

THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

MEDITATIONS ON DOMESTIC HARMONY



BY MIKE HANSEN



The Mysteries of the Rosary

The Mysteries of the Rosary recall moments in the life of Jesus, Mary and the early Church that have resonances in our own lives.

We have all known moments of great joy in our family life, warm memories that glow like sunshine in our hearts.

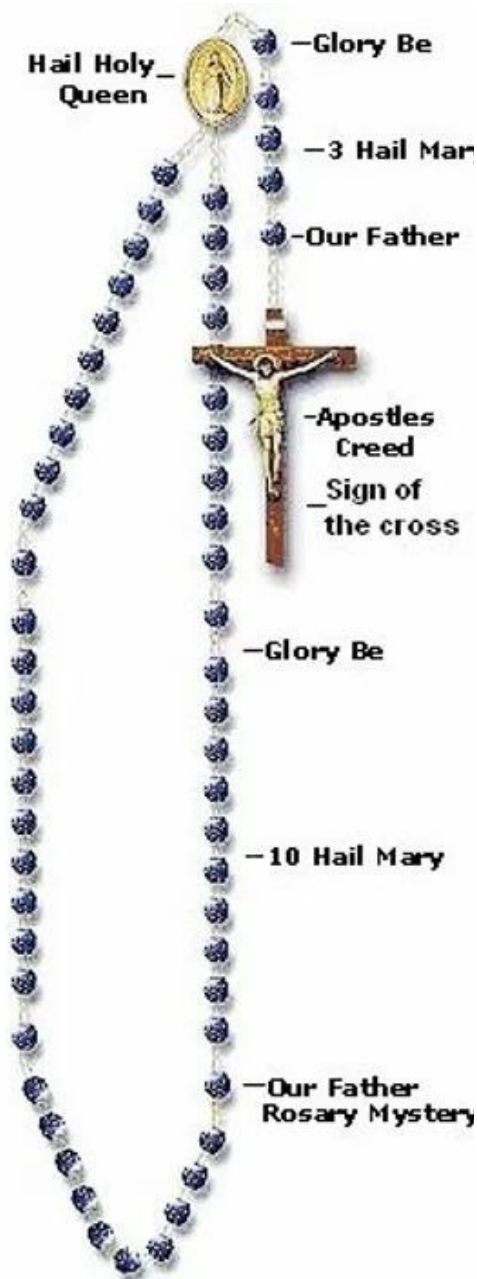
There are also times of deep pain and sorrow that threaten to weigh us down, sap our energy and threaten our wellbeing.

We all want our homes to be safe places where everyone feels secure and family members nourish each other's growth towards maturity.

The following reflections on the Mysteries of the Rosary invite us to contemplate our own personal response to the needs of the people in our circle of relationships... and the needs of the strangers we meet along the way.

How to pray the Rosary

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



The Apostles Creed

At the beginning of each decade, announce the "mystery" to be contemplated. Pause and read the meditation. Pause for reflecting on the meditation. Recite the "Our Father", ten "Hail Marys" and the "Glory be to the Father".

An invocation may be added after each decade. At the end of the Rosary, the Loreto Litany or some other Marian prayer is recited.

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 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..

The Litany of Loreto

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy; hail, 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 towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

1st Glorious Mystery – Jesus Rises from the Dead

... and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (Jn. 20:19)



Piero della Francesca, 1463

Meditation

It must have been a very difficult time for the apostles after the death of Jesus. Peter probably had not slept much and could hardly look the others in the eye after his denial of Jesus... John must have been traumatised having seen his best friend and mentor die in front of his eyes... the grief of Jesus' mother is beyond description. The corporate shame of those who hid themselves for fear of their own safety would have been palpable in the room. And into all this trauma and guilt Jesus appears with his calming presence and with 'Peace' on his lips

I imagine that we have all been in a situation where someone we love is in great turmoil, fear, or distress. We suddenly find that we are the one who must bring some comfort and reassuring solace to the situation that is not of our making. We could not stop the ferocity of the storm that has wreaked so much havoc here. All we can do is step into the space and embrace the one who has been storm riven. Words are not necessary. Our calming presence and gentle eyes are enough to say 'Peace, now!'

