

# THE ROSARY



By and based on the books of **ROBERT J. CORMIER** [www.thefaithkit.org](http://www.thefaithkit.org)

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With illustrations executed by **ROSEANNE PEZZOLLA**

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## WHAT IS THE ROSARY?

The rosary is an aid to prayer.

Involving a concrete object, it helps people to concentrate on what they are doing.

Involving a concrete project—x number of prayers in a specified order—it is something specific that people can do.

Involving repetition, it puts our mind in the mood for God, and it frees our mind for meditation.

This is the reason that each decade (group of ten beads) is associated with a “mystery” (see the pages that follow); a moment in the life of Jesus or Mary is being offered as food for thought.

The traditional program is simple. You say The Our Father on each of large or single beads. You say The Hail Mary on each of the beads in groups. You say The Glory Be at the end of each group.

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The Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries were formally fixed in the sixteenth century. By tradition, the Joyful Mysteries were to be the object of meditation on Mondays and Thursdays, the Sorrowful on Tuesdays and Fridays, and the Glorious on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

When Pope John Paul II added the Luminous Mysteries in 2002, he suggested that they be considered on Thursdays, while the Joyful Mysteries, which feature Mary, be meditated upon on Saturdays, the day of the week traditionally dedicated to her.

But other programs of meditation are also possible. For example, beginning with the Joyful Mysteries on Monday, the Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious could then follow through Thursday for a continuous meditation on the life of Christ. This would be the weekday rosary. Thereafter, a weekend rosary would employ the Sorrowful Mysteries on Friday, the Joyful on Saturday, and the Glorious on Sunday, in keeping with the traditional themes of those days in the Christian week.

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# THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

THE ANNUNCIATION. It is announced to Mary that she is going to be the mother of Jesus. Though she could not understand how this could be, she said: "Let it be done to me as you say." Her acceptance of what she did not understand is the primary reason for devotion to Mary.

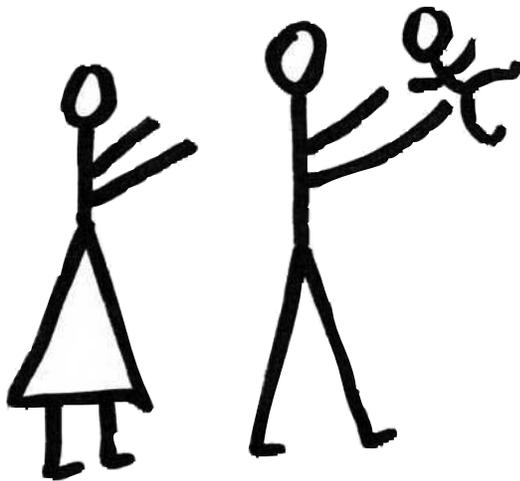
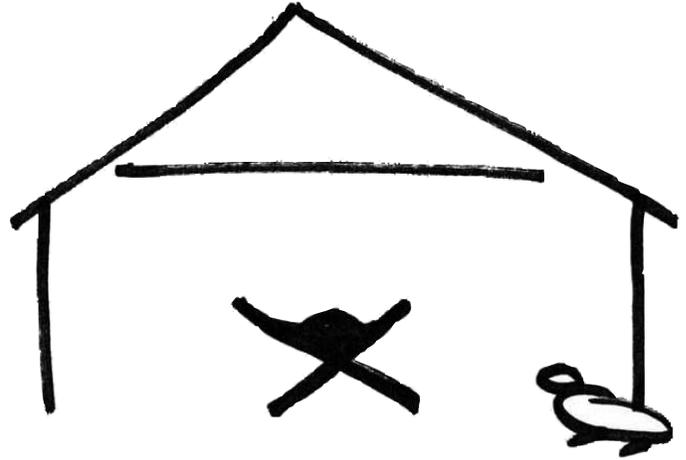


THE VISITATION. Though she herself was with child, Mary went to visit and care for her cousin Elizabeth who was carrying the future John the Baptist. She did not use her own condition as a



reason not to go. She did not care about the question Who is more important? She simply, humbly loved. Mary's simple love—which was the primary human influence on the person that Jesus became—changed the world. And this is the second great reason she was given to us as a model of faith.

