

Coloma Catholic Life.

Liturgical Year

5th Week in Lent. Liturgical colour – Purple

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March Catholics in China

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

Video link: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/pope-francis-prayer-intention-march-2020.html>

Pope Francis Tweet

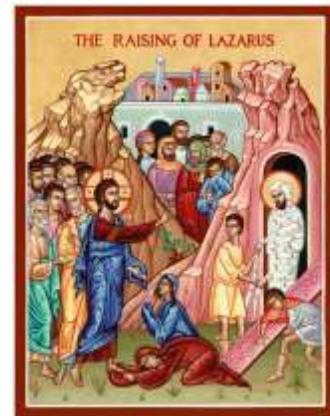
"In Jesus' presence, the true sentiments of the heart come forth. Let us read the Gospel of today (John 9:1 – 41) to understand what happens when Jesus passes by."

Gospel reflection for Sunday 29th March: John 11: 1 - 45

"Lazarus, come out!" Jesus says to Lazarus, who lies dead in the tomb. At the command, Lazarus comes out alive, even though he had been dead and buried for four days. Jesus gives him life. Why now? Why Lazarus? What is the significance of this miracle? What does it mean for us today, two thousand or so years later? These are some questions that might arise as we hear or read the account for this Sunday's gospel passage.

The raising of Lazarus is essentially a story about faith in Jesus — not so much Lazarus's belief, but that of everyone else. In the beginning of the story, Jesus is not present. Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, live in Bethany. Jesus is somewhere else, and the sisters send a messenger to him to let him know that Lazarus was sick. When Jesus receives the message, he says to those with him: "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." At this point Jesus decides not to go immediately to see Lazarus but rather waits two days.

He travels to Bethany, where the sisters are grieving the death of their brother. The call to faith is once again highlighted in Jesus' conversation with Martha. Jesus says to her: "Your brother will rise." Martha responds: "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus then says to her: "I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." Then he invites Martha to faith: "Do you believe this?" She affirms, saying: "Yes Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." Martha professes her faith in Christ Jesus.



The story then moves to an encounter with Mary. Jesus was still outside the town when he met with Martha, who secretly sends word of the Lord's arrival to Mary. The secrecy seems to involve protecting Jesus from those who are seeking his life. Mary, steeped in grief, goes immediately to Jesus as do all those who were gathered with her. The sorrow is overwhelming so much so that Jesus weeps.

Mary says, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Soon after this, Jesus asks to be taken to the tomb. Meanwhile, people are wondering: "Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not have died?" When Jesus asks for the stone to be rolled back, he hears objection: "Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." No one is expecting what will come next, not even Martha and Mary, it is so extraordinary.

As the story develops, we see elements or forces that may inhibit, hinder or block faith. The forces against Jesus are real. The disciples worry about that, as does Martha. Grief and sorrow can be consuming and may cloud over the possibility that Jesus could restore life. Doubt shows itself to some degree when the townsfolk question whether things would have been different if Jesus had arrived earlier. There are plenty of reasons generated that might block the call to faith.

Yet Jesus moves forward and continues to invite. These obstacles help highlight the significance of the miracle – the call to faith. So, Jesus says, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" He then prays to the Father saying, "I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me; but because of the crowd here I have said this, that they may believe that you sent me." He then cries out in a loud voice: "Lazarus, come out!" Lazarus comes out of the tomb bound head to feet in the burial cloths. "Untie him and let him go." Lazarus has been restored to life, to his family and his friends. He lives.

The evangelist concludes the story saying: "Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him." So, it seems like the invitation to faith is one of the central elements of Jesus's restoring Lazarus to life. The life he offers comes through his passion, death and resurrection which were foreshadowed by the Lazarus miracle. Jesus offers us the invitation to life. He has the power to give life, eternal life. He invites us to faith.

While we are always called to faith, in the sense of an ongoing relationship with Christ, these days may give us an opportunity to develop a deeper trust in the Lord. As we journey through Lent, we walk with Jesus on the road to Calvary. The invitation to faith, or deeper faith, is ever present, even as the circumstances of life pose challenges at different times.

Perhaps the wide and varied challenges from the coronavirus pandemic invite us to walk still more closely with Christ. Some might be fearful. Some might be frustrated. Some might be bored — those unable to work, attend school or socialize. Some might be overwhelmed, particularly medical workers, civic officials and employers. Some might be getting annoyed with their family members. There are plenty of other challenges in this moment as well. But in all these, there is the call to faith. Jesus is risen and walks with us in every aspect of life. He is present, even in the most unusual situations. He calls us to faith and it's in faith that he will lead us to life.

