

To Jesus through Mary

For Belgium and the World

Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary

The month of October, the **month of the Rosary**, is also the month of the universal mission of the Church. This year, we commemorate the centenary of its institution by Pope Pius XI in 1926. The following year, in 1927, Pope Pius XI declared **Saint Thérèse of Lisieux “Patroness of the Missions.”** Since then, the Church has celebrated her at the beginning of October.

Every Christian, united to Christ through Baptism and strengthened by Confirmation, participates in the life of His Mystical Body. Each person, according to his or her state in life, is therefore called to make the grace received shine forth and to become, in the world, **the fragrance of Christ** (2 Cor 2:15). Mission is therefore not something foreign to Christian life: it is its fruit when the soul, having received Jesus, allows itself to be transformed by Him and becomes capable of bringing Him to others.

The Rosary is particularly suited to this work. It leads us into the mysteries of Christ through the Heart of Mary, who was the first to receive Him, accompany Him and give Him to the world. It is thus a true school of holiness and missionary love.

May each mystery teach us to become ever more truly “Children of Mary.”

Holy Mother of God, help us to make our Rosary a prayer of Faith, a prayer for the protection of life from conception until natural death, and a prayer that the Peace of Christ may be established throughout the world.

May each mystery teach us to serve Christ more faithfully.

May each Hail Mary be offered for a soul.

JOYFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Annunciation

Fruit of the Mystery: humility

The Angel Gabriel is sent by God to Mary. The Virgin listens to the word addressed to her. She does not ask to know the whole path that lies before her; she believes.

“Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord.”

Through this humble and perfect consent, the eternal Word takes flesh within her. Mary receives in her womb the One who is the Light of the world. Her “yes” thus becomes the visible beginning of the Salvation offered to all mankind.

Every mission begins with this humble faith. Before speaking of God, we must welcome God; before bringing Christ to others, we must open our own hearts to Him. Mary teaches us that apostolic fruitfulness is born from a soul that believes and surrenders itself without reserve to the divine will, even to the forgetting of self, each according to his or her state in life.

O Mary, teach us to receive with faith all that God desires to give us and to respond generously to the call of His grace. May our daily fidelity, however hidden it may be, help Christ to shine around us.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all mankind, that the true Faith may be preserved in hearts, passed on to children and future generations, and that our country and the world may recognize their Saviour in Jesus Christ.

2. The Visitation

Fruit of the Mystery: love of neighbour, charity

No sooner has Mary received Jesus than she sets out towards the hill country.

She carries the Saviour within her, and the love that fills her heart moves her to give herself. At her arrival, John the Baptist leaps for joy in Elizabeth’s womb, and the house is filled with joy.

“My soul magnifies the Lord.”

Mary does not keep for herself the treasure she has just received. Because she is filled with God, she becomes for others a **“bearer” of His grace.**

This is the secret of every true mission: to bring Jesus. Not ourselves, not our own glory, but Jesus. A soul that remains united to Christ becomes capable, through charity, of communicating something of His peace to those it encounters.

Peace often begins in this way: with a visit, a word of consolation, a forgiveness granted, a service rendered, a faithful presence beside one who suffers.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all mankind, that the charity of Christ may reign in hearts and families; that divisions may be overcome, offences forgiven, and that your Son may establish His true Peace in our country and in the world.

3. The Nativity of Jesus

Fruit of the Mystery: detachment from the goods of this world

The Son of God comes into the world in the poverty of a stable. He through whom all things were created rests in a manger. The Almighty makes Himself small and defenceless.

Mary contemplates the One who is both her Son and her God. She wraps Him in swaddling clothes and lays Him in a manger.

The Saviour of the world thus presents Himself to us as a child who depends entirely upon the love of those around Him. The mystery of Bethlehem reveals to us the incomparable dignity of every human life: God Himself chose to share our human condition from the very first moments of existence.

The Christian who contemplates the manger cannot remain indifferent before life that is weak, innocent and defenceless. His mission is also to receive life as a gift from God and to protect it when it is threatened.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all mankind, that every human life may be welcomed with respect and love, from conception until natural death. Obtain that our country and the world may recognize the sacred dignity of the unborn child, the sick, the elderly and every vulnerable person.

