



Month of the Holy Rosary: Pray the Rosary as a Corporal Work of Mercy

Pray in person in the Lady Chapel Monday through Saturday at 9 am or in spirit using the meditations below. – The OLPH Holy Rosary Group

Fridays: Visit the Imprisoned with The Sorrowful Mysteries

Today, offer your Rosary for those who have committed crimes, that they may be visited by the grace and mercy of Christ and grow in holiness. Pray for their victims, especially those who have suffered violence or who have lost a loved one. Pray also for those who are called to prison ministry, for compassion, understanding, and wisdom in ministering to the imprisoned.

After each Rosary meditation, pray one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, the Glory Be and the Fatima Prayer ("Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins..."). Meditations courtesy of "Praying the Rosary with Pope Francis" by Twenty Third Publications. Learn how to pray the Rosary here. ([link to https://marian.org/mary/rosary/how-to-pray](https://marian.org/mary/rosary/how-to-pray))

First Sorrowful Mystery

The Agony in the Garden: *Who am I before the sufferings of my Lord?*

As a Jesuit, Pope Francis is familiar with the tradition of St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises, where the retreatant is asked to ponder the gospel stories "from the inside," as it were, imagining oneself as part of the story with the crowds, disciples, and others. Here, with the mystery of Jesus at prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, Pope Francis asks us to ponder where we stand while Jesus prays in his torment: Are we the ones asleep like the disciples he took with him? Are we those who are about to run away? Or are we ready to stand by his side, as did his mother and the disciple he loved? It's well worth pondering, especially when we're praying for people who themselves are suffering.

PONDER: Where do I stand when praying for those who are suffering—alongside or at a distance?

PRAY: *Lord, strengthen me so that I will never abandon you!*

Second Sorrowful Mystery

The Scourging at the Pillar: *"Father, I have saved your children with these wounds."*

Pope Francis imagines Jesus appearing before his Father in heaven, still carrying the wounds of his scourging and his crucifixion, and he imagines him telling his Father that this is how he paid the price for our sins. Pope Francis says that this is how Jesus advocates for us and prays for our protection. How immense is that sacrifice that redeemed us and made us worthy of eternal life! And how gentle and humble is that prayer—to ask the Father's protection for those whose sins caused his death! How many ways do we torture each other—and ourselves—with pettiness and gossip and dismissiveness? How can we relieve pain instead of causing it?

PONDER: How have I caused others pain?

PRAY: *Wounded Lord, there are some wounds only you can heal. Please heal us and help us not to wound each other!*

Third Sorrowful Mystery

The Crowning with Thorns: *Torture is a very grave sin.*

It's easy to get caught up in the story of Jesus' passion and death and condemn the methods of the Roman soldiers used to humiliate and ridicule him. The crown of thorns is a particularly brutal insult. But have we improved at all as human beings in the way we treat others, even sometimes considering them less than human? Pope Francis has harsh words for those who practice torture of any kind, calling it a mortal sin. Brought down to our own day-to-day level, how do we work for human rights and dignity so that no one need suffer physical or mental torture—that of brutality, or displacement, or rejection? How can the image of Jesus crowned with thorns redouble our resolve to heal others?

PONDER: Who is suffering that I haven't noticed?

PRAY: *Jesus, crowned with thorns but with eyes full of compassion, heal my ignorance and open my eyes.*

Fourth Sorrowful Mystery

The Carrying of the Cross: *The cross of Christ teaches us about love.*

In addressing this mystery of the Rosary, Pope Francis says that the cross that Jesus carried should open our eyes to how much we are loved, and what the enormity of that love asks of us in return. He asks us to consider how many people were a part of that journey to Calvary—Pilate, who didn't have the courage of his convictions; Simon of Cyrene, who helped him shoulder the burden; Mary and the other women, who accompanied him all the way—and to figure out for ourselves whom we most resemble. If we allow ourselves to be affected by the cross, we can begin to notice and to reach out in mercy and love to all who need our help. The cross is a lesson of love.

PONDER: Who am I like on Jesus' path? Who would I want to be?

PRAY: *Jesus, let your cross transform me to shoulder the burdens of all those you love—everyone!*

Fifth Sorrowful Mystery

The Crucifixion: *On the cross, Jesus unites himself to all victims of all kinds of violence.*

In a Good Friday message, Pope Francis spoke of how Christ's sacrifice on the cross united Christ with all those who suffer violence in silence—victims of torture, persecution, ostracism, addiction, and those who suffer from hunger in the midst of plenty. All of Pope Francis' messages of mercy and service and stewardship come down to this mystery of the cross and God's great love for us that even death cannot overcome. How will we work to express our gratitude? By working ourselves to relieve the sufferings of others, by giving voice to the voiceless, and by taking steps to help all live in dignity and peace.

PONDER: What organizations exist in my own community to help the homeless, the hungry, or the addicted? How can I offer my help?

PRAY: *Good Thief, may my eyes be opened like yours to recognize my Savior!*