



FIRST SATURDAY DEVOTIONS

The Joyful Mysteries and the Journey to Bethlehem

Welcome to our First Saturday devotions in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE APOSTLES 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 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended into hell; on the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from there He will 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 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 among 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. X 3

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER:

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.



A meditation on the Joyful Mysteries and the Journey to Bethlehem



THE FIRST MEDITATION: The Edict

Mary is sitting in the little house in Nazareth. It is getting dark. Her abdomen is now very big. She is full of dignity and grace.

Joseph comes in from the village. He smiles but his smile seems to be a forced one, as if he were worried. "Is there anything worrying you?" asks Mary. Joseph replies, "I have a big problem ... that concerns you. An edict has been posted on the synagogue door. It orders the census of all Palestinians. And everybody must go and register in his place of origin. We must go to Bethlehem..."

Joseph and Mary know that it is getting close to the time for Jesus to be born. Joseph is concerned for Mary because the crowds will be big, good lodgings may be hard to get and what if Mary becomes a mother there, what will they do? Mary calms Joseph and tells him not to be afraid. Everything will be alright. Trust in God. The harder the trial, trust in God more. The angels will defend and protect their King. God is with us.

(Pause ...) The first Joyful Mystery – the Annunciation.

Why do you confuse yourselves by worrying? Leave the care of your affairs to me and everything will be peaceful. I say to you in truth that every act of true, blind, complete surrender to me, produces the effect that you desire and resolves all difficult situations.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. [Fr Dolindo Ruotolo]

(Pause ...) We offer this mystery in reparation for blasphemy against Our Lady's Immaculate Conception.

OUR FATHER HAIL MARY X 10 GLORY BE TO THE FATHER
*O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell.
Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.*

THE SECOND MEDITATION: The Road to Bethlehem

The main road is very crowded. It is cold. Mary is on a little grey donkey. She is wrapped in a heavy mantle. Joseph is walking on the side, holding the reins. "Are you tired?" he asks Mary now and again. Mary looks at him smiling and replies, "No, I am not, but you must be tired from walking." They meet a shepherd, who cuts across the road with his herd. Joseph talks to the shepherd who nods. The shepherd goes and milks a big sheep and hands a bowl full of milk to Joseph who offers it to Mary. "May God bless you both," exclaims Mary. "You Joseph, for your love, and you shepherd, for your kindness. I will pray for you." The shepherd told them that he had come from Bethlehem and that it was overcrowded with people who had come from all over to register there. "If you can't find a room in the hotel, go round the back where there are some stables in the mountains for the animals. At least it will provide some shelter. And may God guide you."

(Pause ...) The second Joyful Mystery – the Visitation.

Surrender to me does not mean to fret, to be upset, or to lose hope. Nor does it mean offering to me a worried prayer. Surrender means to placidly close the eyes of the soul and to put yourself in my care, saying, "You take care of it."

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. [Fr Dolindo Ruotolo]

(Pause ...) We offer this mystery in reparation for the blasphemy and heresies against the perpetual virginity of the Most Holy Mother of God.

OUR FATHER HAIL MARY X 10 GLORY BE TO THE FATHER
O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, ...

THE THIRD MEDITATION: The Time Has Come

Joseph and Mary continue their journey on the busy road. They climb over a crest. In the valley below, there are many houses. It is Bethlehem.

Joseph says, "Here we are in David's land, Mary, and now you will be able to rest. You look so tired." Mary pauses as if she is thinking and praying. She gets hold of Joseph's hand and with a blissful smile says to him, "I really think that the time has come. I am full of joy. Such a joy. So great, so beautiful, so uncontainable. He is coming. My Child is knocking at my heart and saying, 'Mother, I am here and I am coming to give you the kiss of God!' "

Joseph urgently looks for shelter and he quickens his pace. He goes from door to door asking for a room. Nothing. He cannot find anything. The fast winter twilight is beginning to spread its shadows. Joseph and Mary then turn down behind the hotel. At last, here are some grottos, low and damp. An old man shouts, "Hey, Galilean! Down there, at the end, there is a den. Perhaps there is nobody in it yet."

(Pause ...) The third Joyful Mystery – the Birth of Jesus.