THE NATIVITY. Jesus was born in a stable. Jesus was born poor. And this was just the beginning of a life in which he was to suffer anything that we might go through. Why? So that if we are poor, otherwise under-privileged, or the victims of ill-treatment, we will not feel that we are worthless. So that we would know that God understands anything we ever suffer. So that we would know that, like Jesus, we can conquer any adversity if only by accepting it.



THE PRESENTATION (of the new-born Jesus in the temple). Simeon, to whom Jesus was presented, said: "Now, Lord, you can let your servant go in peace. My eyes have seen salvation." What Simeon saw was a baby. But now he knew that victory was inevitable. We have even more reason to know it.

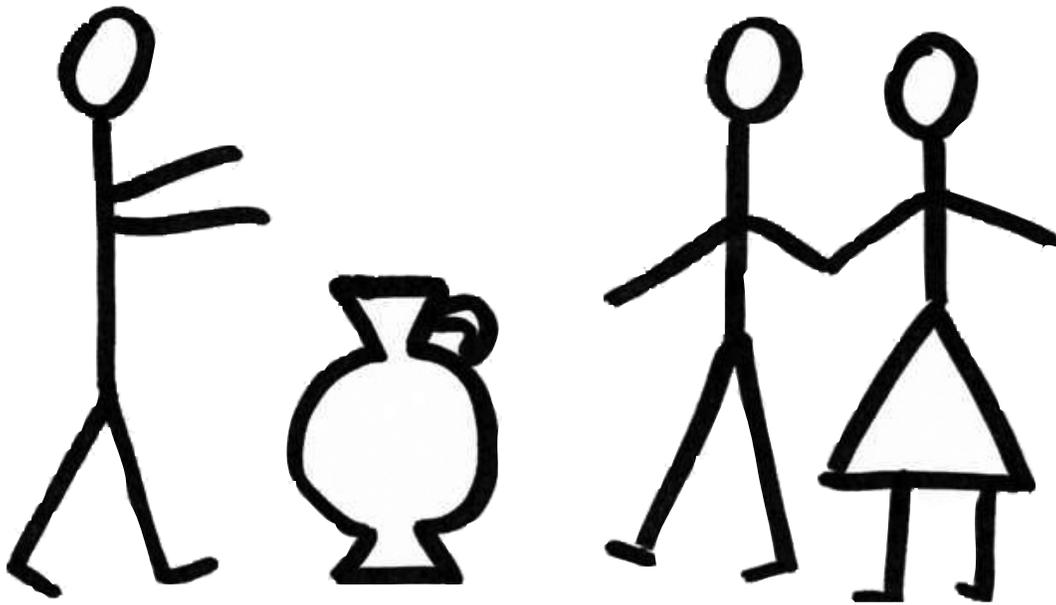
THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE. As he told his parents, the boy Jesus was found in the temple because he just had to go there. This is a calling, a vocation; it is something I just have to do, and it is not all about me. Many kinds of calls are possible. And not to answer will leave us empty.



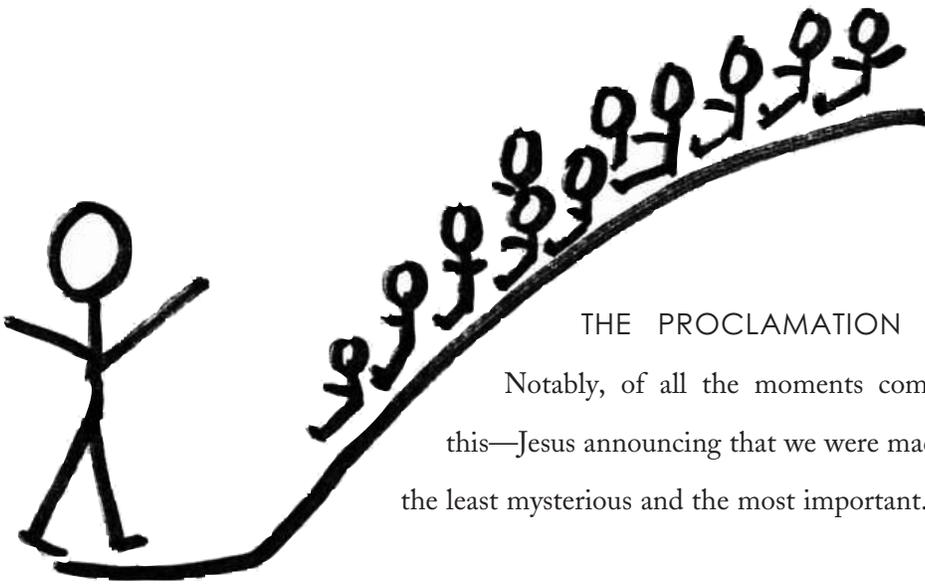
## THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES



THE BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN. Jesus was baptized so that his would provide a complete pattern for Christian life. He began his public life of faith by being baptized and went to share his faith, to give his life, and glory. We are called to the same life, death, and glory.



THE WEDDING AT CANA. Where Jesus turned water into wine. Jesus' first great act was not planned, not publicized, and not for the advancement of his cause. It was just an act of kindness, and person he helped didn't even know there was someone to be thanked.



THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM.

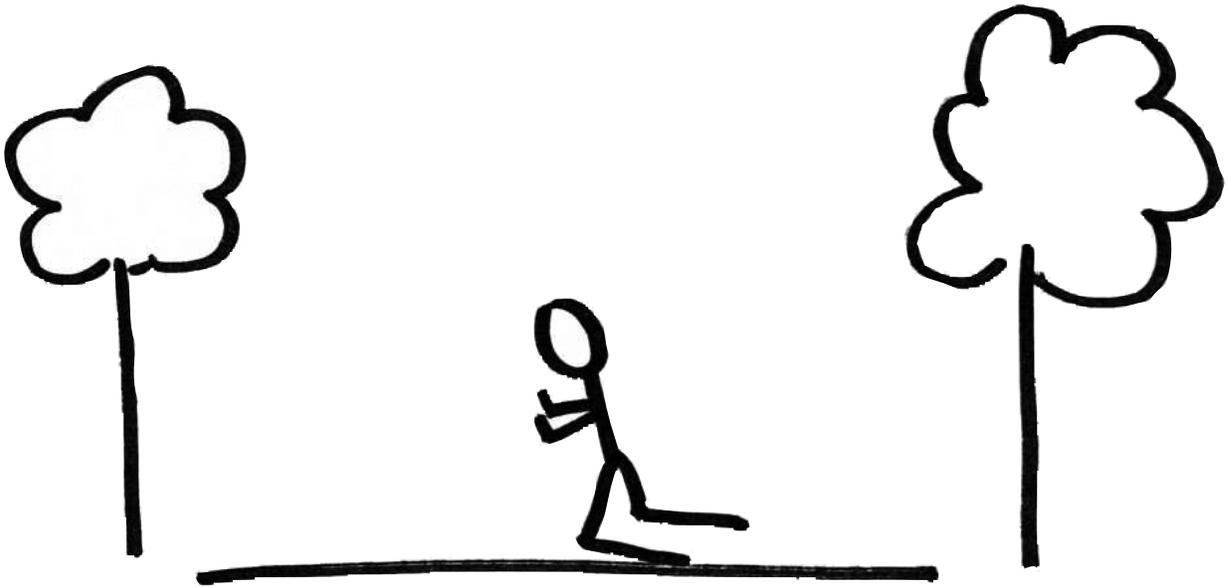
Notably, of all the moments commemorated as mysteries, this—Jesus announcing that we were made for life with God—was the least mysterious and the most important.

THE TRANSFIGURATION (of Jesus on the mountain). God made clear that Jesus is the one who had been promised by the Law and the prophets. Even more remarkable: His disciples forgot this enlightening experience the moment their faith in him was tested.

