



Our Lady of Victories Horsley Park

Under the Pastoral Care of the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel
Celebrating Community



**Our Lady Of Victories
Catholic Parish**
1788 The Horsley Drive, Horsley Park

Our Lady Queen of Peace
215 Western Road, Kemps Creek

We pay our respects and acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land. May we walk gently and respectfully upon the land.

Parish Priest
Fr Dominik Karnas CSMA

Assistant Priest
Fr Marek Okarma CSMA

**Pastoral Associate / Parish
Safeguarding Support Officer:**
Mary Farrell

Parish Pastoral Council
Chairperson: Martin O'Connell
Deputy: Michelle Favotto

Parish Secretaries: Lauren Favretti,
Julie Menon, Edda Santucci

Parish Office
Monday-Friday 9.30am to 2.30pm
PO Box 56 Horsley Park 2175
☎ 9620 1242 Fax: 9620 2101
✉ parish@ourladyofvictories.org.au
🌐 ourladyofvictories.org.au



Mass Times
Horsley Park:
Monday to Friday: 8.30am Rosary
followed by Mass at 9.00am
Saturday: 6.00pm
Sunday: 8.00am, 10.00am
& 6.00pm

Kemps Creek: SUSPENDED

Reconciliation:
Monday to Friday: 8.30am-8.50am
Saturday 5.15pm-5.45pm
At other times by appointment.

Enquiries regarding other Sacraments:
Please ring during office hours.

Marion Catholic Primary School
1788 The Horsley Drive, Horsley Park
Ph: 9620 2045 Fax: 9620 1012
Principal: Therese Gaunt

An induction loop for the hearing impaired is fitted in the centre aisle of the church.

31 October 2021

THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B

INTRODUCTION: Jesus tells us that there is no greater love than that which disposes someone to give up one's life for others and he proved by his own life and death that he meant what he said. Love is so great because, more than anything else, it is a gift from God, who loved us first, and continues to love us in all our failings and inconsistencies. If God keeps accepting us as we are, why then should we not accept those around us? Jesus teaches us that the key to the Kingdom of God is found in balancing our love for God, for ourselves and for our neighbours. We ask God in this Eucharist to help us feel his love and enable us to share it with others.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Forsake me not, O Lord, my God; be not far from me!
Make haste and come to my help, O Lord, my strong salvation.

FIRST READING:

Deuteronomy 6 : 2-6

Hear Israel, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Psalm 17 : 2-4, 47, 51

RESPONSE: I love you, Lord, my strength.

SECOND READING:

Hebrews 7 : 23-28

This one, because he remains for ever, has an eternal priesthood.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia!
All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Mark 12 : 28-34

*This is the first commandment,
and the second is similar to it.*

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.



✠ WE PRAY FOR OUR DECEASED RELATIVES & FRIENDS: CAUCHI Vicki, John, GAUCI John, GRIMA Anthony, Carmel, Joseph, Sam, MARSHALL Kevin, MICALLEF Carmen, MILLSON Colleen, Barry, MONTELEONE Francesca, Giuseppe, MUSCAT Jean, Lewis, SCHEMBRI Joseph, Joe, TABONE Emanuel, VELLA Maryanne, Sylvia, Charlie, Anthony, Stephen. All Souls in Purgatory. All Relatives and Friends. May they rest in peace. Amen

WE PRAY FOR OUR SICK PARISHIONERS. Alyssa Ferreri, Seak Yek Heng, Vicky Vella. *May God's love give them strength and courage.*

Monday 01 November: *All Saints Day*, 9.00am Morning Mass, 7.00pm Mass
Tuesday 02 November: *All Soul's Day*, 9.00am Morning Mass, 7.00pm Mass
Wednesday 03 November: *(Luke 14:25-33)* 8.00am Adoration & Devotion to St Joseph followed by Morning Mass
Thursday 04 November: *(Luke 15:1-10)* *St Charles Borromeo*, 9.00am Morning Mass
Friday 05 November: *(Luke 16:1-8)* *First Friday of the Month*, 8.00am Adoration, 9.00am Morning Mass
Saturday 06 November: *(Luke 16:9-15)* 8.00am Adoration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary followed by Mass, 5.30pm Rosary followed by Mass at 6.00pm
Sunday 07 November: *(1 Kings 17:10-16, Hebrews 9:24-28, Mark 12:38-44)*
8.00am, 9.40am Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by 10.00am Mass, 6.00pm Mass

