

The Verdant Mysteries



Rosary Meditations on Creation and
Incarnation

Introduction

This is a suggested set of scriptural meditations for use with the Rosary. It uses five sets of short passages from the Old and New Testaments to encourage a focus on the deep connection between creation and the incarnation of God in Christ. These are followed by a 'response' in the form of a psalm of praise.

The normal usage of the Rosary can be followed, pausing at each medallion to meditate on the mystery (perhaps using the introductory sentence provided, or another) and to read the passages slowly. This can be followed by silence and prayer intentions, ending with recitation of the psalm portion.

The introduction of the Rosary, and the saying of Hail Marys on each bead, remains the same. Mary is, of course, intimately connected with the response of creation to God, and with the incarnation of God's Word.

The Rosary can end in the traditional way, although an alternative final prayer is also provided.

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I The Spirit of Creation

The overshadowing of the Holy Spirit marks a new beginning: in creation and incarnation, God's grace gently draws nature to fulfilment. Mary's 'yes' speaks for all creatures.

Readings

Genesis 1.1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.

Luke 1.34-5

And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

Response

Psalm 104. 24 and 30

O Lord, how manifold are your works!

In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

II Creation's Song of Praise

Creation is a song of lament and gratitude, and every created being is a sign of God's grace. Mary takes up and leads that song of hope and liberation, as the Word in her womb is greeted with joy.

Readings

Job 38. 4, 6-7

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone

when the morning stars sang together

and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?

Luke 1.41-47

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

And Mary said,

'My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour'.

Response

Psalms 96.11-13

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy

before the Lord, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with his truth.

III The Living Waters

The waters are the birth-spring of creation. The river flowing from the temple offers new life, healing and satisfaction for all – a vision fulfilled in the living water which flows from the incarnate God. We remember that Mary bears witness to the transformation of water into wine at Cana, as Christ takes the stuff of creation and weaves it into a means of grace.

Readings

Ezekiel 47.9 and 12

Wherever the river goes every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes . . . On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.

John 7.12-15

Jesus said to [the Samaritan woman], ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.’ The woman said to him, ‘Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.’

Response

Psalm 36.7-9

How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

They feast on the abundance of your house,

and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the fountain of life;

in your light we see light.

IV The Growing of God's Reign

The presence and reign of God are known in growth: the transformation of earth and society from need to fulfilment, exclusion to embrace. From the tree of the cross, the kingdom will grow wide and wild. We remember how Mary helped Jesus to grow and followed his preaching of the kingdom to its blossoming on the cross.

Readings

Isaiah 41.17-20

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the Lord will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
so that all may see and know,
all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the Lord has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

Mark 4.30-32

Jesus also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.'

Response

Psalms 65.9-13

You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.
You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.
The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.

V A New Creation in Christ

All things will be made new: all. God's wisdom and word is the source of all creatures, and nothing is beyond the scope of Christ's healing, reconciling love. We remember that Mary is Queen of Creation, the one who bears all things to the loving heart of her Son.

Readings

Wisdom 7.21-27a

I learned both what is secret and what is manifest,
for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me . . .
For wisdom is more mobile than any motion;
because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things.
Although she is but one, she can do all things,
and while remaining in herself, she renews all things

Colossians 1.15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Response

Psalms 148.1-4 and 7-13

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!
Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens,
 and you waters above the heavens!
Praise the Lord from the earth,
 you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost,
 stormy wind fulfilling his command!
Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle,
 creeping things and flying birds!
Kings of the earth and all peoples,
 princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike, old and young together!
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
 for his name alone is exalted;
 his glory is above earth and heaven.

Final Prayer

The prayer may be said as part of the final devotions

O God, in your Son you assumed our humanity, reconciling all things in heaven and on earth; grant we pray, that by meditating on these Mysteries, we may be woven into the threads of a new creation; and may the prayers of Mary, the Mother of God and Queen of Creation, raise us and all creatures to the throne of lifegiving grace; we ask this through Christ, through whom and for whom all is made. Amen.