

Here's how John Paul II taught others to pray the Rosary

He gives detailed instructions in his encyclical Rosarium Virginis Mariae.

St. John Paul II was a strong advocate for the Rosary, frequently promoting it during his pontificate and praying it himself on a daily basis.

One of the ways he promoted the Rosary was by offering detailed suggestions on how to pray the beloved devotion.

Announcing the mystery while using a religious icon

In *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, John Paul II writes, "Announcing each mystery, and perhaps even using a suitable icon to portray it, is as it were to open up a scenario on which to focus our attention. The words direct the imagination and the mind towards a particular episode or moment in the life of Christ ... the veneration of icons ... [can] be of great help in concentrating the mind on the particular mystery."

Proclaim a related Bible passage

John Paul II continues, "it is helpful to follow the announcement of the mystery with the proclamation of a related Biblical passage, long or short, depending on the circumstances. No other words can ever match the efficacy of the inspired word. As we listen, we are certain that this is the word of God, spoken for today and spoken 'for me.'"

Allow for moments of silence

After the mystery and Bible passage, John Paul II suggests, "Listening and meditation are nourished by silence. After the announcement of the mystery and the proclamation of the word, it is fitting to pause and focus one's attention for a suitable period of time on the mystery concerned, before moving into vocal prayer."

Add a short clause around the name of "Jesus"

When praying the Hail Mary, John Paul II recommends adding an additional short clause that relates to the mystery being meditated, "Pope Paul VI drew attention, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, to the custom in certain regions of highlighting the name of Christ by the addition of a clause referring to the mystery being contemplated. This is a praiseworthy custom, especially during public recitation. It gives forceful expression to our faith in Christ, directed to the different moments of the Redeemer's life."

Conclude each decade with a short phrase on the fruits of the mystery

John Paul II writes, "conclude each mystery with a prayer for the fruits specific to that particular mystery. In this way the Rosary would better express its connection with the Christian life. One fine liturgical prayer suggests as much, inviting us to pray that, by meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary, we may come to 'imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise.'"

There are a few other suggestions for a fruitful Rosary in *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, all with the goal of making the Rosary a prayer filled with love of God.

If the Rosary remains a dry prayer for you, consider using these alternative methods.

Whatever you do, let the Mother of God move your heart and bring you closer to her son, Jesus Christ.

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