

Introduction

Since our monastery's foundation eighty years ago, our Sisters have kept vigil each day as Mary's Guards of Honor, praying the Rosary hour-by-hour before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

How fitting that as we meditate on the mysteries of the life of Jesus during our Hours of Guard, He is there, truly present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, before us on the Altar. As we ponder each mystery in union with Mary, we thank Jesus for His condescension in taking on our human nature, for His suffering for our redemption, and for the glory He has prepared for us in Heaven. We thank Him for His many gifts of grace, and offer Him our love, reparation, and praise. We intercede with Him for the needs of the world and for the salvation of souls. Truly, *it is good for us to be here* (Lk 9:33 DR).

In honor of the national Eucharistic Congress, we have composed this booklet of Eucharistic Rosary Meditations. We hope they inspire you as you join us in praying the Rosary before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

- *The Dominican Nuns*

DOMINICAN MONASTERY OF ST. JUDE
MARBURY, ALABAMA

*Sacrifices and offerings Thou
hast not desired, but a body hast
Thou prepared for Me; ...
Then I said, "Lo, I have come
to do Thy will, O God."*

– HEBREWS 10:5, 7

THE FIRST JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Annunciation

When Mary uttered her Fiat, *Be it done unto me...* (Lk 1:38 DR) at the Annunciation, Mary offered her virginal womb as a tabernacle for the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. Just as Mary carried the physical reality in herself of His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, so do we at each Holy Communion carry within us the True Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. Our Amen at receiving the Eucharist should be the same as Mary's Fiat—yes, I believe and I accept Jesus into my heart in order to love Him and do His will at every moment.

*What shall I render to the Lord
for all His bounty to me?*

*I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord...*

*I will offer to Thee
the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call on the name of the Lord.*

– PSALM 115/116:12-13, 17

THE SECOND JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Visitation

During Mary's journey to her cousin Elizabeth, she carried the Incarnate God as in a pure tabernacle. He was still invisible to the world, yet His presence shone out to Elizabeth through His Mother. *Blessed is she who believed . . .* (Lk 1:45). So too, we must believe that Jesus in us after Holy Communion wants to shine out from us to all we come into contact with. With Mary, we can say, *My soul magnifies the Lord* (Lk 1:46), as we try to imitate our Mother as we go about our day.

*Behold, a virgin shall
conceive and bear a son,
and his name shall be called
Emmanuel (which means,
God with us).*

– MATTHEW 1:23

THE THIRD JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Nativity

All else faded from view as Mary finally, after nine months, beheld the Face of her Son. The enraptured gaze of Our Lady as she cradled the newborn Christ and contemplated Him should inspire us to spend time after Holy Communion contemplating the Divine Treasure that dwells within us. During those moments He is all ours and we can ask Him for all that we need during the day to remain in union with Him.

*Present your bodies as a
living sacrifice, holy and
acceptable to God, which is
your spiritual worship.*

–ROMANS 12:1

THE FOURTH JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Presentation in the Temple

When Mary brought her Son Jesus into the Temple, she united herself with this first sacrificial act of Christ which He would later carry out physically on Calvary. In each Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the Act is renewed. Like Our Lady, we too, need to place the offering of ourselves and all that each day holds with the Host on the patten so that they can become united to the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Thus we will imitate Our Lady in her union with her Son.

*Seek the Lord
and His strength,
seek His presence
continually!*

– PSALM 104/105:4

THE FIFTH JOYFUL MYSTERY

The Finding in the Temple

In this mystery we behold the great grief of Our Lady and St. Joseph at the loss of the presence of Jesus in their lives. There are times in each of our lives that we too are deprived of the presence of God, even though, like Mary and St. Joseph, it is through no fault of our own. It is important that we never become so familiar in the Presence of Jesus that we lose proper respect. When we pray this mystery in Our Lord's presence, let us ask for the grace to keep the awe of this gift always.

