

*All glory, praise and thanks is Yours: The Father, The Son, and
The Holy Spirit One God as it was in the beginning, is now, and will
be for ever.*

Amen and Amen. Alleluia.



*On this mountain, for all peoples, Yahweh Sabaoth is preparing a banquet
of rich food, and a banquet of fine wines, of succulent food, of well-
strained wines.*

*On this mountain, He has destroyed the veil which used to veil all
peoples, the pall enveloping all nations; He has destroyed death for ever.*

*Lord Yahweh has wiped away the tears from every cheek; He has taken
His people's shame away everywhere on earth; for Yahweh has spoken.*

*And on that day, it will be said, "Look, this is our God, in Him we put
our hope that He should save us, this is Yahweh, we put our hope in Him.
Let us exult and rejoice since He has saved us."*

(Isaiah 25:6-10)

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Special thanks to Mrs Mary Pepping.

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PS: Out of my respect for God, I delibetry used a plural verb, e.g. 'God do not hate'.

This book is a gift ... For anyone who knew that God had sent His Beloved Son on a mission to heal the sick and expel demons (Luke 13:32) and he/she believed in Him for their salvation, and accordingly followed Him to learn from Him, to do what He did in order to become another Jesus, i.e. another son of God, as work in God's Kingdom is not restricted to the Lord Jesus, but it is also the duty of every believer (1 Corinthians 9:16).

This book is a gift ... For every poor person who wants to work in God's Kingdom so he/she asked for the richness from the closest person to the heart of God, the heart of the "Mother and Daughter and the Bride" who gave birth to the Incarnated Word of God, watched over His comfort, listened to Him, and suffered and endured pain because of her love to Him. This richness that she had, and with great humility and love she offered it, is not a richness of money or gold but of something that triumphs over everything, it is the richness of the heart in knowing God and working in His Field. This richness was given to her by God when He chose her from all women born since the beginning of the world so her name would last forever (Tobit 13:11), to be the person whom God would listen to without a mediator and fulfil her request (John 2:1-11).

My Lord and my God ... Thank you for the tender mother whom you chose for us (John 19:25-27) to be as the Angel Raphael interceding for us in front of You and to offer You our prayers (Tobit 12:11-15), and through her to You. Amen and Amen. 

*On behalf of God's Children
whom He had redeemed:
Niran Noel Iskandar Salmon*

Foreword

“Reflections on the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary” is a rewarding book. It is rewarding for people who are learning how to pray the Rosary. It is rewarding for people who have meditated on and contemplated the mysteries of the Rosary for a lifetime.

The author rightly says that a person’s relationship with God deepens as meditation and contemplation on the mysteries of the Rosary reveal more and more about Jesus, our Redeemer and Saviour.

The author rightly says that the Rosary is a prayer that is based in the New Testament. The Rosary is a journey with the Lord Jesus through His Life, His Ministry, His Resurrected Life and through the life of His early Church on earth.

This book will appeal to people who appreciate levels of meaning that are beyond words. It will appeal to people who are able to see reality revealed in images and symbols.

It is also a book that will reveal its meanings gradually. Readers should not expect that a particular reflection on a specific decade of the Rosary (or, in the author’s words a reflection on a ‘sub-mystery’ within the decade) will reveal all of its meaning in one reading. It is a book that will be truly rewarding when a reader returns to a particular reflection for further patient and quiet meditation and contemplation.

And, don’t overlook the three additional reflections!

Approach “Reflections on the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary” with an open heart and open mind and with gentle patience and you will discover the rewards that it has to offer.

Fr Ezio Blasoni SM

Administrator

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Introduction

Contemplating on the events of the Bible is not limited to certain explanation and can result in enormous thoughts as God's thought is unlimited and versatile, so we may find many interpretations for the same event, relying on God's gifts to the meditating person, his/her thinking according to what this person has seen from events including the studies/seminars that he/she has heard in his/her life. Man usually wishes to hear one interpretation for the events within the Bible so as not to split the idea that he/she has about God, but this is applicable only at the beginning of the period of getting acquainted with God, and then while deepening this relationship and knowledge, the person begins to see things with other images, all are pretty and adds another dimension to bring out more clearly the image of God, and then he/she will cry loudly with joy: "Glory to You, O God".

This booklet contains some reflections on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. Some reflections are based on each sub-mystery (i.e. the mystery of the decade) by itself within each main mystery, and some are comprehensive based on the overall look at the sub-mysteries within the main mystery, and some links two mysteries by a particular vision. The reader should not stop at these reflections but takes them and adds to them from other meditations from what he'd read or came to his mind to form a foundation for the character that he should be to be a mirror for God on earth to others. Contemplating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary would bring up all these principles as they cover the life of Son of God, Jesus Christ: Who as Son-of-Man, is considered as the role model to reflect God's image on Earth.

"My God, how great You are, and how great is Your Mercy and Love ... I wish if You'd lift up our Mother Virgin Mary from Your Lap to Your Cheeks to give you her full love through the morning kiss: love of a mother, love of a child and love of a bride instead of our incompetent affection and gratitude, and shower upon us Your Graces through her. And, all thanks is Yours. Amen."

Reflections on the Mysteries of the Holy Rosary

INDEX

	<u>Page</u>
The Holy Rosary	1
The Joyful Mysteries: The Incarnation	7
The Sorrowful Mysteries: The Redemption	16
The Glorious Mysteries: Eternal Life	31
The Luminous Mysteries: Living in God's Kingdom	43
Additional Reflections On the Holy Rosary	58
Additional Reflections	
"Woman, what to Me and to you?"	64
He Chose Her and Sent Her	67
Jesus: The Redeemer	68

The Holy Rosary

The word Rosary means "Crown of Roses". Our Mother the Virgin Mary has revealed to several people that each time they say a Hail Mary they are giving her a beautiful rose and that each complete Rosary makes her a crown of roses. The Rosary in its present form was given to the Church by St. Dominic, who had received it from the Blessed Virgin as a means of converting sinners, a powerful weapon against evil, and to bring us to true peace through a change of heart. [Source: www.theholyroary.org]



In year 1213, the Albigensian heresy was spreading, a heresy that said: "Man is a combination of two opposing principles; a spiritual being created by God, thrust into a material body created by an evil being". In her apparitions, the Virgin Mary taught St. Dominic how to preach in order to convert sinners. Accordingly, he went into the villages of the heretics, gathered the people, and preached to them **the Mysteries of Salvation - the Incarnation, the Redemption, Eternal Life**. He distinguished the different kinds of mysteries and after each short instruction he had ten Hail Marys recited. [Source: www.catholic-pages.com/prayers/rosary_dominic.asp]. Our Lady, Virgin Mary told Saint Dominic: "This act of worship to be for you a weapon to defeat the seen and unseen enemies and be a token of my love for Christians".

Within the Holy Rosary lies the awesome story of our salvation. Infact, while praying the Holy Rosary we ponder upon the lives of Jesus and Mary through 20 mysteries/events/decades divided into four groups in order to know the mystery of God and the love in His Heart for mankind and thus reach the mystery of our salvation and understand our faith:

1. **Joyful Mysteries** (i.e., the Incarnation): The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Presentation in the Temple, and The Finding in the Temple.
2. **Sorrowful Mysteries** (i.e., the Redemption): The Agony in the Garden, The Scourging at the Pillar, The Crowning with Thorns, The Carrying of the Cross, and The Crucifixion and Death.

3. **Glorious Mysteries** (i.e., Eternal Life): The Resurrection, The Ascension to Heaven, The Descent of The Holy Spirit, The Assumption of Mary, and The Coronation of Mary.
4. **Luminous Mysteries** (i.e., Living in God's Kingdom): The Baptism in the Jordan, The Wedding at Cana, The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God, The Transfiguration, and The Institution of The Holy Eucharist.

The Holy Rosary is a prayer based on the Holy Bible so it is a biblical prayer and it is an evangelizing prayer. In addition, the "Hail Mary" prayer in itself is a dialogue consisting of two parts: the first dialogue between the Messenger of God "Angel Gabriel" and the person chosen by God "Theotokos" to propagate for her the salvation that God had prepared for us through the fruit of her womb, and the second dialogue between us, a sinner, and "Mother of God" who became the one who intercedes before her Son for us. This dialogue assures God's humbleness and His love for mankind by allowing him to participate in building the Kingdom of God [i.e. to work in it and for it]. Within the Holy Rosary, the "Hail Mary" prayer comes after "The Lord's Prayer", and it is followed by the prayer "Glory be .."; as if after the person calls upon "Our Heavenly Father", he/she turns to our mother and then surrender to God's Love and Mercy as all glory is His who embrace His Children as the clouds shade the surface of the earth; as if we are in front of a family gathered by love and respect that make us realize how deep is the relationship between the children and their father, between the mother and her children, and the headship of the father over this family.

When we love someone, we seek to know him in order to please him, and this is what we do when we pray the Holy Rosary; note that repetition helps us to remember and keep in heart what we've learnt. Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to set our hearts on God's Kingdom first (Matthew 6:33) and accordingly pray for our needs, therefore the prayer of The Holy Rosary aims at:

1. Knowing God through the life of Jesus Christ, Son-of-Man, since it is easier for a person to generate a picture of God through a human being who is in his/her image rather than to wander with imaginations about God The Creator of Heaven and Earth. This knowledge is not according to shape, but delves into the Heart of God to know Him in truth.
2. To enter into the depths of the worshipper's heart to examine his/her conscience and actions, and to compare between the characteristics of

his/her heart and Jesus Christ's Heart to know his/her weakness/ 'spiritual sickness' [The weakness is any characteristic that is contradictory to Jesus' character: Lover, merciful, depositary, meek, humble, helpful, holy, trustworthy, ...], and ask God to change him/her through the intercession of our Mother Virgin Mary. The purpose of the change is: First: Heaven rejoices over the repentance of a sinner (Luke 15:1-10), and secondly: as the Son of God, the follower of Jesus Christ can reveal God's presence and proclaim His Love to the whole world by reflecting his/her Heavenly Father's Image to others through his/her actions.

As indicated earlier, the whole Holy Rosary is composed of four groups which each is prayed as one Chaplet per day as follows:

- Joyful Mysteries on Monday & Saturday,
- Sorrowful Mysteries on Tuesday & Friday,
- Glorious Mysteries on Wednesday & Sunday,
- Luminous Mysteries on Thursday.

We start praying the Chaplet by **1** holding the Cross and making the sign of the Cross, then remember our sins and pray The Act of Repentance, followed by reciting the Apostle's Creed, **2** Our Father, **3** Hail Mary (3 times) and **4** Glory be before praying the five decades and meditating upon them. During praying the three "Hail Mary"s, we ask the Virgin Mary to pray for our sake as 'The Daughter of God The Father' to increase **faith** within us, and as 'The Mother of Son-of-God' to increase **hope** within us, and as 'The Bride of the Holy Spirit' to increase **love** within us, respectively.



At the beginning of each decade within the mystery, we mention the mystery and sometimes read a verse from the Bible that corresponds to the mystery, then we ask God for a grace that is called ‘The Fruit of The Mystery’, and sometimes there is more than one fruit. Each decade starts with **5 7 9 11 13** one bead where we pray (Our Father in Heaven ...), followed by **6 8 10 12 14** 10 beads (Hail Mary ...), and ended with glorifying God (Glory be ...). At the end of each decade the following prayer is recited: “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who most need of Your Mercy. Amen”. This prayer was taught by our mother Virgin Mary to the three children at Fatima in 1917.

Within each decade we meditate “bead by bead” with every ‘Hail Mary’ on an event from Jesus’ or Mary’s Life and ask God to give us the grace that we need to learn from it and imitate. In order to ease the meditation process, we can:

- Add a statement to the prayer of Hail Mary at the end of the first verse to point to the event being meditating upon, for example: In the mystery: “Birth of Jesus” of the Joyful Mysteries, we can meditate on the humbleness of God and ask Him to give us the grace of becoming humble, and we pray:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus Christ, **the Food of the soul who was born in a stable and put in a manger**. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Or,

- Read a verse from the Bible before praying ‘Hail Mary’, and therefor 10 verses from the Bible will be read to meditate on one event.

At the end of the Rosary, **15**, a few prayers to Virgin Mary are recited, and finally people pray:

"O God, whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation; grant, we beseech you, that meditating upon these mysteries in 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."

When we meditate upon all the mysteries within the Holy Rosary without neglecting any one of them starting from ‘The Annunciation’ passing by ‘Death on the Cross’ and ‘Resurrection’ till the last Mystery: ‘Institution of The Holy Eucharist’, and compare them with what happened in the Old Testament, we will discover that God in the Old Testament chose Moses to give him His Commandments and Law and showed him the Heavenly Realities represented by “The Ark of The Covenant” that is a symbol of God’s Word and Mercy: “The Way, The Truth and Life”: Jesus Christ, and asked him to announce it to the people; and when the time was right, God chose Virgin Mary through whom all the Heavenly secrets are to be incarnated within the fruit of her womb: God’s Word, Love and Mercy: The Way, The Truth and Life: Jesus Christ, that took two forms on earth:

1. A human with two natures at the same time: Human and Divine, and
2. Heavenly Bread given by God when Jesus Christ established the Holy Eucharist to be also His living “Soul and Divinity”,

and these mysteries are summarized in God’s speech that was written in The Book of Isaiah: *“For, as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not return before having watered the earth, fertilising it and making it germinate to provide seed for the sower and food to eat, so it is with the word that goes from my mouth: it will not return to me unfulfilled or before having carried out my good pleasure and having achieved what it was sent to do.”* (Isaiah 55:10-11) because God loved us (Malachi 1:1-2) and wanted for us to have an eternal life with Him in His Kingdom [Check what Jesus Christ says about Himself in John 4:43; 5:36; 6:38-40; 12:49-50; 14:24; 17:1-26, and what is written in John 1:1-18, Luke 22:41-42, John 19:30; 20:11-17, and Acts of the Apostles 1:9].

