

ROSARY OF THE SEVEN SORROWS

Though devotion to Our Sorrowful Mother has always been a part of Catholic piety, the actual recitation of the Rosary of The Seven Sorrows was originated by the Servite Fathers in the thirteenth century. In the same century, St. Bridget also championed devotion to Our Sorrowful Mother. In 1982, when Our Lady appeared in Kibeho, Rwanda, to the visionary, Marie Claire Mukangango, she told her that this Rosary had been almost totally forgotten by the faithful and it would be her mission in life to reintroduce it to the world. Our Lady pleaded that this Rosary, along with the traditional Rosary, be prayed regularly. Our Blessed Mother's apparitions in Kibeho were approved by the Church on June 29, 2001.

The Rosary of The Seven Sorrows recalls the most significant sorrows Our Lady endured in her life. Praying this Rosary, while meditating on her grief and pain, will lead us to Jesus. The purpose of this Rosary is to promote union with Jesus through union with the sorrows that she endured because she was His Mother.

Like the traditional Rosary, The Seven Sorrows Rosary is a "bead-prayer." The beads are designed to keep count of the prayers. The beads are organized into seven sets of seven beads. A single bead representing one of The Seven Sorrows precedes each set. The Our Father is prayed on that bead. The seven beads in each set are used to pray the Hail Mary. In other words, The Seven Sorrow Rosary consists of one Our Father and the Hail Mary seven times for each of The Seven Sorrows.

Seventh Sorrow of Mary

Jesus is placed in the Tomb: John 19:39-42

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus "...and bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by." Although the Gospels do not mention it, we can only imagine that Our Lady helped to arrange the Body of Jesus. When it was time to leave, before they closed the tomb, she took one more look at her loving Son and walked out.

Reflection: Even though Our Blessed Mother knew in advance that Jesus would rise from the dead on Sunday morning, nevertheless her heart was desolate as she kept seeing His wounded Body in her mind's eye. O my dear Lady, even though you were sinless, you suffered more than anybody. You accepted suffering and pain with love and with unsurpassed courage. You suffered along with Jesus. You felt His every pain. Teach us to accept our pain, sorrows and grief with courage. May we always walk in your footsteps. That's the lesson of your seven sorrows.

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

Closing Prayer: Mother of Sorrows, your heart suffered so much. I beg you by the merits of tears you shed to obtain for me, and all sinners, the grace of complete sincerity and repentance. Amen.

Sixth Sorrow

Jesus is taken down from the cross and placed in His Mother's Arms: Mark 15:43-45

“Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had already died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.” The crowd had gone. The noise had stopped. And Our Mother looked up at the dead Body of her Son. Jesus was taken down from the cross, while Mary waited to take Him into her arms. Consider the unbearable grief that tore at the very fabric of her soul. She embraced Him tenderly and then sat down at the foot of the cross while holding Him in her arms on her lap.

***Reflection:* We thank you, Beloved Mother, for your suffering as you stood beneath your Child to comfort Him on the cross. While there you became a mother to all of us. You became the Mother of the World. We implore you to be our advocate before the throne of mercy and grace. We thank you for Jesus, and we thank You, Jesus, for giving Your Mother to us.**

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

Promises of Our Lady

Our Lady told St. Bridget of Sweden that she would grant seven graces to those who honor her daily by meditating on her Seven Sorrows:

- 1. I will grant peace to their families.**
- 2. They will be enlightened about the divine mysteries.**
- 3. I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work.**
- 4. I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of my Divine Son or the sanctification of their souls.**
- 5. I will protect them against the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives.**
- 6. I will visibly help them at the moment of their death; they will see the face of their Mother.**
- 7. I have obtained the grace from my Divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to my tears and dolors, will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness since all their sins will be forgiven and my Son and I will be their eternal consolation and joy.**

Our Lady also told Marie Claire, one of the three Kibeho visionaries, that with the recitation of her Seven Sorrows Rosary:

- ❖ The hardest hearts will change.**
- ❖ They shall be freed from obsessions and addictions.**
- ❖ They will find the strength to repent and convert their hearts.**
- ❖ They will obtain an understanding of the weaknesses that lead them to sin.**
- ❖ Praying it from the heart, they will obtain whatever they ask.**

Within this booklet are suggested meditations for each sorrow. They are not required when prayed privately. Simply thinking and meditating about each sorrow suffices.

Act of Contrition

O my God
I am heartily sorry for having offended You,
And I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of
heaven and the pains of hell,
But most of all because they offend You, my God,
Who are all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve with the help of Your grace to confess my
sins, to do penance and to amend my life. 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 you 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.

Fifth Sorrow of Mary Crucifixion and Death of Jesus John 19:25-27

“Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Behold your Mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.”

