

Mystery by Mystery

A BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH THE ROSARY



About This Study

We hope that you'll dive in, grow in the Lord, and share with others what beauty God reveals to you through it. If you are doing this study independently, know that we at HOM are here for you & that you also have a LARGE community of women through our website and social media that are participating too!

You are truly never alone!

If you are completing this study in a group setting - we are excited that you have found a local community to grow with, on top of our online sisterhood. Please use this study journal for your reference, resource, and more during your meetings and the personal time leading up to it.

Looking for a group? Please visit www.heartofmarywf.com/groups to find a meet up near you.

Are you already in one but not listed on our website? Looking to start one? Please contact us for more information about our "HOM Ambassador" program. We have team members available specifically to help you grow a local group and lead other women through community, prayer, and devotion. Their support is available at all times. We also want to help you grow! We will advertise your group on our website & social media! And we have free resources for you as well. Please email us at heartofmarywf@aol.com

Note: All written content has been reviewed by a Catholic spiritual director to cross check that all statements are align with the teachings and tenants of the Roman Catholic Church.

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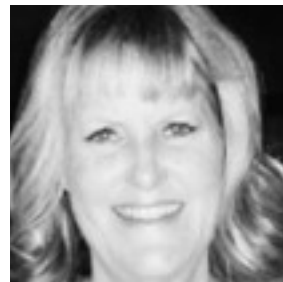
Team



Writer
Michelle



Writing Director
Christine



Journal Curator
Michelle

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Reflection on the Joyful Mysteries in their Entirety

“The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: ‘charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.’”

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1832

While we pray the Rosary, we ask for an increase of the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, as well as to be gifted the promises of Christ. The Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary are those promises of Christ, the living examples of what we hope to obtain. They are: a chaste heart to be one with the Holy Trinity (The Annunciation), the faith to trust in God’s will (Mary visits Elizabeth), a lack of vanity, and a strong sense of compassion for the poor (The Birth of Our Lord in a stable), obedience (The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple), and an unending sense of perseverance (The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple). While it may seem simple enough, I catch myself, quite often, doubting the journey God has taken me on, questioning the traditions of the Church (I’ll maybe go to confession next week...), and even checking out the new iPhone, knowing darn well mine is fine. Faith, hope, charity, patience, and peace are the



Luke 1: 28-35

“Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you...And the angel said to her in reply, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.’”

“Hail, favored one!” Wow! Ok, I admit, I know I am not the favored one. I was born with original sin, the propensity to sin, etc. Mary was not a sinner, nor was she born with original sin...she was the Lord’s favored one who was given the responsibility to birth Our Lord! Do you suppose she believed it? I can hardly believe it, to be honest with you. William Biersach writes, “To even suggest that an ordinary woman could handle such a task is to mock the intellect. Reason dictates that she had to be special indeed” (Of Mary There is Never Enough, 23). Extremely special, indeed.

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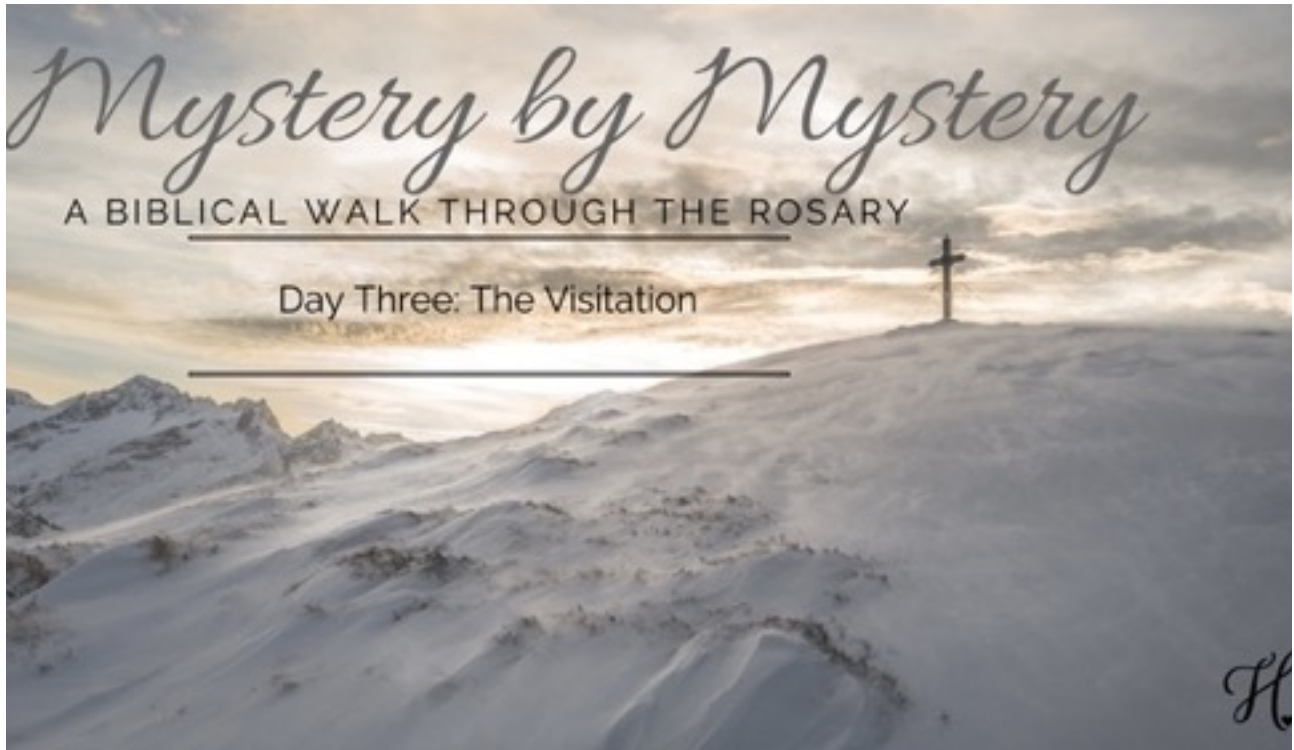
I think we are also indeed special, just in other ways. Let's challenge ourselves to examine our lives. Let's look at everyone who surrounds us, the shelter that houses us, the resources abundantly available to each of us, and ask God what we did to deserve His blessings. I bet there isn't much of an answer other than, "He loves us." To be honest, that should be enough. Just as with Biersach's book *Of Mary There is Never Enough*, I would argue God's love is never enough for us.