**FOR YOUR
SAFETY**



**Please use
hand sanitizer**

WEARING FACE MASKS IS MANDATORY

SANITISE ON ENTRY

QR CODE REGISTRATION IS MANDATORY

If you do not have the Service NSW app, register on the sheets in the foyer with your NAME & CONTACT PHONE NUMBER

*Current restrictions only allow 180 people in the church
socially distanced as per the 4sqm rule.
DO NOT SIT IN THE ROPED OFF PEWS.*

Booking for Mass is not required. **If you are not well stay at home.**



MONTHLY DEVOTIONS

Wednesday - November 03: Adoration & Devotion to St Joseph, 8.00am followed by Mass.
Friday - November 05: First Friday, 8.00am Adoration followed by 9.00am Mass
Saturday - November 06: Immaculate Heart of Mary, 8.00am Adoration & Rosary followed by Mass



REMEMBRANCE MASS & COMPASSIONATE COMPANIONS:
Re-commencing as from next month - Thursday 18 November at 10.30am. All welcome, especially those who grieve the death of loved ones and those who support them.

ALL SOUL'S DAY MASS: We will be celebrating All Saints Day, this Monday 01 November with Masses at 9.00am & 7.00pm and All Souls Day, Tuesday 02 November Masses at 9.00am & 7.00pm. All are welcome.

MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY: We continue the Apostolic Letter by Pope John Paul II on the Rosary "Rosarium Virginis Mariae". For the coming weeks we will email the excerpts as we have done so for the past few weeks. If you wish to receive a printed copy please email or call the office.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2022: *Confirmation:* Enrolments are currently being taken for children who will be in Year 6 or older in 2022 and have received the Sacrament of First Eucharist. Enrolment forms are available from the Parish office or our website - ourladyofvictories.org.au, *Sacraments, Parish Sacramental Programme*. Completed forms MUST be returned to the Parish office by Monday 6 December 2021. Classes will commence in February 2022. *Reconciliation & First Eucharist:* For children who will be in Year 3 in 2022 will be celebrated later in the year. Details regarding these sacraments will be communicated in due course.

CHURCH CLEANERS: Can you spare approx. 1 hour every 6 weeks?? Church cleaners are urgently needed to join the current groups who have members soon retiring. If you are able to help, please contact the Parish office on 9620 1242 and leave your details.

NOVEMBER MASS INTENTIONS: Envelopes are available in the magazine rack for those wishing to offer Mass for deceased loved ones during the month of November. However, due to the number of requests it will not be possible to announce all names prior to each Eucharistic celebration. Instead all intentions will be included in the bulletin list.

EUTHANASIA BILL: The anti-euthanasia Coalition, HOPE, has developed an online tool that will allow you to send an email directly to your state MP and to all members of the NSW Upper House. The tool is available at www.no euthanasia.org.au/petition_2108_ocp_nsw

RECLAIMING EVANGELISATION: You are invited to attend Bishop Robert Barron's live online address, Saturday 13 November 11am-12.30pm, as he launches the renewal series, *Reclaiming Evangelisation: How Jesus' Great Commission Will Renew Our Parishes*. He will be speaking on the topic "Why Make Disciples? The Case for the Evangelising Mission of the Church." The series will continue in 2022, with many other inspiring speakers leading conversations about how our parishes can be renewed through seeking to live more fully the mission given to us by Our Lord to call disciples, baptise and teach them. Register at www.gomakedisciples.org.au

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

MYSTERY OF FAITH

We proclaim your death, O Lord,
and profess your resurrection,
until you come again.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages. God from God,
Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven; and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried, and rose again
on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

ROSTERS

COUNTING GROUPS:

THIS WEEK

GROUP 3:
Angelo Basso,
Peter Basso

NEXT WEEK

GROUP 4:
John Borg, Fred Borg,
Emanuel Borg

CLEANING GROUPS:

THIS WEEK GROUP 1:

Diane Borg, Denis
Schembri, Lily
Bugeja, Michelle
Gauci, Patricia
Stuardo, Louise Louis