Also, while we contemplate over all the mysteries of the Holy Rosary divided into the four major mysteries we will discover that God wanted us to know Him as The Good Shepherd (Ezekiel 34:11-16, John 10:1-16), and to understand what He meant by saying: *"I shall be a wall of fire all round her and I shall be the Glory within her"* (Zechariah 2:9), as He is the One who:

- Take His sheep to where the healthy food is; to fertile pastures that produce milk and curd and honey; to the Heart of God: Jesus Christ --- Joyful Mysteries.
- Defend His flock and sacrifice Himself for it, and bring it to the place of rest --- Sorrowful Mysteries.

- Gather His flock and let them enter His field from the only gate of the field --- Glorious Mysteries.
- Know His flock and therefore know whether anyone has strayed away so that He'll go searching for him/her and bring him/her back --- Luminous Mysteries.

From the Apostolic Exhortation of his Holiness Pope Paul VI, “*Marialis Cultus*” for the right ordering and development of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, February 2, 1974, point 47:

“There has also been felt with greater urgency the need to point out once more the importance of a further essential element in the Rosary, in addition to the value of the elements of praise and petition, namely the element of contemplation. Without this the Rosary is a body without a soul, and its recitation is in danger of becoming a mechanical repetition of formulas and of going counter to the warning of Christ: “And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words” (Matthew 6:7). By its nature the recitation of the Rosary calls for a quiet rhythm and a lingering pace, helping the individual to meditate on the mysteries of the Lord’s life as seen through the eyes of her who was closest to the Lord. In this way the unfathomable riches of these mysteries are unfolded.”
[Source: <http://www.vatican.va>]



The Holy Rosary is a prayer based on the Bible.

The Joyful Mysteries: The Incarnation

(Fertile Pasture)

The Joyful Mysteries are distinguished that they show the contemplator God's Thoughts which are not as human thought, and thus they move him/her from distress and sadness that is to be felt when a certain event occurs to feel joy and pleasure for the same event when it is seen through God's Eye as a fulfilment to what fills His Heart from love for mankind. The Joyful Mysteries, as the rest of the Mysteries, change the human way of thinking so that he/she no longer cares about the difficulties and hardships that may face in their daily lives because he/she knows that God is his/her shield, and he/she is in God's Mind who is Love: The author of peace in the heart; and this Mind is so rich and His fruits are eternal and infinite.

In fact, the time span of the Joyful Mysteries includes the whole period that preceded the first moment that started the fulfilment of our salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e. from the days of Abraham, the father of all, through Prophet Moses and other prophets; a period of preparation for the coming of Christ the Savior, King of Israel, till His coming and recognizing Him and know where He can be found. These Mysteries reveal the identity of the expected King, although: (1) Some suffered frustration when they learned that whom they were waiting for was not as they've imagined (Matthew 20:20-23, Mark 10:35-40), and required a lot of time to understand God's plan for their salvation in order to offer their lives for His sake as their woe turned into joy [i.e., believing in the good news of redemption, and therefor martyrdom for spreading it (Acts 7, the life of the disciples and saints)], and (2) Others are still awaiting His coming, and hopefully this may not be long in order for them to know The Truth and accordingly peace will prevail in their hearts!!

The Joyful Mysteries start with revealing for us about 'That Day' which dawns the 'End of Time' period mentioned by God to Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah Chapter 6 till Chapter 12) as He asked him to predict about the coming of the Savior so that the people would sing a new song/hymn on 'That Day' saying: *"I praise you, Yahweh, You have been angry with me but Your anger is now appeased and You have comforted me. Look, He is the God of my salvation: I shall have faith and not be afraid, for Yahweh is my strength and my song, He has been my salvation"*, and *"Praise Yahweh, invoke His Name. Proclaim His deeds to the people, declare His Name sublime. Sing of*

Yahweh, for His works are majestic, make them known throughout the world. Cry and shout for joy, you who live in Zion. For the Holy One of Israel is among you in His Greatness” (Isaiah 12:1-2 & 4-6).

The First Mystery: The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) – “Jesus: God with us”

In this mystery we contemplate upon the joyful announcement that Angel Gabriel revealed to Virgin Mary that she will give birth to a Holy Child, the King of Israel, who will be called "Son of God". O what a joy, as the time has come to fulfil the sign given by God and foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, in the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah king of Judah: *"It is this: the young woman is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14), and this child will be *the light of the world and Prince-of-Peace, and dominion will be laid on his shoulders forever* (Isaiah 9:1-6) so that we will become children of God (Galatians 4:4-5).

In this mystery we contemplate the love of God to us, as this annunciation to Virgin Mary implied the annunciation of the good news to the whole world to enable each of us to give birth to "the Spirit of the Son of God" in his heart, where Virgin Mary represents all the people of God and his Church, and through her we hear God saying to each one of us: "I love you as my mother, I love you as my bride, I love you as a son/daughter to me".

While we contemplate this event from the perspective of Virgin Mary, we see a pure innocent girl who spent her life serving God in the Temple; she is engaged to a man, but no man has touched her, and suddenly an Angel appears to her in her solitude telling her that she has won favour with God and she will become pregnant without marrying her fiancé!! What shame she will bring to her family, and what to say to her fiancé, and who will believe her that she had seen an Angel? The baby that she'll give birth to is "The Son of God: Immanuel" whom they are expecting!! There would have been feelings of fear and alarm and trouble if it was not for her love to God and for the peace that God filled her heart and womb with that turned fear into joy and resilience. Therefore, in this mystery we can ponder the peace and joy that accompanies the meeting of the lowly [whom Virgin Mary Mother of God symbolizes] with the "Divine Mercy".

Fruit of the mystery: Trust in God and surrender to His Will as of love of Him, Meekness; Humbleness; ...

The Second Mystery: The Visitation (Luke 1:39-56) – “Jesus: Joy of the World”

In this mystery we contemplate upon the fulfillment of God's promise regarding His Mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever through the fruit of Virgin Mary's womb: "God The Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel" (Genesis 22:17-18, Isaiah 41:8-20). Great joy will fill all generations expressed by the fetus in the womb of Elizabeth. The visit began with a meeting that is a meeting of joy: A meeting between the unseen God with all who wish to identify Him and kneel to Him, as He came to His lovers brought to them by His Mother Virgin Mary as Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, has declared.

When we look at the event from the perspective of Virgin Mary, we see a young woman in the first month of her pregnancy and who hasn't moved yet to her husband's House (Matthew 1:18; 20), and no one knows yet; however she disregarded the fear of the scandal and overcame her weakness and the symptoms that accompany pregnancy in the first three months from nausea, vomiting and fatigue, and preferred to climb the mountain from Nazareth in Galilee to the city of Judah to serve an old relative who is pregnant within the last three months of pregnancy instead of sleeping to get the rest she needs. She did this out of love. She also learnt a lot about birthing and childcare.

The peace that Mary carried in her womb made her thank God because He had selected her, as she glorified His Greatness when she learned that her relative knew about the secret of her pregnancy and did not care about the scandal but her spirit was overwhelmed with joy and sang, what every humble soul would sing, proclaiming to the hungry nations their heavenly food and bounties of God. In this mystery we discover that Mary was the first to echo the hymn of Prophet Isaiah without knowing how salvation would be, but was sure that what was said by God in the Old Testament would be done; therefore the Virgin Mary is the first among believers in the Lord Jesus [after the Old Testament prophets who predicted the advent of the Savior]. Accordingly, we can say that God has chosen her, not only to be the mother of the incarnated God, but also a mother to the whole Church (Revelation 12).

Meditating upon this mystery makes us realize how willing the Virgin Mary was to provide aid to the needy and weak; and perhaps the thing that she does perfectly is to take Lord Jesus to them, and she carries Him in her

womb protected from all distortion and external factors that may offend Him, thus approaching the Lord Jesus and knowing Him through her will be truthful [and this is confirmed by the meditation upon all the mysteries of the Holy Rosary let alone the prayer of Virgin Mary for us to her son Lord Jesus].

Fruit of the mystery: Love of relative/neighbor, the needy and the weak; Help of others by doing for them what they can't do themselves; Bear of hardships for the comfort of others; Make Jesus known to others; Radiate God's Love to others; Ask Virgin Mary to help us by praying for us in our weakness...

The Third Mystery: The Nativity (Luke 2:1-20) – “Jesus: Food of the Soul”

When we reflect on this mystery, we find that God speak with many and tell them: “Dear little flock, don't be afraid as you will not starve anymore. Your food had been given to you, and it will stay with you always, and I have guided your shepherds to the Manger that I've filled with the ‘Bread of Life’ which will not run out. Come so that you may live.”

In this mystery we also contemplate on the humility of God manifested in the incarnation of The Word and the birth of the Son of God away from the place of comfort and wrapped in a swaddling clothes and placed in a manger, a place for animal's food, a place not fit for a King, and with this God wanted us to waive our pride and the "I" and become humble in His likeness and upon the example of His mother Virgin Mary so that we can see Him and love Him and glorify Him with joy and rejoicing forever, and tell others about His Greatness.



When we reflect on the event from the perspective of the Virgin Mary, we see a pregnant woman experiencing pain and difficulties in the last month. And we see her scared sitting on an animal to travel approximately the same distance made at the beginning of her pregnancy, and is faced with the danger of losing her baby during travel, not to mention the fear of the unknown as this was her first pregnancy, and often the first birth was very difficult and painful especially in the absence of any other woman from relatives to help her to alleviate pain and encourage her with affectionate

words as a mother would do with her daughter at birth. But these feelings of fear turned to joy and pleasure with the coming of the baby Jesus, and the visit of the shepherds to Him and informing her about the appearance of the Angels to them announcing the birth of the Savior. As, His birth is joy for all nations.

Fruit of the mystery: Spiritual poverty and asceticism in worldly goods; Humility; Loving the poor who resembles Jesus; Approach God's Table and be filled with "The Bread of Life" [The Holy Eucharist]...

The Fourth Mystery: The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22-38) – "Jesus: Our Salvation"

In this mystery we ponder upon the knowing of mankind to the mystery of his salvation through the Holy Spirit: **Christ the Lord**, whom after knowing Him there will be no fear from death but enlightenment of the path and opening of eyes so that the lips will start thanking God saying: "Look, He is the God of my salvation: I shall have faith and not be afraid, for Yahweh is my strength and my song, He has been my salvation" (Isaiah 12:2), as Simeon said.

With this mystery, and at the end of the event, all hearts awaiting redemption [represented by Simeon the upright, and prophetess Anna] are filled with joy except the heart of Virgin Mary despite the joy that filled her heart at the beginning of that day. That day ended a period of forty days required to stay at home for cleansing, and on that day, the mother washed and became pure to be able to take her son to the temple to offer him to God with a pair of dove in obedience to the Law. But the joy did not last long as Simeon informed her that "*a sword will pierce her soul*" causing her pain "*so that the secrets thoughts of many may be laid bare*". What will these hearts tell other than God's love to the world while pondering with awe the death of Christ on the cross (John 3:14-18) and the sorrow of His mother Virgin Mary that is the joy of mankind in salvation. Here, the feelings of joy and sorrow are mixed together but the feelings of joy conquer because it is God's will.

Fruit of the mystery: Obedience to The Word of God [The Law]; Purity: purity of thought, heart and body; Knowing Jesus and spreading the good news by informing others about Him; Waiting for the promise of God in patience and love.

The Fifth Mystery: The Finding in the Temple (Luke 2:41-50) – “Jesus: The One sent from God’s lap: The Spring of Love and Knowledge”

In this mystery we gaze at the fountain of knowledge, wisdom and understanding: "The Incarnated Word of God"; and where do we find Him, because whoever finds Him will obtain everlasting joy as he will be with Him in the lap of the Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ, The Word, was sent by The Heavenly Father and became man, died on the cross and rose from the dead on the third day and then ascended to The Heavenly Father, and wherever He is, His followers will be.

As His parents found Him in the Temple in Jerusalem, where lies the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant; where the offerings, learning of the law (by reading the scriptures and explaining them) and worshiping God are accomplished; there also in the Church we find Him, where within the "Holy Mass" there is the Word of God: The Heard One, i.e., The Bible, and the Eaten One, i.e. the Offering/Eucharist: The Divine Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ that give comfort and joy for whoever devours Him.

And, when we recognize the importance of the Word of God to our lives, we will sit with Him and hold fast to Him in order to work by His Word to please God thus pleasing ourselves too, where the Word of God lead to “Knowing God” that is “Eternal Life” as Jesus Christ said when He directed his eyes towards the sky: *"And, eternal life is this: to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* (John 17:3).

When we reflect on the event from the perspective of Virgin Mary, we see a mother and her heart is torn for loosing her son. This painful feeling can only be imagined by someone who has really lost his only son; a feeling that no one wishes to have or even wish that his enemy would feel, as there is no one more dear than the son: A feeling of anxiety, confusion, sadness, and fear of the unknown and from the idea of loosing the son and unable to find him forever. Such feeling can lead to a depression that directs the senses to gloom and doom while he/she is alive, but the Mercy of God quickly fades away this feeling and turn it into joy and happiness and life by finding the lost son: Happiness that brings back Life. This feeling of fear was inevitable so that everyone would know that The Word of God is heard and understood within the Church, and the man who wishes to become a Child

of God will be as Jesus, a servant to educate others about God and lead them to the Heavenly Father.