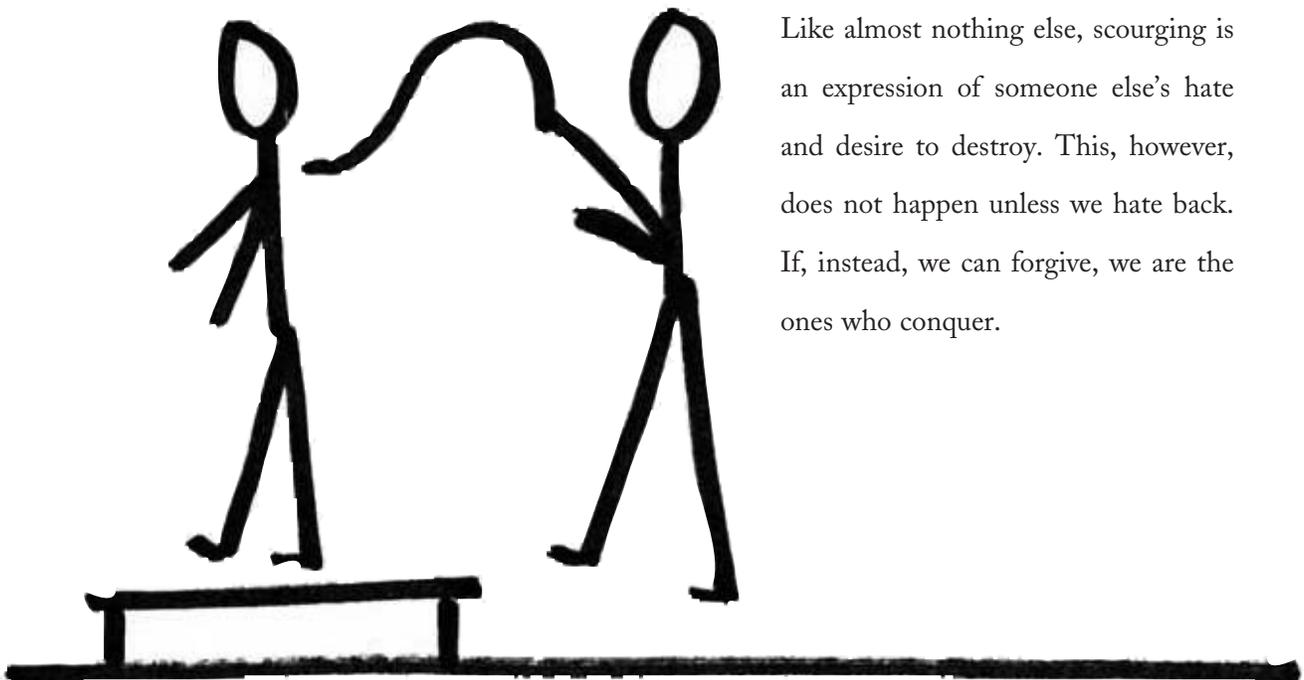


THE INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST. The “mystery” is the genius of this action which, in an unbloody way, presents to us time and again the moment Jesus showed his decision not to run and therein gave up his life, gives to us a receivable sign of the love that was proclaimed on the cross, and calls us together around a table to be God’s family.

## THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

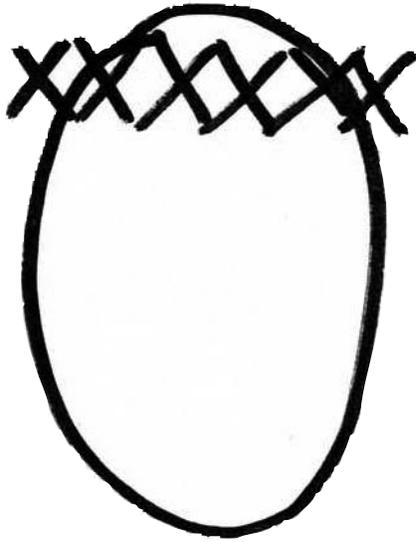


THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN. Jesus suffered emotionally. And God understands when *we* suffer emotionally, or when we struggle with feelings that are difficult to manage.