NEXT WEEK

GROUP 2:
Dorothy Muscat,
Violet Menolotto,
Lily Rowe, Angela
Panetta, Jane Borg

ACTIVITIES IN NOVEMBER

Mon 01, 9.00am &
7.00pm: All Saints Day
Mass

Tues 02, 9.00am &
7.00pm: All Soul's Day
Mass

Thurs 18, 10.30am:
Remembrance Mass &
Compassionate
Companions-Horsley
Park

ACTIVITIES IN DECEMBER

Thurs 16, 10.30am:
Remembrance Mass &
Compassionate
Companions-Horsley
Park

Fri 17: School year
ends

Fri 24: Christmas Eve

Sat: 25 Christmas Day

Sun 26: Boxing Day

Catechesis of St Joseph

ST JOSEPH - THE SERVANT OF CHRIST



St. Joseph, the servant of God, was chosen by God as the husband of Mary and the loving foster father of Jesus. St. Joseph was a man of substance of whom we can be proud to imitate his interior life and virtues. As a faithful servant of God, he was a man of simplicity and his few words convey to us today a deeper message about the necessity and importance in life of the value of silence. He was rarely mentioned in the bible, however he has a huge role in the Church and in people's lives. In fact, he is the protector saint of a person's vocation – just as he protected and loved Mary and Jesus, his family, for the rest of his life.

We ask St. Joseph, that through his intercession, we may be, like him, a faithful servant of God. He was a good worker as a carpenter, a loving husband of Mary, and a foster father to Jesus. He supported his family with dignified work and was a good, holy labourer of God.

Let us continue to pray that St. Joseph may intercede for us in our daily activities of following God with fidelity, love, total trust, commitment and dedication to the ministry entrusted to us.

St. Joseph, the servant of Christ, pray for us!

Prayer to St Michael the Archangel

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray and do you, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



SAFEGUARDING - A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding & Ministerial Integrity Office at 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to police.

November and the Holy Souls

"For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day." *John 6:40*

On the 1st of November we will celebrate Solemnity of All Saints which gives us an opportunity to celebrate and rejoice in the fact that there are countless people who have gone before us who are now enjoying the glories of Heaven. These faithful souls lived lives that were grounded in God's grace and have been fully purified of all sin. They now gaze at our good God face-to-face.

On the 2nd of November, we will commemorate the fact that many who die in a state of grace are not immediately ready to stand before the glorious throne of God and see Him face-to-face. The only way this is possible is if every sin and every attachment to sin is purged from our souls. We must have nothing but pure charity alive within us if we are to enter the eternal glories of Heaven. But how many people die in such a state?

The Church, in her wisdom and holiness, has taught clearly through the centuries that when a person passes from this world to the next while still attached to less serious sin, they need to be fully purified in order to enter Heaven.

Purgatory is essentially a place of cleansing and purification for those who die in a state of grace, but is not something permanent. The Holy Souls need to be purified, because, according to the Book of Revelation, nothing unclean can enter heaven (Rev 21:27). They are called "holy" because they can no longer offend God through sin.

Jesus pointed to the importance of the soul when he said, in the words of the Douay-Rheims version of the Bible, "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?" (Mark 8:36).

He also pointed to the existence of purgatory, when He said: "And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? As you go with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him on the way, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer put you in prison. I tell you, you will never get out till you have paid the very last copper."

This passage has been understood as indicating the necessity of ensuring we are purified before we die, otherwise the punishment due to our sins, even when they have been forgiven, will be exacted in purgatory.

The Catechism has this to say about purgatory: "All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven." (CCC 1030)

For some, Purgatory can be a frightening and even confusing thought. Why doesn't God, in His infinite mercy, simply take all our loved ones who followed Him straight to Heaven? The answer is simple. He does! And the path for them to Heaven is this incredible mercy of their final purification.

Purification of all attachment to sin within our soul is a mercy beyond what we can imagine. Through this final purification, God prepares the holy souls who have died for an eternity of joy. But this purification is necessary because God, in His love, does not want any soul to live eternally with even a minor attachment to sin. God wants us all free. The truth is that every sin on our soul, even the smallest one, is reason enough for us to be excluded from Heaven.

So Purgatory must be seen as a final mercy from God by which He lifts every last burden that keeps us from perfect love, so that our eternity will be one of utmost freedom and ecstasy. God wants us to be filled only with the purity of love forever. Thus, upon our death, we are graced to enter into a final and intense purification of every minor sin, so that when we see God in all His glory, we will see Him with the perfection to which we are called. Purgatory is a gift, a grace, a mercy. It will be painful to go through in the same way that overcoming any sin is painful. But the good fruit of freedom from sin makes every final purification we must endure worth it a hundredfold and more.