Who might we know that is 'storm riven' and needs our quiet, gentle, listening presence?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

2nd Glorious Mystery – Jesus Ascends to Heaven

“I am with you always.” (Mt. 28:20)



Karin Jonzen (1914–1998)
Selwyn College, University of Cambridge

Meditation

It is interesting that Matthew’s gospel does not specifically describe the ascension of Jesus. The eleven disciples are on the mountain where Jesus himself seemed to be waiting for them. Matthew describes how Jesus ‘came to them’ and gave them his last instructions...

like a pep talk by the coach at a half time footy match; make disciples of all nations, baptise, be faithful to my teachings. And then the last words of Jesus to his disciples... one can almost sense the pause and the breathless moment just before he scans each of their faces... “and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”.

Can you imagine not having anyone in your life who will stick by you in your time of greatest need? For the follower of Jesus, knowing the comfort there is in the promise of the Lord to be always present in our life, there is an onus on us to be ‘present’ to all those in our circle of relationships, especially in dark and isolating times. In times of trouble, we all need to know that we are not alone and that there are others we can rely upon for help.

Who do we know who might need the reassurance of our comforting presence?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary’s and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

3rd Glorious Mystery – Descent of the Holy Spirit



When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire,

appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Acts 2:1-4

Meditation

What an extraordinary event! They were all gathered. They had been told by Jesus to go to Jerusalem and wait for The Comforter to come. Imagine their sense of anticipation. They had been waiting expectantly for weeks for something to happen, just sitting around, it seems. How would the Comforter arrive? Who would this be? How should we prepare? How will we be enriched?

The comforter comes in wind and fire. The effect is dramatic!

Oftentimes we find ourselves waiting in expectation for something life-giving to occur; the birth of a child, an exam result, illness to pass, a letter to arrive, a word to be said, a plane to land, the sun to break through. It can be a delicious time of waiting... a chance to rehearse the very moment of fulfilment and completion... a time that stretches forward and energises and gives us life and meaning... a Pentecost time.

On other occasions our waiting times are filled with foreboding and distress; a terminal illness, a looming financial crisis, a child who has lost their way in life, a bully boy in the workplace, a drunken homecoming. These can be times that darken our hearts. As a future event draws near, tension and fear for ourselves and others grip our guts like a vice. These are the times that diminish our strength and sap our joy for living... times when we are most vulnerable... times when we long for the support of others alive with a life-giving energy and presence.

Is there someone for whom we can be wind and fire?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

4th Glorious Mystery – Mary is taken up into Heaven

“I shall return to take you with Me.” Jn. 14:3



The Assumption or The Dormition, a fresco by Juan de Jesus Munera Ochoa in the Cathedral of San Pedro de los Milagros (Saint Peter of the Miracles) in Antioquia, Colombia.

Meditation

The Assumption honours the belief that when Mary’s earthly life was over, her heavenly life with God began. In celebrating this belief for Mary, we celebrate it also for ourselves. We rejoice in the central idea of the Christian faith that we are born to live forever. It is an inheritance no-one can take away from us.

Mary's Assumption shows us our destiny in Christ. Pope St. John Paul II stated, “In her, assumed into heaven, we are shown the eternal destiny that awaits us beyond the mystery of death; a destiny of total happiness in divine glory.”

Do we make a deliberate effort to model ourselves on Mary? Do we all try to live out our lives as Mary did – being open to God, looking for what God wants us to be and to do, and being people of love and hope? May we draw encouragement from the knowledge that what awaited Mary also awaits us; life eternal.

Do we know someone for whom love has soured and dreams have withered... someone we can touch with our hope filled presence?

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5th Glorious Mystery – Mary is Crowned Queen of Heaven

“The moon was under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” Apoc. 12:1



Diego Velázquez 1635–1636 Holy Trinity crowning the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Meditation

It has been a long-held tradition of recognising Mary as queen. So, it is with complete justice that St. John Damascene could write, “When she became mother of the Creator, she truly became queen of every creature.”