4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

Fruit of the Mystery: obedience and purity in all things

Mary and Joseph go up to the Temple to fulfil what the Law prescribes.

You are the All-Pure One, O Mary, and yet You humbly submit Yourself to the prescriptions of the Law. You present Jesus to the Lord as an acknowledgement that everything comes from God and must return to God.

Simeon takes into his arms the One for whom he has been waiting. He recognizes in Him the Salvation prepared for all peoples.

In this mystery, we see that Christian mission passes through obedience. The disciple does not create his own law: he receives from God a rule of life and seeks to remain faithful to it. When each person faithfully fulfils the duties of his or her state in life, justice and order can be established in society.

True peace cannot be built against God, nor against the natural order which He has established.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all mankind, that the laws of God may be honoured and the legitimate laws of the State respected. May our country seek a just order founded upon Truth, so that the Peace of Christ may reign in families and in society.

5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

Fruit of the Mystery: seeking God in all things

Mary and Joseph search for Jesus in sorrow. After three days, they find Him in the Temple, among the teachers.

Jesus then reveals to them that He must be about His Father's business.

From His childhood, the Lord shows that He belongs entirely to the One who sent Him. His life will be the perfect fulfilment of a mission received from the Father.

Mary, You sought Jesus in anguish and kept in Your heart what You did not yet understand. Teach us to seek God above all things and to accept that His will may sometimes be different from our plans.

From this search for God, vocations are born. The Lord calls some to leave the world in order to devote themselves entirely to the proclamation of the Gospel; He calls others to serve Him in the family, at work, in consecrated life or in any other Christian vocation.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all mankind, that each person may seek the will of God in all things. Obtain for families the grace to become the cradle of vocations, and for young people called to the priesthood, consecrated life and the gift of self, the generosity to respond to the call of Christ.

SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

1. The Agony of Jesus in the Garden of Olives

Fruit of the Mystery: contrition for our sins

Night has fallen over Gethsemane. Jesus is alone. He knows the Passion that is approaching and already bears in His Heart the weight of the sins of the world.

He prays.

The Apostles fall asleep, but Jesus keeps watch.

What a lesson for our mission! There is a hidden apostolate, known to God alone: that of prayer, intercession and sacrifice offered for souls.

When we pray for those who do not pray, when we offer a suffering for the conversion of a sinner, when we keep watch beside a sick or dying person, we mysteriously participate in the work of Christ.

The peace of the world begins in a heart reconciled with God.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for people throughout the world. Teach us to keep watch with Jesus, to persevere in prayer and to offer our sufferings for souls. Obtain peace for troubled hearts, reconciliation for sinners, and the Peace of Christ for our country and for the world.

2. The Scourging at the Pillar

Fruit of the Mystery: mortification of the senses

Pilate has Jesus scourged.

The Most Holy Body of the Saviour is torn for our sins. Mary, You are united in Your heart to all the sufferings of Your Son.

Even today, so many people suffer in their bodies: victims of war, violence, illness, abuse or persecution.

The disciple of Christ cannot contemplate such suffering without compassion. His mission is to defend and serve suffering life.

But he also learns from Christ to offer his own suffering. What may seem humanly useless can become, when united to the Sacrifice of Jesus, a prayer for souls.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for all those who suffer. Teach us to defend every human life and to relieve, as far as possible, those who carry a cross. May our sacrifices, united with those of Jesus, obtain grace and consolation for those who suffer in our country and throughout the world.

3. The Crowning with Thorns

Fruit of the Mystery: mortification of the senses

Jesus is crowned with thorns. The soldiers mock Him. The King of Heaven is treated as an object of ridicule.

Christ accepts humiliation without renouncing His Truth.

In a world where people seek recognition, appearances and the approval of others, the Christian is called to remain faithful to Christ, even when this fidelity brings contempt.

Mission sometimes requires the courage to bear witness. We cannot proclaim Christ if we are ashamed of Him.