How can we help the souls in purgatory?

Regarding the feast of All Souls, we can gain particular indulgences that can be applied for their benefit on this day and during November. **A plenary or full indulgence**, which can only be applied to the souls in purgatory, can be gained if a person visits a cemetery each day from Nov. 1 – 8 and prays for that intention. On the feast day itself, Nov. 2, a plenary indulgence for the Holy Souls can be gained if a person visits a church or public oratory and prays the *Creed* and *Our Father*, and also an *Our Father* and *Hail Mary* for the Pope's intentions.

A plenary indulgence completely removes the punishment due to sin, whereas a partial one only removes a part of this punishment. In practice, it is very difficult to gain a plenary indulgence, either for oneself or for a suffering soul, since in addition to the requirement of being in a state of grace, the person must also have no attachment to sin, including venial sin. If this is not the case, then only a partial indulgence is gained. Also, to gain the indulgence, the person must receive Holy Communion and go to Confession, preferably on the day, but otherwise within a period of about 20 days before or after the day itself, and also pray for the Pope's intentions, e.g., an *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*.

Otherwise, if a person visits a cemetery at any time during the year and prays for particular souls, either vocally or mentally, then a partial indulgence can be gained. This is also the case if the prayer *Eternal Rest* is said at any time or in any place. We can also say the Rosary, the Chaplet to Divine Mercy or do the Stations of the Cross for the Holy Souls, but as the *Catechism* states, (1032), the best thing we can possibly do, and at any time of the year, is to have Masses offered for them, that they may speedily enter heaven and behold God face to face.

In our parish, we priests will offer Masses every day for the Souls of the Faithful Departed whose names will be written in our parish bulletin. I encourage you offer Mass for your beloved whom you miss. Thank you so much for your support and your offering.

*May the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Fr Dominik Karmas CSMA, PP



APOSTOLIC LETTER
ROSARIUM VIRGINIS MARIAE
OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF JOHN PAUL II
(continued)

CHAPTER III
“FOR ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST”

The Rosary, a way of assimilating the mystery

26. Meditation on the mysteries of Christ is proposed in the Rosary by means of a method designed to assist in their assimilation. It is a method *based on repetition*. This applies above all to the *Hail Mary*, repeated ten times in each mystery. If this repetition is considered superficially, there could be a temptation to see the Rosary as a dry and boring exercise. It is quite another thing, however, when the Rosary is thought of as an outpouring of that love which tirelessly returns to the person loved with expressions similar in their content but ever fresh in terms of the feeling pervading them.

In Christ, God has truly assumed a “heart of flesh”. Not only does God have a divine heart, rich in mercy and in forgiveness, but also a human heart, capable of all the stirrings of affection. If we needed evidence for this from the Gospel, we could easily find it in the touching dialogue between Christ and Peter after the Resurrection: “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Three times this question is put to Peter, and three times he gives the reply: “Lord, you know that I love you” (cf. *Jn* 21:15-17). Over and above the specific meaning of this passage, so important for Peter's mission, none can fail to recognize the beauty of this triple repetition, in which the insistent request and the corresponding reply are expressed in terms familiar from the universal experience of human love. To understand the Rosary, one has to enter into the psychological dynamic proper to love.

One thing is clear: although the repeated *Hail Mary* is addressed directly to Mary, it is to Jesus that the act of love is ultimately directed, with her and through her. The repetition is nourished by the desire to be conformed ever more completely to Christ, the true programme of the Christian life. Saint Paul expressed this project with words of fire: “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain” (*Phil* 1:21). And again: “It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me” (*Gal* 2:20). The Rosary helps us to be conformed ever more closely to Christ until we attain true holiness.

A valid method...

27. We should not be surprised that our relationship with Christ makes use of a method. God communicates himself to us respecting our human nature and its vital rhythms. Hence, while Christian spirituality is familiar with the most sublime forms of mystical silence in which images, words and gestures are all, so to speak, superseded by an intense and ineffable union with God, it normally engages the whole person in all his complex psychological, physical and relational reality.

This becomes apparent *in the Liturgy*. Sacraments and sacramentals are structured as a series of rites which bring into play all the dimensions of the person. The same applies to non-liturgical prayer. This is confirmed by the fact that, in the East, the most characteristic prayer of Christological meditation, centred on the words “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”⁽³⁴⁾ is traditionally linked to the rhythm of breathing; while this practice favours perseverance in the prayer, it also in some way embodies the desire for Christ to become the breath, the soul and the “all” of one's life.