When Jesus and Mary arrived at the top of Calvary, she felt her son’s humiliation when his tormentors forced him to strip off his clothing. Our Lady felt pain beyond bearing when Jesus was stretched out on the cross. As they hammered the nails through His hands and feet, she felt the blows in her heart. The nails seemed to pierce her flesh as they tore into her Son’s Body. Streams of His Precious Blood gushed forth. As they lifted the cross to drop it into the hole they dug, the pain shot through His body like liquid fire. He endured three excruciating hours pinned and suffering on the cross. Then Jesus died. But to be certain that He was dead, the centurion pierced His side with a sword, and the last precious content of His Holy Heart – Blood and Water – was poured out.

Reflection: Beloved Mother, give us an idea as to the courage you had in your sufferings so that we may unite our sufferings with yours and give glory to God.

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

Fourth Sorrow of Mary

Our Blessed Mother meets Jesus on the way to Calvary

Following His meeting with Pontius Pilate, and the physical abuse He endured at the hands of His accusers, Jesus was paraded up the way to Calvary and His crucifixion. Mary, never far from the Son she loves, must have waited for her Son to come along. How much must she have heard said by the crowd against Jesus. Perhaps even mockery against her. What a frightening sight as the nails, the hammer, the ropes, and all the fatal instruments that were to put an end to her Son's life were paraded past her. When all the implements and executioners had passed, Mary raised her eyes, and saw Jesus all covered in blood and wounds from head to foot, a wreath of thorns on His head and carrying the cross on his shoulders. The Mother and the Son looked at each other and their looks became as so many sorrows to pierce those hearts that loved each other so tenderly. As He stumbled on, she followed and prayed silently. She would not leave Him.

***Reflection:* Beloved Mother, help us to bear our suffering and pain with courage and love. In doing so, may we give glory to God. Mother, please teach us to suffer silently without complaint.**

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

The Rosary of The Seven Sorrows begins with a fervent Act of Contrition and the Hail Mary three times in honor of Our Sorrowful Mother's tears.

First Sorrow of Mary

The prophecy of Simeon: Luke 2:29-35

St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin take Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem as custom demanded for infant boys forty days after their birth for them to be presented to God. There the holy man who had been awaiting the birth of the Messiah held the baby in his arms and the Holy Spirit filled his heart. Simeon recognized Jesus as the promised Savior and said: "Now Master you may let your servant go in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation...." Then he looked upon Mary and said: "Behold this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign to be contradicted and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Our Blessed Mother understood and accepted this prophecy, for she knew what was written in sacred scripture, especially the Book of Isaiah, about the suffering Savior. Whenever she saw Jesus, she was reminded of His suffering, and His suffering became her own.

***Reflection:* Beloved Mother, you suffered because of us and our sins. Teach us to suffer with you and to accept all the sorrows and suffering God deems necessary to send us.**

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

Second Sorrow of Mary

Flight into Egypt: Matthew 2:13

Having heard that the long-awaited Messiah had been born, Herod foolishly feared that he would deprive him of his kingdom. Herod waited to hear from the holy Magi as to where the baby King was born, and planned to take His life. When he found he had been deceived, he ordered all the male infants in the neighborhood of Bethlehem to be put to death. It was at this time that the angel appeared in a dream to St. Joseph and told him: "Rise, and take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt."

No sooner is Jesus born than He is persecuted. Mary began to realize that Simeon's prophecy regarding her Son was beginning to be fulfilled. What anguish the realization of the impending exile must have caused her. It is easy to imagine that she must have suffered on the journey. The distance to Egypt was considerable: three hundred miles, requiring a journey of up to thirty days. Our Lady rode on a donkey holding Jesus while St. Joseph walked beside her. The road was rough and unknown to them. Where could they have slept, ate, and washed and cleaned the Baby on such a journey, especially as they crossed the desert?

Reflection: The thought of the Holy Family traveling to Egypt teaches us to willingly embrace trials, anguish and disappointments. Most Blessed Mother, help us to accept them without complaint so that we may give glory to God.

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)

Third Sorrow of Mary

The loss of Jesus in the Temple: Luke 2:41-46

"Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him they returned to Jerusalem to look for him."

Can you imagine the anxiety this broken-hearted Mother must have felt during those three days when she searched everywhere for her Son? Have you ever taken one of your children to a store and one moment turned around and he or she was nowhere in sight? If so, you have an idea of what extreme panic Our Blessed Mother must have felt as this loss extended over three days.

Reflection: Our Lady wept over the loss of her loving Son for three days. Similarly, sinners should weep who have lost sight of Jesus in their daily lives. For this is the effect of sin: It separates the soul from God. This third sorrow of Mary ought to serve as a consolation to souls who no longer enjoy the sweet presence of Our Lord. Whenever you feel consumed with sorrow or you feel desolate or lost, call to mind the depth of Our Mother's grief. She will unite our sorrows with her own and give them to Jesus, who in return will offer us peace.

Most merciful Mother, remind us always about the Sorrows of your Son, Jesus.

Our Father, Hail Mary (x7)