

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

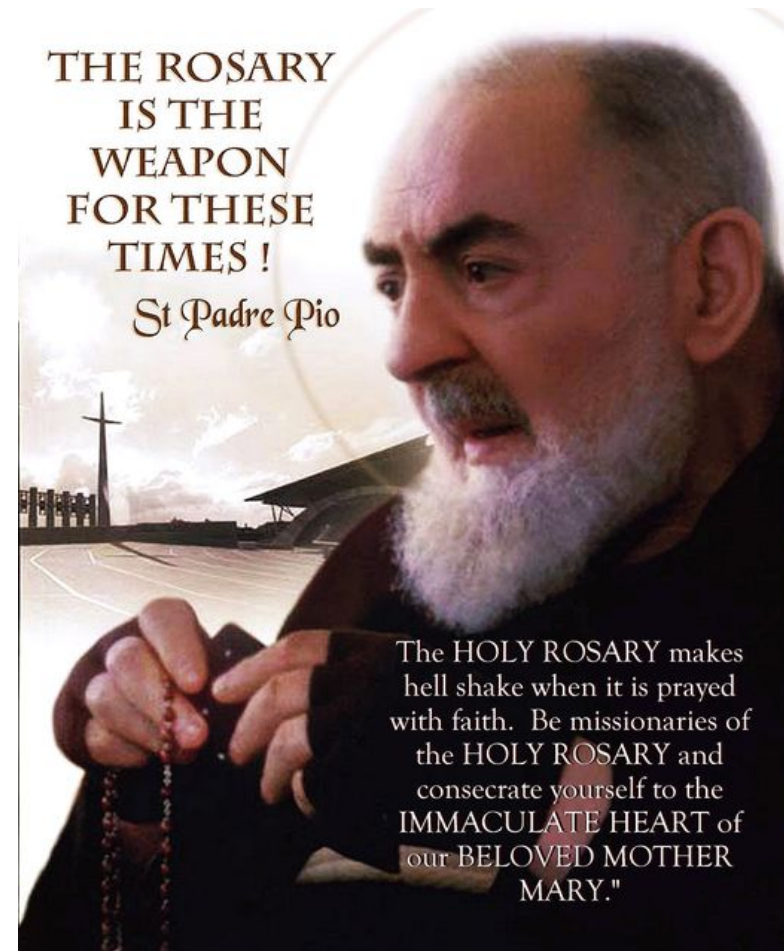


The Rosary, a Contemplative Prayer

The Rosary, precisely because it starts with Mary's own experience, is an exquisitely contemplative prayer. Without this contemplative dimension, it would lose its meaning, as Pope Paul VI clearly pointed out: "Without contemplation, the Rosary is a body without a soul, and its recitation runs the risk of becoming a mechanical repetition of formulas, in violation of the admonition of Christ: 'In praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think they will be heard for their many words' (Mt 6:7). 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". (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, St. John Paul II)

Inspiring Contemplation

The following pages contain Catholic art, excerpts from the scriptures and *The Mystical City of God*, and ten considerations (one for each Hail Mary) from an unknown author to feed one's soul and develop a *quiet rhythm and a lingering pace* to inspire contemplation.



THE FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



The Annunciation - Murillo, 1655–1660

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!"

But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" 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 behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."

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.

THE FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



The Mystical City of God by Venerable Mary of Agreda

At the bidding of the divine will the holy Gabriel presented himself at the foot of the throne intent upon the immutable essence of the Most High. His Majesty then expressly charged him with the message, which he was to bring to the most holy Mary and instructed him in the very words with which he was to salute and address Her... that the Lord had chosen Her among women to be the Mother of the eternal Word, that She should conceive Him in her virginal womb through operation of the Holy Ghost without injury to her virginity.

The supernal prince Gabriel, obeying with singular delight the divine command and accompanied by many thousands of most beautiful angels in visible forms, descended from the highest heaven.

Mary was engaged in prayer at the hour, when the holy angel Gabriel arrived. She was most pure in soul, most perfect in body, most noble in her sentiments, most exalted in sanctity, full of grace and so deified and pleasing in the sight of God, that She was fit to be his Mother and an instrument adapted for drawing Him from the bosom of the Father to her virginal womb. She was the powerful means of our redemption and to her we owe it on many accounts. And therefore it is just, that all generations and nations shall bless and forever extol her.