Fruit of the mystery: The enthusiasm to learn God's Word; Finding Jesus Christ in the Church; Eagerness for Jesus; The thirst for the Word of God ...

The General Content of the Joyful Mysteries

Now, if we want to reflect upon the general content of the Joyful Mysteries, we will see that it invites us to move confidently towards Virgin Mary the Mother of God to pray for us sinners, to our Lord and God, Jesus Christ saying to him: "O Jesus, meek and humble heart, make their heart like Your Holy One" (Matthew 11:29), so He will cultivate in our hearts the seed of the tree of life to grow within our hearts to produce work on the commandments with which the whole law and the prophets are summarized: "*You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and you must love your neighbor as yourself*" (Matthew 22:34-40, Luke 10:25-37), and we will be full of grace, and our hearts will be filled with pleasure and joy that we became sons of God and shared his beloved son with his "family in spirit" and live in his Kingdom. And, if we want to ask ourselves: "How can this happen?", we need to ponder again from a different angle upon the readings from the Bible that accompany each mystery, as follows:

These mysteries start with "The Annunciation" (Luke 1:26-38), and while we think about it, we wonder how this girl conquered God's love and why He chose her to be the mother of the son-of-man: His Word Incarnated and His Love to the world. We find the answer within the words of the Angel Gabriel while he was greeting her: "*Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour*", where she had demonstrated through her actions that she really deserved this title as through her docility and modesty had surrendered to the will of God and trusted him, and agreed to become "a mother without marriage" without thinking or caring about the difficulties she would face when the matter will be known by her family and fiance. The Virgin Mary loved God above all things (Deuteronomy 6:1-9) and her life became as a feather in God's Hand and Mind and Spirit, and under His protection as the Holy Spirit over-shadowed her. With this gentleness that resembles God's Gentleness that is shown in Jesus Christ who surrendered totally to His Heavenly Father when he said, "Thy will be done" and did what was asked from Him without a whimper, the Virgin Mary deserved to be Mother of

God in flesh and according to the the spiritual kinship, as she had heard and obeyed God's Word and worked by it (Matthew 12:46-50) thus saying to Angel Gabriel: *"You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said"* (Luke 1:38). In the same way, when we become humble and surrender to God's Will to let Him sow in our heart His Word and build around it a fence strengthened and empowered by the Holy Spirit for His Glory.

And, to confirm her righteousness, we see her while we contemplate on the second mystery "The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth" (Luke 1:39-45) that she loves her cousin (Leviticus 19:18) and runs for her help without considering the effort that she will be doing which might effect her health since she herself was in the early days and the first months of pregnancy. Here, Mary is not only showing her love to others but she is showing God's love to them, and has carried this love planted within her womb, accordingly we hear Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, saying: *"Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the Mother of my Lord?"*. Such love that radiates from behind the darkness [from inside the womb] and gives light to those in darkness [who are in the womb], where Elizabeth felt the baby inside her had leapt with joy at the arrival of Mary carrying in her womb 'The Light of the World'. And, we when we serve others without worrying about personal interests and physical vulnerability, knowing that God has given us the strength we need for the service, then the other and his family can touch and inspect God's Love through us.

In order for the Light to come out to the world, "humbleness" was required and is shown in the third mystery "The Nativity: The Birth of Jesus" (Luke 2:1-7), where we touch God's great Humbleness as He love us and He want us also to enter such a place that is below our standard, i.e. to become humble so that we can see Him, otherwise we won't be able to see Him. As when we become humble, we open our heart to God and His Word to enter into it, and we accept to grow by living merely on the Living Bread, prepared by God, that has laid on the manger.

And this brings us to the fourth mystery "The Presentation in the Temple" (Luke 2:22-40) where the people who are filled with the Holy Spirit would recognize God's Word and His promise, and can distinguish it from others, so they would be in peace knowing that he/she has accomplished his/her mission in life which was to preach and lead other to The Messiah, as we

hear Simeon says: *"Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared for all the nations to see"*, and the prophetess Anna telling all people who were waiting for the salvation of Israel about Jesus. Also, note that the "Offering of Jesus" is the continuity of Virgin Mary's meekness and obedience to the Word of God as she is offering her eldest son to God according to the Law.

The fifth mystery "Finding Jesus in the Temple" (Luke 2:41-50) brings us to the way in which we also can get a heart that pleases God and dwell with Him, and that is by finding the Word of God [Jesus Christ] in the temple, where we hear Jesus saying to his parents when they found him in the temple: *"Did you not know that I must be busy with My Father's affairs?"*. Having a new heart is not completed when we find Him but it must be accompanied by deep love that compels us to sit with Him and listen to Him and learn from Him to reach our Heavenly Father. The Church nowadays represents the temple for worship and offering the sacrifice, and hearing the Word of God, i.e. the place where we find Lord Jesus. As by attending the Holy Mass, we listen to Jesus when the Bible is read, and know God's will for us when it is interpreted during the homily, and we offer our sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins through The Holy Eucharist as well as we become united with Jesus through His Body and Blood that make us steadfast in adhering to His love and to live in our hearts forever. This Spiritual Food works in us and makes us a mother and brothers to Jesus, who said: *"Anyone who does the will of My Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother."* (Matthew 12:50). All thanks is to God, Amen.

Therefore, while we contemplate these mysteries we find that they refer to the characteristics of the "Children of God" who feed on the Word of God, as follows:

Love of God, and obedient to His Word with confidence ... Love of neighbour ... Meekness ... Humility ... Filled with the Holy Spirit: Wisdom and knowledge ... Love of Jesus and getting closer to hear His Word to get the treasure that does not wear out forever, thus selling everything (i.e. ignore the earthly desires) and follow Him, as a man would leave his father and mother to become one in body (i.e. spiritually) with his partner, i.e. a man would give up the old man/spirit/characteristics to wear the new Spirit of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Sorrowful Mysteries: The Redemption (Comfort of the Flock of Sheep)

The Sorrowful Mysteries are distinguished by the way in which they show the contemplator the full unconditional love of man to God, and how God loved man though knowing of his mistakes, and unconditionally giving him life and eternal happiness; freely leaving him the option to accept or reject this love. These mysteries reflect what the Lord Jesus told the Pharisees: "*When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing of My own accord. What I say is what the Father have taught me; He who sent Me is with Me, and have not left Me to Myself, for I always do what pleases Him*" (John 8:28-29), and the writings of Saint Paul the Apostle in his letter to the Hebrews explaining God's Love and the message of Jesus the Savior, particularly the tenth chapter (Hebrews 10:4-10):

*Dear brothers: Bulls' blood and goats' blood are incapable of taking away sins, and that is why he said, on coming into the world: "You wanted no sacrifice or cereal offering, but you gave me a body. You took no pleasure in burnt offering or sacrifice for sin; then I said, 'Here I am, I am coming,' in the scroll of the book it is written of me, to do your will, God". He says first "You did not want what the Law lays down as the things to be offered, that is: the sacrifices, the cereal offerings, the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for sin, and you took no pleasure in them"; and then he says: "Here I am! I am coming to do your will". He is abolishing the first sort to establish the second. And this **Will** was for us to be made holy by the **Offering** of the body of Jesus Christ made once and for all.*

So it will become clear that Lord Jesus is the brass snake that was lifted up so that whoever looks at it will not perish (Numbers 21:4-9).

These mysteries though they look sad and the shadow of death mark it but they are the joy of the spirit; the spirit that yearns to see its Creator, as without these mysteries man remains struggling between paradise and hell, and the tears in the eyes wet his pillow, and fear fills his heart (Psalm 6).

The Sorrowful Mysteries are a marriage arrangement in which the Father choose a bride for His Son, a bride who is a sinner unworthy of His Son's position, but because He loved her and wanted to raise her up, He selected her to become the bride of His Son, the Son of the King; to become his daughter (Ezekiel 16:1-14, Hosea 2). And because of the Son's love for His

Father, and knowing who the bride is, the Son loved her and accepted her as His bride, thus saying to His Father: "*Thy will be done*", and vowed to His Father in His blood that He would not abandon His bride but that He will love and redeem her with His blood to be sacred and without blemish (Ephesians 5:27), so the Father put the wedding wreath on His Son's head: a wreath of thorns as a symbol of the bride's reputation and the agony He would suffer. As for the bride, her Father also wanted her to get married but knowing her He chose for her to see her bridegroom broken in body without any beauty, majesty and looks to attract her eyes (Isaiah 53:2-3), so her heart was softened and she took upon herself to look after His wounds without knowing that she was the reason behind these wounds; because of her sin he was scourged and crucified (Isaiah 53:4-12). Her father wanted her to see her groom in this picture in order not to boast about her beauty and enamor with her figure but hide behind Him and allow Him to carry her on His shoulder and walk to the end and open His arms widely and protect her. They would become one flesh, thus she'll repeat what He says and will do what He does. It will be out of the question that the bride would boast at all, except of the cross of her beloved Lord Jesus (Galatians 6:14), giving thanks to His Father and hers, and telling Him as Jesus Christ said: "In your hands I commit my spirit"; and with this, the bride will retain her purity, and she will see the splendor of her groom that will reflect on her and with which her compassionate father has dressed her. The Sorrowful Mysteries move the children of God from the left side to the right, as wherever the Son is then His bride will be (John 14:3).

Through these mysteries we can see the sword that pierced Virgin Mary's soul, and feel the amount of pain that crushed her which was foretold by Simeon the upright man. A "pain" we need to feel, we for whom Jesus Christ died on the cross, in order to regret and repent of our wrong behaviour. Compelling pain though, it is not the pain of losing a son but the pain caused by the idea of hurting God; 'pain' that if we did not feel, then we will not be able to love God as He deserve.

The First Mystery: The Agony in the Garden (Luke 22:39-46) – “Jesus The Man: Son-of-God”

In this mystery we contemplate Jesus of Nazareth, Son-of-Man, who loved His Father very much, kneeling in prayer, submitting Himself to God, with His sweat turning into blood drops to authenticate His Covenant with God at that moment and say: "*Let Your will be done, not mine*" (Hebrews 10:5-

10) despite of His deep sorrow. Meditating on this sorrow, we'll notice that it was a sorrow to the point of death (Matthew 26:38), like the sorrow of a faithful man who committed sin and thought that he would be cut-off from the tree of life. This sorrow was not because He was going to die, as He knew this, and He had told His disciples three times earlier about what would happen to Him and that He is the Messiah (Matthew 16:21, 17:22-23, 20:17-19), but because He became weak, and His weakness would sadden His Father when the aim of His life is **'to please His Father by doing His Will, i.e. obeying His Word'** (Psalm 40:8-9, Luke 2:41-49). By asking God to let the cup of pain and awful death to pass by, He would dishonor God's Holy Name **"The One who keep His Promise"** (Numbers 20:1-13) before others and question the credibility of His Word as He is "The Redeemer of Israel, The Holy One of Israel".

In the Garden of Olives, Jesus was going through a hard trial. As humans, we fall a lot in this kind of trial, a trial that Jesus Christ asked us to stay awake and pray in order not to be put to it; a trial that makes us act in a way that differs from what we preach, e.g. our preaching about forgiveness, sacrifice, generosity, ... etc.; a trial that will make us run away from fulfilling God's Will in our lives especially if we know what God want from us. This will shake the credibility of God's Word in the hearts of the people surrounding us especially if we were connected to God through a strong relationship and are found always in prayer. In such situations, we are actually doing a disservice to God more than harming ourselves. This kind of trial requires from us a great love of God and a deep steadfast faith with a live conscience (i.e., watchfulness to all actions to keep it holy) to say "let Your Will be done". For example, when love dies in our heart because of much abuse or when being persecuted or humiliated, and knowing that God's Will for people is to love each other as He loved us, then we would forgive and pray for the increase of love and faith in the heart of our abuser, in order to be a mirror of God's love and to show His Glory to others by being obedient to His Will with complete trust.

Through meditating upon this mystery, we discover that the event was an example given to us by Jesus Christ to learn "fortitude and perseverance in difficult times". Where His prayer to His Heavenly Father was to take the cup of crucifixion away from Him, i.e. "deny the cross", it was just for us to learn to think about God's Will in our lives and to compare it with our decisions before making them and applying them into our lives, and then to surrender to God's Will with full confidence because we love Him above all things, and zealously guard the sanctity of His Name.

In other words, through meditating upon this mystery, we discover that “obedience to God’s Word and doing His Will” and “staying alert” is an expression of our love for God, as “**Love fruits obedience**”.

Fruit of the mystery: Surrender to the Will of God; Content; Prayer without laziness; Watchfulness at the time of trial; Fortitude and perseverance ...

