

To The Bishops, Clergy and Faithful on the Most Holy Rosary – The LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

How many graces I received from the Blessed Virgin through the Rosary: Magnificat anima mea Dominum! I wish to lift up my thanks to the Lord in words of his Most Holy Mother, under whose protection I placed my Petrine ministry: Totus Tuus! I felt drawn to offer a reflection on the Rosary, an exhortation to contemplate the face of Christ in union with, and at the school of, his Most Holy Mother. To recite the Rosary is to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ “when the Mother is honoured, the Son ... is duly known, loved and glorified”.⁸ In the present historical and theological context the Rosary can risk being wrongly devalued, and no longer taught to the younger generation. I desire that the Rosary should be especially emphasized and promoted in the various Christian communities. *(The following texts are from Pope JP II’s Letter on the Year of the Rosary 2002-3.)*

The Mysteries of Light – (Thursday) – with accompanying prayers to end the decade

21. Moving on from the infancy and the hidden life in Nazareth to the public life of Jesus, our contemplation brings us to those mysteries which may be called in a special way “mysteries of light”. Certainly the whole mystery of Christ is a mystery of light. He is the “light of the world” (Jn 8:12). This truth emerges in a special way during the years of his public life, when he proclaims the Gospel of the Kingdom... as we see... in five significant moments – “luminous” mysteries – during this phase of Christ’s life: (1) his Baptism in the Jordan, (2) his self-manifestation at the wedding of Cana, (3) his proclamation of the Kingdom of God, with his call to conversion, (4) his Transfiguration, and finally, (5) his institution of the Eucharist, as the sacramental expression of the Paschal Mystery. Each of these mysteries is a revelation of the Kingdom now present in the very person of Jesus.

1st – The Baptism of Jesus – “Jesus, in whom the Father is well pleased”

The Baptism in the Jordan is first of all a mystery of light. Here, as Christ descends into the waters, the innocent one who became “sin” for our sake (cf. 2Cor 5:21), the heavens open wide and the voice of the Father declares him the beloved Son (cf. Mt 3:17 and parallels), while the Spirit descends on him to invest him with the mission which he is to carry out.

Let us pray: Father, by the light radiating from Jesus’ Baptism, give us the mind and heart of Christ to be – like Him – attentive and obedient to your Holy Spirit. Amen.

2nd – Cana Wedding “Jesus, who makes sacramental Marriage the sign of the eternal Covenant”

The first of the signs, given at Cana (cf. Jn 2:1- 12), when Christ changes water into wine and opens the hearts of the disciples to faith, thanks to the intervention of Mary, the first among believers. The role she assumed at Cana in some way accompanies Christ throughout his ministry. The revelation made directly by the Father at the Baptism in the Jordan and echoed by John the Baptist is placed upon Mary’s lips at Cana, and it becomes the great maternal counsel which Mary addresses to the Church of every age: “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). This counsel is a fitting introduction to the words and signs of Christ’s public ministry and it forms the Marian foundation of all the “mysteries of light”.

Let us pray: Father, by the light radiating from Mary, the first to believe in Jesus as our Savior, focus our mind, heart, and will on Jesus, and help us do whatever He tells us. Amen.

3rd – The Proclamation of the Kingdom – “Jesus, whose Kingdom is so very near to us”

Jesus our Light proclaims the coming of the Kingdom of God, calls to conversion (cf. Mk 1:15) and forgives the sins of all who draw near to him in humble trust (cf. Mk 2:3-13; Lk 7:47- 48): inaugurates that ministry of mercy which he continues to exercise until the end of the world, particularly through the Sacrament of Reconciliation which he has entrusted to his Church (cf. Jn 20:22-23).

Let us pray: Father, by the light radiating from Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom and call to conversion, let a spirit of repentance make us generous ministers of your Mercy. Amen.

4th – The Transfiguration of Jesus – “Jesus, whose glory transforms us in his image”

The greatest mystery of light is the Transfiguration, believed to have taken place on Mount Tabor. The glory of the Godhead shines forth from the face of Christ as the Father commands astonished Apostles to “listen to him” (cf. Lk 9:35 and parallels) and to prepare to experience with him the agony of the Passion, so as to come with him to the joy of the Resurrection and a life transfigured by the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray: Father, by the light radiating from the Transfiguration of Jesus with Moses and Elijah, encourage us to gladly accompany Jesus into the time of our own passion. Amen.

5th – The Institution of the Eucharist – “Jesus, who offers us the New Covenant in his blood”

A final mystery of light is the institution of the Eucharist, in which Christ offers his body and blood as food under the signs of bread and wine, and testifies “to the end” his love for humanity (Jn 13:1), for whose salvation he will offer himself in sacrifice.

Let us pray: Father, by the light radiating from the Holy Eucharist and Jesus’ Paschal Mystery, transform us into the One we eat and drink, glad to spend ourselves for love of others. Amen.

Let us pray together: 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 meditating upon these mysteries in 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.

Prayer to St. Michael – St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in the day of battle. Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits, who prowl through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

The Memorare of St. Bernard

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly to Thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my Mother! To Thee do I come, before Thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

Mary, Queen of Holy Angels, pray for us!

Prayer for Vocations

God our Father, Lord of the harvest, we come to you with confidence. Raise up priests to proclaim your Son Jesus to all, to reveal his presence among us, to gather your people in unity and help us to grow. May our community be truly alive and our families firm in faith so that the pastors of tomorrow may spring from their midst. Nurture men and women with hearts to be faithful and devoted husbands and wives, witnesses of faith, and generous parents. Raise up deacons, missionaries, and consecrated persons to also teach us to give of ourselves in service to others. Build us up, married and celibate, as one family to spread your Kingdom and to share the joy of being your children. Amen.

Prayer for Our Country

Heavenly Father, we commit this, our beloved land, to the Kingship and Lordship of Jesus Christ. We ask You to renew our country in the power of the Holy Spirit that all Canadians will bow their knee and confess with their tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord. We pray that our political leaders receive wisdom and knowledge from on high to govern this land according to your sovereign Will; so we may prosper in justice and in peace, in love and in truth; until Christ our Lord is indeed the King of Canada from coast to coast, from sea to sea. We pledge a covenant of prayer and witness so that the powers of evil be defeated and the enemy of God, Satan, be subdued. Let Jesus Christ be Sovereign in every City Hall, every Parliament and every Court in our land until the day of his glorious coming. Amen.