The holy archangel saluted our and his Queen and said: "Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed are thou among women". Hearing this new salutation of the angel, this most humble of all creatures was disturbed, but not confused in mind. This disturbance arose from two causes: first, from her humility, for she thought herself the lowest of the creatures and thus in her humility, was taken unawares at hearing herself saluted and called the "blessed among women"; secondly, when she heard this salute and began to consider within herself how she should receive it, she was interiorly made to understand by the Lord, that He chose her for His mother, and this caused a still greater perturbation, having such an humble opinion of herself. On account of this perturbation the angel proceeded to explain to her the decree of the Lord, saying: "Do not fear, Mary, for thou hast found grace before the Lord; behold thou shalt conceive a Son in thy womb, and thou shalt give birth to Him, and thou shalt name Him Jesus; He shall be great, and He shall be called Son of the Most High."

And Mary said to the angel: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" And the angel answering, said to her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"... And Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word."

At the pronouncing of this "fiat", so sweet to the hearing of God and so fortunate for us, in one instant... the most holy body of Christ our Lord was formed... the Divinity united Itself in the person of the Word with the humanity... and thus was formed Christ true God and man, our Lord and redeemer.

THE FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE ARCHANGEL GABRIEL TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



The Annunciation - Bozhena Fuchs, 2021

1. Mary is praying in her chamber. How Heaven and earth rejoice over the solitary Virgin in prayer! May I also, when in prayer, appear pleasing to God.
2. The first **Ave Maria** is intoned: "Hail Mary!" May my **Ave** equally reverent and devout, mount up to the throne of God's Mother.
3. The Archangel announces his message: "Thou shalt bear a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus". Now breaks the dawn of Redemption.
4. Mary asks: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" I revere the Purest of Virgins. She is willing to become the Mother of God, only if she may remain a virgin.
5. Wonderful is the counsel of the Almighty. "The Holy Ghost shall overshadow thee. And therefore the Holy One, that shall be born of thee, shall be called, not the son of Joseph, but the Son of God". Mary shall become the Mother of Jesus and still remain a virgin.
6. With boundless joy, I hear Mary announce her consent: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord". From now on, angels and men may greet Mary as Mother of God.
7. How humble is Mary! At the very moment when she becomes the Mother of God, she calls herself merely the handmaid of the Lord. What an inspiring example for me always to be humble!
8. How courageous Mary is! Through divine inspiration, she foresees all that she and her Divine Son will suffer. But even in carrying the cross, Mary desires to be merely the handmaid of the Lord. I also will persevere in God's service, even when His service is hard, - in temptations and sufferings.
9. The great moment of the Incarnation of the Son of God has come. "And the Word was made flesh". Like a Holy Communion, the created nature of Christ takes up its abode in the heart of the Mother of God. I kneel down before the Ark of the New Covenant and adore the Savior.
10. My resolution: May the Savior abide with me at all times in a heart that is equally pure.

THE SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO HER COUSIN, ST. ELIZABETH

Luke 1:39-56



The Visitation - Philippe de Champaigne, 1643–48

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 why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;

for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree;

he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever."

And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.

THE SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO HER COUSIN, ST. ELIZABETH

The Mystical City of God by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The Mother of Grace saluted anew her cousin saying: "May God save thee, my dearest cousin, and may His divine light communicate to thee grace and life." At the sound of most holy Mary's voice, saint Elisabeth was filled by the Holy Ghost and so enlightened interiorly, that in one instant she perceived the most exalted mysteries and sacraments. These emotions, and those that at the same time were felt by the child John in the womb of his mother, were caused by the presence of the Word made flesh in the bridal chamber of Mary's womb, for, making use of the voice of Mary as his instrument, He, as Redeemer, began from that place to use the power given to Him by the eternal Father for the salvation and justification of the souls.