... which can nevertheless be improved

28. I mentioned in my Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* that the West is now experiencing a *renewed demand for meditation*, which at times leads to a keen interest in aspects of other religions.⁽³⁵⁾ Some Christians, limited in their knowledge of the Christian contemplative tradition, are attracted by those forms of prayer. While the latter contain many elements which are positive and at times compatible with Christian experience, they are often based on ultimately unacceptable premises. Much in vogue among these approaches are methods aimed at attaining a high level of spiritual concentration by using techniques of a psychophysical, repetitive and symbolic nature. The Rosary is situated within this broad gamut of religious phenomena, but it is distinguished by characteristics of its own which correspond to specifically Christian requirements.

In effect, the Rosary is simply a *method of contemplation*. As a method, it serves as a means to an end and cannot become an end in itself. All the same, as the fruit of centuries of experience, this method should not be undervalued. In its favour one could cite the experience of countless Saints. This is not to say, however, that the method cannot be improved. Such is the intent of the addition of the new series of *mysteria lucis* to the overall cycle of mysteries and of the few suggestions which I am proposing in this Letter regarding its manner of recitation. These suggestions, while respecting the well-established structure of this prayer, are intended to help the faithful to understand it in the richness of its symbolism and in harmony with the demands of daily life.

Otherwise there is a risk that the Rosary would not only fail to produce the intended spiritual effects, but even that the beads, with which it is usually said, could come to be regarded as some kind of amulet or magic object, thereby radically distorting their meaning and function.

Announcing each mystery

29. Announcing each mystery, and perhaps even using a suitable icon to portray it, is as it were *to open up a scenario* on which to focus our attention. The words direct the imagination and the mind towards a particular episode or moment in the life of Christ. In the Church's traditional spirituality, the veneration of icons and the many devotions appealing to the senses, as well as the method of prayer proposed by Saint Ignatius of Loyola in the Spiritual Exercises, make use of visual and imaginative elements (the *compositio loci*), judged to be of great help in concentrating the mind on the particular mystery. This is a methodology, moreover, which *corresponds to the inner logic of the Incarnation*: in Jesus, God wanted to take on human features. It is through his bodily reality that we are led into contact with the mystery of his divinity.

This need for concreteness finds further expression in the announcement of the various mysteries of the Rosary. Obviously these mysteries neither replace the Gospel nor exhaust its content. The Rosary, therefore, is no substitute for *lectio divina*; on the contrary, it presupposes and promotes it. Yet, even though the mysteries contemplated in the Rosary, even with the addition of the *mysteria lucis*, do no more than outline the fundamental elements of the life of Christ, they easily draw the mind to a more expansive reflection on the rest of the Gospel, especially when the Rosary is prayed in a setting of prolonged recollection.

Listening to the word of God

30. In order to supply a Biblical foundation and greater depth to our meditation, it is helpful to follow the announcement of the mystery with *the proclamation of a related Biblical passage*, long or short, depending on the circumstances. No other words can ever match the efficacy of the inspired word. As we listen, we are certain that this is the word of God, spoken for today and spoken "for me".

If received in this way, the word of God can become part of the Rosary's methodology of repetition without giving rise to the ennui derived from the simple recollection of something already well known. It is not a matter of recalling information but of *allowing God to speak*. In certain solemn communal celebrations, this word can be appropriately illustrated by a brief commentary.

Silence

31. *Listening and meditation are nourished by silence.* After the announcement of the mystery and the proclamation of the word, it is fitting to pause and focus one's attention for a suitable period of time on the mystery concerned, before moving into vocal prayer. A discovery of the importance of silence is one of the secrets of practicing contemplation and meditation. One drawback of a society dominated by technology and the mass media is the fact that silence becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. Just as moments of silence are recommended in the Liturgy, so too in the recitation of the Rosary it is fitting to pause briefly after listening to the word of God, while the mind focuses on the content of a particular mystery.

