

## THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

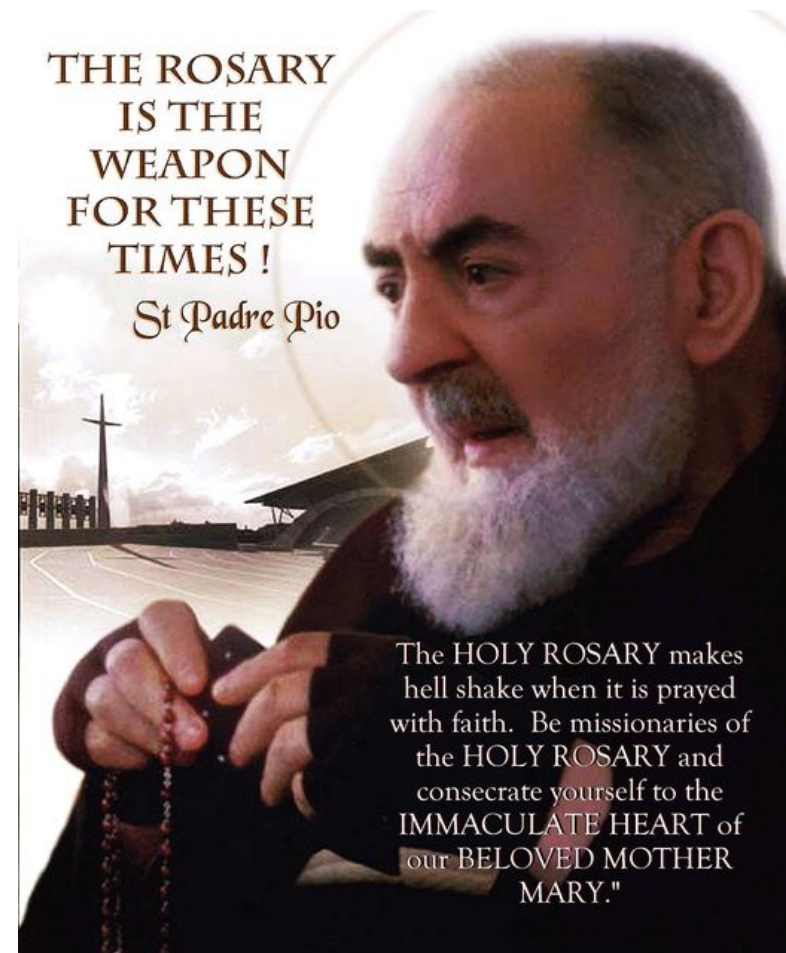


### The Rosary, a Contemplative Prayer

*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* to feed one's soul and develop a *quiet rhythm and a lingering pace* to inspire contemplation.



## THE FIRST LUMINOUS MYSTERY - BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN



*The Baptism of Christ - Francesco Trevisani*

### **Matthew 3:1-17**

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather girdle around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

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."

## THE FIRST LUMINOUS MYSTERY - BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN



*The Baptism of Christ - Bartolome Esteban Murillo*

### ***The Mystical City of God*** by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The Lord then joined the multitude and asked Baptism of saint John as one of the rest. The Baptist knew Him and, falling at his feet, hesitated, saying: "I have need of being baptized, and Thou, Lord, askest Baptism of me?" But the savior answered: "Suffer it to be so now. For so it becometh us to fulfill all justice." By thus hesitating to baptize Christ his Lord and asking Him for Baptism instead, he gave evidence that he recognized Him as the true Redeemer.

When saint John had finished baptizing our Lord, the heavens opened and the Holy Ghost descended visibly in the form of a dove upon his head and the voice of his Father was heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Many of the bystanders heard this voice, namely, those who were not unworthy of such a wonderful favor; they also saw the Holy Ghost descending upon the Savior. This was the most convincing proof which could ever be given of the Divinity of the Savior, as well on the part of the Father, who acknowledged Him his Son, as also in regard to the nature of the testimony given; for without any reserve was Christ manifested as the true God, equal to his eternal Father in substance and in perfection. The Father himself wished to be the first to testify to the Divinity of Christ in order that by virtue of his testimony all the other witnesses might be ratified. There was also another mystery in this voice of the eternal Father: it was as it were a restoration of the honor of his Son before the world and a recompense for his having thus humiliated Himself by receiving the Baptism of the remission of sins, though He was entirely free from fault and never could have upon Him the guilt of sin.