At the pronounciation of the words mentioned above, God looked upon the child in the womb of saint Elisabeth, and gave it perfect use of reason, enlightening it with His divine light, in order that he might prepare himself by foreknowledge for the blessing which he was to receive. Together with this preparation he was sanctified from original sin, made an adopted son of God, and filled with the most abundant graces of the Holy Ghost and with the plenitude of all his gifts; his faculties were sanctified, subjected and subordinated to reason, thus verifying in himself what the archangel Gabriel had said to Zacharias; that his son would be filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb of his mother.

Saint Elisabeth was instructed at the same time in the mystery of the Incarnation, the sanctification of her own son and the sacramental purpose of this new wonder... Saint Elisabeth was wrapt in the joy of the Holy Ghost; and, looking upon the Queen of the world and what was contained in her, she burst forth in loud voice of praise, pronouncing the words reported to us by saint Luke: "Blessed are 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, and blessed art thou, that has believed, because those things shall be accomplished, that were spoken to thee by the Lord."

In the sweetest and softest voice Mary intoned the Magnificat as recorded by saint Luke.

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Because he that is mighty, hath done great things to me; and holy is his name.

And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him.

He hath shewed might in his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy:

As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

THE SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN TO HER COUSIN, ST. ELIZABETH



The Visitation - Jerónimo Ezquerro

1. Mary and Joseph undertake the three days' journey between Nazareth and the hill country of Juda to visit Elizabeth and Zachary. The latter are awaiting the birth of St. John.
2. Protected by St. Joseph, Mary hastens through the meadows and woodlands, over hills and through valleys. She is outwardly as poor as she is inwardly rich, for Jesus is in her heart. Solely of Him is she thinking during the toilsome journey: for Him she endures all the hardships of the way. Thus all her own noble dispositions the good Mary instills in her Child.
3. If I carry Jesus in my heart even the most laborious lot in life is naught but a way of peace, a golden path to God. Without Jesus, even the greatest works are dead.
4. How intense their mutual joy, when Mary and Elizabeth are united again after a long separation! I will foster in my heart a similar love towards my dear ones and towards all men.
5. Elizabeth recognizes in Mary the Mother of God. She feels unworthy of the privilege of having Jesus and Mary abide under her roof. "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 unto me".
6. Jesus and St. John. The meeting of the two mothers is also the first meeting of the two greatest in the world's history, Jesus Christ and His Precursor, St. John. The latter is freed from original sin.
7. Rarely has the world witnessed such rapturous joy as that experienced now by Mary and Elizabeth. Their joy, having come from God, is referred back to Him: "My soul doth magnify the Lord". Good God, grant me also from time to time a similar great joy in Thee to be perfected in Eternity.
8. In her humility, Mary ascribes all honor and exaltation to God alone. "He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid... He hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things".
9. Mary foresees how all men will hold her in honor. "Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed". I also shall contribute according to my strength to the fulfilling of these words. To the full extent of my power, I will venerate Mary.
10. My resolution: Like Mary on her journey, I will carry God in my heart during my whole life. I will dedicate to Him all my thoughts, words, and actions, all my sufferings, and all my joys.

THE THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE BIRTH OF OUR DIVINE LORD IN BETHLEHEM



The Nativity - Lorenzo Lotto, 1523

Luke 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment, when Quirin'i-us was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear.

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!"

THE THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE BIRTH OF OUR DIVINE LORD IN BETHLEHEM



In Adoration of the Shepherds - Charles Le Brun, 1689

The Mystical City of God by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The sacred evangelist Luke tells us that the Mother Virgin, having brought forth her first begotten Son, wrapped Him in swathing clothes and placed Him in a manger. He does not say that She received Him in her arms from her virginal womb; for this did not pertain to the purpose of his narrative. But the two sovereign princes, saint Michael and saint Gabriel, were the assistants of the Virgin on this occasion. They stood by at proper distance in human corporeal forms at the moment when the incarnate Word, penetrating the virginal chamber by divine power, issued forth to the light, and they received Him in their hands with ineffable reverence. In the same manner as a priest exhibits the sacred host to the people for adoration, so these two celestial ministers presented to the divine mother her glorious and refulgent Son. All this happened in a short space of time. In the same moment in

which the holy angels thus presented the divine Child to His Mother, both Son and Mother looked upon each other, and in this look, She wounded with love the sweet Infant and was at the same time exalted and transformed in Him.