We must bear witness to the Truth without compromise and with gentleness.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that Faith in God may be preserved and the dignity of life respected. Give Christians the courage to bear witness to the Truth without fear or pride, and to defend with charity those who are rejected, humiliated or despised.

4. Jesus Carries His Cross to Calvary

Fruit of the Mystery: perseverance in trials

Jesus falls beneath the weight of His Cross. Simon of Cyrene is called to help Him.

The Son of God accepts that a man should share in the burden of His Passion.

This is a beautiful image of our vocation. Christ desires to associate His disciples with His work. He wants us to become Cyrenians for our brothers and sisters.

To carry another person's cross, to accompany a sick person, to support a suffering family, to be present beside someone who is dying, to help one who is in despair: these are all concrete ways of bringing the Charity of Christ into the world.

Peace often begins with someone who accepts to carry the burden of his brother.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our country and for all the countries of the world, that we may become instruments of the Peace of Christ. Obtain that there may never be a lack of generous people to accompany the sick, the suffering and the dying, and to carry with them the weight of their cross.

5. Jesus Dies on the Cross

Fruit of the Mystery: a greater love of God and of souls

Jesus is raised upon the Cross.

His arms are open towards all humanity. He thirsts: He thirsts for souls, He thirsts for their love.

Upon the Cross, Christ fulfils His mission. He gives His life so that mankind may have Life.

Thus we understand that every Christian mission finds its source and its model in sacrifice. Whoever wishes to work for the Salvation of souls must learn to give of himself, to give himself.

Mary, You stand at the foot of the Cross. Your motherly heart is united to the Sacrifice of Your Son.

Teach us not to fear sacrifice. Teach us to offer our sorrows, our renunciations and our lives so that others may find Jesus Christ and receive eternal Life from Him.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for people throughout the world, that every life may be respected and protected. Teach us to understand that Christ gave His life for every soul, and make us generous servants of human life, for the sake of eternal Life.

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Resurrection of Jesus

Fruit of the Mystery: Faith

Jesus is no longer in the tomb.

He is risen!

Death is defeated. Christ now lives in glory.

The Apostles, who had been scattered by fear, become witnesses to this truth. They cannot keep for themselves what they have seen: they must proclaim to the world that Jesus is alive.

This is the source of every Christian mission: the certainty of Faith.

We are not sent to proclaim an idea, but Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again for our Salvation.

Mary, You who believed when everything seemed lost, obtain for us this steadfast Faith that does not waver in the face of trials or the contradictions of the world.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that Faith in the risen Jesus Christ may remain alive. Obtain for Christians the courage to bear witness to the Gospel, and grant that our country and all nations may recognize in Jesus the living Lord and Saviour of the world.

2. The Ascension of Jesus

Fruit of the Mystery: hope of Heaven

For the last time, the Apostles are gathered around Jesus. He blesses them and ascends into Heaven.

The Lord disappears from their sight, but He does not abandon them. He promises them His presence and entrusts them with the mission of teaching all nations.

This scene teaches us to live by Faith in what remains invisible.

The Church Militant is never alone. She is united with the Church Triumphant. The Saints who contemplate God intercede for their brothers and sisters who are still journeying. The Apostles, martyrs, doctors, missionaries and all the saints mysteriously continue their work of charity for the Church on earth, the Church Militant.

Mary, open our eyes to this invisible reality. Teach us to seek the intercession of the Saints and to pray that their example may inspire new vocations in the Church for the service of the Gospel.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that our Faith in the Communion of Saints may grow. Teach us to ask for the intercession of the Saints for the Church and for the missions, and to pray for the departed of our families and for all those who have gone before us in Faith.

3. Pentecost

Fruit of the Mystery: apostolic charity

The Apostles are gathered with Mary in prayer.

Suddenly, the Holy Spirit descends upon them in the form of tongues of fire.

These men who had once trembled before others become courageous witnesses of Christ. They speak in every language and proclaim the wonders of God.

This is the manifest beginning of the universal mission of the Church.

The Gospel is not reserved for one people, one nation or one era. Christ came for all mankind.

Mary, You are in the midst of the Apostles. You are the faithful Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Obtain for all members of the Church your docility and your courage.