The National Catholic Register writes, “Mary's crown is the promise of our crown. What we shall be, Mary already is supremely; a creature exalted and glorified by Jesus Christ to show forth the glory of God in the splendour of his saints.”

I am sure we have all heard of Madonna. Not The Madonna but Madonna Louise Ciccone, (curiously born August 16, the day after the feast of the Assumption) an American singer, songwriter, and actress. Regarded as the “Queen of Pop”, she has been recognized for her continual reinvention and versatility in music production, songwriting and visual presentation. We might say that she is at the very pinnacle of what it means to be an entertainer and musical artist.

We, too, like Mary, are called to be our very best, the pinnacle of our humanity, in the time we have been given... called to a life of holiness where we open our arms to all in welcome, where we open our hearts in compassion and where we open our ears to hear the cry of the poor and afflicted.

With whom will you be your best today?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary’s and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

1st Sorrowful Mystery - The Agony in the Garden



Image: Carl Bloch, "Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane", 1873

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." (Mt 26:36-38)

Meditation

The Sorrowful mysteries mirror the hardest aspects of our lives, the people we know and love and others whose pain touches our hearts. Here in the garden, we see Jesus in need of companionship in his time of distress. He doesn't really know what his friends can do for him, but he knows he wants them near him. You can sense the anxiety in Jesus as he urges them to stay awake.

How true this is in our own lives. We accompany our children to the dentist and the doctor holding their hands and letting them know they are not alone. We sit by the bed of the one who is gravely ill in the hope that they know they are not abandoned. We deliver a pot of soup to the one who is grieving or distressed to show they are not forgotten.

Who is it in my life who needs me close by to accompany them through their difficult, lonely or traumatic time?

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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. Amen.

2nd Sorrowful Mystery - The Scourging at the Pillar



FERNANDEZ, Alejo (b. ca. 1475, Córdoba, d. ca. 1545, Granada)

“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

“Crucify him!” they shouted.

“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.

(Mark 15:12-15)

Meditation

I have always felt that Pontius Pilate was a victim of his own political status and ambition. He could find no fault with Jesus, but he didn't stick up for him in the face of the bullying and threats to his own power base. He did not have the courage of his own convictions. In the end he gave in to the bullies without much of a fight.

How often have we given in to the bully boys and buffaloes of this world, those who belittle and trample on others? How many times have we slunk away from sight when we witness mistreatment and others being ridiculed and pushed around? Sometimes it can be costly to stand up and be counted when we see unjust behaviour!

Is there someone you know who needs your supportive voice and presence?

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3rd Sorrowful Mystery - The Crowning with Thorns



Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had

mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (Matthew 27:27-31)

Meditation

It is hard to imagine what it would be like to have our clothes ripped from us and our human dignity assaulted by the jeers and physical brutality of the soldiers in this event. Jesus is stripped not only of his clothes but of his identity. He is mocked for the king he claims to be and subjected to horrific torture. And, as if it has never happened, he is dressed in his own clothes again.

What is our response when we witness women being subject to abusive behaviour and demeaning and insulting comments?

Do we call out the times when we see family members put on their "own clothes" to cover up abuse and domestic violence?

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4th Sorrowful Mystery - Jesus Carries His Cross



As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross. (Matthew 27:32)

Meditation

Weakened by the brutal treatment of the guards and deep gouges from the excessive lashings, Jesus is wilting under the heavy wooden beam that he struggles to drag to the hill of Calvary just outside the city walls. A total stranger is forced to help. We are not told if Simon objected and, in fact, given that he is the patron saint of passersby we can readily believe that he did what he could to relieve the strain of the burden when Jesus was at his weakest and most vulnerable.

It is interesting to compare the impulsive action of Veronica who needs no encouragement and shows no fear when she rushes forward to wipe the face of Jesus. Her actions do not depend on what everyone else is doing.

