



HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY WITH YOUR HEART

The rosary is a Christological and Marian prayer because you contemplate the life of Jesus through Mary. Its name means a crown of roses, because each Hail Mary is a rose you offer to Mary. Here are some tips for how to pray it with your heart and not mechanically.

1. Contemplate the mysteries

The rosary is a contemplative prayer. The four sets of mysteries (joyful, luminous, sorrowful, and glorious) are a journey through the whole life of Jesus. Through the rosary you contemplate the mysteries of his life. More precisely, you contemplate the life of Jesus through the eyes and heart of Mary.

“Mary was a peerless model of contemplation of Christ. Memories of Jesus, imprinted on her mind and on her heart, marked every instant of Mary’s existence. We can say that the prayer of the Rosary is modelled precisely on Mary, because it consists in contemplating the mysteries of Christ in spiritual union with the Mother of the Lord.” –Benedict XVI

How to deepen the contemplative nature of the rosary

1. After you announce the mystery of the Rosary and before you pray the Our Father, spend some time of silence contemplating the mystery.
2. During the recitation of the rosary, try to enter the mystery through Mary. Your lips recite the Hail Mary but the mind thinks on the mystery: *“By its nature the recitation of the Rosary calls for a quiet rhythm and a lingering pace, helping the individual to meditate on the mysteries of the Lord’s life as seen through the eyes of her who was closest to the Lord.”*
–St. John Paul II
3. Something that can enhance contemplation is reading a short biblical passage related to the mystery.

“The Rosary is my favorite prayer. A marvelous prayer! Marvelous in its simplicity and its depth. ... Against the background of the words Ave Maria the principal events of the life of Jesus Christ pass before the eyes of the soul.”

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2. Vocal prayer

The rosary is also a vocal prayer. For this reason, it is necessary to synchronize words and mind: Think in your mind about the words you say with your lips. Say them with affection. Think of the joy these words bring to Mary. Don't rush the rosary.

Pay special attention to the center of the Hail Mary, the word JESUS. Say that word, the name of Jesus, with love: *"The center of gravity in the Hail Mary, the hinge as it were, that joins its two parts, is the name of Jesus. Sometimes, in hurried recitation, this center of gravity can be overlooked, with it the connection to the mystery of Christ being contemplated."*
—St. John Paul II

3. Intercessory prayer

The rosary is also an intercessory prayer. We pray to Jesus through Mary. You can either offer a whole rosary for one person or special intention, or you can offer each mystery, or even each Hail Mary, for a different intention.

"The Rosary is both meditation and supplication. Insistent prayer to the Mother of God is based on the confidence that her maternal intercession can obtain all things from the heart of her Son." —St. John Paul II

4. Other Tips

- Fight against distractions. If you get distracted, just keep coming back to contemplation, to intercession, or to vocal prayer.

- If you don't have enough time for a whole Rosary, pray a decade or two with attentiveness and devotion.
- Pray before an image or with a holy card of Mary to inspire more devotion.
- Carry a blessed Rosary with you. It will remind you of the presence of Mary and the call to pray.
- Once a year do or renew your Marian Consecration on a Marian Feast day.

When should you pray the Rosary?

- Every day
- When you drive or on a long trip
- When you are tempted or feel lukewarm
- Before the Mass so you can celebrate it with more peace.
- On Marian feast days as a way of honoring Our Lady.
- As a family, pray the Rosary together once a week. The family that prays together stays together.

More Resources

- *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, by St. John Paul II
- *33 days to Morning Glory*, by Michael Gaitley
- *The Scriptural Rosary*
- *Hail Holy Queen*, by Scott Hahn
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