The shepherds found themselves suddenly enveloped and bathed in the celestial radiance of the angel, and at his sight, being little versed in such visions, they were filled with great fear. The holy prince reassured them as said: "Ye upright men, be not afraid: for I announce to you tidings of great joy, which is, that for you is born today the Redeemer Christ, our Lord, in the city of David. And as a sign of this truth, I announce to you, that you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-clothes and placed in a manger." At these words of the angel, suddenly appeared a great multitude of the celestial army, who in voices of sweet harmony sang to the Most High these words: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will."

The shepherds departed without delay and entering the cave or portal, they found, as saint Luke tells us, Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in a manger. Seeing all this they recognized the truth of what they had heard of the Child.

Prostrating themselves on the earth they adored the Word made flesh. Not any more as ignorant rustic, but as wise and prudent men they adored Him, acknowledged and magnified Him as true God and man, as Restorer and Redeemer of the human race. The heavenly Lady and Mother of the Child took notice of all that they did interiorly and exteriorly; for She saw into their inmost hearts. In highest wisdom and prudence She preserved the memory of all these happenings and pondered them in her soul, comparing them with the other mysteries therein contained and with the holy prophecies and sayings of the scriptures.

THE THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE BIRTH OF OUR DIVINE LORD IN BETHLEHEM



The Birth of Jesus - Renaissance

1. It is the silent, holy night. "And the Word was made flesh!" How tenderly does not God love us! Full of wonder and awe, I kneel in adoration at the crib.
2. The eternal Son of God has become man in order to win our love and make us blessed. O Infant Jesus, I offer thee all my love and repose in Thee all my trust! I give myself without reserve to Thee. Deliver me from my sins and lead me to Heaven.
3. A poor stable, a manger, and a little straw, such was the first earthly abode chosen by the Child Jesus. He renounces all else: He seeks only me. Heaven, therefore, must ever mean more to me than does the earth.
4. O blessed Christmas for the Mother of God! How great must have been the love and adoration that reigned in the heart of Mary on this night!
5. Mary makes me a present of her Christ Child. For me, she brought Him into the world. Like Jesus, our good Mother Mary has loved me with a special love ever since this holy night.
6. O the great good fortune of St. Joseph! To him, the poor laborer, has been entrusted the guardianship of the Divine Mother and Child. A sublimer stewardship is his than that of Joseph of Egypt. May the blessed privilege of St. Joseph, the possession of Jesus, abide with rich and poor to become the true wealth of hovel and palace!
7. How the angels exult at the birth of Christ! The whole countryside resounds with the jubilant echo of the angelic message: The Savior is born! Glory to God! Peace to men!
8. The pious shepherds are the first to hear the glad tidings of the Christ Child's birth. Filled with a holy joy, they hasten to the manger. They have nothing but their simple, heartfelt love: But this gift is the one that pleases the Infant Jesus most.
9. The star of Bethlehem heralds the birth in poverty of the Lord of the world. Kings hasten to the Divine Child. In reverence and love, they present their gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Therefore, I will bring to Jesus the gold of love, the frankincense of adoration, the myrrh of self sacrifice.
10. My resolution: In still humbler form than that of an infant in a manger, the Child Jesus in the tabernacle is confided to us children of men. There, I will often adore Him with Mary and Joseph, the angels, the shepherds, and the kings. I must celebrate Christmas as often as I enter the church, else my faith is weak.

THE FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



The Presentation of Christ the Temple - by Charles Le Brun

Luke 2:22-40

And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens

the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And inspired by the Spirit he came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel.”

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.”

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phan’u-el, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity, and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

THE FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



The Mystical City of God by Venerable Mary of Agreda

On the next morning, the Sun of heaven being now ready to issue from its purest dawning, the Virgin Mary, on whose arms He reclined, and being about to rise up in full view of the world, the heavenly Lady, having provided the turtle-dove and two candles, wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes and betook Herself with saint Joseph from their lodging to the temple.