Do we stand back when we see others in need of help and assistance? Are we like Simon and wait until someone in authority tells us what is needed, or do we trust our instinct and intuition to dictate our actions when we see the vulnerable being mistreated?

Is there someone you know for whom the burden is just too heavy?

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5th Sorrowful Mystery - Jesus is Crucified



From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”)

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” Mat27: 45-50

Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to save him.”

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

Meditation

I have always admired the soldier who felt sorry for Jesus and gave him a drink from what I have always imagined was his own little flask of wine. He ‘offers’ a drink to Jesus in the darkest moments of his life, when he is fast approaching death, a gesture to ease his pain and his passing from this life. The other soldiers want to see the comic drama of his rescue by Elijah. By breaking ranks, this last kind act is performed by one of the thugs who brutalised him.

In the mid-afternoon of our own dark days help may come from the most unexpected and most unlikely people. There are those around us who feel forsaken and utterly alone and there may be a little knock on their door one day that is the Holy One’s answer to their desperation. Perhaps the hand that knocks will be yours or mine.

Let us remain alert to the promptings of the Spirit!

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1st Joyful Mystery – The Annunciation



In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.” (Luke 1:26-28)

Meditation

Can you imagine looking up and seeing a heavenly messenger on your porch? Artists from every age have attempted to capture this moment. My favourite image is this fresco by Fra Angelico on a convent wall in Florence. It is a beautifully elegant portrayal of this moment that God enters human history as a human being.

Isn’t it wonderful when we hear that someone is pregnant! There is usually lots of excitement and many congratulatory kisses and hugs. But in this modern age when young women are separated from immediate family it can be a struggle to keep the family unit functioning smoothly given the extra pressure and stress. Where I work, a ‘mum to be’ and her husband have been the recipients of food drops leading up to the birth of their child... isn’t that just simply a marvellous idea to relieve the pressure a tad... and demonstrate she is not alone at this time.

Who do we know who might welcome a visitor bringing some home baking and a friendly smile?

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2nd Joyful Mystery – The Visitation



At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" (Luke 1:39-42)

Meditation

We are not told in Scripture what transpired between Mary and her mum and dad or even when she told them that she was with child. But we do know that Mary went to visit her older cousin and the moment they met was electric with emotion and joy. Mary sought out an older woman!

Every year my wife makes a rich, traditional Christmas cake and when she gathers the flour, dried fruit & rum she straps on her apron and says aloud, "OK mum... are you with me?" Her mum has been dead for 16 years... but she was such a powerhouse of culinary delights that her wisdom is still missed and called upon.

Do we always dignify the aged as we should? They are the keepers of stories and the treasuries of wisdom, people who were once young and pregnant with hope just as we are.

Is there an elderly person we know who would be glad to pass the time with us over a cup of tea?

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3rd Joyful Mystery – Nativity of Our Lord



Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth, and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:4-7)

Meditation

I imagine that Joseph and Mary had plans to create a home in Nazareth where they would be surrounded by the support of family and friends. Instead, they had to respond to the imperial power of the time and turn up to be counted in a census, expecting a child or not.

As people become more mobile, families sometimes find themselves in places they had no original intention of being. They may find it hard to find their place in their new community. Migrant and refugee families can suffer from isolation and exclusion, especially where lack of English language is an issue.

How might you and I create small communities of hospitality in our immediate neighbourhood?

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4th Joyful Mystery – The Presentation in the Temple



The child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too. (Luke 2:33-35)

Meditation

Parents nourish their children and the love they bestow is unconditional. They look forward with longing to parenting the new life they have brought into the world... celebrating the gathering maturity of their child with all the milestones along the way. Imagine what Mary must have felt deep in her bones upon hearing that this gorgeous child will be an integral part of an enigma that will cause her such distress.

In a different context of distress and pain, we can recall the hurt our children and loved ones have inflicted upon us; those spiteful tantrums from our little ones who learnt early on where to strike to hurt ... through the teenage years of poor choices and dismissive attitudes ... to wilful neglect of personal health and anti-social behaviour.