Holy Mary, pray for our Pope, for the bishops and priests, and for all the faithful, that they may bear witness to their Faith with courage throughout the world. Obtain many priestly, religious and missionary vocations, and grant that Belgium itself may become an instrument for proclaiming the Gospel to the nations.

4. The Assumption of Mary

Fruit of the Mystery: the grace of a good death

Mary is taken up into Heaven, body and soul.

In You, O Mary, we contemplate the fulfilment of grace. Your body, which carried the Son of God, was not abandoned to the corruption of the tomb.

Your Assumption reminds us that the whole human person belongs to God. The body is not something without value: together with the soul, it is called to glory.

Christian mission must therefore defend the dignity of the human person at every stage of life. It must teach respect for the body, honour chastity, protect the weak and accompany the dying.

And above all, it must remind mankind of its eternal destiny: man was created to know, love and serve God in this life, and to see and possess Him eternally in the next, in eternal Life.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that every human life may be respected and protected. Obtain for us the grace to recognize the dignity of every person; may their body, created “united with their soul,” be respected as truly a gift from God; may chastity be honoured, and may everyone reach the end of life in a state of grace, ready to enter into eternal Life.

5. The Coronation of Mary in Heaven

Fruit of the Mystery: greater devotion to Mary

“A great sign appeared in heaven: a Woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” (Rev 12:1)

Mary is Queen.

But Your queenship, O Our Lady, is that of a Mother. You reign by leading souls to Jesus.

You received the Word, carried Him, gave Him to the world; You accompanied Him to Calvary; and now, in glory, You continue to work maternally for the Salvation of souls.

This is why the Rosary is a missionary school: under Your guidance, we learn to receive Jesus in order to give Him to others.

The mission of the Church is inseparable from Your motherhood. As at Cana, You always lead us to Jesus and repeat to us:

“Do whatever He tells you.” (Jn 2:5)

We therefore entrust Belgium and the world to You. We entrust to You the Church in her universal mission, families, clergy, the sick, the poor, the persecuted and all those who are far from God.

Holy Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us, for our country and for the whole world. We ask You that the Peace of Christ may reign in souls, in families, in the Church and throughout the whole world. May each person, according to his or her state in life, be an instrument of this Peace of God, living and radiating the Faith.

LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

1. The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan

Fruit of the Mystery: fidelity to the promises of our Baptism

Jesus descends into the waters of the Jordan. The Holy Spirit descends upon Him and the voice of the Father is heard:

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mt 3:17)

Jesus sanctifies the waters in which His disciples will be reborn to divine life.

Through Baptism, we have become children of God, temples of the Holy Spirit and members of the Mystical Body of Christ. Through Confirmation, we have been strengthened by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we have received in their fullness so that, with the help of grace, we may bear witness to them.

Thus, the mission is not reserved for a few. It belongs to every Christian, each according to his or her state in life. The father and mother of a family, the priest, the religious, the working person, the sick, the young and the elderly can all, through their fidelity to their state in life, make Christ shine forth.

The first mission, therefore, consists in living the grace we have received in holiness.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that we may remain faithful to the promises of our Baptism and make the graces of Confirmation fruitful. Renew in Christians the awareness of their vocation and grant that the Faith in Jesus Christ may be preserved, lived and passed on.

2. The Wedding at Cana

Fruit of the Mystery: a greater trust in Mary

Jesus and Mary are present at Cana. Mary sees the need of the bride and groom and brings it before Jesus:

“They have no wine.” (Jn 2:3)

Then she says to the servants:

“Do whatever He tells you.” (Jn 2:5)

Mary always leads us to Jesus. She keeps nothing for herself. Her maternal role consists in presenting the needs of humanity to her Son and teaching people to obey Him, to obey God.

At Cana, Jesus also reveals the dignity of marriage and God’s loving concern for the family.

Christian mission therefore passes through the family. It is in the family that life is welcomed, that faith is transmitted, that a child learns to love, and that future servants of the Church and of society are formed.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that life may be welcomed as a gift from God. Protect families, strengthen husbands and wives in their fidelity, and grant that children may be

welcomed and raised with love. May our country and the world respect and defend human life at every stage.