The Second Mystery: The Scourging at the Pillar (Matthew 27:26) – "Jesus the Loving Friend"

In this mystery we contemplate on “what is happening?” and wonder "Why the scourging while He has done nothing to deserve it? Why the scourging if He was to be crucified?", as scourging is a type of punishment used before crucifixion to shorten the period of pain, and the answer comes out when we read two sections of the Bible, one from the Old Testament: *"Yet ours were the sufferings he was bearing, ours the sorrows he was carrying, while we thought of him as someone being punished and struck with affliction by God"* (Isaiah 53:4), and the other from the New Testament: *"The servant who knows what his master wants, but has got nothing ready and done nothing in accord with those wishes, will be given a great many stokes of the lash."* (Luke 12:47), then we shall know that He was scourged in our place as He took our punishment that we deserve when we don’t act according to God’s Will, and also don’t work for the Kingdom, and this is the Love of God for whoever believed in His Son as his Savior. It is a “Free Gift” from God to whoever believes that God love him.

Through meditating on this mystery and on the Lord Jesus’ commandment: *"Love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you."* (John 13: 34), we can reach to the kind of love that God want us to love each other with: Love to the point of sacrificing oneself for others without condition; self sacrifice for the salvation of others, as **Love fruits sacrifice**.

When we reflect upon this mystery, we can stop for a moment and ask ourselves: "Have we allowed the drops of blood of Jesus to close the open wounds and damage in our hearts caused by the hurt from others, so that we’ll forgive them as God forgave us through the blood of His Beloved Son?". Accordingly, we will turn to our Mother Virgin Mary in prayer and say with many who reflect upon the ‘Stations of the Cross’: "Holy Mother! Pierce me through, in my heart each wound renew, of my Saviour crucified." to forgive and sanctify our words, thoughts and deeds because of our love for God.

Fruit of the mystery: Thank God for redemption; Repent and feel the pain of sin; Feel the shame and humiliation caused by sin; Work on self purification and obeying the Word of God [Steadfast faith and righteousness]; Courage; Forgive others...

The Third Mystery: The Crowning with Thorns (Matthew 27:27-31) – "Jesus the Bridegroom"

In this mystery we contemplate "Jesus the King" and how He became like this, and why, and for whose sake; we reflect on the reaction of Jesus towards all the insults He heard and received; we think of the emotional pain caused by: the insults He heard, stripping Him from His clothes, mocking and the spit He received on His Holy Face and Body, and the physical pain all over His Body caused by: inserting the crown of thorns into His forehead, struck with fists, struck on the head and in the face with a staff, scourging Him all over His body, bearing the heavy cross on His shoulder, inserting nails into His hands and legs. What a divine humility that exceeds human perception and reflects the amount of God's love for man; what meekness of the Son-of-Man by which He deserved to be called "Lamb of God" to be our "Passover Lamb"; such meekness and gentleness that reflect man's love to God and to others: To sacrifice oneself for the sake of the beloved.

As we contemplate upon this mystery, we discover that God did not care about insults and humiliation for the sake of our salvation otherwise He would not have done what He did; as all His thoughts were motivated by the "Jealous Love" that He have for us. And this is exactly how we should be, i.e. the qualities that we must have: meekness and humbleness in front of difficulties especially before those who persecute us (Matthew 5:3-12) for God's Glory, i.e. we do not respond to insult or abuse by insult or abuse, and we do not think about the "I" but keep the love of God and the good of others over other matters, as **Love fruits gentleness and humility**.

When we reflect upon the Crown of Thorns, we find that it unites us all as ONE in one Kingdom, as there is one King and one Bridegroom (1 Corinthians 11:2), i.e. one church [brothers and sisters] filled with love and spiritual poverty that is enriched by God, and where sovereignty is only to God with complete dependency on Him always. So, the Church is the bride that asks her bridegroom constantly and does not speak from herself (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). When we reflect on this wedding for our sake, we can stop for a moment and review our thoughts and actions and ask

ourselves: “As a bride of God, are we one flesh wholeheartedly and do we enjoy the same spirit with Him?”

Fruit of the mystery: Having Christ as King over our hearts; Courage to deny oneself; Humility and gentleness...

The Fourth Mystery: The Carrying of the Cross (Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26, John 19:17) – "Jesus the Father, the Pillar"

In this mystery we contemplate Jesus sometimes carrying His cross, and sometimes walking in front or beside His cross that was carried on His behalf by Simon of Cyrene, who came from the countryside. For sure Jesus' ripped body had been ravaged by pain and is no longer able to carry the cross, but He was determined to get to the site to complete the Will of God, i.e. “Salvation for all”. Jesus fell three times from the weight of the cross, and we can say that in the first fall, the cross was instead of the people who were born before the advent of Prophet Moses and receiving the Law of God where God's sorrow for people not to obey Him was less minimum, while in the second fall, the cross was instead of who were born before the advent of the Saviour, and the third fall was the most painful as the cross here is for the sins of the world after His coming.

When we reflect on this mystery, we find out that God through His commandments have commissioned us to serve others as He have served us. Now, if we asked ourself who was Simon of Cyrene, then we need to analyse his identity to know him and understand why it was inspired by God for him to carry the cross of Jesus: He is someone coming from the countryside, from a field, a fertile land suitable for sowing; this means that this person is fully aware of:

1. The meaning of "working in the field", and the amount of physical fatigue which weakens the body of the worker,
2. The importance of the "fertile land", and
3. The significance of having "good water springs" in the field

in order to get plenty good harvest. And, Simon of Cyrene can be one of the following:

1. The owner of the field. Here, he represents God who came down to carry the burden of His people, redeem them and make them happy (Isaiah 14:13-14; 43:1-3), [Jesus said: "For this is how *God loved the world: He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life*" (John 3:16)].

2. A Worker in the field. Here, he represents a good Christian who loves God and his creation and who works hard to obey God's Word through consoling the broken-hearted and healing the wounded, considering them as his/her relatives (Luke 10:25-37).
3. Someone who came to the owner of the field to buy the harvest to sell it to others, or to buy seeds for his field. Here, he represents anyone looking for the truth of God and wants to be fed by His Word and receives His blessing, so he/she will be guided by others to the cross of Jesus to hold it in his/her heart so his/her road will be illuminated and he/she will get all the blessings and graces in order that he/she in turn can plant them in the hearts of others [Jesus said "*Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*" (Matthew 11:28-30)].

This mystery reminds us that if we want to be followers of Jesus Christ, we must be servants to others working in the field of God for His Glory humbly, tirelessly and joyfully as Jesus said to his disciples: "If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash one each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you." (John 13:14-15). So, we are required to carry each other's pain, physical and spiritual, and leave the indifferences and unconcern aside, we are required to reveal the love of God and His Glory to others. Perhaps one of the greatest services that humans can serve out his brother are the acts of mercy recommended by God and considered as acceptable fasting to Him: Feeding the hungry food both physically and spiritually, clothing the naked with clothes both physically and spiritually, and lifting the injustice of the oppressed and showing the right and refraining from uttering the bad word (Isaiah 58:6-14). And, if we wondered how we feed the hungry and we clothe the naked spiritually, then we need to know that the food of the spirit is the Word of God, and the spirit is clothed by forgiveness that removes the yoke of sin and its weight and enclothes the yoke of forgiveness and joy; i.e. wear love. **Loving yields forgiveness**, as we serve each other when each one of us forgives others their trespasses against him/her, as forgiveness brings joy to the sad sinful soul.

Reflecting upon this mystery makes us understand what is meant by "Christianity" and "Carry the Cross" [The Cross which symbolizes the whole teachings of God in order for His Will to be done], and puts in our

hearts a humble spirit that cries out to her Heavenly Father saying: "I offer you myself to do with me whatever you want", and it will say when I do my duties and receive the words of appreciation: "All thanks is to God, I am just doing my duties; I was a servant to others as my Teacher was to me."
Loving will fruit doing service for others with joy.

This mystery makes us stop living as if God do not exist or do not deserve to use the day of our rest [which often we use to achieve physical desires] to help others and do good to make God pleased (the work of Jesus Christ on Saturday that shows "God is love" to others: Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6, Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-5). If we thought that Simon of Cyrene did not know Jesus and yet he chose to carry the cross in obedience to the soldiers, then what is our reaction when Lord Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, ask us to do so, saying: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24)? Would we really carry the cross and observe his commandments without any complaints but with full love to Him and trusting Him all the time?

Fruit of the mystery: Perseverance to spread the good news to all; Acceptance of trials with patience (God's Will); Forgiveness of other's trespasses; Assistance for the needy and love to serve others ...

The Fifth Mystery: The Crucifixion and Death (Matthew 27:45-54, Mark 15:33-41, Luke 23:44-47, John 19:28-30) – "Jesus the Redeemer"

Within this mystery lies "Life", where Jesus "The desirable ripen fruit" bowed his head at the cross [like a fig fruit when it ripens] and said to death: "**Come, I'm The Life, and you'll die in Me forever**", for as with one single fruit on one tree 'death' entered into human life (Genesis), so within one fruit hanging on one tree 'life' is given for all [according to one of the Fathers].

Within this mystery lies "Life", where the tears of Virgin Mary and her grief represent the baptism of water that soften the harshness of our hearts and are an incentive for our repentance, thus allowing the blood of Christ that He was baptized with during the crucifixion to be for us (i.e., we who have put our sins into His wounds) the baptism of blood, thus whitening our homepage and erasing our sins. During Crucifixion, Jesus' blood was shed on His body from the top of the head where the Crown of thorns to the soles His feet where the nails through the wounds that were opened by the scourging.

Within this mystery lies “God’s Love for us” (John 3:14-16); and it calls us to know and understand how the true love between people should be, and how we show our love to God through our actions with/towards others. As Jesus Christ said: *“This is my commandment: Love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you.”* (John 15:12-14).

So, contemplating upon this mystery will open for us a wide prospect towards knowing “God is Love” to include God’s love for man, and man’s love for God, and to his fellow man. And, perhaps **the words spoken by Jesus Christ while He was on the Cross** before His death are the most beautiful expression for this kind of love: the love He have in His Heart which reflects the characteristics of His Heart and what is in His Mind [i.e., His Character (Isaiah 11:2-3)] (Matthew 12:33-35, Proverbs 10:11; 13-14; 20-21); in addition they are realistic examples of **‘The Beatitudes’** that He mentioned during His teaching from the top of the mountain to the crowd who followed Him regarding the loving hearts and the true happiness, which would be gained by being in the heart of God, because they reflect His Image to others as **they are filled of the Holy Spirit** (Matthew 5:3-12). The Holy Spirit that is given to us will pour into our hearts the love of God (Romans 5:5) to join us as one body. This “Love” is characterized by:

1. **“Forgiveness”** as a kind of mercy towards others, and as a characteristic of God (i.e. God’s Nature).

On the cross: *“Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing”* (Luke 23:33-34).

On the mountain: *“Blessed are the merciful; they shall have mercy shown them”* (Matthew 5:7). * **The Spirit of Knowledge.**

2. **“Counseling the confessors who admit their mistakes/sins”** as they know their weaknesses in comparison to God’s Holiness, and they fear God’s Justice; and that is by announcing the Goods News of Salvation (i.e. **Provide comfort regarding salvation**).

On the cross: *“In truth I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise”* (Luke 23:39-42).

On the mountain: *“Blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of Heaven is theirs”* (Matthew 5:3). * **The Spirit of Wisdom.**

3. **“Consoling the broken-hearted, and loving others by thinking of their physical and/or spiritual suffering”** [i.e. the grief of losing God because of "spiritual death"/Sin], and finding solutions to minimize the pain within their heart by reflecting God’s Image (i.e. Love) to them.

On the cross: *"Woman, this is your son"* and *"This is your mother"* (John 19:26-27). For a mother who lost her son, the best person who can console her is the one who knows her son and her son loves him more than others and was with him at all times in order to speak always about her son without fatigue; in addition the best person to solace a young person who had lost his dearest friend is the mother of this beloved to make him feel his existence always through talking about him.

On the mountain: *"Blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted."* (Matthew 5:5). * **The Spirit of Consolation.**

4. Human's **"yearning for God 'The Living Water'"** (Ezekiel 47:1-12, Revelation 22:1-2).

On the cross: *"I'm thirsty"* (John 19:28). No one can fulfill this thirst but God: The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, or any person who provides The Living Water on behalf of God, accordingly we see the soldiers who crucified Jesus Christ offering Him vinegar instead as an indication of the persecution that will face His followers by the people who would not believe in Him; and drinking the vinegar is a sign of bearing the tribulations for the love of God.

On the mountain: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for uprightness: they shall have their full."* (Matthew 5:6) and *"Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs."* (Matthew 5:10). * **The Spirit of Fortitude.**

5. **"Trusting in God, and giving oneself to His Will, and asking for His aid always"**.

On the cross: *"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Mark 15:34) and *"Father, into Your Hands I commit my spirit."* (Luke 23:46).

On the mountain: *"Blessed are the gentle, they shall have the earth as inheritance."* (Matthew 5:4) and *"Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God."* (Matthew 5:8). * **The Spirit of Understanding, and the Spirit of Piety.**

6. **"Accomplishing our mission according to God's Will" (i.e. Living by God's Word).**

On the cross: *"It is fulfilled"* (John 19:30).

On the mountain: *"Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognized as children of God."* (Matthew 5:9). * **The Spirit of Fear of God.**

Reflecting upon this mystery makes us stop time for a moment so that we can evaluate our actions and then regret what is bad and change it according to what pleases God, and this is the wisdom that God wish us to live through, as the wise man is the one *"who delights in the law of Yahweh and*

murmurs his law by day and night" (Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 1: 2, Psalm 51 and 119), as it was said: "*The fear of the Lord is 'Wisdom', and avoiding evil is 'Intelligence'*" (Job 28:28), and the intelligent person is he who understands God and knows the power of His Love, so he has eternal life not only after death, but in his humble and meek heart on Earth (John 17:3).