*Come, all you who are
thirsty, come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat! Come,
buy wine and milk without
money and without cost.*

– ISAIAH 55:1 NIV

THE FIRST LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Baptism in the Jordan

How much our souls long for God, to know Him, to love Him, to share His Divine Life! When *Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan*, He revealed to us the mystery of His Divine Sonship: *And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son; with Thee I am well pleased"* (Mk 1:9-11). In baptism, we went down into the waters of death, and rose again filled with the new life of Christ, sharing His sonship, beloved of the Father, indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Now the desire of our souls is to be transformed more fully in Him, to grow to *the stature of the fulness of Christ* (Eph 4:13). What will increase our knowledge and love of Him, and our participation in His Divine Life through grace? In the Eucharist, Jesus feeds the longing of our souls with Himself.

*I came so that they
might have life
and have it more abundantly.*

—JOHN 10:10 NABRE

THE SECOND LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Wedding Feast at Cana

The abundance of God's Divine Life—this is the promise poured out for us at Cana, in the pattern of the Eucharist.

When *there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there with Jesus and His disciples*, everything had been arranged for the feast. Yet it did not fulfil its promise; in fact, as Mary pointed out, *They have no wine*. Would not Jesus help? Yes, but at a cost: *My hour has not yet come* (Jn 2:1-4). Indeed, He refers to the hour of His Passion, in which He is truly poured out in His Precious Blood to win us a share in His Divine Life. We join Him: *He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life* (Jn 12:25).

Like the treasure hidden in a field, the Kingdom of Heaven costs everything, but is worth everything (cf. Mt 13:44). The servants fill the jars *up to the brim*; poured out, it is clear that *you have kept the good wine until now* (Jn 2:10). The promise of the Eucharist is the abundance of God's Divine Life for those who pour themselves out totally in union with Him.

*Jesus answered them,
“This is the work of God,
that you believe in Him
whom He has sent.”*

– JOHN 10:10 NABRE

THE THIRD LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Proclamation of the Kingdom

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel (Mk 1:15). These words of Jesus call us to turn to Him in repentance, believe in Him, and so come to share in His Divine Life: *The kingdom of God is within you (Lk 17:21 DR).*

How does the Kingdom of God grow in our souls? Little by little, like the seed the farmer planted in the field that *should sprout and grow, he knows not how (Mk 4:27).* All-pervadingly, like the yeast that leavens the entire dough (Mt 13:33). To its full stature, like the mustard seed *that is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches. (Mt 13:32).*

In Eucharistic Adoration, we turn our hearts to the Lord and believe in Him. As we gaze on Him in faith and love under the sacramental veil of the Host, little by little His Presence pervades our hearts, so that in them His Kingdom may come to full stature. *For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life (Jn 6:40).*

*I am the way,
and the truth,
and the life.*

*No one comes
to the Father
except through Me.*

– JOHN 14:6 NABRE

THE FOURTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Transfiguration

Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart (Mt 17:1). An arduous trek up the mountain, with Jesus: this can be an image of our life, as He accompanies us along the way in His Eucharistic Presence.

At the top of the mountain was Jesus transfigured before them, and they saw him speaking with Moses and Elijah about His exodus that He was going to accomplish in Jerusalem (Lk 9:30 NABRE). At the climax, a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son; listen to Him" (Mk 9:7).

In the overshadowing cloud of the Holy Spirit and in the Father's voice, the goal of our arduous trek uphill is revealed: participation in the life of the Blessed Trinity through our union with Jesus, the Beloved Son. It is through the Exodus of His Passion and Death, which He continues to make present to us in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, that He leads us to the Promised Land of eternal life with God.

*I have earnestly desired
to eat this Passover with you
before I suffer.*

– LUKE 22:14

THE FIFTH LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Institution of the Eucharist

How much Jesus longs to give Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist! How much He longs to give Himself over to the Father through His Passion and Death, so that *where I am you may be also* (Jn 14:3)! This mystery, the mystery that is the institution of the Eucharist Itself, shows the depths of His love: *He loved them to the end* (Jn 13:1).

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (1 Cor 11:23-26)

In the Eucharist Jesus' saving death is made present to us, but also His Risen Life at the right hand of the Father in Heaven. He fulfills His desire: *And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age* (Mt 28:20).