This act of humiliation in receiving Baptism in the company of those who were sinners, Christ our Redeemer offered up to the eternal Father as an act of acknowledgement of the inferiority of his human nature, which, in common with all the rest of the children of men, He had derived from Adam. By it he also instituted the sacrament of Baptism, which was to wash away the sins of the world through his merits. By thus humiliating Himself in this baptism of sins, He sought and obtained from the eternal Father a general pardon for all those who were to receive it; He freed them from the power of the demon and of sin, and regenerated them to a new existence, spiritual and supernatural as adopted sons of the Most High, brethren of their Redeemer and Lord.

## THE SECOND LUMINOUS MYSTERY - WEDDING FEAST AT CANA



*The Wedding Feast at Cana - Benvenuto Tisi da Garofalo*

### **John 2:1-11**

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples.

When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.”

And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”

His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.” So they took it.

When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.”

This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

## THE SECOND LUMINOUS MYSTERY - WEDDING FEAST AT CANA



*The Marriage Feast at Cana - Frans Francken the Younger*

### ***The Mystical City of God*** by Venerable Mary of Agreda

By divine arrangement and in order to give occasion to the miracle, the wine gave out during the meal and the kind Lady said to her Son: "They have no wine." And the Lord answered: "Woman, what is that to Me and to thee? My hour is not yet come." This answer of Christ was not intended as a reproach, but contained a mystery; for the most prudent Queen had not asked for a miracle by mere accident, but by divine light.

The blessed Lady well understood this mystery and She said with quiet modesty to the servants, "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye." In these words, showing her wise insight into the will of her Son, She spoke as the Mistress of the whole human race, teaching us mortals, that, in order to supply all our necessities and wants, it was required and sufficient on our part to do all that the Savior and those taking his place shall command. Such a lesson could not but come from such a Mother and Advocate, who is so desirous of our welfare and who, since She so well knew what hindrance we place in the way of his great and numerous miracles of our benefits, wishes to instruct us to meet properly the beneficent intentions of the Most High. The Redeemer of the world ordered the servants to fill the jars or waterpots, which according to the Hebrew custom had been provided for the occasion. All having been filled, the Lord bade them draw some of the wine into which the water had been changed, and bring it to the chief steward of the feast, who was at the head of the table and was one of the priests of the Law. When this one had tasted of the wine, he called the bridegroom in surprise and said to him: "Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse, but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

Then the miracle of changing the water into wine and the dignity of the Redeemer was revealed. The disciples believed anew as the Evangelist says, and their faith in Him was confirmed. Not only they, but many of the others that were present, believed that He was the true Messiah and they followed Him to the City of Capernaum, whither the Evangelist tells us He, with his Mother and disciples went from Cana.

## THE THIRD LUMINOUS MYSTERY - PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM



*Sermon on the Mount - Carl Bloch, 1877*

### **Mark 1:14-15**

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel."

### **Luke 4:16-30**

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue, as his custom was, on the sabbath day. And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

### **Luke 7:19-23**

And John, calling to him two of his disciples, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" 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?'"

In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. 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. And blessed is he who takes no offense at me."

## THE THIRD LUMINOUS MYSTERY - PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM



*Christ preaching to the Multitudes - Tintoretto*

### ***The Mystical City of God*** by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The heavenly Lady had the whole doctrine of the evangelical law written in her heart. Nevertheless She was as solicitous and attentive as a new disciple to the preaching and doctrine of her divine Son, and She had instructed her angels to report to Her, if necessary, the sermons of the Master whenever She was absent. To the sermons of her Son She always listened on her knees, thus according to the utmost of her powers showing the reverence and worship due to his Person and doctrine. As She was aware at each moment, of the interior operations of the Soul of Christ, and of his continual prayers to the eternal Father for the proper disposition of the hearts of his hearers and for the growth of the seed of his doctrine into eternal life, the most loving Mother joined the divine Master in his petitions and prayers and in securing for them the blessings of her most ardent and tearful charity. By her attention and reverence She taught and moved others to appreciate duly the teaching and instructions of the

Savior of the world. She also knew the interior of those that listened to the preaching of the Lord, their state of grace or sin, their vices and virtues. This various and hidden knowledge, so far above the capacity of men, caused in the heavenly Mother many wonderful effects of highest charity and other virtues; it inflamed Her with zeal for the Honor of the Lord and with ardent desires, that the fruits of the Redemption be not lost to the souls through sin moved Her to exert Herself in the most fervent prayer for their welfare. She felt in her heart a piercing and cruel sorrow, that God should not be known, adored and served by all his creatures: and this sorrow was in proportion to the unequalled knowledge and understanding She had of all these mysteries. For the souls, that would not give entrance to divine grace and virtue, She sorrowed with ineffable grief, and was wont to shed tears of blood at the thought of their misfortune. What the great Queen suffered in this her solicitude and in her labors exceeds beyond all measure the pains endured by all the martyrs of the world.