Reflecting upon this mystery makes us realize that God's Love is not love for only some specific people and not others, thus our awareness that God love everyone motivates us to remove the sense of importance and pride over others, as Saint Paul the Apostle wrote: "*But as for me, it is out of the question that I should boast at all, except of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*" (Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31). **Love will fruit the emptying of oneself (i.e., abandon the "I") to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to become an image of God.**

Reflecting upon this mystery makes us aware of the greatness of God and His love that He have shown in His Will to inform the Sons of Israel and guide them towards Lord Jesus the Savior when the time comes according to what is predicted by the prophets, as on the cross the prophecy of King David in Psalm 22, and of the Prophet Isaiah (53:2-3 & 7) were fulfilled.

Within this mystery we ask ourselves many questions and perhaps one of them is: "Do I stand under the feet of Jesus Christ holding tight to Him and not letting go without receiving His Blessings as Jacob [i.e., Israel] did with God (Genesis 32:22-31), or leave Him without getting something from Him or even care for His coming? Do I run away and deny Him, or stay with His Mother consoling her to console me?"

Fruit of the mystery: Love, repentance, cling to God's love and mercy; Loving others and forgiving their sins towards us; Giving oneself to God; Imitating the Heart of Jesus; The desire to have intelligence, wisdom and understanding ...

The General Content of the Sorrowful Mysteries

Now, if we want to reflect upon the general content of the Sorrowful Mysteries, we will see that they invite us to move confidently towards the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, to pray for us sinners, who have been as a lost sheep, to God to search for us and "**strengthen our weakness with His Mercy and Affection**" (Psalm 119, Psalm 123:3) by teaching us His ways

and providing us with the faith in His only Son who bore our infirmities and took upon himself our punishment to loosen our bondage and make us free and strong in order to stand before Him without a blemish to praise His Holy Name with His angels and His saints. Loosening our bondage is like unwrapping the shroud that we are wrapped with when we die, the shroud which restricts the flesh and limits the movement if the person wearing it was alive exactly as the work of sin within us, i.e. it imprisons us. Sin here is like an illness that can be physical as blindness and paralysis, leprosy and bleeding or other diseases that impair its owner from doing natural things, or sentimental things as selfishness and arrogance and bullying and greed, hatred and other things that push away humans from love; and God's Word was incarnated to cure these diseases to whoever wants to come nearer to God. And, when we reflect on the readings from the Bible that accompany each mystery, we see how God took our hand and gave us knowledge about His ways and laws, and strengthened our weakness and cured our diseases by the grace of His Beloved Son and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

These mysteries start with the mystery of "The Agony in the Garden" where we ask ourselves how could Jesus fulfill God's Will despite the difficulty in the commitment to this Will, and it was He who told His Disciples: "The spirit is willing enough; but human nature is weak (Matthew 26:41), in other words, we ask: "What do we do to obey God?", and we hear the answer by Jesus Christ himself to His disciples, more than once, when he said to them: "Pray not to be put to the test" (Luke 22:40 and 46), and the test here is: (1) Not obeying God and desiring to do our own will, and (2) to act contrary to what we preach: "loving", "sacrifice", "forgiveness", ... Etc, i.e. situations that lead us not to do or complete the will of God, and this results in a loss of credibility of the Word of God in front of others especially if we were having a strong relationship with God, so we are doing a disservice to God rather than harming ourselves. God here is teaching us that prayer is one way by which we can overcome difficulties and trials that the devil wishes through them for us to turn away from God. And here we must remember the simple words of the "Lord's Prayer" taught by Jesus. God respond to prayer made with faith and strengthen our weakness, and increase the graces that we need such as wisdom, fortitude and other gifts of the Holy Spirit (James 1:5-8).

But what about our sins as a result of the tests that we've been through and became weakened under the influence of Satan before the increase of our faith, how do God forgive and erase them? The answer comes in the second mystery "The Scourging at the Pillar", as there He took on Himself our

punishment. And, this “Love of God” wipes the tears of remorse from the eye and strengthens our weaknesses, increases our love for God and reinforces our determination for not to go back to sin, and stimulates us to do acts of mercy with compassion and total offering of oneself towards others with all meekness and humility and without complaining as God did and still do for us, as what is written in the Book of Prophet Isaiah: “*We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and Yahweh brought the acts of rebellion of all of us to bear on Him. Ill-treated and afflicted, He never opened His mouth, like a lamb led to the slaughter house, like a sheep dumb before its shearers He never opened His mouth*” (Isaiah 53:6-7).

And, then comes the third mystery assuring us of the Divine Providence and help of God, as God is trustworthy and He honor His Word and promise that He’ll be with us forever; He is the groom who would not abandon his bride even if she committed adultery and wanted to get away from him (Hosea 1, 2, 3). And this strengthens our weaknesses and make us ashamed of our sins before God, and with humble spirits we would recognize and admit our sins and ask for forgiveness, as we know that we can rely on Him and not give up on His mercy and compassion and love that will lift us to Him, i.e. enter the wedding feast and sit in the last seat because of our actions, and then because God honor those who ask forgiveness [for example: Zacchaeus the tax collector (Luke 19:1-10)] and know what is in our hearts from remorse; He come and bring us closer and replace us with those who sat in the first row without being ashamed of their actions, because no one is holy by his own deeds except God (Luke 15:8-11). Also, God is the good shepherd who, because of His love to all His flock, He came out in search of the lost sheep and took it to the house of the Heavenly Father (Luke 15:1-7).

And if we asked ourselves how to be honest and faithful to our bridegroom or even be friends of the groom to organize a few things concerning the wedding as John the Baptist (John 1:29-30) who was “*a horn in the wilderness that will go before the Lord to prepare a way for Him, to give His people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins*” (Luke 1:76-79), and what should we do, we find the answer in the fourth mystery where Jesus teach us how **the ‘love for God and for others’ is shown by bearing the difficulties and hardships patiently and silently** [“*If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me*” (Matthew 16:24)], so that this tolerance will be an example of what is written in the Book of Wisdom regarding the people who loved God and relied on Him: “*But the souls of the upright are*

*in the hands of God, and no torment can touch them. To the unenlightened, they appeared to die, their departure was regarded as a disaster, their leaving us like an annihilation, but they are at peace. If, as it seemed to us, they suffered punishment, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their correction, great will their blessings be. God was putting them to the test and has proved them worthy to be with Him; He has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them as a perfect burnt offering. At their time of visitation, they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble, so will they. They will judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king for ever. Those who trust in Him will understand the truth, those who are faithful will live with Him in love; for grace and mercy await His holy ones, and He intervenes on behalf of His chosen” (Wisdom 3:1-9). As well as the example of what was written in the Book of Lamentations: "I have become a joke to all my people, their refrain all day long. ... I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is and thought: 'My lasting hope in Yahweh is lost'. Bring to mind my misery and anguish; it is wormwood and gall! My heart dwells on this continually and sinks within me. This is what I shall keep in mind and so regain some hope: **Surely Yahweh's mercies are not over, His deeds of faithful love not exhausted; every morning they are renewed; great is thy faithfulness! 'Yahweh is all I have' I say to myself, 'and so I shall put my hope in Him'. Yahweh is good to those who trust him, to all who search for Him. It is good to wait in silence for Yahweh to save. It is good for someone to bear the yoke from a young age, to sit in solitude and silence when it weighs heavy, to lay one's head in the dust--- may be there is hope--- to offer one's cheek to the sticker, to have one's fill of disgrace!"** (Lamentations 3:14-28).*

And through meditation upon these mysteries and seeing the silence of Jesus Christ during scourging and carrying the cross, and His endurance to pain, we understand that **'Love fruits patience and endurance of hardships'**. And accordingly, we can know why the virtue of patience/perseverance is important for everyone who wants to be a servant in the Kingdom of God, and how "perseverance in the time of distress/hardship" is a sign of faith, and that is why God want His lovers to have this virtue knowing that 'perseverance' is born after many tests (James 1:2-4, Ecclesiasticus 2:1-21). Perhaps God do not want us to stand firm only when we have difficulties to signify faith/love, but in the fifth mystery He show us: (1) LOVE incarnated in the qualities/characteristics of His Beloved Son, as while at the peak of His passion/pain He forget Himself and think only

about others, and accordingly we need to echo his words and deeds, and (2) the greatest love that surpass all kinds of love is to sacrifice oneself and offer it for the love of others as Jesus died to be the sacrifice of the Passover for whoever believes that **Jesus is a Free Gift from God to humanity because God love them**, as God sent Him for his redemption and atonement for his sins so that he can live with God forever (Hebrews 10:5-10).

Therefore, while we contemplate these mysteries we find out that they pointing to the **characteristics of the perfect bride and to the specifications of 'Love that doesn't fade away'** (Proverbs 31:10-31), also it refers to the **virtues of Wisdom "the bride" that is loved and desired by every believer in God in order to enjoy eternal rest** (Wisdom 8:1-10), as follows:

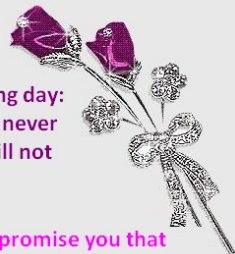
The love for God and submission to his will and upholding His commandments and teachings [The Truth], and have His Word as a fulfilling food for oneself and for others ... Making peace and spreading love ... Content and satisfaction... Remorse for sin and repentance leading to piety and righteousness [wisdom/"understanding God"] and holiness ... The acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior (baptism of blood), and being proud of Him in front of others ... Steadfastness in faith ... Love others and sacrifice oneself for their good ... Gentleness, meekness and humility ... Pardon the trespasses/sins of others and cover their weaknesses ... Mercy ... The courage and the strength to withstand the difficulties ... Patience ... Work tirelessly with a reassured heart without fear and with all the joy because of the love of Christ ... Total dependence on God and His Graces, giving thanks all the time.

For Adults Only

The Bride said to her Bridegroom on their wedding day:
"By the blood of my virginity I tell you that I have never been to someone else and I promise you that I will not be for anyone else. I am for my beloved."

The bridegroom replied: "With the same blood I promise you that your lover will be yours forever."

Praise to You God, for how many covenants were sealed with blood, although in our relationship with You, the blood of the bridegroom is what was poured to authenticate the Covenant between us and says to me: "I'm for my beloved and my beloved is for me", Amen.



The Glorious Mysteries: Eternal Life (God among the Flock– Heavenly Kingdom)

The Glorious Mysteries are distinguished by showing God's Glory and the splendor of eternal life with Him in His Kingdom to the contemplator, and urge him on piety and the work for the glory of God. And if we wondered "how is God's glory that is not given to another?" (Isaiah 42:8), we have to imagine a king who is served by many because they love him, and he is standing in front of his nation that are countless people of all ages who come out to meet him whatever it takes out of their love to him. The King's acts/behaviour is what made him loved by the people and the servants, as it was he who took them by the hand and raised them towards him, and made the poor rich. The King did not need the people as the King is already a King, and his glory is not measured by the number of his people, but his love for them did all that. God through His miracles showed His Glory, and humans through their faith in the Word of God gave glory to God [this does not mean that God's Glory increases with people's faith rather than it become visible to others]. Perhaps, the real glory of God will only be realized after the death of the body, the resurrection and seeing God.

If someone asks "How can we glorify God?", then we can say, by:

- **Believing in the resurrection.** No one can bring back the dead to life but God alone who have power over death, He do this because He love us. Accordingly, He is given all the glory that His Majesty deserve when every knee found on Earth bends and prostrates to him.
- **Obedience to God's Word.** A King is glorified when his people obey his laws; where 'obedience without fear' is a sign of loving and accepting the rule of the King over the people.
- **Evangelizing and proclaiming the Gospel (i.e. the Good News)** (John 16:14-15). Declaration of the Gospel is proclaiming the power of God's love for mankind, and the aim of it is to bring back man to His Creator to love Him and worship Him with all respect, and to praise His Holy Name with the angels.
- **Bonding/Immutability to Christ and His love and teachings in order to bear fruits** [i.e. to attract others to God and His love, and to know Him through our words and deeds (John 15)]. The owner of the field becomes richer [though God do not need anyone to increase His wealth]

when the trees in his field bear fruit and he sells it. And, God do not sell the fruit to be enriched but He use the seeds of these fruits to produce new trees (Isaiah 60:19-22). Therefore, we understand why the unfruitful tree is cut down, as it occupies land and absorbs its water and goodness without being of any use to the owner of the field. Are we trees just to beautify the field??? Or, for the weary to rest under their branches, and for the hungry to be filled and satisfied by their fruit! We know that the water in God's field is inexhaustible, and the size of the field is of unlimited capacity, so which kind of tree we would like to be?