Reflection by: *Msgr. Joseph Prior is pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish, Penn del*

Spiritual Communion

Until further notice it is no longer possible to celebrate publicly. The Holy Father is strongly encouraging us to make a spiritual communion. Here is a link to an excellent prayer sheet produced by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, including prayer for spiritual communion.

<http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/media/No-Mass-A4.pdf>

Here is a link to various liturgical services and live streaming of mass. It is updated regularly.

<https://www.churchservices.tv/whats-on-now/>

Alternatively, you can log on to the diocesan website for parishes providing streamed liturgical services.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/mass-at-home/>

This link can be found on Our Lady's website also:

<http://www.addiscombecatholicchurch.com/live-web-cam>

Pope Francis offers this spiritual communion during the coronavirus pandemic:

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/pope-francis-offers-this-spiritual-communion-prayer-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Pastoral Letter from The Most Reverend John Wilson, Archbishop of Southwark

The link below is to a Pastoral letter written by Archbishop John on 18th March 2020:

<http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/media/Pastoral%20Letter%20-%2018%20March%202020.pdf>

Rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary – March 29th



On Sunday 29th March England was re-dedicated as the Dowry of Mary. It is a personal promise of the people of our country and a renewal of the entrustment vows made by King Richard II in 1381. It was in Westminster Abbey that King Richard II sought the protection of Our Lady. England received the title 'Mary's Dowry' which means that England was 'set aside' as a gift, a dowry, for Our Lady under her guidance and protection. By this re-dedication we are invited to give ourselves to Mary. By making a personal promise and a communal entrustment.

This links to a brief explanation by Archbishop John;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=84&v=yxkyWW-lcZE&feature=emb_logo

This explains more about the Rededication:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e956A7Wqv7k>

Additional resources can be found at <http://www.behold2020.com>.

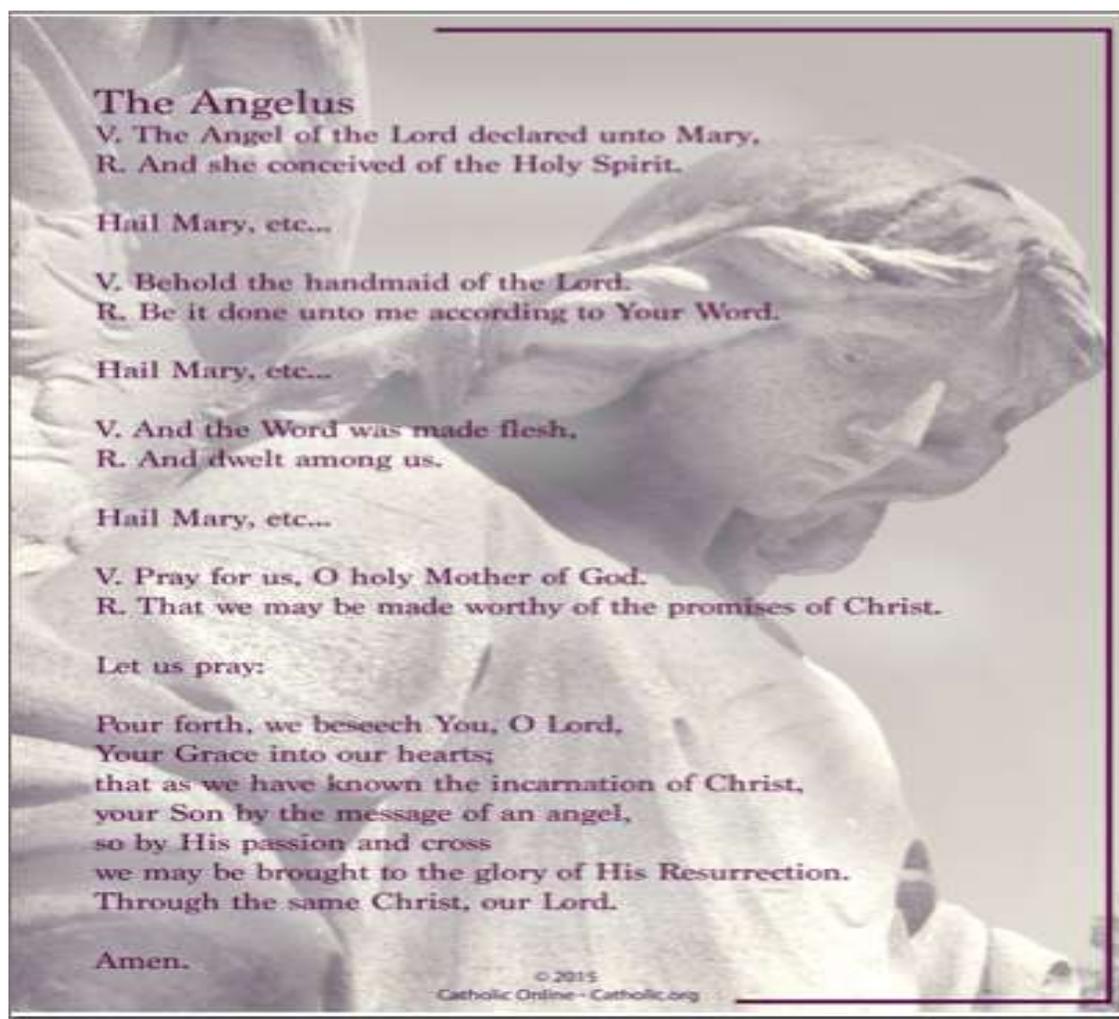
The Diocese of Westminster Educational Service have created some excellent resources for this event as well as a resource pack on the role of Mary in the Catholic Church. <https://education.rcdow.org.uk/re-catholic-life/catholic-life/>