*Jesus Preaches at the Sea of Galilee - Gerbrand van den Eeckhout*

## THE FOURTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY - THE TRANSFIGURATION



*The Transfiguration - Raphael, 1520*

### Mark 9:2-13

And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, and his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them.

And there appeared to them Eli'jah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus.

And Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah." For he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid.

And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." And suddenly looking around they no longer saw any one with them but Jesus only.

And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of man should have risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant.

And they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that first Eli'jah must come?" And he said to them, "Eli'jah does come first to restore all things; and how is it written of the Son of man, that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Eli'jah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."



## THE FOURTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY - THE TRANSFIGURATION



*The Transfiguration - Giacinto Calandrucci*

### ***The Mystical City of God*** by Venerable Mary of Agreda

The Lord resolved to prepare and strengthen some of his Apostles for the scandal of his Passion by manifesting to them beforehand in its glory that same body, which He was so soon to exhibit in the disfigurement of the cross. Thus would they be reassured by the thought, that they had seen it transfigured in glory before they looked upon it disfigured by his sufferings.

For his Transfiguration He selected a high mountain in the center of Galilee, two leagues east of Nazareth and called Mount Tabor. Ascending to its highest summit with the three Apostles, Peter and the two brothers James and John, He was transfigured before them. The three Evangelists tell us that besides these Apostles, were present also the two prophets, Moses and Elias, discoursing with Jesus about his Passion, and that, while He was thus transfigured, a voice resounded from heaven in the name of the eternal Father, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him."

His countenance began to shine like the sun and his garments became whiter than snow. This outward splendor was merely the effect of the glory of his Divinity always united to his beatified soul. At his Incarnation, the glory which would naturally have been communicated permanently to his sacred body, was miraculously suspended for the time of his natural life: now, this suspension of his divine glory ceased and the body, for a short time, was allowed to share the glory of his soul. This is the splendor which became visible to those who were present. Immediately after the miraculous suspense, the divine glory was again confined only to his soul.

## THE FIFTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY - THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST



### John 6:47-59

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever.”

### Mark 14:22-25

And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.”

And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

## THE FIFTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY - THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST



*The Last Supper - Bouveret, 1896*

### ***The Mystical City of God*** by Venerable Mary of Agreda

Thereupon Christ our Lord took into his venerable hands the bread, which lay upon the plate, and interiorly asked the permission and cooperation of the eternal Father, that now and ever afterwards in virtue of the words about to be uttered by Him, and later to be repeated in his holy Church, He should really and truly become present in the host, Himself to yield obedience to these sacred words. While making this petition He raised his eyes toward heaven with an expression of such sublime majesty, that he inspired the Apostles, the angels and his Virgin Mother with new and deepest reverence. Then He pronounced the words of consecration over the bread, changing its substance into the substance of his true body and immediately thereupon He uttered the words of consecration also over the wine changing it into his true blood. As an answer to these words of consecration was heard the voice of the eternal Father, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I delight, and shall take my delight to the end of the world; and He shall be with men during all the time of their banishment." In like manner was this confirmed by the Holy Ghost.

All the apostles and disciples, who, with the exception of the traitor, believed in this holy Sacrament, adored it with great humility and reverence according to each one's disposition. The great high priest Christ raised up his own consecrated body and blood in order that all who were present at this first Mass might adore it in a special manner, as they also did.

In the species of the bread, was contained his body and in those of the wine, his blood; in both, on account of the inseparable union of his soul with his body and blood, was present the living and true Christ; with the Person of the Word, was also therein united the Person of the Father and of the Holy Ghost; and therefore, on account of the inseparable existence and union of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the holy Eucharist contained the perfect humanity of the Lord with the three divine Persons of the Godhead.



*The Last Supper - Joan de Joanes, 1562*