- **Thanksgiving.** When we praise and thank God we acknowledge and recognize His Graces and His Divine Providence [*"Let thanksgiving be your sacrifice to God, fulfill the vows you make to the Most High; then If you call to Me in the time of trouble I will rescue you and you will honour Me"* (Psalm 50:14-15)]. We need to realize that not everyone acknowledges God's Hand in his success/cure, e.g. in the miracle of the ten lepers who were all cured but one of them came back and thanked God. Verbally we thank God in words, and in action we thank God through charity/almsgiving (Ecclesiasticus 35:2) [God said: *"Honour to me is a sacrifice of thanksgiving"* (Psalm 50:23)], so that more people will see and be thankful [*"You see, everything is for your benefit, so that as grace spreads, so, to the glory of God, thanksgiving may also overflow among more and more people"* (2 Corinthians 4:15)].
- **Praising God.** "Praise" is "the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem" (Isaiah 60:18), and it pleases God's Heart because the Bible mentioned that God *"The Holy One, who make His Home in the praises of Israel"* (Psalm 22:3), where the Seraphs are shouting to each other saying: *"Holy, Holy, Holy is Yahweh Sabaoth, His glory fills the whole Earth"* (Isaiah 6:1-3). No one can enter the Kingdom of God without filling his heart with pride in God's Name and praises for His greatness, His characteristics and His deeds while he is on Earth (Psalm 105:1-11). Perhaps one of the most beautiful praises that is said in the Holy Mass according to the Catholic Chaldean Rite is: "Glory to you Lord for the indescribable Gift that You have given us forever" and "Let Your Holy Heart be blessed and glorified everywhere now and at all times". Note that 'praise' and 'giving thanks' are among the good things (Psalm 92:1-6) that every believer needs to do because he/she loves God.
- **Prostrating/Kneeling to Him.** As it says in Psalm 99:5-7 & 9: *"Exalt Yahweh our God, bow down at His Footstool; Holy is He! Moses and*

Aaron are among His priests, and Samuel, calling on His Name; they called on Yahweh and He answered them. He spoke with them in the Pillar of Fire, they obeyed His decrees, the Law He gave them. Exalt Yahweh our God, bow down at His holy mountain; Holy is Yahweh our God”.

If we think about the acts by which we can glorify God, we will come to the conclusion that we can do them all by attending the Holy Mass through which we witness God’s good deeds, remembering His love through the coming of Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, and praising His Holy Name, and thanking Him for His Graces upon us by giving alms to the needy through the Church. The non-blood sacrifice of the Holy Mass, i.e. The Eucharist, is a sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise to the Glory of God.

The Glorious Mysteries make us stand before God and on our tongues a ‘hymn of thanks’ written by one of the Fathers of the Church and was made part of the Holy Mass according to the Catholic Chaldean Rite, initiated by the priest saying: “We adore You and praise You without end in Your triumphant church that is filled with all graces and blessing. Because You are the Lord and creator of all things forever”, and the people would answer him: “Amen. We give You thanks, O Lord of all, we glorify You O Jesus Christ, because You raise our bodies into life, and You are the Saviour of our souls. **It is good to give thanks to the Lord and sing praises to Your exalted name, O Most High.** We give You thanks, O Lord of all, we glorify You O Jesus Christ, because You raise our bodies into life, and You are the Saviour of our souls. **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit from the beginning and unto all ages amen and amen.** We give You thanks, O Lord of all, we glorify You O Jesus Christ, because You raise our bodies into life, and You are the Saviour of our souls”. Amazing is God, as man glorifies Him by thanksgiving and praise, the same acts that increases man’s glory, as because of man’s glory he/she praises God (Psalm 30:11-12), and the glory of man increases through fearing God (Ecclesiasticus 1:11 & 18-19) that make him/her praise God at all times in words and deeds [*“Sing a song of praise, blessing the Lord for all His Works. Declare the greatness of His Name, proclaim His praise...”*] (Ecclesiasticus 39:13-16)], and glorify Him with all acts.

Through these specific mysteries, and when we turn to our mother, the Virgin Mary, to pray for us sinners, we are actually turning to the only person in the universe whom by being filled with grace became truly a sacred home/temple for God, wholeheartedly and in flesh too. Never will,

nor had anyone else, such honour, an honour that was given by God to His handmaid Virgin Mary, so we need to accept this prestigious honour of being “The Mother of God” humbly without undermining her title/position. We need to remember what happened to Aaron and his sister Mary when they spoke against their brother Moses and what God had said about Moses (Numbers 12:1-10).

The First Mystery: The Resurrection (John 20 & 21) – “Jesus our Faith”

This mystery is the foundation of our faith: The belief that God created man to be exalted with His Glory and was not created for destruction, as death has no power over man since God is Eternal and He is God of the living, and death is only ‘Temporary sleep time for the body’ as Lord Jesus Christ said (Luke 8:40-56) until the day of resurrection, and the resurrection of Jesus is a sure sign of the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:12-58), and the resurrection of the dead is one of the miracles that glorifies God and show His Glory as He is capable of everything, and it is also indicative of God’s Love for humans who will be His Children through their faith in Jesus (Luke 7:11-16; 20:35-36, John 11:39-45; 12:28-36). Recalling what was written in the book of Ecclesiasticus (25:11): *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of loving Him but it is by faith that a man begins to cling to Him"*, we realize that when we remember this mystery we affirm our faith in God and His power, i.e. we proclaim our love to Him.

When we reflect on this mystery, we remember Lord Jesus’ acts during the forty days from the day of His resurrection until His Ascension into Heaven. And, these acts are confirmation to His followers, who walk with Him, that:

1. He have nothing else to say to them as He have said it all, but He remind them with what was said and done [especially to the real repentant who is represented by Mary Magdalene from whom He had expelled seven Devils, as Salvation is theirs], and the time has come where all what was written in the books is fulfilled, and now the aim is to encourage Mary and everyone who believed in Him to engage himself/herself with the spread of the good news through His Resurrection, and the call to repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name (Luke 24:44-49) so that everyone will be saved.
2. God calls man, who is represented by Jesus, to avoid sin after he had died of it (i.e, stop doing it, and stop living together with sinners and

doing their acts) [This is seen when He asked Mary Magdalene not to touch Him] and affirm himself/herself in faith, i.e. fill his/her heart with God's Love completely and attach oneself to God, in order to strengthen others in faith, and this is what previously Jesus Christ asked Saint Peter the Apostle to do (Luke 22:32, John 21:15-17).

3. What Jesus proclaimed to them before His Death has happened (Luke 9:22), so will all His teachings (whether verbally or through His acts), and His teachings are True. Among these teachings: "Breaking the bread in the same manner of the Last Supper of Passover opens the heart's insight to know Lord Jesus Christ" (as what happened to the two men on the road of Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)) as God's Word open the heart's insight, because the Passover's Broken Bread is the Body of Lord Jesus "Incarnated Word of God" who for our salvation was given (Matthew 26:26-29, Luke 22:19).
4. He is the Messiah whom they are waiting for according to what's written in the Books, i.e. The Old Testament (Luke 24:44-48), so hearts should be affirmed well in faith and refrain from waiting for another Christ.
5. He is the loving good Shepherd who care for His sheep (Ezekiel 34:11-16, John 10:11-15) and who hear every one of them and know what's in his/her mind of doubts (John 20:25, Luke 24:13-16), and He don't want the lost sheep to drift away from Him. He will take them by hand to His Heart, as He took Saint Thomas' hand (John 20:27) and the two disciples on the road of Emmaus (Luke 24: 25-31) so as not to doubt.
6. He will always be with them to attract the whole world to be saved: primarily as fishermen [i.e., to catch humans] (John 21:4-8), and secondly as shepherds to the sheep who followed him (John 21:15-17), because this is the Will of the Heavenly Father (John 6:40, 1 Timothy 2:3-4), and then all can confess what Saint Thomas the Apostle said: "My Lord and My God".
7. What the priests, Sons of Levi, were performing for the forgiveness of sins (Leviticus 4 & 5, Numbers 5:5-7), He has given them [i.e. to the priests] in the Sacrament of Confession and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist through the power of the Holy Spirit. Also, Lord Jesus direct His repented followers towards "Love" so that no one is condemned, as they are also messengers of "Forgiveness" by the power of the Holy Spirit, where as the Heavenly Father sent Him to reconcile God with man and bring back man to the love of God, so

He send His followers filled with the Holy Spirit [i.e. with God's Love] to be reconciled with his/her fellow man (John 20:19-23, Acts 7:54-60), giving them the option of not reconciling with the abuser, accordingly He give the true repentant believer the right to share with God in judgment (2 Kings 1:5-15; 2:23-24, Matthew 12:38-42; 19:27-28, 1 Corinthians 6: 2), and leave to him/her the option to allow others who abused him/her to enter the Kingdom of God without being judged if he/she forgave them (Matthew 5:21-26). Here, Lord Jesus remind us that the Love of God need to be above all things, and to love others as the love of oneself [including the salvation of the soul]; here He wanted to His Holy Church to be built without blemish on the basis of Love (Ephesians 1:1-14) because He know God's justice.

When we reflect on this mystery we become aware of the importance of giving attention to our bodies not to be stained with sin, but to be looking forward to the day when we meet our Heavenly Father. The resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day reminds us of what Jesus said to the Jews, as well it reminded His Apostles, about His capability of raising the Temple in three days after being destroyed, and what was written in the Gospel inspired by the Holy Spirit that He meant 'His Body is the Temple of God', a Temple that was not made by man's hand (John 2:18-22). His body and the body of His followers are homes for God to dwell therein to be light to others and through which His image is reflected: Love and Mercy and Holiness. So, we must act according to the Spirit, sanctifying our acts of the flesh not because we are only Children of God in inheritance in the Name of Jesus, but also we are really "Temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). And when we know we are called to be God's Temple, we understand "why Holiness?"; because the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom, do not live in and be friend with people other than who have special characteristics as written in The Book of Wisdom: *"Love uprightness you who are rulers on earth, be properly disposed towards the Lord and seek Him in simplicity of heart; for He will be found by those who do not put Him to the test, revealing Himself to those who do not mistrust Him. Perverse thoughts, however, separate people from God, and power, when put to the test, confounds the stupid. Wisdom will never enter the soul of a wrong-doer, nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin; for the Holy Spirit of instruction flees deceitfulness, recoils from unintelligent thoughts, is thwarted by the onset of vice. Wisdom is a spirit friendly to humanity, though She will not let a blasphemer's words go unpunished; since God*

observes the very soul and accurately surveys the heart, listening to every word. For the Spirit of the Lord fill the world, and that which hold everything together know every word said. No one who speaks what is wrong will go undetected, nor will avenging Justice pass by such a one. For the schemes of the godless will be examined, and a report of his words will reach the Lord to convict him of his crimes. There is a jealous ear that overhears everything, not even a murmur of complaint escapes it. So beware of uttering frivolous complaints, restrain your tongue from finding fault; even what is said in secret has repercussions, and a lying mouth deals death to the soul. Do not court death by the errors of your ways, nor invite destruction through the work of your hands. For God did not make Death, he takes no pleasure in destroying the living” (Wisdom 1:1-13).

Fruit of the mystery: Faith; Desire for holiness in God's love; ...

The Second Mystery: The Ascension to Heaven (Acts 1:6-11) – “Jesus is our Hope”

This mystery is the subject of our hope. In this mystery, along with our belief in Jesus Christ our Saviour, we can be confident that we have the Grace of God to be His Children to share in His eternal Heavenly Kingdom, and we need to spread this hope which is good news for all Nations [*“From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the service of the gospel that God promised long ago through his prophets in the holy scriptures. This is the gospel concerning his Son who, in terms of human nature was born a descendant of David and who, in terms of the Spirit and of holiness, was designated Son of God in power by resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ, our Lord, through whom we have received grace and our apostolic mission of winning the obedience of faith among all the nations for the honour of his name.”* (Romans 1:1-5)].

In this mystery, we remember the Lord Jesus’ words to the crowd who came to see him: *“Whoever serves Me, must follow Me, and My servant will be with Me wherever I am. If anyone serves Me, My Father will honour him”* (John 12:26), and His words to His disciples: *“In my Father's house there are many places to live in; otherwise I would have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you to myself, so that you may be with me where I am.”* (John 14:2-3), accordingly, our hearts rejoice and the fear of death is gone, and peace prevails in our soul, and we will be filled with the desire to work in the field of the Lord.

In this mystery, we remember the words of the two Angels to the apostles who saw Jesus Christ rising into the sky that **He will come again on the cloud**, so we strive to see Him coming in great glory and ignore all predictions from anyone who would proclaim that he is the expected Messiah who will guide people to peace and triumph over the devil; no other Messiah will come for salvation (Matthew 24:23-25).

Fruit of the mystery: Hope; Love and Longing for Heaven, Eagerness to spread “Jesus’ Peace” for the glory of God; ...

The Third Mystery: The Descent of The Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5, 2:1-4) – “Jesus is our Love”

When we reflect on this mystery after contemplating upon the mystery of Hope, we cannot help but think in one thing, that is: "Love", and how to proclaim it, because he who has hope because of God’s Love to him must not be selfish but wish that everyone would receive part of this unlimited and endless love, as stated in the letter of St. Paul to the Romans about hope: "*A hope which will not let us down, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.*" (Romans 5:5). The descent of the Holy Spirit within us makes each one of us a stone in the Temple of God according to the gifts given to him; this Temple in which Jesus Christ is the corner-stone, has its base in God’s Word, and ‘Love’ is the material that joins each stone with the other (Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:14-19; 4:1-16).

God send into our hearts the Holy Spirit because we are His Children by adoption through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit enfold us as the swaddling cloth that wraps the baby to protect him and make him sleep comfortably (Wisdom 7:4), cover us with the full armor of God (Wisdom 5:15-19), and make us wear the wedding gown and God’s Splendor (Ezekiel 16:4-14). Therefore the Holy Spirit make us cry out to God and say, "*Abba, Father*" (Galatians 4:4-7).

The descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples is like the graduation party of a student at the University and receiving the certificate that enables him to work in the field. The life of the disciples with Lord Jesus is like our life with the Word of God in order to know ‘Him/The Word’; it is a period of study to enable them to work after graduation, that’s why we see them after the descent of the Holy Spirit they had succeeded with all the work that was

given and entrusted to them, and they have mastered it with joy and pleasure. When the Holy Spirit came upon the Disciples, He showed them where their treasure is, so their hearts would stick there. He gave them all they needed to testify to the Truth that leads us to eternal life. He attached their hearts with Jesus Christ's Sacred Heart who became their lamp that lighted for them the darkness so that they, in turn, will enlighten all. They started to see things through this Sacred Heart ("The eye is the lamp of the body") that hold all the love and mercy for every one of us. The Holy Spirit made them commemorate God's Law, speak things that comes from the Sacred Heart and preach, with wisdom, God's Love & Mercy for all through the forgiveness of their sins by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and live according to His teachings. The Holy Spirit made them clean as all their actions (speech or thought) comes from such Heart, as Jesus Christ said. And the gifts of the Holy Spirit are: Wisdom, Understanding, Counselling, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of God.

This mystery makes us think not only of the disciples and what the Holy Spirit did for them, but of every man and woman whom the Bible mentioned that they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and then we will understand that the aim of being filled with the Holy Spirit is to make Him known to others, i.e. "God's love for the world, and the knowledge of man's salvation through Jesus Christ": Zechariah (Luke 1:67-74), Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-45), Simeon (Luke 2:25-32), the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36-38), and all the prophets, John the Baptist (Luke 1:13-17), Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-35, John 2:1-5).

Fruit of the mystery: Love; Proclaiming the good news; Love to be filled with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit; Giving oneself to God; Imitating the Heart of Jesus ...

The Fourth Mystery: The Assumption of Mary into Heaven (Luke 1:46-55) – “Jesus is our Strength”

When we reflect on this mystery, we confess to God that we believe that the Church is a "people who lived the faith and they handed it over from one generation to another." We also believe that God chose the Virgin Mary from all women, and gave her a name and glory that lasts forever, as Tobit predicted on the birth of the light of the world in Zion [i.e., Bethlehem: the city of David] that is located near Jerusalem from Virgin Mary, and said: "*A bright light will shine over all the regions of the earth; many nations will*

come from far away, from all the ends of the earth, to dwell close to the holy name of the Lord God, with gifts in their hands for the King of Heaven. Within you generation after generation will proclaim their joy, and the name of her who is Elect will endure through the generations to come." (Tobit 13:11). Yes, God gave a high position to Virgin Mary [as the angel addressed her: "*Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour*" (Luke 1:30)], and made for her great things as she mentioned in her Magnificat glorifying God and showing His Mercy for whoever fears Him: "*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; because he has looked upon the humiliation of his servant. Yes, from now onwards all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me. Holy is His Name, and His faithful love extends age after age to those who fear Him.*" (Luke 1:46-50). And, one of the great things that God Almighty have done to the Virgin Mary is lifting her body and soul up into Heaven after her death, where the Tradition mentions that Saint Thomas the Apostle told the rest of the apostles of seeing her ascending towards the sky on his way to Jerusalem to see her before she dies. But, Saint Thomas was not present when she died and was buried. And, she gave him her belt to prove his saying [Note: Tradition is what happened, but it is not mentioned in the Bible rather it was passed on to us by mouth from the early Christian generations].

In this mystery, God confirm to the people who say "Jesus ascended into Heaven in body and Spirit/Soul because He is God" that man also represented by the Virgin Mary can be taken up in flesh and Spirit into Heaven. This mystery assures us regarding the fate of the person who fears God and humbles himself before Him all the time knowing of His unlimited Love and Mercy, and ensuring us, if not urging us, to ask Virgin Mother Mary to intercede for us before the Throne of God. This intercession is not for God's Mercy on us for the remission of sin as the only intercessor for this Mercy is Lord Jesus Christ [i.e., Jesus Christ is our saving Grace], but to ask God to pour upon us His other graces so to become the children of God who work effitiently in their Father's House. As a "mother" who is worthy of this title is always closer to the heart of the father as well as to the heart of the son, and knows the mysteries of both of them.

Fruit of the mystery: Desire for Holiness; Cling to faith; Love of Virgin Mary, imitating her actions ...

The Fifth Mystery: The Coronation of Mary (Revelation 12:1-5) – “Jesus is our Glory and Authority”

Through this mystery our joy is complete as the Queen the Bride, i.e. the whole "Church" represented by Virgin Mary, stands to the right hand of God the Bridegroom the King.

This mystery was not seen with the naked eye but was heard by the people under the cross, when Jesus entrusted His mother to His beloved disciple (i.e., everyone whom His Heart loved), thus she became Queen Mother on earth before her death, and in Heaven, when she met Him again and forever.

Through this mystery we understand the meaning of love that is associated with ‘praying for the enemy’. While we pray ‘Hail Mary’ to Mary Mother of God, saying: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen", and acknowledging the cause of her son’s crucifixion being our sins, we are actually asking her to pray for her enemies who have caused her sadness, and she does it with joy as her aim had become one with our Heavenly Father that everyone is to be saved [because this is the will of God] and believes in her Son and His Teachings for the glory of God.

Fruit of the mystery: Trust in Lord Jesus and Virgin Mary; Anxiously waiting for seeing New Jerusalem ...

The General Content of the Glorious Mysteries

If we want to reflect upon the general content of the Glorious Mysteries, we find out that it invites us to pray to God for ourselves, sinners, through His Virgin Mother to "increase our faith as much as the faith of a mother in her son ... and increase our hope as much as the hope of a poor daughter in her rich father ... and increase our love as the love of a bride to her bridegroom". Our mother, Virgin Mary, is the mother who believed in her Son, and she taught us to obey His Words, to believe Him and to put our trust in Him. She is the daughter who put her hope in God so she stood under the cross looking at her dead Son and awaiting His resurrection. She is the bride who loved her bridegroom and obeyed Him, honoured Him and reflected His Image before the people through her actions, and loved everyone who belongs to Him for the love she has for Him.

The Glorious Mysteries reflect the image of "New Birth" and establishment of New Jerusalem: If the process of "The death of Jesus on the cross" leads

to "Conception of a baby without sin" [i.e. having no sin as all of his sins are forgiven], and this child is God's chosen people, the people of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-8), then "Resurrection" will be "Giving Birth to God's people", and it is an open invitation to all people at all times to be part of God's people, as this invitation is no longer restricted to just Sons of Israel. These people collectively are called "The Church", and are represented by the Virgin Mary Mother of God, namely "The Immaculate Conception" as she introduced herself to Saint Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879) when she appeared to her for the 16th time in Lourdes, France on Thursday, 25 March 1858. As for the "Ascension of Jesus to Heaven" and "The Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Disciples", they are the true birth of this Church, the Kingdom of God on Earth, to spread the good news of salvation, and then to stand up as one body at the right hand of God in Heaven as the Queen stands beside the King at his throne.

Therefore, while we contemplate these mysteries, we find out that they indicate to the presence of God in the center of His Flock, and to the meaning of Christianity and our faith (Titus 2 and 3), as follows:

Faith in Jesus the Savior and the Son of God who descended from the bosom of the Heavenly Father ... **Hope** in a glorified resurrection, where wherever God is we will be also, as heirs of eternal life ... **Love** that calls to spread the good news all over the world led by the power of the Holy Spirit for God's Glory ... One Holy Universal and Apostolic Church ... Children of one mother: The Church of holiness, righteousness and peace.

***If God wanted to hold a mirror
to see His Image:***

- * His Love and Mercy*
- * His Compassionate Tender Heart*
- * His Honesty and His Righteousness*
- * His Clemency and Patience
(Slow to Anger)*
- * His Hand outstretched for the hungry*
- * His Justice and Truth*



Will He be holding you???

The Luminous Mysteries: Living in God's Kingdom

(The Return of the Lost Sheep)

The Luminous Mysteries show the meditator the events of advent of God's Splendor and His Brightness, and His staying with us in order to fill our hearts with the love of our Heavenly Father. These mysteries are the events of the appearance of the Light which was since the beginning and will remain forever the lamp for our feet and the guidance on our way (Exodus 13:21-22, Psalm 119 n:105), and a way to bring us back to the Light, and our food for the day (Exodus 16:10-16).

As a scientific concept, everyone sees the light for the first time when they are born and come out of the womb, that dark place. From the Divine concept, man sees the light on earth when he recognizes that God exist and He is the Creator, and he loves Him as the love of a son to his father, and he is baptized in the name of The Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15-16), in other words, when he sees the Lord Jesus Christ within his heart, i.e. when he opens the door of his heart for Him to listen to Him and acts by His Word.

The First Mystery: The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan (Matthew 3:13-17) – “Jesus our Righteousness”

In this mystery we contemplate over two persons and God is the third in a wedding ceremony, resulting in the birth of holy baby in a repentant soul, a soul that was lost in the wilderness and suddenly a friend of the groom holds her hand and leads her to the path that will make her meet the groom. This path consists of two steps: First: "Repentance and washing the darkness of the past", and Secondly: "A pledge to make changes and not return to sin again".

The friend of the groom is a modest man, no jealousy in his heart towards the groom, and does not wish to take his place; as he is a man who knows his duties and does not covet anything that belongs to others, and thankful to God for every grace he has. It is in this spirit, when it is worn by the faithful, that they can make a testimony to the groom and prepare the way of the Lord for himself and for others (Luke 1:76-79). And if we think of this spirit that looks like the spirit of Elijah, we realize that self-denial for God's love does not mean weakness and disdain, but its owner knows

exactly who he is in relation to God, and what his position is in comparison with God, and what are his duties towards God [*"He must grow greater, I must grow less."* (John 3:30), and 'I have to repent and obey, and praise God's Name and glorify Him' (Book of Baruch)], for he is "*A voice of one that cries in the desert: Prepare a way for the Lord. Make his paths straight!*", i.e. a voice in the wilderness calling for repentance, and *giving his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins* through Jesus Christ, Light of the world" (John 1:29-37, Luke 1:77). He also "*reconciles fathers to their children and the disobedient to the good sense of the upright, preparing for the Lord a people fit for him.*" (Luke 1:17).

In this mystery, we understand that "denial of sin" is considered spiritual blindness and darkness within which a human lives, and it makes him lose the ability to see the light, as the beloved disciple John the Apostle wrote: *If we say, 'We have no sin', we are deceiving ourselves, and truth has no place in us; if we acknowledge our sins, he is trustworthy and upright, so that he will forgive our sins and will cleanse us from all evil. If we say, 'We have never sinned', we make him a liar, and his word has no place in us.* (1 John 1:8-10). Perhaps the worst sin that humans blind their vision from seeing and admitting it is the abuse of others, whether by:

- Covet their possessions, or
- Assault, overlook and ignore their rights and social status within the family, or
- Not to recognize his/her mistake that caused the problems within the family or at work, and putting the blame on others and distort their image, accusing them of causing problems, therefor using lies to turn the truth upside down, and metaphorically, we can say: "he/she throws stones on others" and "puts a stumbling block on the way of others", or
- Fail to protect the vulnerable people whom he/she is responsible for, e.g. a husband would not protect his wife from the jealousy and injustice of his family towards her, or a father who does not protect his children from the cruelty of others, or a man does not protect his old parents from the cruelty of his wife.

All this is because of the pride and greatness and selfishness in the heart, or because of lust, or having no zeal over his/her property, and the lack of love: this is part of the hatred that is the opposite of love (1 John 2:3-11).

In this mystery, we contemplate upon the words of our Heavenly Father of Jesus Christ, on Whom the Holy Spirit descended: "*You are my Son; today have I fathered you*" (Luke 3:21-22). Remembering the words of God said

from the cloud the day Jesus transfigured: "*This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him*" (Luke 9:35), will put in our hearts the desire to act on the example of Jesus, Son-of-Man, imitating His deeds and sayings that showed God's Love, Mercy and glory to others. Therefore we ask God with complete faith to be among the people whom Lord Jesus baptize with: (1) the Holy Spirit [Jesus read: "*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, for He has anointed Me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.*" (Luke 4:18-19)], and (2) His Blood for the forgiveness of sins when He gave His life for us (Luke 12:50). We will be witnesses to the Holy Trinity One God in our words and actions and according to His words and deeds (John 1:29-34), offering ourselves as a satisfactory offering to God like Abel's offering that God was satisfied with and selected (Genesis 4:3-5).

Fruit of the mystery: Humbleness; Deprive from jealousy and covetousness of other people's physical and spiritual belongings; Examination of conscience leading to repentance and purification of self; Knowing the truth; Courage to confess sins...

The Second Mystery: The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11) – “Jesus our Wine and Joy”

In this mystery we discover how much the Virgin Mary knows her Son Jesus, and we see when she notices the needs of others how she acts and directs them to Him because she is confident that He can do what no one can do, and all that is requested from them is to obey Him to obtain their request.

It may seem to the servants that Lord Jesus has the ability to do magic so He could turn water into wine, but He did not say a Word and never touched the water, as they filled the jars with water with their own hands and they poured from it for the guests and wine came out of it without Lord Jesus touching it or saying anything. So, He is not a magician; and Virgin Mary wanted to tell them that His Glory is greater than the glory of a magician as He is Son of God, “The Divine Providence”.