*Remain here
and keep watch.
Watch and pray . . .*

– MARK 14:34, 38 NABRE

THE FIRST SORROWFUL MYSTERY

The Agony in the Garden

Come watch and pray with Jesus. Let His words from the Upper Room, *Remain in My love* (Jn 15:9 NABRE), echo in your soul, as you respond to His expressed desire that you be with Him. Contemplate Him with Our Lady's heart, as the first drops of His Precious Blood fall to the ground. With every level of His being, Jesus offers His will to the Father and accepts the chalice . . . for you and for those whom He loves so much.

*I gave my back to those who
beat me, my cheeks to those
who tore out my beard;
My face I did not hide
from insults and spitting.*

– ISAIAH 50:6 NABRE

THE SECOND SORROWFUL MYSTERY

The Scourging at the Pillar

Come witness Jesus give His Body and Blood—His pure Flesh is rent, His Precious Blood is everywhere spilt. Just hours before, He luminously gave Himself in the Upper Room to the disciples whom He loved, and now He gives Himself surrounded by those who have no love for Him at all. Still He gives, to all and for all. Let us always receive Him at the Eucharistic table—and everywhere else—with great love. Contemplate His generosity with Our Lady, and respond with humble gratitude. Here in superabundance His life blood is poured out . . . for you and for those whom He loves so much.

“Then you are a king?”

*“ . . . For this I was born and
for this I came into the world,
to testify to the truth.*

*Everyone who belongs to the
truth listens to My voice.”*

“What is truth?”

– CF. JOHN 18:37-38 NABRE

THE THIRD SORROWFUL MYSTERY

The Crowning with Thorns

Come, behold the Man: *Ecce Homo!* Truly, truly behold your King to whom you belong. Let your heart be open to listen His voice. Contemplate Truth Incarnate with Our Lady with profound reverence in reparation for the mockery and contempt of this cruel crowning. *Truth Himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.** Respond generously to our thorn-crowned King who gives His Flesh as true food and His Blood as true drink . . . for you and for those whom He loves so much.

**Adoro Te Devote*, St. Thomas Aquinas, trans. Gerard Manly Hopkins.

*They see Your solemn
procession, O God, the
procession of my God, of my
king, to the sanctuary.*

– PSALM 68:24 GRAIL PSALTER

THE FOURTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY

The Carrying of the Cross

Come and see the King christen the royal road—the Via Dolorosa—studding the stony narrow streets with bloody rubies, marking His slow painful progress. Let your steps and heart quicken as you respond by following Him. Contemplate with Our Lady all the “stops” along the road—each terrible fall, the violent treatment of the soldiers, Veronica, Simon of Cyrene, and all the rest. This Eucharistic procession is solemn indeed, and brings us with Him to His sacrifice’s summit, taking every painful step . . . for you and for those whom He loves so much.

*He loved His own
in the world and He loved
them to the end.*

–JOHN 13:1 NABRE

THE FIFTH SORROWFUL MYSTERY

The Crucifixion and Death

Come stand at the cross with His Mother and behold Him beholding her. Soon all will be accomplished and she will be holding Him. Let the elevation of His Sacred Body show forth the source and summit of Love Incarnate. Contemplate with Our Lady's pristine eyes of faith, His countenance gazing down upon you, loving you to the end. May He see and love in you what He sees and loves in her. Respond by uniting all that you are to all that is He is, as He utterly empties Himself . . . for you and for those whom He loves so much.

*He who eats My flesh
and drinks My blood
abides in Me and I in Him.*

–JOHN 6:56

THE FIRST GLORIOUS MYSTERY

The Resurrection of Jesus

Christ's resurrection to a new, immortal life is the foundation of our new life in Him, of our "abiding" in Him. Jesus wants us to be so closely united to Himself that we are one with Him! Thus, He said, *I am the vine, you are the branches* (Jn 15:5). He also expects us to bear the same fruit for the Father's glory as Himself: keeping the Father's commandments and loving one another as He has loved us (Jn 15:10-12). This is only possible to the degree that we remain closely united to Jesus: *He who abides in Me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing* (Jn 15:5).

Our Christian life that begins at Baptism, the sacrament of faith, is consummated by Holy Communion, the sacrament of love. By frequently and devoutly receiving Holy Communion, we abide in Jesus, thereby bearing much fruit to glorify His—and our—Heavenly Father, and drawing each other more deeply into the peace of the Risen Christ.