The "Our Father"

32. After listening to the word and focusing on the mystery, it is natural for *the mind to be lifted up towards the Father.* In each of his mysteries, Jesus always leads us to the Father, for as he rests in the Father's bosom (cf. *Jn 1:18*) he is continually turned towards him. He wants us to share in his intimacy with the Father, so that we can say with him: "Abba, Father" (*Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6*). By virtue of his relationship to the Father he makes us brothers and sisters of himself and of one another, communicating to us the Spirit which is both his and the Father's. Acting as a kind of foundation for the Christological and Marian meditation which unfolds in the repetition of the *Hail Mary*, the *Our Father* makes meditation upon the mystery, even when carried out in solitude, an ecclesial experience.

The ten "Hail Marys"

33. This is the most substantial element in the Rosary and also the one which makes it a Marian prayer *par excellence.* Yet when the *Hail Mary* is properly understood, we come to see clearly that its Marian character is not opposed to its Christological character, but that it actually emphasizes and increases it. The first part of the *Hail Mary*, drawn from the words spoken to Mary by the Angel Gabriel and by Saint Elizabeth, is a contemplation in adoration of the mystery accomplished in the Virgin of Nazareth. These words express, so to speak, the wonder of heaven and earth; they could be said to give us a glimpse of God's own wonderment as he contemplates his "masterpiece" – the Incarnation of the Son in the womb of the Virgin Mary. If we recall how, in the Book of Genesis, God "saw all that he had made" (*Gen 1:31*), we can find here an echo of that "pathos with which God, at the dawn of creation, looked upon the work of his hands".⁽³⁶⁾ The repetition of the *Hail Mary* in the Rosary gives us a share in God's own wonder and pleasure: in jubilant amazement we acknowledge the greatest miracle of history. Mary's prophecy here finds its fulfilment: "Henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (*Lk 1:48*).

The centre of gravity in the *Hail Mary*, the hinge as it were which joins its two parts, is *the name of Jesus.* Sometimes, in hurried recitation, this centre of gravity can be overlooked, and with it the connection to the mystery of Christ being contemplated. Yet it is precisely the emphasis given to the name of Jesus and to his mystery that is the sign of a meaningful and fruitful recitation of the Rosary. Pope Paul VI drew attention, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, to the custom in certain regions of highlighting the name of Christ by the addition of a clause referring to the mystery being contemplated.⁽³⁷⁾ This is a praiseworthy custom, especially during public recitation. It gives forceful expression to our faith in Christ, directed to the different moments of the Redeemer's life. It is at once *a profession of faith* and an aid in concentrating our meditation, since it facilitates the process of assimilation to the mystery of Christ inherent in the repetition of the *Hail Mary.* When we repeat the name of Jesus – the only name given to us by which we may hope for salvation (cf. *Acts 4:12*) – in close association with the name of his Blessed Mother, almost as if it were done at her suggestion, we set out on a path of assimilation meant to help us enter more deeply into the life of Christ.

From Mary's uniquely privileged relationship with Christ, which makes her the Mother of God, *Theotókos*, derives the forcefulness of the appeal we make to her in the second half of the prayer, as we entrust to her maternal intercession our lives and the hour of our death.

The “Gloria”

34. Trinitarian doxology is the goal of all Christian contemplation. For Christ is the way that leads us to the Father in the Spirit. If we travel this way to the end, we repeatedly encounter the mystery of the three divine Persons, to whom all praise, worship and thanksgiving are due. It is important that the *Gloria*, the *high-point of contemplation*, be given due prominence in the Rosary. In public recitation it could be sung, as a way of giving proper emphasis to the essentially Trinitarian structure of all Christian prayer.

To the extent that meditation on the mystery is attentive and profound, and to the extent that it is enlivened – from one *Hail Mary* to another – by love for Christ and for Mary, the glorification of the Trinity at the end of each decade, far from being a perfunctory conclusion, takes on its proper contemplative tone, raising the mind as it were to the heights of heaven and enabling us in some way to relive the experience of Tabor, a foretaste of the contemplation yet to come: “It is good for us to be here!” (*Lk 9:33*).

The concluding short prayer

35. In current practice, the Trinitarian doxology is followed by a brief concluding prayer which varies according to local custom. Without in any way diminishing the value of such invocations, it is worthwhile to note that the contemplation of the mysteries could better express their full spiritual fruitfulness if an effort were made to conclude each mystery with a *prayer for the fruits specific to that particular mystery*. In this way the Rosary would better express its connection with the Christian life. One fine liturgical prayer suggests as much, inviting us to pray that, by meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary, we may come to “imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise”.⁽³⁸⁾

Such a final prayer could take on a legitimate variety of forms, as indeed it already does. In this way the Rosary can be better adapted to different spiritual traditions and different Christian communities. It is to be hoped, then, that appropriate formulas will be widely circulated, after due pastoral discernment and possibly after experimental use in centres and shrines particularly devoted to the Rosary, so that the People of God may benefit from an abundance of authentic spiritual riches and find nourishment for their personal contemplation.

