

## HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY

The Rosary is a Scripture-based prayer. It begins with the *Apostles' Creed*, which summarizes the great mysteries of the Catholic faith. The *Our Father*, which introduces each mystery, is from the Gospels. The first part of the *Hail Mary* is the angel's words announcing Christ's birth and Elizabeth's greeting to Mary. St. Pius V officially added the second part of the *Hail Mary*. The Mysteries of the Rosary center on the events of Christ's life. There are four sets of Mysteries: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and—added by Saint John Paul II in 2002—the Luminous.

The repetition in the Rosary is meant to lead one into restful and contemplative prayer related to each Mystery. The gentle repetition of the words helps us to enter into the silence of our hearts, where Christ's spirit dwells. The Rosary can be said privately or with a group.

The **Five Joyful Mysteries** are traditionally prayed on Mondays, Saturdays, and, during the season of Advent, on Sundays:

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Nativity
4. The Presentation in the Temple
5. The Finding in the Temple

The **Five Sorrowful Mysteries** are traditionally prayed on Tuesdays, Fridays, and, during the season of Lent, on Sundays:

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death

The **Five Glorious Mysteries** are traditionally prayed on Wednesdays and, outside the seasons of Advent and Lent, on Sundays:

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. The Coronation of Mary

The **Five Luminous Mysteries** are traditionally prayed on Thursdays:

1. The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. Jesus' Proclamation of the Coming of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist



## Praying the Rosary

Familiarize yourself and/or your group with the [prayers of the rosary](#).

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Holding the Crucifix, say the *Apostles' Creed*.
3. On the first bead, say an *Our Father*.
4. Say one *Hail Mary* on each of the next three beads.
5. Say the *Glory Be*
6. For each of the five decades, announce the Mystery (perhaps followed by a brief reading from Scripture) then say the *Our Father*.
7. While fingering each of the ten beads of the decade, next say ten *Hail Marys* while meditating on the Mystery. Then say a *Glory Be*.  
(After finishing each decade, some say the following prayer requested by the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima: *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 your mercy.*)
8. After saying the five decades, say the *Hail, Holy Queen*, followed by this dialogue and prayer:

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

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

*Let us pray: 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 while meditating on these mysteries  
of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
we may imitate what they contain  
and obtain what they promise,  
through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

(A [prayer to St. Joseph](#) may also follow.) Conclude the Rosary with the Sign of the Cross.

**PRAYERS OF THE ROSARY – FOLLOW ON NEXT PAGES**

## 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;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

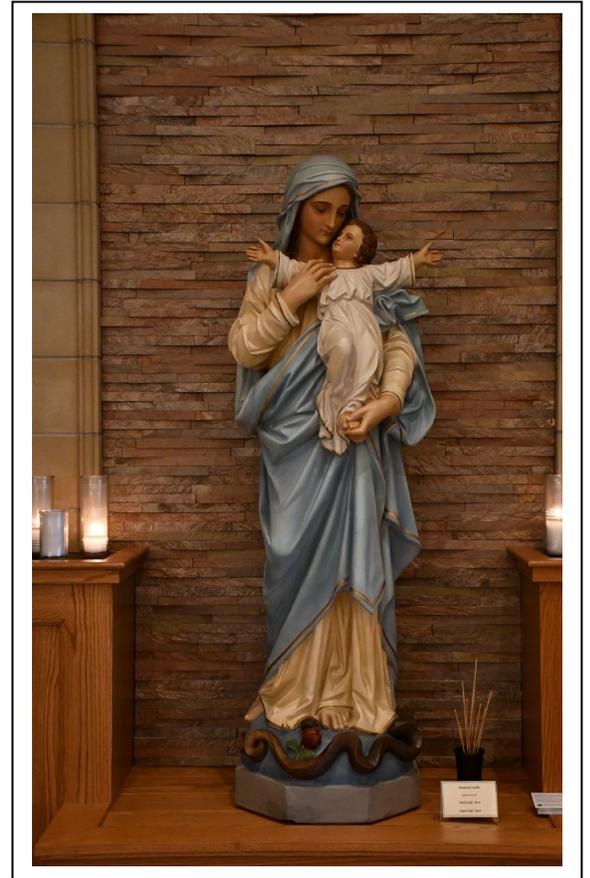
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

## 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 you;  
blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners  
now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.



### The Glory Be (The Doxology)

Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen.

### The Hail Holy Queen (The Salve Regina)

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,  
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.  
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;  
to you we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.  
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,  
your eyes of mercy toward us;  
and after this, our exile,  
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

## The Fatima Prayer

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A favorite devotional practice in Roman Catholicism is praying the Rosary, which involves using a set of rosary beads as a counting device for the highly stylized components of the prayer. The Rosary is divided into sets of components, known as *decades*. Various prayers can be added after each decade in the Rosary, and among the most common of these prayers is the Fatima prayer, also known as the Decade Prayer.

According to Roman Catholic tradition, the Decade Prayer for the rosary, commonly known as the Fatima Prayer, was revealed by Our Lady of Fatima on July 13, 1917 to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. It is best known of five Fatima prayers said to have been revealed that day. Tradition states the three shepherd children, Francisco, Jacinta, and Lucia, were asked to recite this prayer at the end of each decade of the rosary. It was approved for public use in 1930, and has since become a common (though optional) part of the Rosary.

### The Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

### History of the Fatima Prayer

In the Roman Catholic Church, supernatural appearances by the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, are known as Marian Apparitions. Although there are dozens of alleged events of this type, there only ten that have been recognized officially by the Roman Catholic Church as genuine miracles.

One such officially sanctioned miracle is Our Lady of Fatima. On May 13 of 1917 at Cova da Iria, located in the city of Fatima, Portugal, a supernatural event occurred in which the Virgin Mary appeared to three children as they were tending sheep. In the well water on property owned by the family of one of the children, they saw an apparition of a beautiful woman holding a rosary in her hand. As a storm broke and the children ran for cover, they again saw the vision of the woman in the air just above an oak tree, who reassured them not to be afraid, saying "I come from heaven." In the following days, this apparition appeared to them six more times, the last being in October of 1917, during which she instructed them to pray the Rosary in order to end World War I. During the course of these visits, the apparition is said to have given the children five different prayers, one of which would later become known as the Decade Prayer.

Soon, devout believers began visiting Fatima to pay homage to the miracle, and a small chapel was built at the site in the 1920s. In October of 1930, the bishop approved the reported apparitions as a genuine miracle. Use of the Fatima Prayer in the Rosary began around this time.

In the years since Fatima has become an important center of pilgrimage for Roman Catholics. Our Lady of Fatima has been very important to several popes, among them John Paul II, who credits her with saving his life after he was shot in Rome in May 1981. He donated the bullet that wounded him on that day to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima.



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