



REFLECTION ON THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY.

THE ROSARY IS A USEFUL TOOL FOR CATHOLICS, ASSISTING US IN CENTERING OURSELVES IN LIVING COMMUNION WITH JESUS. THE ROSARY CONSISTS OF A SERIES OF 'ROSES' (PRAYERS) WHICH ARE PRAYED WHILE MEDIATING ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST AND OUR LADY.

TAKING INSPIRATION FROM THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES, THE CHRISTIAN NETWORK AGAINST CASTE DISCRIMINATION (CNACD) HAVE PRODUCED THE FOLLOWING REFLECTIONS FOR EACH OF THE FIVE MYSTERIES. EACH REFLECTION INVITES US TO CONSIDER THE FACE OF JESUS IN OUR FELLOW SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

THE FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY: The Annunciation

Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”— Luke 1:30-33

In this mystery we contemplate Mary being told that she would give birth to the Son of God. We might reflect on Jesus being conceived in a country that linked the three main continents known at that time, and which linked people of all shades of skin colour. As Christians we rejoice as Jesus was born not simply to redeem one chosen race of people, but to redeem the whole world.

In this mystery we consider how God did not choose a financially rich household or a people that ruled over many lands. An imposed queen or empress was not selected. Instead, God chose a humble, relatively unknown girl to become the Mother of God and Queen of Heaven.

Loving Father, thank you for giving us Jesus, who came to redeem the whole world. Help us to see people through your eyes; to value purity of heart over status or financial wealth.

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys (contemplating the mystery), Glory Be, The Fatima Prayer

THE SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY: The Visitation

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? – Luke 1:41-43

In this mystery we ponder the pregnant Mary making the journey to her cousin Elizabeth, who too was pregnant. We can imagine the joy of Elizabeth, taken aback that the Mother of God would make the journey to visit her, a woman of old age. Elizabeth had struggled with infertility, which many may have incorrectly believed was a punishment from God.

In this episode, we rejoice that Mary, our spiritual mother, is with each of us no matter our class, caste, colour or background. We delight that the most blessed of all women, loves all of us and is besides us in our joys and our sorrows. Elizabeth was elderly, a woman and barren and therefore had limited status. Despite this, Elizabeth was the only person mentioned in the Bible to have received a visit from Our Lady. While we as human beings, sometimes fail to recognise the dignity of our fellow human beings due their age or status, the Mother of God did not forget that we are all made in the image and likeness of God.

Loving God, thank you for giving us a spiritual mother and role model in Mary. Guide us in following her example of spending time with the forgotten and marginalized, and in celebrating in our hearts, their joys as our own.

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys (contemplating the mystery), Glory Be, The Fatima Prayer

THE THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY: The Birth of Our Lord

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." – Luke 1:10-14

In this mystery we remember Jesus's birth and the shepherds visiting him while he lay in a manger. For hundreds of years the coming of Jesus had been prophesized. Yet, when the creator of the world was finally born, most failed to recognise him. He was spurned and rejected by men as Isaiah had prophesized. There was no room for Jesus either at the inn or in people's hearts. It was the humble, poor shepherds that God chose to be revealed to; it is they who would become rich in faith.

Today so many are rejected like Jesus. While they may not be laid in a manger, so many come into the world to a life of simplicity and poverty. Whilst they may carry their cross each day, they can seek comfort in knowing that Jesus has promised the Kingdom of God to the poor in spirit, an inheritance greater than any earthly wealth. For those in comfort, will we be tempted to misguidedly seek joy through status and popularity, or will we recognise that true joy comes through Jesus?

Wise and loving God, help us to be like the shepherds and to recognise Jesus amongst us now, especially in the marginalized, persecuted and forgotten. May we open our hearts to be blessed in encountering you in the rejected and downtrodden.

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys (contemplating the mystery), Glory Be, The Fatima Prayer

THE FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY: The Presentation in the Temple

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, "Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord," – Luke 2:22-23

Just as Hannah had dedicated her son to the Lord, Mary and Jesus presented their son at the temple in Jerusalem.

In this mystery we remember Simeon meeting and blessing them and saying to Mary, "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many..." Hundreds of people may have been in the Temple that day, but they did not recognise Jesus for who he was. Like Simeon, we are called to see Jesus through the eyes of faith as the glory of God's people.

Also, like Jesus, we too are called to consecrate our lives to the Lord and to help the poor in spirit to rise. No person or peoples have the right to own so much wealth or power, that it leads to the deprivation of others. Anti-casteism, anti-racism etc., are not about charity. We are called to give back to the oppressed what is theirs: their dignity, their rights, their land and resources, their opportunities to flourish and live out their calling.

Generous Father, you have given the world all that it needs. Help us to dedicate our lives to raising high the lowly and to filling the starving with good things. In this way, may we continue to give glory to you.

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys (contemplating the mystery), Glory Be, The Fatima Prayer

THE FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY: The Finding in the Temple

All who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. — Luke 2:47-49

In this mystery we contemplate Jesus being found in the temple after three days, conversing with elders.

Like Mary and Joseph, we too can become busy with the celebrations and obligations of life. Sometimes people can go days, months or even years without feeling they are near Jesus. However, we can feel joyful that we have the Mass, sacraments, and beauty of God's creation to help us to re-find God each day.

Sometimes we also forget that the beauty of God's creation includes us, in our sisters and brothers. We are reminded at the very beginning of the Bible, that we as humans are not just created good, but very good and made in God's image. As children of God, we are all of infinite value.

Heavenly Father, thank you for our sisters and brothers around the world. Bless us all, as one global family, to shine forth your goodness and to recognise your goodness in each other.

Our Father, 10 Hail Marys (contemplating the mystery), Glory Be, The Fatima Prayer

Hail Holy Queen

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. Pray for us, that we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.