

Unity in Diversity

A Scriptural Rosary

The document *Unity in Diversity: A Scriptural Rosary* was developed as a resource by the Committee on Migration of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for National Migration Week. It was reviewed by the committee chairman, Bishop John C. Wester, and has been authorized for publication by the undersigned.

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The Catholic bishops of the United States, in their pastoral letter *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*, invite us to enter into the mystery of the Mystical Body of Christ. As St. Paul teaches in his first letter to the Corinthians, the mystery is that we are made part of that Body through our Baptism. By learning to celebrate our individual differences while embracing our union with others, we grow not only in our understanding of Jesus, but in the knowledge of our own true selves.

Such knowledge flies in the face of a culture that promotes fear of immigrants and that excludes or imprisons refugees and asylum seekers. In their pastoral letter, the bishops challenge us to embrace our sisters and brothers through a series of four calls: to conversion, to communion, to solidarity, and to evangelization.

There is no better guide to help us enter into this mystery and answer these calls than our Mother Mary. In her miraculous apparitions throughout the world she has embodied the diversity of every race and nation. As our loving Mother, she draws us into union with each other through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Praying the Rosary—particularly with the recent inclusion of the Luminous Mysteries, which celebrate the active ministry of Jesus Christ—is one way in which we can respond to the four calls of

Welcoming the Stranger. As we reflect on the events in the lives of Jesus and Mary, we are invited to consider how even today, we, as Christ’s Mystical Body, continue to share these joyful, luminous, sorrowful, and glorious experiences with one another.

How to Pray the Rosary

Just as we are called to be one from many, so the Rosary is a single great prayer that unites the basic prayers of our faith.

It begins by proclaiming our faith with the *Apostles’ Creed*. The great prayer of intercession given to us by Jesus himself, the *Our Father*, comes next. Then we pray the words of praise first spoken to Mary by the Angel Gabriel and her kinswoman, Elizabeth: the *Hail Mary*. Each set of ten Hail Marys begins with a brief reflection—called a “mystery”—on one event in the lives of Jesus and Mary. With Pope John Paul II’s inclusion of the Mysteries of Light (or “Luminous Mysteries”), there are twenty Mysteries in all. These are divided into four sets of five: the Joyful, the Luminous, the Sorrowful, and the Glorious Mysteries. Each set ends with the *Fatima Prayer* and the prayer of praise to the Holy Trinity, the *Glory Be*, for in all things Mary seeks only to lead us closer to God. Finally,

after five sets of one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and a Glory Be, we end with a final prayer of praise for our Mother: the *Hail, Holy Queen*.

The Rosary is a prayer that teaches us to contemplate. The repeated mantra of familiar prayers invites us to reflect on the lives of Jesus and Mary and to discern how their experiences call us to respond to the events of the world today.

The 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 liv-
ing 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.

The 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 (Doxology)

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.

Prayer of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Fatima

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us
from the fires of hell, lead all souls to
heaven, especially those who have most
need of your mercy.

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy: Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

The Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation—Luke 1:29-32

“Do not be afraid,” the Angel Gabriel told Mary. When we are confronted with change in our lives, it is hard not to be afraid. For the immigrant and refugee, change may require leaving behind family, friends, and home. When we make room in our lives to welcome newcomers, we change as well. We pray for the grace of love, which casts out all fear.

The Visitation—Luke 1:39-45

During her pregnancy, Mary was a woman on the move, going to visit her cousin Elizabeth in the hill country. Today, millions of women—often pregnant or with young children—are forced to flee their homelands. We pray for the grace of hospitality, to welcome them into our country and our homes as Elizabeth welcomed Mary.

The Nativity—Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 2:13-15

Jesus was born a migrant. Bethlehem had no room, no welcome for the outsiders, so Jesus was born in a stable. The wrath of King Herod turned Jesus and his family into refugees. Today, migrants and refugees are still forced from their homes by poverty, war, disaster, or oppression. We pray for the grace of charity, to offer them comfort and consolation.

The Presentation—Luke 2:22-38

Simeon and Anna created a welcoming community when the Holy Family came to the temple. They were rewarded with the recognition that they had seen God’s Holy One. We are challenged to create welcoming communities in our own churches. We pray for the grace to recognize Jesus present in each immigrant and refugee.

The Finding in the Temple—Luke 2:41-50

How frantic Mary and Joseph must have been to discover that the child Jesus was missing, and how relieved they were to recover him. Many thousands of refugees today are “unaccompanied minors”—lost children with no parents to seek and reclaim them. We pray for the grace to find loving homes and families for them, as we would for Jesus himself.

The Luminous Mysteries

The Baptism in the Jordan— Mark 1:9-11

When John baptized Jesus, the heavens opened, the Spirit descended, and a heavenly voice proclaimed: “You are my beloved Son.” Yet many still refused to recognize Jesus as the anointed one of God. Today, many still fail to recognize the signs of our Christ’s presence in our immigrant sisters and brothers. We pray for the grace to open ourselves to welcome Christ.