The Rosary beads

36. The traditional aid used for the recitation of the Rosary is the set of beads. At the most superficial level, the beads often become a simple counting mechanism to mark the succession of *Hail Marys*. Yet they can also take on a symbolism which can give added depth to contemplation.

Here the first thing to note is the way *the beads converge upon the Crucifix*, which both opens and closes the unfolding sequence of prayer. The life and prayer of believers is centred upon Christ. Everything begins from him, everything leads towards him, everything, through him, in the Holy Spirit, attains to the Father.

As a counting mechanism, marking the progress of the prayer, the beads evoke the unending path of contemplation and of Christian perfection. Blessed Bartolo Longo saw them also as a “chain” which links us to God. A chain, yes, but a sweet chain; for sweet indeed is the bond to God who is also our Father. A “filial” chain which puts us in tune with Mary, the “handmaid of the Lord” (*Lk 1:38*) and, most of all, with Christ himself, who, though he was in the form of God, made himself a “servant” out of love for us (*Phil 2:7*).

A fine way to expand the symbolism of the beads is to let them remind us of our many relationships, of the bond of communion and fraternity which unites us all in Christ.

The opening and closing

37. At present, in different parts of the Church, there are many ways to introduce the Rosary. In some places, it is customary to begin with the opening words of Psalm 70: "O God, come to my aid; O Lord, make haste to help me", as if to nourish in those who are praying a humble awareness of their own insufficiency. In other places, the Rosary begins with the recitation of the Creed, as if to make the profession of faith the basis of the contemplative journey about to be undertaken. These and similar customs, to the extent that they prepare the mind for contemplation, are all equally legitimate. The Rosary is then ended with a prayer for the intentions of the Pope, as if to expand the vision of the one praying to embrace all the needs of the Church. It is precisely in order to encourage this ecclesial dimension of the Rosary that the Church has seen fit to grant indulgences to those who recite it with the required dispositions.

If prayed in this way, the Rosary truly becomes a spiritual itinerary in which Mary acts as Mother, Teacher and Guide, sustaining the faithful by her powerful intercession. Is it any wonder, then, that the soul feels the need, after saying this prayer and experiencing so profoundly the motherhood of Mary, to burst forth in praise of the Blessed Virgin, either in that splendid prayer the *Salve Regina* or in the *Litany of Loreto*? This is the crowning moment of an inner journey which has brought the faithful into living contact with the mystery of Christ and his Blessed Mother.

Distribution over time

38. The Rosary can be recited in full every day, and there are those who most laudably do so. In this way it fills with prayer the days of many a contemplative, or keeps company with the sick and the elderly who have abundant time at their disposal. Yet it is clear – and this applies all the more if the new series of *mysteria lucis* is included – that many people will not be able to recite more than a part of the Rosary, according to a certain weekly pattern. This weekly distribution has the effect of giving the different days of the week a certain spiritual "colour", by analogy with the way in which the Liturgy colours the different seasons of the liturgical year.

According to current practice, Monday and Thursday are dedicated to the "joyful mysteries", Tuesday and Friday to the "sorrowful mysteries", and Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday to the "glorious mysteries". Where might the "mysteries of light" be inserted? If we consider that the "glorious mysteries" are said on both Saturday and Sunday, and that Saturday has always had a special Marian flavour, the second weekly meditation on the "joyful mysteries", mysteries in which Mary's presence is especially pronounced, could be moved to Saturday. Thursday would then be free for meditating on the "mysteries of light".

This indication is not intended to limit a rightful freedom in personal and community prayer, where account needs to be taken of spiritual and pastoral needs and of the occurrence of particular liturgical celebrations which might call for suitable adaptations. What is really important is that the Rosary should always be seen and experienced as a path of contemplation. In the Rosary, in a way similar to what takes place in the Liturgy, the Christian week, centred on Sunday, the day of Resurrection, becomes a journey through the mysteries of the life of Christ, and he is revealed in the lives of his disciples as the Lord of time and of history.