And through all that hurt we continue to love, clinging to the hope that our love will bring them home to us... that, in the end, they will remember how much they are valued and that our wounded hearts have bled for them. Such is the power of forbearance.

In the end there are three great virtues... faith, hope and love... and the greatest of these is love.

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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5th Joyful Mystery – Finding Jesus in the Temple



After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them, and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished.

His mother said to him, “Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Did you not know I had to be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:46-49)

Meditation

We have all lost our children in the supermarket, the shopping mall or on a busy street. Sometimes, like the young Jesus, they can be blissfully unaware they have caused any distress for their anxious parents. They have ‘been busy about their business’ following the bright lights of their distraction. But sometimes our loved ones seem lost to us in other ways... perhaps through disruptive behaviour, addiction, depression or some form of dementia.

Let us rely on one another’s strength at these times. May we be gentle with ourselves and not blame our lack of care or attention for what has happened. May we wrap ourselves in the mantle of our prayer life and hold our lost ones close. To make us strong and help ease the hollow ache in our hearts, may we be attentive to God’s presence in flashing moments of wonder and awe evident in the people and world around us.

Jesus is in the temple still.

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary’s and 1 Glory Be

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1st Luminous Mystery – The Baptism of the Lord



And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 13:16,17)

Meditation

Matthew does not describe the actual immersion of Jesus in the Jordan river at his Baptism. What he is interested in is describing the effects on Jesus as he emerges from the water. It is almost like a curtain is pulled back as Jesus 'sees' the Spirit of God descending upon him, perhaps 'like the dewfall'. And all hear a voice declaring Jesus the 'Beloved'.

When people are baptised, we do not normally see or feel the heavens opening and the Spirit of God flowing down upon them. Nor will those gathered to celebrate with us hear a voice declaring our special relationship with the Holy One. Nevertheless, despite appearances, that is exactly what happens. Isn't that what a sacrament is!?! An outward sign of an inward reality. You and I are the Beloved of God.

Knowing we are loved and valued is essential in our personal growth toward wholeness. We love others when we know that we ourselves are first loved and loved deeply; by God, a spouse, family & special friends.

Perhaps we know someone who struggles with knowing they are loveable. How might we 'open the heavens' and show them the reality of their human dignity?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

2nd Luminous Mystery – The Wedding in Cana



John of Flanders: c. 1460- c. 1519

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to me and to you? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars 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 person in charge of the banquet." (John 2:1-11)

Meditation

How embarrassing! Running out of wine at the wedding. Sack the wedding planner! We all know the story of this event so well... and such a whimsical little miracle for John to relate... that is, until you look a little closer at John's allegorical details. This miracle happens on the third day, there is a Mary involved, the vessels are empty of wine. This foreshadows the resurrection of Jesus on the third day... Mary of Magdala recognising the power of Jesus' new life... the empty tomb being a place of death and endings. For this wedding event is a miracle about new beginnings. This is a resurrection story.

We all know what it is like to run out of essentials; energy, time, options, chances, money, resources. All too well, like at the wedding, we know what it's like to be found wanting, not to have enough. And some close to us will be having the same experience of depletion, of not knowing how or where to replenish exhausted personal resources... and even more importantly, who to turn towards seeking help.

Can you and I be like Mary at the wedding feast being alert enough to spot a problem for which we can be part of the solution? Perhaps we can be like Mary of Magdala rushing with life giving news from an empty tomb

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3rd Luminous Mystery – The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the Call to Conversion



Sermon on the Mount by [Carl Bloch](#) (1877)

Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

(Matthew 9:13)

Meditation

Jesus had been eating a meal with the social and moral outcasts of the day; tax collectors and sinners. A righteous scandal for some!

How can this man share bread with such people? the 'holier than thou' complained to the disciples.

We can readily imagine how Jesus, upon hearing them voice their concerns about who he is eating with (just loud enough so that he might hear), turns his attention and ire upon them. He doesn't mince words as he tells the Pharisees to go and do a bit of research. For this is God's core business; calling the lost back, loving them into life, restoring their dignity, healing their brokenness.