Praying the Angelus

Designed to commemorate the mystery of the Incarnation and pay homage to Mary's role in salvation history, it has long been part of Catholic life. Around the world, three times every day, the faithful stop whatever they are doing and with the words "The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary" begin this simple yet beautiful prayer. But why do we say the Angelus at all, much less three times a day?

A review of Church history shows that this devotion did not appear suddenly, but developed over several centuries: This link gives a full explanations as to how the praying of the Angelus developed:

<https://simplycatholic.com/what-is-the-angelus/>



The Angelus
V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, etc...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to Your Word.

Hail Mary, etc...

V. And the Word was made flesh,
R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Four forth, we beseech You, O Lord,
Your Grace into our hearts;
that as we have known the incarnation of Christ,
your Son by the message of an angel,
so by His passion and cross
we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection.
Through the same Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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This link shows how to pray The Angelus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiMO7EePhjM>

Praying the Rosary

The word "rosary" originally meant "crown of roses," which is a symbol of the Virgin Mary. The Catholic rosary is a devotional tool that Catholics can use to recite a series of the prayers that focus on the central core of Catholic faith. It is a string of beads to keep track of a series of prayers recited in a particular order.

St. Dominic Receives the Rosary

The Catholic Church traces the invention of rosary to the year 1206 C.E. when an apparition of the Virgin Mary revealed it to St. Dominic Guzman. The rosary was a helpful way for St. Dominic to teach members of the Catholic Church about the important stages in the life of Jesus. Many people in Europe were illiterate, and therefore unable to learn about their religion through books.

What Is a Rosary?

A rosary is a string of beads divided into five groups of 10 beads by one bead, with a strand of five beads and a crucifix that hang from the bottom of the necklace. Each bead has prayers that go along with it. Catholics begin by holding the crucifix and silently praying the Apostle's Creed, then moving onto the bead above the crucifix to say an Our Father.

The Mysteries

The Mysteries of the Catholic faith are important events in the life of Jesus. They are divided into The Joyful Mysteries, The Luminous Mysteries, The Sorrowful Mysteries and The Glorious Mysteries. Each set of mysteries is recited on the rosary on a different day of the week. The last bead that joins the circular part of the necklace with the string holding the crucifix is the place where the worshiper says the First Mystery. Each single bead between a set of 10 Hail Mary prayers is where the worshiper says the next Mystery after an Our Father and prays the Glory Be prayer.

Prayers for Praying the Rosary

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen.