Having arrived at the temple gate, the most blessed Mother was filled with new and exalted sentiments of devotion. Joining the other women, She bowed and knelt to adore the Lord in spirit and in truth in his holy temple and She presented Herself before the exalted Majesty of God with his Son upon her arms.

The holy high-priest Simeon, moved by the Holy Ghost as explained in the preceding chapter, also entered the temple at that time. Approaching the place where the Queen stood with the Infant Jesus in her arms, he saw both Mother and Child enveloped in splendor and glory. The prophetess Anne, who, as the Evangelist says, had come at the same hour, also saw Mary and her Infant surrounded by this wonderful light. In the joy of their spirit both of them approached the Queen of heaven, and the priest received the Infant Jesus from her arms upon his hands. Raising up his eyes to heaven he offered Him up to the eternal Father, pronouncing at the same time these words so full of mysteries: “Now dost thou dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy Word in peace. Because my eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light for the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

It was as if he said: “Now, Lord, thou wilt release me from the bondage of this mortal body and let me go free and in peace; for until now have I been detained in it by the hope of seeing thy promises fulfilled and by the desire of seeing thy Onlybegotten made man. Now that my eyes have seen thy salvation, the Onlybegotten made man, joined to our nature in order to give it eternal welfare according to the intention and eternal decree of thy infinite wisdom and mercy, I shall enjoy true and secure peace. Now, O Lord, Thou hast prepared and placed before all mortals thy divine light that it may shine upon the world and that all who wish may enjoy it throughout the universe and derive therefrom guidance and salvation. For this is the light which is revealed to the gentiles for the glory of thy chosen people of Israel.”

THE FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



The Presentation of the Christ Child in the Temple
Phillippe de Champaigne, 1648

1. The most beautiful rite of the Old Covenant is now being enacted. The Divine Child, who is the Messiah longed for and foretold for thousands of years, appears in the temple. On the arms of a priest, He is being offered up to God. Thus, even now, He is being daily offered up: in the hands of the priest at the Consecration; in the hearts of the faithful at Holy Communion.
2. The purifications of Mary. The Purest of Mothers and Virgins submits to the legal purifications consisting in prayers by the priests. She is a model of humble obedience.
3. Mary likewise offers up her Divine Child in the temple to God. She alone knows that He has come solely to offer up for us His body and blood on the cross.
4. Mary and Joseph are patterns for Christian parents. May indeed all Christian parents offer up their children to God and rear them for Eternal Life. As the Child Jesus offers Himself up for me, so will I offer myself up for the Child Jesus.
5. St. Joseph presents the offering of the poor -- two young turtle-doves. The parents of the Child Jesus are willingly poor. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven".
6. The aged Simeon prophecies: "This child shall be a light for the revelation of the Gentiles. "Through His person, His teaching, and His redemption, Jesus is the light of the world. O Jesus, enlighten me also! Enlighten the world of the heathen!
7. "And thine own soul a sword shall pierce". What great fear wells up in the heart of Mary, as the future cross was so clearly revealed to the eyes of her soul!
8. This Child shall be the resurrection of some, the fall of others. How keenly Mary rejoices over the former, how deeply she grieves for the latter! O Mary, pray for me, that thy Divine Child may be my resurrection!
9. Simeon and Anna are models for Christian old age. They were daily in the temple and ever hoped to see the Messiah. Let my hope and my life's aim be, to see Jesus eternally in Heaven!
10. My resolution: Often at the Consecration and at Communion, I will offer up to God the Child Jesus. In Jesus I will seek my rest.

THE FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE FINDING OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



Luke 2:41-51

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom; and when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the company they went a day's journey, and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances; and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking him.

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?" And they did not understand the saying which he spoke to them.

And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart.

THE FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE FINDING OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



The Mystical City of God by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The Mother of wisdom then began to discuss within her heart the different possibilities. The first thought which presented itself to Her, was the fear lest Archelaus, imitating the cruelty of his father Herod, should have obtained notice of the presence of Jesus and have taken Him prisoner. Although She knew from the holy Scriptures and revelations, and by her conversations with her most holy Son and Teacher, that the time for his Passion and Death had not yet come and that the king would not take away his life, yet She was filled with dread at the thought, that they should have taken Him prisoner and might illtreat Him. In her profoundest humility She also had misgivings, lest perchance She had in any way displeased Him by her conduct and therefore deserved that He should leave Her and take up his abode in the desert with his precursor saint John. She exclaimed: "Sweet Love and Delight of my soul!"

