

Luminous mysteries of the rosary for an end to hunger

The rosary

Each year, more and more people around the world are going hungry, despite there being enough food in the world to feed everyone. We offer these luminous mysteries, uplifted by our faith in Jesus, Light of the World. In this way we nourish our commitment to dispel the darkness of poverty and tackle the causes of hunger in our world.

Guided by Mary, mother of Jesus and mother of all, may we be open to let these mysteries penetrate deep within us and respond with compassion to the scandal of hunger and poverty in our world.

Begin by making the Sign of the Cross and professing 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 of 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.

Pray one Our Father on the single bead nearest the cross

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.

Pray one Hail Mary on each of the next three beads for an increase in faith, hope and charity.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst 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.

On the next single bead, pray the 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.

Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan

Then Jesus appeared: he came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him, with the words, "It is I who need baptism from you, and yet you come to me!" But Jesus replied, "Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that uprightness demands." Then John gave in to him.

And when Jesus had been baptised he at once came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And suddenly there was a voice from heaven, "This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him." (*Matthew 3:13-17*)

As Jesus is baptised, the Holy Spirit comes down upon him and God's love for his Son is declared in a voice from heaven.

We are all beloved children of God, and yet too many of us face hunger because the way our food system works is broken. It is failing to deliver the food that people need and it is threatening the earth, our common home.

As we pray this mystery, we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Moved by the Spirit, may we seek to reach out and play our part in tackling the underlying reasons why millions of people do not have the food that they need.

Pray the Our Father.

Pray a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads of the decade.

Pray the Glory Be. You may also want to add the Fatima invocation:

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

The Wedding at Cana

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. And they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the feast had all been used, and the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." Jesus said, "Woman, what do you want from me? My hour has not come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. Then he said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the president of the feast." They did this; the president tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – though the servants who had drawn the water knew – the president of the feast called the bridegroom and said, "Everyone serves the good wine first and the worse wine when the guests are well wined; but you have kept the best wine till now."

This was the first of Jesus' signs: it was at Cana in Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. (*John 2:1-11*)

Imagine running out of wine at a party or inviting people to an event and not having enough to go round. How embarrassing. And yet, we know that despite there being enough food produced for everyone in the world, a third of it is wasted, while around 800 million people go hungry every day.

Where is our embarrassment as a society that this is our reality?

At the wedding in Cana, Jesus is reluctant to help. His time has not yet come. But Mary encourages Jesus to act. She speaks to the servants and tells them to listen to him. As a result, Jesus performs his first miracle and changes water into wine. God provides, not just enough, but an abundance, that is meant to be shared.

And so, as we contemplate this mystery, we turn to Mary. We prayerfully ask her to intercede for us, and for our world. Through her intervention, we pray that Jesus may lead us to make a change so that all people, in our local community and throughout the world, may have enough to eat.

Pray the Our Father.

Pray a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads of the decade.

Pray the Glory Be. You may also want to add the Fatima invocation.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the gospel from God saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel.” (*Mark 1:14-15*)

As we reflect on this mystery, we also try to answer the call to repent and believe the gospel.

We ask forgiveness for the things we have done wrong in our own lives, for the times we have hurt others, and for the part we play in a world which is unjust and unequal.

All around the world, including here, families are finding it harder than ever to put food on the table due to rising costs.

There are many reasons why this crisis is happening. Climate change, the coronavirus pandemic and the Ukraine conflict have caused food prices to rise.

The food crisis is particularly severe in East Africa, where millions of families are facing an extreme food shortage. There have been four failed harvests due to the region’s worse drought in decades.

Isacko, who works for a local Church organisation in Marsabit, Kenya says: “Because of lack of water and pasture, many animals – goats, sheep, cows and even camels died. The remaining ones have been very weak so they can hardly fetch any amount from the market, let alone produce milk for the family.”

And so, as we say this decade of the rosary, we ask Mary to pray for us as we express our sorrow at the injustice which leads to poverty and hunger in our world. And we trust that with God’s help we may transform our world, so that it better reflects his Kingdom of love and plenty for all. A Kingdom which is close at hand.

Pray the Our Father.

Pray a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads of the decade.

Pray the Glory Be. You may also want to add the Fatima invocation.

The Transfiguration

Jesus took with him Peter, John, James and went up to the mountain to pray. And it happened that, as he was praying, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became sparkling white... And a voice came from the cloud saying, "This is my son, the Chosen One. Listen to him. (*Luke 9:28-29, 35*)

In the Transfiguration, Jesus is completely transformed while praying. The disciples finally catch a glimpse of him in his full glory and come to understand that he is the Son of God.

In rural Bangladesh, Alpona is growing food in a different way on her small farm. After she and her community received training from CAFOD in organic farming, things changed quite dramatically.

"We had not realised just how big a mistake we had made by moving away from the traditional ways of farming of our forefathers. We had become disconnected from nature, but now we are going back to it again.

"I get a great deal of vegetables and fruits from my organic farming, which is enough for the family to eat, and which I can sell at the market too. Our village has become a lot greener and healthier after so many of us shifted to organic farming, and the soil has greatly improved."

Through our prayers we can also hope for wonderful changes. As we pray, let us open our hearts so that God may lead us to live differently, as we change our own lives and the world around us.

Pray the Our Father.

Pray a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads of the decade.

Pray the Glory Be. You may also want to add the Fatima invocation.

The Institution of the Eucharist

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to his disciples. "Take it and eat," he said, "this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them saying, "Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (*Matthew 26:26-28*)

Jesus shared his Last Supper with the disciples and invited us all to take part in this feast, each time we receive the Eucharist. We share in the body and blood of the Lord, and it commits us to one another. We become one body, many parts, in Christ.

As one body, when one of us is hurt, hungry or abandoned, we are all hurt, hungry and abandoned. Yet, as we go out from Mass, and our sharing in the Eucharist, we realise that injustice and hunger keep us divided and apart. There are many people missing from the

table that God spreads for us all. Too many of us are not receiving our fair share of the bountiful gift of creation. Too many are excluded, overlooked and ignored.

After receiving the Eucharist, we are sent out to “love and to serve the Lord”. As we contemplate this mystery, we pray that we may be nourished and strengthened by the gift of the Eucharist to honour Christ, not just in bread and wine, but also in one another. And to ensure that all our brothers and sisters are able to access their fair share of food.

Pray the Our Father.

Pray a Hail Mary on each of the ten beads of the decade.

Pray the Glory Be. You may also want to add the Fatima invocation.

We finish our rosary for an end to hunger with a final invocation to our blessed Virgin Mary and ask her to pray for us, that we may build a world which reflects God’s Kingdom of peace and plenty for all.

Mary, Mother of us all,
pray for us, that our meditation on these mysteries
may guide us into new ways of seeing the world,
new ways of living so everyone has enough to eat,
new ways of being global neighbours
and sharing the gifts we have been given fairly,
as we seek to build the Kingdom to which your Son calls us.
Amen.

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