I was once helping at a community kitchen which provides a homecooked meal for those who might be doing it tough in one way or another. It was a blistering hot evening and the guests at the meal were lined up in the sun outside waiting for the doors to be opened. All was ready inside; the tables were set, the meal was cooked, the volunteers were ready to go, it was not yet six o'clock, we were all in the air conditioned cool of the kitchen. A volunteer said, "It's hot outside... let's let them in!" "Let them wait. It's not time!" said someone who assumed authority.

How often do we find ourselves making judgments about the worthiness of other people's needs? Such judgements are really a reflection on the dignity we ascribe to those people themselves. I'm pleased to say that volunteer ignored the instruction and opened the door early to allow people into the cool interior.

Do we have an open-door policy when it comes to others whose needs are obvious?

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4TH Luminous Mystery – The Transfiguration



Lodovico Carracci, "The Transfiguration," 1594 (photo: Public Domain)

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. (Matthew 17:1-3)

Meditation

We have all had 'mountain top' experiences. We try and capture them on film or photographs, we fill our diary pages, and we store as many aspects of the moment as close as possible to our memory and hearts. Such moments not only enrich our lives, but they sustain us in the dark and lonely times assuring us that we are not alone nor insignificant.

So, Jesus and his friends leave behind the heady experience of the mountain top and proceed down into the lowlands to face the reality of the mission of bringing the message of the coming of the kingdom to ordinary folk. They will need all the strength and understanding from their time close to heaven for what they will soon be called upon to do and endure.

It is the same with us, too. Those exquisite moments of realisation when heaven seems to open, and light fills the air, sustain us in the everyday. We draw power from the knowledge that there is beauty and grace in the world. We have seen it, and we are assured that God is always close in the person of Jesus with his gentle touch of peace, a peace that takes away fear and brings consolation.

With whom can we share our life-giving moments of awe and wonder?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

5th Luminous Mystery – The Institution of the Eucharist



The Sacrament of the Last Supper, 1955 Salvador Dalí

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."

(Matthew 26:26)

Meditation

We can be so focused on the presence of Jesus in the bread and the wine that we tend to forget that just as the bread and wine are transformed into the Body of Christ, we too are also being transformed into the Body of Christ; a more compassionate, forgiving, and responsive body alive to the deep needs of others.

"... gather all who share this one body and one cup into the one body of Christ, a living sacrifice of praise." (Eucharistic Prayer iv)

How conscious are we of being a member of the Body of Christ constantly being transformed and becoming what we receive? Let us dedicate ourselves to Tertullian's description of the early church in Rome, "See how they love one another!"

To whom can we be the compassionate presence of Jesus this day?

1 Our Father, 10 Hail Mary's and 1 Glory Be

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. Amen.

THE LITANY OF LORETO

Tower of ivory,	pray for us.
House of gold,	pray for us.
Ark of the covenant,	pray for us.
Gate of heaven,	pray for us.
Morning star,	pray for us.
Health of the sick,	pray for us.
Refuge of sinners,	pray for us.
Solace of Migrants,	pray for us.
Comfort of the afflicted,	pray for us.
Help of Christians,	pray for us.
Queen of Angels,	pray for us.
Queen of Patriarchs,	pray for us.
Queen of Prophets,	pray for us.
Queen of Apostles,	pray for us.
Queen of Martyrs,	pray for us.
Queen of Confessors,	pray for us.
Queen of Virgins,	pray for us.
Queen of all Saints,	pray for us.
Queen conceived without original sin,	pray for us.
Queen assumed into heaven,	pray for us.
Queen of the most holy Rosary,	pray for us.
Queen of families,	pray for us.
Queen of peace.	pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

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

Let us pray.

Grant, we beseech thee,

O Lord God,

that we, your servants,

may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body;

and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin,

may be delivered from present sorrow,

and obtain eternal joy.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy; hail, 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 towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

