and to Jesus Mary gives her fullest cooperation: after the union of the Divine Persons in the Blessed Trinity and the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures in the Incarnation, no more glorious or more profound union can be conceived than the union between Jesus and Mary.



The Fourth Joyful Mystery

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple - Obedience

And after the days of her purification, according to the law of **Moses**, we accomplished, they carried him to **Jerusalem**, to present him to the **Lord**: **And** to offer a sacrifice according as it is written in the law of the **Lord**, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons: **And** behold there was man in **Jerusalem** named **Simeon**, and this man was just and devote, waiting for the consolation of **Israel**; and the **Holy Ghost** was in him. **And** **Simeon** blessed them, and said to **Mary** his mother: **Behold** this child is set for the fall, and for the

resurrection of many in **Israel**, and for a sign which shall be contradicted.

(Luke 2: 22,24,25,34)

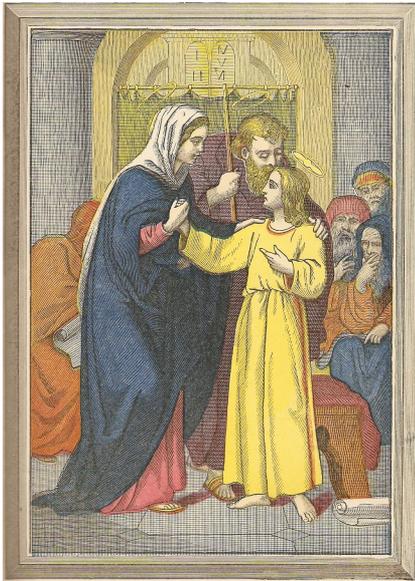
4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

On the day of the Presentation God received infinitely more glory than He had hitherto received in the temple from all the sacrifices and all the holocausts of the Old Testament. On this day it is His own Son Jesus Who is offered to Him, and Who offers to the Father the infinite homage of adoration, thanksgiving, expiation and supplication.

This is indeed a gift worthy of God.

And it is from the hands of the Virgin, full of grace, that this offering, so pleasing to God, is received. Mary's faith is perfect. Filled with the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, she has a clear understanding of the value of the offering which she is making to God at this moment; by His inspirations the Holy Ghost brings her soul into harmony with the interior dispositions of the heart of her Divine Son.

Just as Mary had given her consent in the name of all humanity when the angel announced to her the mystery of the Incarnation, so also on this day Mary offers Jesus to the Father in the name of the whole human race. For she knows that her Son is "the King of Glory, the new light enkindled before the dawn, the Master of life and death."



The Fifth Joyful Mystery

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple - Piety

And it came to pass, that, after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his wideband answers. And seeing him, they wondered. And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? did you not know, that I must be about my Father business. (Luke 2: 46 -49)

5. Jesus is Found in the Temple

"How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" This is the answer that Jesus gave to His Mother when, after three days' search she had the joy of finding Him in the Temple.

These are the first words coming from the lips of the Word Incarnate to be recorded in the Gospel.

In these words Jesus sums up His whole person, His whole life, His whole mission. They reveal His Divine Sonship; they testify to His supernatural mission. Christ's whole life will only be a clarifying and magnificent exposition of the meaning of these words.

St. Luke goes on to tell us that Mary "did not understand the word that He spoke." But even if Mary did not grasp the full significance of these words, she did not doubt that Jesus was the Son of God. This is why she submitted in silence to that Divine Will which had demanded such a sacrifice of her love.

"Mary kept these words of Jesus carefully in her heart." She kept them in her heart, for there was the tabernacle in which she adored the mystery concealed in the words of her Son, waiting until the full light of understanding would be granted her.