

How to Pray the Rosary

A beginner-friendly Catholic prayer guide with the complete prayers, the four sets of mysteries, and a simple bead-by-bead pattern.

**Start at the crucifix.**

Pray the opening prayers, announce a mystery, then pray five decades while contemplating the life of Jesus Christ.

The Rosary at a Glance

The Rosary combines familiar Catholic prayers with meditation on mysteries from the life of Jesus Christ. The beads keep the rhythm so your attention can remain with the Gospel event you are contemplating.

The basic pattern

1	Crucifix Sign of the Cross, then the Apostles' Creed.
2	First large bead Pray one Our Father.
3	Three small beads Pray three Hail Marys, traditionally for faith, hope, and charity.
4	Before the loop Pray the Glory Be. Announce the first mystery.
5	Each decade One Our Father, ten Hail Marys, one Glory Be. The Fatima Prayer may follow.
6	After five decades Pray the Hail Holy Queen and the concluding Rosary prayer. Finish with the Sign of the Cross.

One decade

Announce 1 mystery • 1 Our Father • 10 Hail Marys • 1 Glory Be

Short on time or just beginning? One decade prayed attentively is a good beginning.

Which Mysteries Should I Pray?

A five-decade Rosary normally uses one complete set of five mysteries. The weekly pattern below is a devotional custom, not a restriction.

Monday	Joyful
Tuesday	Sorrowful
Wednesday	Glorious
Thursday	Luminous
Friday	Sorrowful
Saturday	Joyful
Sunday	Glorious*

*Joyful Mysteries are traditionally prayed on Sundays during Advent, and Sorrowful Mysteries on Sundays during Lent.

Remember: If you pray a different set of mysteries on a given day, you have still prayed the Rosary.

How to meditate on a mystery

Announce the mystery. Bring the Gospel event to mind. During the ten Hail Marys, keep returning your attention to Jesus Christ in that mystery. The repetition gives prayer a steady rhythm while the mystery gives it its focus.

Joyful Mysteries

Mondays & Saturdays

1. The Annunciation

Luke 1:26-38

Consider trust in God's will.

2. The Visitation

Luke 1:39-56

Consider loving service.

3. The Nativity

Luke 2:1-20

Consider Christ's humility.

4. The Presentation

Luke 2:22-38

Consider dedication to God.

5. The Finding in the Temple

Luke 2:41-52

Consider seeking Jesus.

For each mystery: announce it, pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be.

Luminous Mysteries

Thursdays

1. The Baptism in the Jordan

Matthew 3:13-17

Consider your baptism.

2. The Wedding at Cana

John 2:1-11

Consider trust in Jesus.

3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom

Mark 1:14-15

Consider conversion.

4. The Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1-8

Consider listening to Christ.

5. The Institution of the Eucharist

Luke 22:14-20

Consider Christ's self-gift.

For each mystery: announce it, pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be.

Sorrowful Mysteries

Tuesdays & Fridays

1. The Agony in the Garden

Matthew 26:36-46

Consider trust in suffering.

2. The Scourging at the Pillar

John 19:1

Consider endurance.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

Matthew 27:27-31

Consider humility.

4. The Carrying of the Cross

Luke 23:26-32

Consider perseverance.

5. The Crucifixion

Luke 23:33-46

Consider sacrificial love.

For each mystery: announce it, pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be.

Glorious Mysteries

Wednesdays & most Sundays

1. The Resurrection

Matthew 28:1-10

Consider faith in the risen Lord.

2. The Ascension

Acts 1:6-11

Consider Christian hope.

3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-13

Consider the Spirit's gifts.

4. The Assumption of Mary

Revelation 12:1; Catholic tradition

Consider fidelity.

5. The Coronation of Mary

Revelation 12:1

Consider eternal life.

For each mystery: announce it, pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and one Glory Be.

Complete Prayers of the Rosary

Sign of the Cross

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

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 you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Complete Prayers of the Rosary

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.

Optional 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.

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.

Concluding 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 while meditating on 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.

Your First Rosary

Do not worry about getting everything perfect

If you lose count, continue praying. If you forget a prayer, read it. If your attention wanders, gently return to the mystery. If five decades feel overwhelming, begin with one.

- Keep the prayers in front of you. Memorization often comes naturally.
- Slow down. The Rosary is not a race.
- Read a few verses of Scripture before each mystery.
- Choose a realistic regular time and a place that helps you pray.
- Pray with family, friends, or other Catholics when possible.
- When distracted, return gently to Christ without restarting.

*Prayer is not a test.
The Rosary is learned by praying it.*

Start at the crucifix. The rest can be learned one bead at a time.

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