How many things I do when the soul, in so much spiritual and material need turns to me, looks at me and says to me, "You take care of it", then closes its eyes and rests.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. [Fr Dolindo Ruotolo]

(Pause ...) We offer this mystery in reparation for the blasphemy and heresies against the divine maternity of Our Blessed Mother.

OUR FATHER	HAIL MARY X 10	GLORY BE TO THE FATHER
<i>O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, ...</i>		

THE FOURTH MEDITATION: The Den

There is hardly any light and, to see better, Joseph lights a little lamp. He finds the den, goes into it and is greeted by a bellow. "Come in Mary. It is empty. There is only an ox. It is better than nothing." Mary dismounts from her little donkey and goes in. Joseph hangs the little lamp on a nail on one of the supporting beams. The den is filthy, the soil is strewn with straw. The ox turns its head round and looks with his large quiet eyes, hay hanging from its lips. In a corner there is a rough fireplace. Mary goes near the ox. She is cold. She puts her hands on its neck to feel its warmth. The ox bellows but does not stir. It seems to understand. The ox makes room for the little donkey to also eat the hay from the manger.

Joseph sweeps the floor with a bunch of twigs that he has found. He then lights a fire and he dries the hay, a handful at a time, holding it near the fire. Mary sits. She is tired. She watches and smiles. The hay is dried and made ready, and Mary sits down more comfortably on the soft hay. Joseph hangs his mantle across the hole that serves as a door. He then gives Mary bread and cheese with some water out of a flask. All is made ready.

(Pause ...) The fourth Joyful Mystery – the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

I perform miracles in proportion to your full surrender to me. I sow treasure troves of graces when you are in the deepest poverty. I will take care of things, I promise this to you."

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. [Fr Dolindo Ruotolo]

(Pause ...) We offer this mystery in reparation for the disrespect and irreverence shown to Our Lady's shrines or images.

OUR FATHER	HAIL MARY X 10	GLORY BE TO THE FATHER
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THE FIFTH MEDITATION: Watching and Waiting

Mary closes her eyes. She has been carefully wrapped by Joseph in her mantle and in a blanket. Joseph lies down, facing the fire. The ox has lain down also. Joseph breaks little sticks as noiselessly as possible and throws them, one at a time on the little fire, so that it may not go out and may give some light. The lamp has been put out. Rest tired ones.

After a while, when Joseph is dozing, Mary sits up. She smiles lovingly at the sleeping Joseph and goes on her knees to pray. She prays a long and ardent prayer. Joseph wakes and adds sticks to the fire. He joins Mary in prayer. Apart from the noise of the crackling sticks and the noise made now and then by the donkey stamping its hooves on the ground, no other sound is heard.

A thin ray of moonlight creeps in through a crack in the vault and it seems like a blade of unearthly silver looking for Mary. At last it reaches her. It is now on her head, where it forms a halo of pure light. The light increases around Mary more and more. It seems to come down from Heaven as well as from herself. Mary's body draws all the light that can descend from Heaven. She is the holder of the Light. She will now bring this Light into the world and she will give this Light to the world – Christ, our Light.

(Pause ...) The fifth Joyful Mystery – the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.

Pray always in readiness to surrender, and you will receive from it great peace and great rewards. Close your eyes and say with all your soul, "Jesus, you take care of it." Do not be afraid, I will take care of things. I promise this to you.

O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything. [Fr Dolindo Ruotolo]

(Pause ...) We offer this mystery in reparation for the crime of those who attempt to uproot devotion to the Mother of God, particularly from the souls of our young people.

OUR FATHER HAIL MARY X 10 GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell.

Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

HAIL HOLY QUEEN:

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, Hail our life, our sweetness and our hope.

To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve;

To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.

Turn then, O most gracious Advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life, death and resurrection has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant, we beseech you, that by meditating on these Mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

May the Divine Assistance remain always with us.

And may the Souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

References: * The Poem of the Man-God [Maria Valtorta]

* Fr Dolindo Ruotolo and the Surrender Novena

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in the hour of battle, be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God restrain him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits who roam through the world seeking the ruin of souls. **Amen.**