Mary didn't have a home or many resources, but she felt gratitude. "The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name." Luke 1:49 Let's open our hearts as Mary did. **-Michelle**

Reflect: Let's focus today on accepting the blessings God provides, solely because He loves us.

Reflect: We don't deserve the blessings God provides us, but He continues to bless us as He did when He chose Mary as the Mother of the Lord. Do you think that, because we are made in His likeness, and He deserves everything, we are deserving of the graces God gives us?

Act: Offer up your decade of the rosary to God and be thankful today, because you are favored, just like Mary.



“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her.”

Luke 1:39-56

I mentioned yesterday that perhaps Mary might have doubted the angel when he told her of her impending partum stage. Wouldn't you have questioned a little further, knowing that children are conceived a certain way, requiring a certain act to occur, following the wedding hopefully? Mary was an unwed virgin when she was told she would bear Jesus, the son of God, and she went with it, blindly, openly, with faith. What is remarkable about this mystery also is that Elizabeth, her older cousin, believed the same to be true, without a doubt in sight!

How many times do we doubt the path God has us on? He ALWAYS amazes me, even when I expect something to happen, and He is pretty consistent in making Himself presently known, so to speak. For as many years as I can remember, God shows me the time 11:11 as a way to remind me that He is around. At

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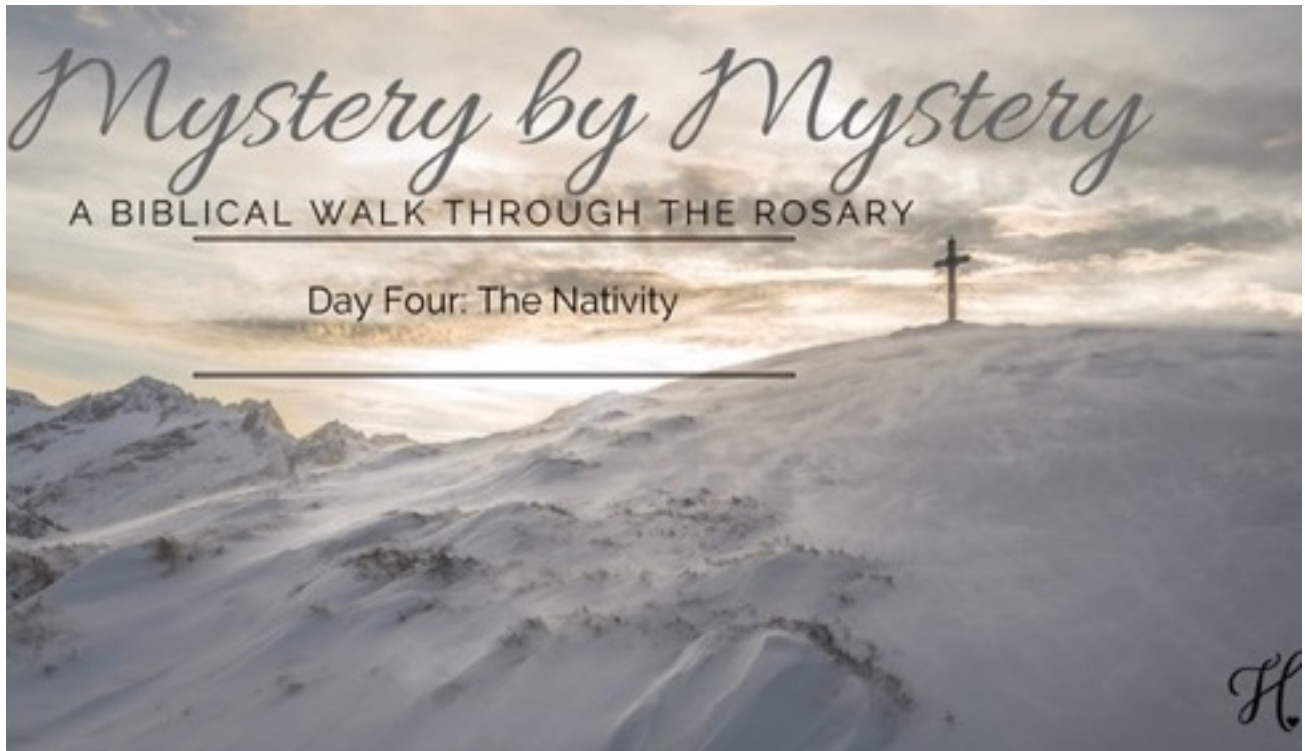
32, I still doubt His omnipresence, and I shouldn't. Mary didn't doubt the angel and Elizabeth didn't doubt the Holy Spirit. As women, we should look to these two as role models for ourselves, young and old alike. Mary and Elizabeth's faith reminds me of Saint Teresa of Calcutta and her unending drive to fulfill God's wish that she help the poor, which we will approach more tomorrow.

I worry a lot about the future, and I think it is more common than not for women to be "worrywarts." Elizabeth and Mary weren't concerned with the outcome of what was happening to them other than it being God's will and that was enough. Patience and faithfulness can be used to describe Mary and Elizabeth's experience with God, and mothers especially should take note of that. Many things in this world are out of our control, but the Bible continuously tells us, Do not be afraid. **-Michelle**

Reflect: Today, think of a time, preferably an ongoing struggle, in which you doubted God's guidance.

Reflect: Are you trying to control something that is out of your control? Is it due to fear? Can you let go of it?