3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and the Call to Conversion

Fruit of the Mystery: conversion of heart

“I have come to bring fire to the earth...” (Lk 12:49)

Jesus travels the roads of Palestine. He proclaims the Kingdom of God and calls people to conversion.

The mission of Christ is that of Salvation. He comes to deliver humanity from sin and to reconcile us with His Father.

The Church therefore cannot proclaim the Peace of Christ without first proclaiming conversion. True peace does not consist merely in the absence of war or conflict: it is first and foremost the fruit of a heart reconciled with God.

He who receives forgiveness is in turn called to forgive. He who has found the Peace of Christ becomes its servant to others.

Mary, teach us never to separate charity from Truth, nor mercy from the call to conversion.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that people may acknowledge their faults and return to God. Lead sinners to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that the Peace of Christ may reign in hearts, in families and among peoples.

4. The Transfiguration

Fruit of the Mystery: prayer

Jesus leads Peter, James and John up the mountain. He is transfigured before them.

The Apostles contemplate His glory. They would like to remain in this light. But soon the vision comes to an end and they must descend with Jesus.

So it is with prayer. It raises us towards God so that we may then be made capable of fulfilling our mission in the world.

A soul that prays is transformed. It learns to look upon people with the eyes of Christ, to discern the will of God and to remain faithful amid trials.

Mission cannot be fruitful without this interior life. The apostle must first be a soul that contemplates.

Mary, teach us to remain with Jesus in prayer and meditation, so that His light may then shine through us.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that Faith may not be extinguished in souls. Teach us to pray, to contemplate and to listen to God, so that we may become faithful witnesses of His Son and bring His light to those who live in darkness or do not know Him.

5. The Institution of the Eucharist

Fruit of the Mystery: love for the Eucharist

On the eve of His Passion, Jesus desires to remain with us.

He takes bread and wine and changes them into His Body and His Blood. He institutes the Holy Eucharist, the living memorial of His Sacrifice, of His death on the Cross.

Christ gives Himself so that we may have Life.

Every true mission proceeds from this self-offering. Whoever receives Jesus in the Eucharist receives Him who gave Himself for the Salvation of the world. He, in turn, learns to give himself.

The Eucharist thus teaches us that the Christian life does not consist in keeping for ourselves what we have received, but in becoming an offering with Christ.

Holy Mary, pray for us, for our fellow citizens and for the world, that Faith in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist may be renewed. Obtain for us holy priests, numerous vocations and generous souls who know how to offer their lives with Christ for life and for the salvation of souls.

FINAL PRAYER

O Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary,

You who received Jesus with perfect Faith, carried Him with love, gave Him to the world and accompanied Him to His death on the Cross and then to His Ascension, teach us to live our Christian vocation at your school.

Obtain for us the grace to remain faithful to the graces of our Baptism and Confirmation.

May we receive Jesus in the Eucharist with dignity and in a state of grace, live by Him and make Him known as our Saviour, God the Son, made man for us, our Lord Jesus Christ.

O Mary, You who chose to manifest your maternal care upon our Belgian soil, remain close to our country. May the memory of your presence at Beauraing, at Banneux and elsewhere simply remind us that you watch over your children and always lead us to Jesus.

We entrust our country to You.

Obtain for us a return to the Faith, the protection of all human life and the Peace of Christ.

Our Lady of the Golden Heart, pray for us.

We entrust the world to You.

Sustain the Church in her mission; strengthen the missionaries; raise up holy priestly and religious vocations; convert sinners; protect the weak; console the afflicted; bring the souls of the departed to your Son.

Obtain for us above all that ardent charity which is not content merely to seek our own Salvation, but desires that all souls may know, love and serve Jesus Christ and then share eternally in the divine Life.

And after having walked here below under your guidance, may we one day join you in glory, to contemplate with you for all eternity Him whom we have sought, loved and served:

Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God.

O Mary, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us.

Our Lady of Beauraing, pray for us.

Lead us to Jesus.

Amen.