*I am the living bread which
came down from heaven;
if any one eats of this bread,
he will live for ever; and
the bread which I shall give
for the life of the world
is My flesh.*

—JOHN 6:51

THE SECOND GLORIOUS MYSTERY

The Ascension of Jesus

The Eucharist is Our Lord's supreme fulfilment of His promise, *I am with you always, to the close of the age* (Mt 28:20). By establishing this Sacrament, Jesus provides us the consolation of His Real Presence, invites us to intimacy with Him in Holy Communion, and enables us to unite ourselves to His sacrificial self-offering to the Father. But our union with Jesus is not a merely personal reality. Having ascended into Heaven as our High Priest, Jesus is still offering Himself to the Father—for me, yes, but also for the life of the world. For *He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them* (Heb 7:25). When we draw near to Jesus at Mass, in Holy Communion, or in Eucharistic Adoration, we, His members, must join Him in intercession and self-offering for the salvation and holiness of others, of the whole world. His Body is itself the *Living Bread* that strengthens us for this daunting task.

*It is the spirit that gives life,
the flesh is of no avail;
the words that I have spoken
to you are spirit and life.*

–JOHN 6:63

THE THIRD GLORIOUS MYSTERY

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit's action in the New Covenant always tends to building up *the body of Christ, the Church* (Eph 4:12). Just as the Spirit overshadowed Mary to bring about the Incarnation, and descended upon the nascent Church at Pentecost, so now He causes us who are in Christ Jesus *to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body... builds itself up in love* (Eph 4:15,16).

The *works of the flesh* do not avail to unite us to God or each other, but cause personal and ecclesial division: *immorality, ... sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness...* Love, by contrast, is the unmistakable sign that the Spirit is within us, *giving us life* by His fruit: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Gal 5:19-22). When, at Mass, the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, He also descends upon us to make us *one body, one spirit in Christ, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph 4:3-4; Eucharistic Prayer IV).

*For this is the will of My
Father, that every one who
sees the Son and believes in
Him should have eternal life;
and I shall raise him up
on the last day.*

– JOHN 6:40

THE FOURTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY

The Assumption of Mary

Mary spent her last years living a deeply Eucharistic life in the midst of the Christian community: *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers* (Acts 2:42). She also lived a deeply hope-filled life. *She who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord* (Lk 1:45) concerning her miraculous motherhood, believed and hoped also for the glorious resurrection that Christ promises to those who believe in Him.

For us, as for her, the Holy Eucharist is not only the *food of wayfarers* (St. Thomas Aquinas), giving us strength and refreshment during the struggles of this life, it is also a *pledge of future glory* (St. Thomas Aquinas) and the *medicine of immortality* (St. Ignatius of Antioch). Unlike Mary, we must wait until *the last day* for our resurrection, but, like her, we do not live *for this life only* (1 Cor 15:19). Rather, we *look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come* (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed).

*Do not labor for the food
which perishes, but for the food
which endures to eternal life,
which the Son of Man
will give to you.*

—JOHN 6:27

THE FIFTH GLORIOUS MYSTERY

The Coronation of Mary

Our Lady's queenship is the fitting reward for her perfect fidelity to her Son: *If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign with Him* (2 Tim 2:11). No one will ever endure as steadfastly in union with Christ as Mary. Thus, she participates in a superlative degree in Christ's kingship also, wearing *a crown of twelve stars* (Rev 12:1) that distinguishes her among all others who wear the *crown of life* (Rev 2:10). But her queenship is also a heavenly continuation of her role as Christ's mother. Though Jesus no longer needs her to nurture and accompany Him in His mortal life, we, the *rest of her offspring*, Christ's Mystical Body, very much need her help to *conquer the ancient serpent* (Rev 12:17, 11, 9). Knowing this, Jesus explicitly gives her to us as our mother, even as He gives us Himself as the Bread of Life. She will help us endure the sorrows and struggles of this life by keeping our eyes on *the food which endures to eternal life*. And in our final hour, she will be near, helping us *to die with Him*, so as *to live with Him* forever.

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