The Wedding at Cana—John 2:1-12

Jesus initially resisted beginning his public ministry at Cana, saying, “My hour has not yet come.” Yet in the face of need, he could not fail to respond. We too have many reasons why we do not have time to get involved in public issues such as immigration. In the face of our sister’s and brother’s need, however, how can we refuse? We ask for the grace to act on behalf of others when God calls us.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom—Matthew 5–7

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus proclaimed a Kingdom that turns the world’s traditional wisdom on end. In the Kingdom of God, it is the poor, the meek, the peacemakers, and the oppressed who are blessed, while the rich and powerful turn away sad. We pray for the grace to create this Peaceable

Kingdom in our age, by welcoming the poor, oppressed migrants who turn to us seeking a home.

The Transfiguration—Luke 9:29-36

When the dazzling brilliance of the transfigured Jesus was revealed to the disciples, they saw not only a prefiguring of the Resurrection, but also the change they themselves would undergo when they received the fullness of the Spirit at Pentecost. We pray for the grace of transformation—of ourselves and of our nation—into the welcoming Body of Christ.

The Institution of the Eucharist— Luke 24:19-27

Even as Jesus gave his own body and blood to the Apostles, they persisted in quarreling over who was the greatest. Christ’s last instruction to them was that the greatest is the one who serves the lowliest. We ask for the grace to serve those who come among us as “aliens,” unwelcome and spurned.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony in the Garden—Mark 14:34-42

Part of Christ’s suffering was that he endured it alone. The Apostles slumbered while his persecutors approached. Are we asleep as well? Do we recognize the injustice of current immigration policy? Do we speak on behalf of asylum

seekers? We pray for the grace of solidarity with those who are denied welcome in our country.

The Scouring at the Pillar— John 19:1

Pilate used torture to try to force a confession from Jesus. Today, asylum seekers and torture victims who flee to the United States are often deported or imprisoned for failing to possess proper documents. We pray for forgiveness for our silence and the courage to speak out on their behalf.

The Crowning with Thorns— Matthew 27:27-30

Jesus' captors were not content with torture; they humiliated him, crowned him with thorns, and mocked him. Racism, prejudice, cruel stereotypes, and verbal abuse are the thorns that pierce many new migrants as they seek work, housing, and education for their children. We pray for compassion and for the grace to heal the wounds that divide us.

The Carrying of the Cross—Luke 23:26

The burden of the Cross was so great that without the help of Simon of Cyrene, Jesus would have been crushed by its weight. Often, refugees bear crushing guilt from having survived when their children, parents, and spouses died horribly. Who can endure this alone? We pray for the grace to be present to

their suffering and help them carry their burden.

The Crucifixion—Mark 15:37

And with a loud cry, he breathed his last and died. Do the "illegal aliens" cry when they die of dehydration in the western desert, or drown in the Florida Straits, or suffocate in a cargo container? We pray for the grace to understand that no human is illegal, and that every life is sacred.

The Glorious Mysteries

The Resurrection—John 20:18

"I have seen the Lord!" With these words, Mary Magdalene answered the call to evangelize, to share the Gospel of new life with others. We are also called to share the Good News that Jesus is alive and among us today. Like Mary, however, at first we may not recognize him. We pray for the grace to recognize and proclaim the Body of Christ, alive in each person we meet.

The Ascension—Acts 1:11

"Why are you standing there looking at the sky?" the angels asked after Jesus was taken up. Why indeed do we stand waiting for Jesus to miraculously create a welcoming Kingdom? We are the ones who must seek the grace to change our hearts and our society. We are the ones who must create the welcoming community here on earth. We pray for the grace of conversion.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit— Acts 2:5-11

At Pentecost, people of every nation were in Jerusalem, yet each heard the Apostles' proclamation of the Spirit in their native tongues. Today we experience the same diversity of language and culture in our land. We pray for the grace of true communion: the appreciation of the richness and beauty that each tradition brings to God's table.

The Assumption—Luke 1:46-55

Mary glorified the Lord, and her spirit rejoiced in God her savior, and God raised her up and exalted her. In her Assumption, the lowly are raised up, the hungry are fed, and mercy is bestowed on God's children. We pray for the grace to follow Mary's example by our tender care for the stranger in our midst.

The Coronation of Mary— Revelations 12:1-6

It is a radiant Mary, clothed in the sun and crowned with stars, who reigns as Queen of Heaven and battles the dragon who would destroy her child. As her children, we are called to battle the dragons of fear, prejudice, intolerance, and exclusion that separate us from our sisters and brothers. We pray for the grace of courageous, loving hearts.