# Praying the Rosary

*https://dynamiccatholic.com/5-million-rosaries/how-to-pray-the-rosary/*

## **The Structure of the Rosary**

The rosary has 59 beads, a crucifix, and a medal, with certain prayers for each of these different pieces. The prayers of the rosary can be divided into three categories:

1. Introductory Prayers
2. The Decades
3. Closing Prayers

With the prayers of the rosary, we ask Mary to pray for us and to guide us by the example of her son, Jesus.

## **Introductory Prayers**

The introductory prayers set the stage for the rosary. They prepare you for deeper reflection when you pray the decades.

Either before or after the introductory prayers, think of any needs or struggles in your life and bring them to Mary. She cares for you like a loving mother, and wants to take your needs to Jesus. If you are praying with a group, you can say your intentions out loud so the rest of the group can pray for them as well.

* **Step 1:** While holding the crucifix, make the **Sign of the Cross** and pray the **Apostles’ Creed** (a brief summary of the core beliefs of our faith).
* **Step 2:** On the first large bead, pray the **Our Father** (the prayer Jesus taught us), typically for the intentions of the pope.
* **Step 3:** On the next three small beads, pray the **Hail Mary** (a prayer to Mary, based on words from the Bible). These Hail Marys are often prayed for an increase in faith, hope, and love.
* **Step 4:** In the space after the third Hail Mary, pray the **Glory Be** (a simple expression of praise and belief in the Trinity).

One you’ve prayed these introductory prayers, you are ready to begin the first decade.

## **The Decades**

There are five decades, or groups of 10 small beads, that make up the main portion of the rosary. Between each decade is one large bead set off by itself.

You’ll find that the prayers for each decade are repeated many times. This gives you an opportunity to reflect on the words, which are deeply rooted in the Bible and Christian tradition. They are powerful and filled with meaning.

* **Step 5:** On the next large bead, pray the Our Father.
* **Step 6:** On each small bead in the decade, pray the Hail Mary.
* **Step 7:** In the space after the 10th bead, pray the Glory Be and the **Fatima Prayer** (a prayer Mary revealed to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917).

Repeat steps 5–7 for the remaining four decades. Pray an Our Father on the large bead and a Hail Mary on each of the 10 small beads, followed by the Glory Be and the Fatima Prayer.

As you pray the decades, you can also meditate on the **mysteries of the rosary** and learn valuable lessons from the lives of Jesus and Mary.

## **Closing Prayers**

The closing prayers are prayed on the medal, and they end the rosary. With these prayers we ask God and Mary to watch over us, guide us, and help us become a-better-version-of-ourselves.

* **Step 8:** Pray the **Hail, Holy Queen** (a prayer asking for Mary’s help) and the **Rosary Prayer** (a prayer of hope that our lives will be changed by the rosary).
* **Step 9:** While holding the crucifix, make the Sign of the Cross.

As you practice praying the rosary, these prayers will become second nature to you. There’s a rhythm to the rosary. As you enter into that rhythm, you’ll begin to think less about the words and more about the meaning of the words.

That’s when you begin to unlock the power of the rosary.

If you are new to the rosary, take some time to familiarize yourself with the beads themselves. Practice holding the rosary in your hand and feeding the beads between your fingers. See if you can remember which prayers are prayed at each point in the rosary.

# The Prayers of the Rosary

The prayers of the rosary are timeless. They are simple, meaningful, and they bring us peace. While people often add other prayers, these are the basic ones. If you are praying the rosary in a group, then most of the prayers are divided in two. The leader prays the first half, and the whole group responds with the second half (indicated by an asterisk: \*).

### 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.

### 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.

### Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. \* Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

### Glory Be

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

### Fatima Prayer

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

### Hail, Holy Queen

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

Pray for us O holy mother of God, \* that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

### Rosary Prayer

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 by meditating upon 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.

# The Mysteries of the Rosary

Another fruitful way to pray the rosary is to meditate on important events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. Twenty of these moments are captured in what we call the mysteries of the rosary. These mysteries are grouped into four sets: joyful, luminous, sorrowful, and glorious. Each set of mysteries is prayed on specific days of the week. They serve as a backdrop to the decades of the rosary and hold incredible insights worthy of reflection.

As you meditate on these events, let the words of the prayers float by. Focus less on the words and more on the mysteries. Get lost in the scene. Imagine yourself there. Each of the mysteries of the rosary can teach you a valuable lesson about life, love, and God’s dream for you.

If you are praying the rosary in a group, the leader announces the mystery before beginning each decade.

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| Joyful Mysteries | Sorrowful Mysteries | Glorious Mysteries | Luminous Mysteries |
| The Annunciation of the Lord to Mary | The Agony of Jesus in the Garden | The Resurrection of Jesus Christ | The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan |
| The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth | The Scourging at the Pillar | The Ascension of Jesus | The Wedding at Cana |
| The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ | Jesus is Crowned with Thorns | The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost) | The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God |
| The Presentation of our Lord in the Temple | The Carrying of the Cross | The Assumption of Mary into Heaven | The Transfiguration |
| The Finding of Jesus in the Temple | The Crucifixion of our Lord | The Crowning (Coronation) of Mary as Queen of Heaven | The Institution of the Eucharist (Last Supper) |