Act: While meditating on the decade of Mary's visitation to Elizabeth, ask God to continue to guide you in His path, and for the courage to continue in prayer to glorify and trust His great works. Do not be afraid today.



“While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Luke 2: 6-7

One recurring theme throughout our Lord’s birth is that of poverty, and of having compassion for the poor. Many of us are seeing more and more people in our neighborhoods affected by poverty. Also, many people, such as Saint Teresa of Calcutta, have brought much needed attention to the plight of the poor, and modern technology has connected us and made it easier for all of us to see the effects of poverty. Organizations, politicians, and religious leaders attempt to lessen the harm done to individuals affected by the discrepancy of wealth, faulty economies, victims of abuse, addiction, and natural disasters, to the tune of billions, if not trillions of U.S. dollars worldwide. And yet, there is still war and poverty and suffering. Where is God in all this world-wide suffering and poverty?

I think it is a reasonable question to ask each other, however, as Christians we know Christ is poverty. We need to constantly remind ourselves that each and every person on earth is made by God and in His own likeness, out of love. We should strive for modesty in material goods and generosity in tithing. We should support the men and women around the globe on the ground, such as the Missionaries of Charity, taking care of the poorest of the poor. We should ask God for kindness and gentleness in dealing with our family, friends, foes, and forgotten, who struggle with addiction and disease. God asks us to care for people of all circumstances and situations because in those people, we find God.

That's a lot to take in I think, and probably unreasonable for many of us reading right now. One of the things I know we can do though, is not judge. We don't know anything about the individuals we pass on the streets, read about in the news, nor should we care about the individual story. **-Michelle**

Reflect: Is there something in particular that you are having difficulty practicing detachment?

Reflect: Is there a person in your life right now in need of charity? Is there something you can do to bring God's mercy to that person?

Act: Today, while praying the Joyful Mysteries, or at least one decade meditating on the birth of our Lord, ask Jesus through Mary to strengthen your compassion for all individuals, and to allow you the opportunity to make a positive contribution towards a struggling individual's life. Jesus is everywhere and Jesus is LOVE.

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. God still loves the world and sends you and me to be His love, His compassion to the poor. Mother Teresa Center



“When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord...And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.”