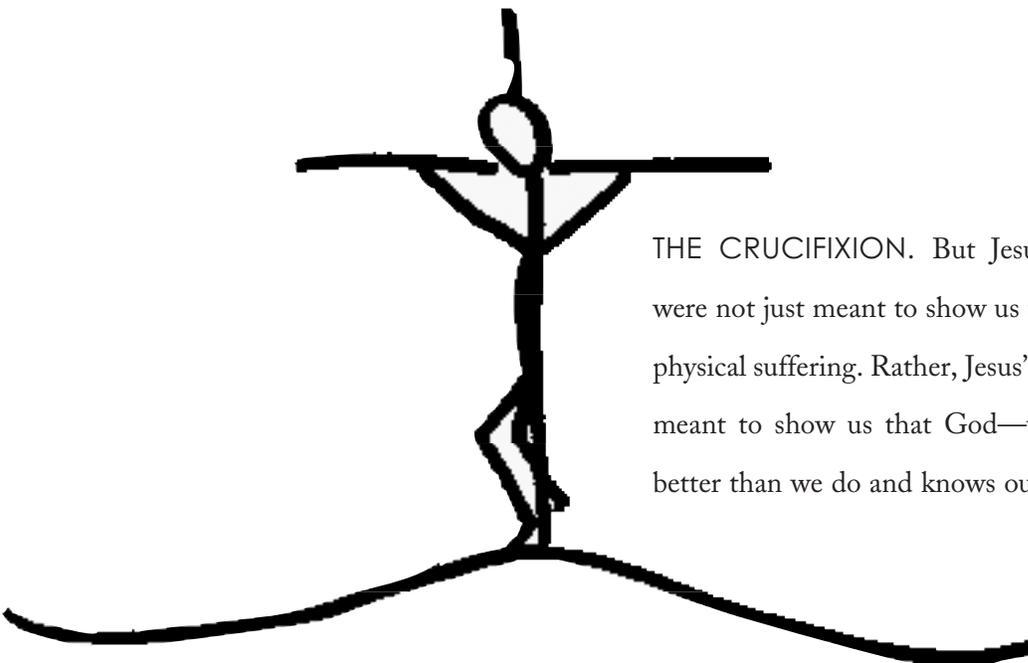
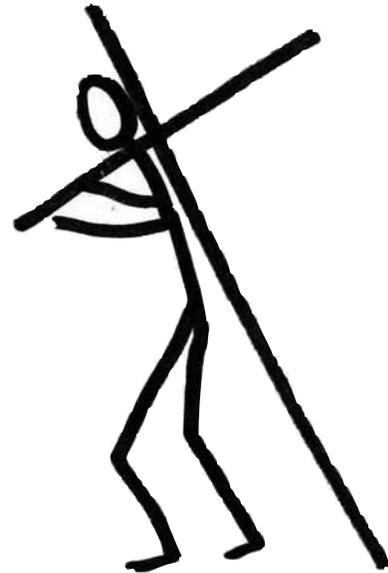
THE SCOURGING AT THE PILLAR.

Like almost nothing else, scourging is an expression of someone else's hate and desire to destroy. This, however, does not happen unless we hate back. If, instead, we can forgive, we are the ones who conquer.



THE CROWNING WITH THORNS. This, of course, was a false honor. This we see a lot. We see it in stardom, in wealth, and position—once we consider what a person had to do to get it. The honor in any title is what you have to do to get it.

THE CARRYING OF THE CROSS. To make a man carry the instrument of his own execution is the worst possible case of adding insult to injury. It is done to humiliate a person. This, however, does not happen unless we let it. No one can humiliate us unless we agree.



THE CRUCIFIXION. But Jesus' three hours of agony were not just meant to show us that God understands our physical suffering. Rather, Jesus' suffering on the cross was meant to show us that God—who knows our thoughts better than we do and knows our feelings for all that they are—suffers with all of us all the time.

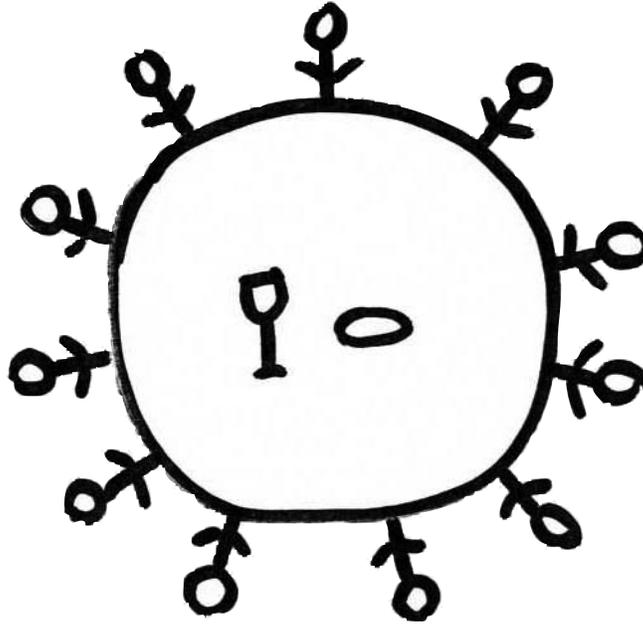
## THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES



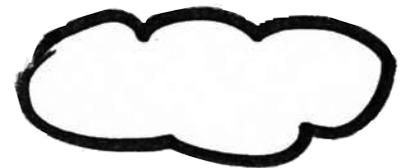
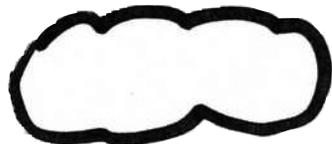
THE RESURRECTION. Jesus appears to his apostles after his death. These appearances not only showed that Jesus taught the truth, but they showed the truth that Jesus taught.



THE ASCENSION. The conclusion of Jesus' appearances on earth, and, as a conclusion, something sad. Endings of all kinds, big and small, hurt us. Why? Because God made us for permanence, for a world where things will never end.



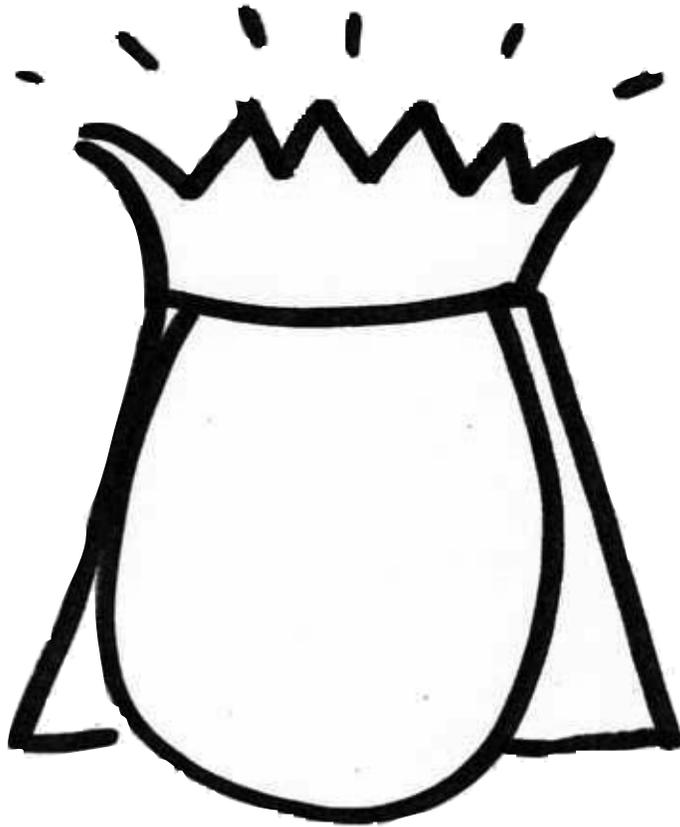
THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. In other words, those who had experienced the resurrection decided what it meant and were filled with a fervor that gave birth to the Church. Of course, this happened according to God's plan. God is still present in history, and He is also present in us: in our experience of Him in prayer, our knowledge of truths that no one ever taught us, our desire for so much more than the world could ever give us, and in our ability to love.



THE ASSUMPTION (of Mary into heaven soul *and* body).  
 heaven we will have a body means three wonderful things:  
 that—not like the doctrine of some who say that we will  
 of life as drops return to a bucket—we will remain indi-  
 means that we will retain our identity; we will retain our  
 we are going to recognize one another, and not just that:  
 one another intimately.



The idea that in  
 First, it means  
 return to the source  
 viduals. Secondly, it  
 memories. Thirdly,  
 We are going love



THE CORONATION (of Mary as Queen of Heaven). A description of the glory that awaits anyone who can say: "Let it be done to me as you say."

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# THE BASIC PRAYERS OF THE ROSARY

## THE 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.

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## THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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## THE 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 will be forever. Amen.

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