Thus the sincerest Dove persevered in her tears and groans without cessation or rest, without sleeping or eating anything for three whole days.

Not all the sorrows suffered by all the martyrs ever reached the height of the sorrows of most holy Mary in this trial; nor will the patience, resignation and tolerance of this Lady ever be equalled, nor can they; for the loss of Jesus was greater to Her than the loss of anything created, while her love and appreciation of Him exceeded all that can be conceived by any other creature.

With this heavenly wisdom and with greatest diligence She sought Him for three successive days, roaming through the streets of the city, asking different persons and describing to the daughters of Jerusalem the marks of her Beloved, searching the byways and the open squares of the city and thereby fulfilling what was recorded in the Canticles of Solomon.

Then the thought struck Her, that, since He was not with the poor, He no doubt tarried in the temple, as in the house of God and of prayer. The holy angels encouraged Her and said: "Our Queen and Lady, the hour of thy consolation is at hand: soon wilt Thou see the Light of thy eyes; hasten thy footsteps and go to the temple." The glorious patriarch saint Joseph at this moment again met his Spouse, for, in order to increase their chance of finding the divine Child, they had separated in different directions. By another angel he had now been likewise ordered to proceed to the temple. During all these three days he had suffered unspeakable sorrow and affliction, hastening from one place to another, sometimes without his heavenly Spouse, sometimes with Her. He was in serious danger of losing his life during this time, if the hand of the Lord had not strengthened him and if the most prudent Lady had not consoled him and forced him to take some food and rest. His sincere and exquisite love for the divine Child made him so anxious and solicitous to find Him, that he would have allowed himself no time or care to take nourishment for the support of nature.

THE FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY - THE FINDING OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE



Jesus in the Temple - Heinrich Hofmann, 1881

1. What a picture of radiant grace was the Child Jesus at the age of twelve! How the Holy City and temple gladden His young heart! As in our days, through the Sacrament of Confirmation, children become soldiers of Christ, so on this occasion, Jesus was admitted to the temple court reserved for men.
2. Picture to yourself Jesus, Mary, and Joseph on their journey to Jerusalem. Imagine how they prayed and conversed; how deep and tender was their mutual love; how patient they were amid the hardships of the way! Would that I were as good and amiable in my family circle.
3. Arriving on the Mount of Olives, the Holy family descry the Holy City and the Temple. Poor Child Jesus! Sorrowful Mother! How much will you not have to suffer in this city! Proceeding into the Holy City, they enter the temple and pray together in their Father's house.
4. Great beyond words is the sorrow of this Mother, when she loses her Child. The incident gives her a presentiment of her loss of Jesus through His death on the cross. And St. Joseph! What anguish rends his loving heart!
5. On the streets in the squares, the holy parents seek their Divine Child in vain. I also vainly seek happiness and peace amid the dissipations of the world.
6. Among relatives and acquaintances, the parents of Jesus inquire for Him. To their increasing anguish, Jesus is nowhere to be found. Neither can I find enduring happiness among the votaries of the world.
7. After a three day's anxious search, Mary and Joseph find Jesus at last in the temple. I hear His Mother Mary's gentle reproach: "Son, why hast thou done so to us. Thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing." Jesus was so fond of God's temple. He tarried there three days. In the house of His Heavenly Father, he has no concern for the things of earth. "Did you not know, that I must be about my Father's business." The example of piety, that Jesus thus gives me, is deeply touching.
8. Jesus was found among the doctors of the temple. They were visibly astonished at His knowledge of divine things and at His modesty. Thus Jesus is a most beautiful pattern for youth both at church and school.
9. Jesus having returned to Nazareth, His entire life from His twelfth to His thirtieth years is described in this words: "He was subject to them." I would that this were likewise the law of my spiritual growth.
10. My resolution: I will never lose God by sin. If I have already lost Him by sin, I will seek Him by true repentance. I will, by prayer and good example, also help my fellowmen to find God.