Luke 2:22-38

The presentation in the temple, which is akin to the baptism, is a sign of obedience, that we, as Catholics, know so well. I think a baptism has more purpose, in that it washes clean the soul from original sin, but the root of obedience and gratitude to God is the same, as well as the promise to live a faithful life. After everything Mary and Joseph had been through, they dedicated their son, Jesus, our Lord, to our Father. In this act, the family asked for continued guidance and grace in raising their son. We ask the Holy Trinity for faithfulness and self-control, both of which can be attained through active Christian lives, more so than being a “cafeteria Catholic,” which we might all be accused of at times.

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How often do we hear people complain about the “demands” of the Catholic Church? At 32, I have been raised in the Church, attended Catholic schooling in elementary, secondary, and at the university level, and every single day there is a new piece of information that I learn about my faith. The Church is not demanding, in that the constant education it is providing allows us parishioners to take control of our faith and better live it in this sin-filled world. Many times finding the time to pray is difficult, but how often does saying just one Hail Mary completely help the situation?! Asking the Lord for continued aid in self-control for prayer can only help each one of us in our daily lives.

At the agony in the garden, Jesus asks Simon to keep watch for only one hour, “Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test,” Mark 14:37-38. Jesus asks us directly to pray for at least an hour, preferably a day, I would guess. The only way to defeat the devil is prayer. The best way to learn to pray properly is by attending Mass. The way to start attending the Mass fully is to be dedicated to the Church and her teachings.

Reflect: How is your prayer life right now? Is there something that you should be doing to improve it?

Reflect: The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a blessing to us. When was the last time you made a good confession? Do you need to make time in your schedule for this sacrament?

Act: Today, while praying on the decade dedicated to the presentation of Jesus in the temple, ask our Lord for the strength to attend Mass every holy day of obligation; ask the Lord for the strength to be active in your faith and enjoy your time in prayer as one of the greatest blessings available. Thank the Lord today for presenting you to the “temple.”



Luke 2:41-52 Luke 22:46

“Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”

Luke 2:41-52

“Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test.”

Luke 22:46

Today’s mystery is the culmination of Jesus taking complete control of His faith. A child is a reflection of his parents, and in this case it was God and Mary. If I were a betting woman, my money’s on Jesus being the Messiah. No matter what a parent does, however, the child always has free will at the end of the day, and Jesus could have rejected God. Rejection is in many heartbreaking stories we hear among our friends and families, and feel within our own homes. Thankfully, He didn’t reject the teachings of our Lord and, in fact, converted billions to God’s will.

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Jesus spent many hours reading the laws of Moses and David and studying with the rabbis, starting with those first three days spent in His father's house at the age of 12. Throughout the Bible, Jesus reminds us to spend time in prayer, teaching us the Our Father, and directing us in Gethsemane to take a holy hour. Even Jesus didn't think He could do it all alone, and spent day after day asking the Lord our Father to assist Him in kindness, peace, and patience, some things I think we could each use in our daily lives.

Reflect: When did you start taking control of your own faith?

Reflect: Is there time in the week we can commit more towards prayer, reflection, and learning? You are reading this, so one positive checkmark for the week!

Act: Today, pray the entire Joyful Mysteries, all five decades. Reflect on the journey Jesus had from conception to age 12, birth in the manger to being found in the temple after staying behind from the caravan. Ask God today for a student mentality in your approach to faith. While most of us are not completing the Liturgy of the Hours daily, commit to prayer every single day. Pray we don't have to face any tests, but if we do, have faith that the Lord will grant us joy. **-Michelle**

If you aren't familiar with the rosary, there is no better month than October to devote yourself to it as this is the month Holy Mother Church devotes herself to the rosary. I *could* write about how beautiful a prayer it is; about its power; and about how, when praying the rosary, the Christian is looking at the Gospel message through the eyes of Mary, the mother of Jesus. But words fail. Rather, I'll let Pope St. John Paul II do the introductions from his beautiful apostolic letter, [Rosarium Virginis Mariae](#).

"The Rosary of the Virgin Mary...is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium. Simple yet profound, it still remains, at the dawn of this third millennium, a prayer of great significance, destined to bring forth a harvest of holiness. It blends easily into the spiritual journey of the Christian life, which, after two thousand years, has lost none of the freshness of its beginnings and feels drawn by the Spirit of God to "set out into the deep" (duc in altum!) in order once more to proclaim, and even cry out, before the world that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour, "the way, and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6), "the goal of human history and the point on which the desires of history and civilization turn."

The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the *depth of the Gospel message in its entirety*, of which it can be said to be a compendium. It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial *Magnificat* for the work of the redemptive Incarnation which began in her virginal womb. With the Rosary, the Christian people *sits at the school of Mary* and is led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer."-**Christine**

