



Rosary reflections: The Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary

Today, more than three million hungry children will eat Mary's Meals at school. Since our humble beginnings, Mary's Meals has been built on a foundation of prayer and the many little acts of love from those who believe in our mission. Our work is named after Mary, Mother of God, who brought up her own child in poverty.

We invite you to join us in prayer as we honour Our Lady during the month of May. Our Rosary reflections can be used to meditate on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary at home, at church or in your prayer group.

1

The First Joyful Mystery: The annunciation

"In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!' But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.'" **Luke 1: 26-31.**

The angel Gabriel affirms God's presence in this little house in Nazareth as he speaks to Our Lady, saying "the Lord is with you". This scene is the beginning of a new chapter in the story of humanity, when Jesus takes on flesh and dwells among us, being present to us in a whole new way. In whatever circumstance we are in, we can call upon the Lord to be present with us, to strengthen us and dwell with us in the midst of suffering.

As we remember the work of Mary's Meals during Pray In May, we ask the intercession of Our Lady for all families around the world who feel alone due to hunger and poverty. May they feel God's very real and transformative presence in their lives and may the work of agencies like Mary's Meals help alleviate their suffering.

2

The Second Joyful Mystery: The visitation

"In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechari'ah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy.'" **Luke 1: 39-44.**

To share in her joy and to be a support to her kinswoman, Mary travels a great distance to visit Elizabeth. Elizabeth had no children and was believed to be barren, yet God in His infinite goodness gives her the gift of new life against all odds. When the problems in our own lives or in the world at large seem insurmountable, we can remember that the Lord can move mountains for those who call on His name.

As we remember the work of Mary's Meals in our prayers, we ask Our Blessed Mother to pray with us for the removal of all barriers that make it difficult for Mary's Meals to reach children in need. Jesus, make straight all of their paths to help them reach the hungry children crying out for help.

3

The Third Joyful Mystery: The nativity of Our Lord

“While they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. And in that region, there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, ‘Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.’” **Luke 2: 6-11.**

As the angel proclaims, the birth of Jesus was a source of great joy, not just for his earthly family, but for all people, shepherds and kings alike. This joy spreads across time, bringing together families and communities every year when we celebrate Christ’s birth.

The arrival of a new baby, alongside joy, can bring anxiety for some parents due to worries about safety and being able to support their child. We ask Our Lady to intercede for all expectant mothers around the world, especially those affected by hunger and poverty, that they may be blessed, supported and filled with hope and joy.

4

The Fourth Joyful Mystery: The presentation

“On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. When the time came for the purification rights required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord’), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: ‘a pair of doves or two young pigeons.’” **Luke 2: 21-24.**

We are surrounded by gifts and blessings from God – our family and friends, the marvels of creation, meaningful work, art and music. Yet so often we can take these things for granted and forget to give thanks to Our Heavenly Father, the source of all blessings. Our Lady followed God’s law and the traditions of the Jewish people by presenting her son Jesus to God, remembering that He belongs to Him.

During Pray In May, we offer the mission of Mary’s Meals to Our Lady and to Jesus. We pray that this mission will be blessed and guided by God’s hand to be a vehicle for hope and justice.

5

The Fifth Joyful Mystery: Finding Jesus in the temple

“Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they travelled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days, they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.” **Luke 2: 41-46.**

The Bible does not include many scenes from Jesus’ early life, but here we see a glimpse of him growing up and growing into the mission that lies before him. The brief separation from his parents is a source of anxiety for them, as they naturally wish to protect and care for him and are not ready yet for the separation that must come as he reaches adulthood.

We think of the many families around the world who have been separated due to conflict, especially those in Haiti where gangs seek to recruit hungry children with the promise of food. Our Lady, protect the work of Mary’s Meals and other agencies who offer daily meals for children in the safe environment of their schools. We ask Jesus to bring an end to all violence and help people work towards a lasting peace.

Find out more about the story of Mary’s Meals and how you can support our work on our [website](#), or by requesting a free copy of our Founder’s book [‘The Shed That Fed 2 Million Children’](#) for your church or group.