Glory Be

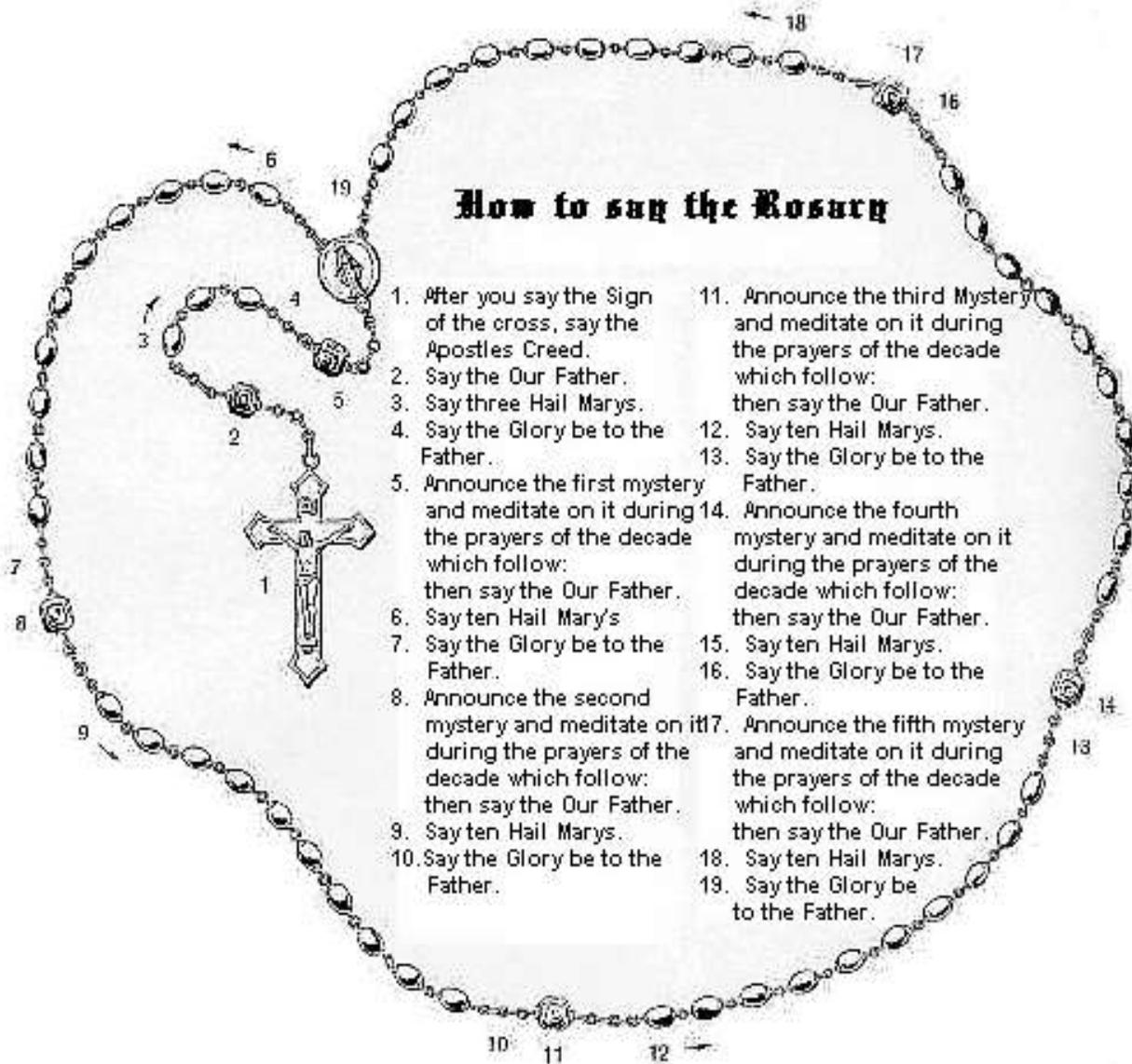
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

Leader: Pray for us O Holy Mother of God,

All: That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.



Urbi et Orbi Blessing 27th March, 2020



A short but very moving video from Vatican News:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nOIYQB8Twdk>

The whole service:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv3HSn_l4uY

Written by C.S. Lewis in 1942 ...

Satan "I will cause anxiety, fear and panic. I will shut down business, schools, places of worship, and sports events. I will cause economic turmoil."

Jesus "I will bring together neighbors, restore the family unit, I will bring dinner back to the kitchen table. I will help people slow down their lives and appreciate what really matters. I will teach my children to rely on me and not the world. I will teach my children to trust me and not their money and material resources."

... and still true today!