In this mystery Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother, summarizes all things stored up in her heart about her only son (Luke 2:51-52) in one sentence calling everyone who does not know Him to follow Him with confidence: "*Do whatever He tells you*", because she knows that His aim is "The Divine

Happiness and Joy", that was symbolized by the happiness of all guests attending the wedding: starting with the bride and groom, their parents, relatives and friends, of the servants who were also happy on this occasion despite the fatigue for preparing such occasion. The Virgin Mary knew in advance that He would respond to her, as she did not take His permission when she went to the servants, rather she just told Him the reason that will make them sad: "*They have no wine*", and was confident that He would make whoever is in the wedding happy.

In her words to the servants of the wedding ceremony, it was as if Virgin Mary was saying to all servants of God [i.e., priests, scribes and Pharisees] and her people 'Children of Israel' [i.e., who are invited to the wedding ceremony prepared by God] and every one who will be spiritually a Child of Israel, what Jesus said about himself later to His disciples and the crowd following Him in His sermon on the mount (Matthew 5:17): "Don't be afraid of my son, He didn't come to your wedding to abolish your joy but He came to complete your happiness and make it eternal". And, in order not to misunderstand the terms of "happiness, and removing what is preventing it" we must understand that Jesus did not give 'Money' to the groom to bring more wine, but He personally presented them, with the help of the servants, wine of the finest quality. Also, in order for us not to think that Jesus and Virgin Mary wanted the guests to be drunk with more wine [as it is a sin to be drunk], the Bible clearly mentioned that the president of the feast tasted the wine and he knew that it tasted good; for if he was drunk from the wine he drank earlier then 'he would not be able to know that the new wine tastes good', and so is the case with the rest of the guests where the wine didn't make them drunk. To offer good expensive wine at the beginning of the wedding ceremony is an indication of the generosity and wealth of the owners because everyone wants to drink good grape juice (wine) with food, and when they have enough, they will stop drinking, and then the owners of the party will start offering lower quality wine which is cheaper, if they don't have enough money to provide the same expensive quality [providing lower quality wine at the end was the common case]. We did not read that the attendees complained about the taste of the wine presented to them in the beginning as an indication that it must have been good, but the wine that made Jesus "was the best". This also signifies that *Lord Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to complete it* (Matthew 5:17).

Now, if we think about the words said by the president of the feast to the bridegroom, we find out that he was not mocking the groom because he

kept the good wine to last but he was flattering him and praising him because the taste that would stay in the mouth of those present is of the finest wine [i.e., the wine that was formed of God's love, and it symbolizes God's love: The Blood of the New Covenant] and will not remember the taste of the previous wine. Here, we remember what King David sang: "*Taste and see that Yahweh is good. How blessed are those who take refuge in him*" (Psalm 34:8), and what King Solomon sang on the lips of the beloved [i.e., the bride]: "*your love is sweeter than wine ... Draw me in your footsteps, let us run. The king [i.e., the groom] has brought me into his rooms; you will be our joy and our gladness. We shall praise your love more than wine; how right it is to love you*" (The Song of Songs 1:1-4).

In this mystery, our mother, the Virgin Mary teaches us to come nearer to her beloved Son and ask Him as St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Monastic Order prayed: "Blood of Christ, inebriate me!", thus we say: "O Lord, inebriate us with your wine: 'Your Word and Holy Blood', 'Your Love: Wine from The Vine (John 15:1) to stay away from drunkenness by the wine of the adulteress [i.e. the sin of denying God and the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit] (Revelation 17:1-2). Let's be pleased with Your Light and we fill our hearts with Your Divine Love to see God's Light rather than having pleasure in staying in darkness; ashamed of our sins. Let's forget ourselves through Your wine and fly away with gladness through Your love".

Fruit of the mystery: Get closer to Lord Jesus and obey what He says; Love the Virgin Mary [and whoever knows God well] in order to reach the Lord Jesus thus God's Love; The desire to become a servant/disciple of the Lord to deliver eternal joy to others through His Divine Providence; Avoiding apathy; Help of people in need ...

The Third Mystery: The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:15; 16:15-18) – “Jesus our Teacher”

When we understand that the Kingdom of God is among us and in our hearts, we will know that the Kingdom of God is "Jesus Christ: God's love and Mercy", and His big field is enough for everyone; where everyone is serving each other according to God's Word and His Gifts given to us through the Holy Spirit (Wisdom 7:7-30; 8:1, Psalm 119 Nun, Luke 17:20-25). The announcement of the Gospel of salvation in the Lord Jesus is the duty of every Christian in order to show love for God and for others. Redemption, i.e. God's consoling to the troubled and vulnerable hearts, was

a free gift to the whole world. Accordingly, because of our love of God and for others, we must console the evil doer's with God's Mercy, and the desperate hearts with God's power, and the hearts that wallow under deep pain with God's Love (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).

Through this mystery, we become aware of the importance of proclaiming the Good News (i.e. the Gospel) and think of the extent of the responsibility put on our shoulders so as people would live in peace and would not be judged when they die [maybe we don't have to die for others as Jesus did, but we should make every effort], so God's Will will be accomplished in accordance to what He told prophet Ezekiel that *the repentant wicked will not die* (Ezekiel 33:10-20) and that "*everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth*" (1 Timothy 2:4). Whereas, proclaiming the Gospel is an act of charity that does not involve money but what is greater in order for everyone would shout "*Great is Yahweh*" (Psalm 40:8-17); it is:

- As holding the hands of a blind man and taking him to Lord Jesus to open his eyes, and he sees God's Light; and he'll give thanks and glorify God.
- As touching the leper to be healed, and he can live again with his people in peace; and he'll give thanks and glorify God.
- As opening the chains off the hands and legs of the captives, and they will go to work in the field to produce fruits for God's Glory.
- As planting a good plant through which God would be glorified.
- As giving a cup of water to a small child, where God is 'The Water of Life', and knowing God is 'The Eternal Life'; and he'll give thanks and glorify God.
- As putting clothes on naked bodies because of sin, shivering from extreme cold; covering their shame and warm them with the fire of faith; and they'll thank the Lord and glorify Him.
- As washing other people's legs after they became tired from walking through dirt and mud in a road filled with pitfalls; and they'll thank the Lord and glorify Him (Psalm 40:1-4).
- As recovery from impure spirits (Mark 1:21-28) for those who have in their heart the spirit of greed [A blind person who does not see the needs of others], the spirit of pride [A leper whose abnormality is seen by every person and is avoided], the spirit of recklessness and fast to anger [A bleeding person who spread damage to those around him], the spirit of selfishness [A prisoner of love to oneself], the spirit of envy [A paralyzed person who cannot move without making problems].

In order for us to proclaim the Gospel, we should be: (1) As a child in accepting and obeying the Word of our Heavenly Father with full trust in Him, and (2) As men in being strong in accepting and enduring the things that are our responsibility, especially when problems exist. As to the recipient of the Gospel, the first step he/she would do is "Repentance" (Luke 13:1-9; 15:11-24) ,and "Baptizm in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as a sign for the circumcision of the heart, and belonging to God as a son who has repented from abandoning Him" (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark: 16:15-16).

Fruit of the mystery: Love of God and others; Desire Holiness: Staying away from selfishness, jealousy, cruelty of heart, and ...; The humility to accept the task of being “the servant” for the sake of accomplishing the “One Body in Christ” ...

The Fourth Mystery: The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:1-8, Luke 9:28-36) – “Jesus our Light”

In this mystery we ponder on how God reveal Jesus as the sacrifice without blemish thus He is worthy to be the redemption for all (1 Peter 1:18-21, Exodus 12:5, Hebrews 7:26-27). He is ‘Light from Light’ to reveal His glory to come which was since time immemorial, and He is the good man who have no dust on Him as His features and clothes were radiating light from the intensity of its whiteness [as snow which radiates light through the night], and "**this light is His title**"; and He is the one whom Prophet Moses (to whom God gave His Commandments) had prophesied, and so did all the prophets [who are represented by the Prophet Elijah], the coming of Lord Jesus (Luke 24:44). In front of the Symbols of the Old Testament and the Disciples of the New Testament, God, by saying, "***This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to Him***", have testified that Lord Jesus is:

1. The Beloved Son who will sit on the throne of His Father. And when we know that "God do not give His Glory to another", and He is immortal and do not die (Isaiah 42:8), and "the Son and the Father are one" (John 10:30; 14:1-11), we can say with Saint Paul the Apostle: "*Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is very deep indeed: He was made visible in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed to the gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.*" (1 Timothy 3:16).
2. The offering that God chose and was pleased with (Genesis 4:3-5).

3. The one whom God spoke of to Prophet Isaiah, saying: "*Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. ... "I have made you a covenant of the people and light to the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon."* (Isaiah 42:1-7).
4. The only teacher as He is the incarnated Word of God. Here, God tell the hearers that "**The Lord's Words are food for human to live**", where Prophet Moses told the Israelites that God fed them manna in the desert to teach them that "*human beings live not on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh.*" (Deuteronomy 8:3), and this was confirmed by Jesus when tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:4). And also reminds us of what Lord Jesus said about who listen to His voice and follow Him that they are considered from His Flock, and He will give them eternal life (John 10:27-29).

When we ponder over this mystery, we realize that the "Two Witnesses" mentioned in the Book of Revelation (Chapter 11) are "The Transfigured Jesus Christ" who is supported by God The Father for the salvation of the people who are citizens of the sinful city. Jesus Christ explained in the Holy Bible (John 8:12-19) that His Word is the Truth and is witnessed by His work and by The Father, so it is considered that there are Two Witnesses when He talks; though one Witness is unseen. And, if the coming of Jesus Christ for their salvation was considered as a 'Disaster' to them [i.e., the second disaster (Revelation 8:13; 11:14)], then we understand that it is a 'Disaster' for 'Sin' and not as a punishment for people. A 'Disaster' that resulted in God's Glory and stopped the devil from having power over the earth by proclaiming God's Kingdom (Revelation 11:15-19). May be this is what God wanted to tell the three disciples when He permitted for them to see part of His Glory, as He gave them, and all other believers, the authority on earth over unclean spirit and the power to drive them out (Matthew 10:1, Mark 16:15-18), then in Heaven, on the resurrection of the dead, they will be as He is, on His Image because they will be able to see Him, as it is written: "*When He appear we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He really is.*" (1 John 3:2), as the angels (Matthew 22:30) having a luminous body [as the appearance of the angel who descended from Heaven to Jesus' Tomb (Matthew 28:1-3)].

Saint Leo The Great (401-461), Pope and Doctor of the Church, wrote a sermon, no. 51, on the Transfiguration and its connection to the Glory of the Cross and the hope in resurrection, encouraging the people listening to him

to come forward and see the true light in Jesus so that they can be light to others as the three disciples who witnessed the event (See more at: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/360351.htm>):

“The Lord reveals his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses. His body is like that of the rest of mankind, but he makes it shine with such splendor that his face becomes like the sun in glory and his garments as white as snow.

The great reason for this transfiguration was to remove the scandal of the cross from the hearts of his disciples, and to prevent the humiliation of his voluntary suffering from disturbing the faith of those who had witnessed the surpassing glory that lay concealed.

With no less forethought he was also providing a firm foundation for the hope of holy Church. The whole body of Christ was to understand the kind of transformation that it would receive as his gift. The members of that body were to look forward to a share in that glory which first blazed out in Christ their head.

“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him”. Hear Him, Who opens the way to heaven, and by the punishment of the cross prepares for you the steps of ascent to the Kingdom. Why do you tremble at being redeemed? Why do you fear to be healed of your wounds? Let that happen which Christ wills and I will. Cast away all fleshly fear, and arm yourselves with faithful constancy; for it is unworthy that you should fear in the Saviour's Passion what by His good gift you shall not have to fear even at your own end.

In these three Apostles the whole Church has learned all that their eyes saw and their ears heard. Let all men's faith then be established, according to the preaching of the most holy Gospel, and let no one be ashamed of Christ's cross, through which the world was redeemed.”

Fruit of the mystery: Obedience to and faith in Lord Jesus [Teacher and God]; Longing to meet God; Spiritual courage to declare the Good News of salvation...

The Fifth Mystery: The Institution of The Holy Eucharist (Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20) – “Jesus our Passover”

Meditating upon this mystery makes us realize the importance of understanding every word uttered by Jesus and every movement He did, as

He did not say a word haphazardly or did not do any work without the intention of guiding us to His Divine Providence and God's love for us. Jesus did not need to raise up the bread to say that it is His Body if He did not mean that His Body will remain with us and with all generations forever in the form of bread (just to the eyes) being blessed by the power of the Holy Spirit and His same words that is uttered by the priest in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, otherwise Jesus was lying to His Disciples [God forbid] claiming that the bread becomes His Body. And Jesus did not need to raise the cup of wine to tell His Disciples that it is His Blood if He did not mean that His Blood will stay with us and with all generations forever [God's Covenant is an eternal promise] in the form of wine (just to the eyes) being blessed by the power of the Holy Spirit and His same words that is uttered by the priest in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist was established by Jesus himself, so we cannot deny it or underestimate it, and if Jesus wanted to make His disciples understand that He is the Passover's lamb then He would have told them that and they would understand what it meant when He would be crucified and dies instead of them for their salvation. In the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, Jesus tells us: "I am with you always in Body and Blood, and not just 'a Word' that you read. I am present for real in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist as it is My Holy Heart". When Jesus said: "*Do this in memory of me*", didn't He know that we can remember Him when we read His words and deeds in the Bible? So what's the thing He would like us to remember while making this Sacrament? To answer this question we need to read the whole words of the Lord, where omitting some words in one of the Gospels in comparison to another Gospel does not mean that these words were not spoken, to understand that He did not want to change the words/teachings of God in the Old Testament of doing an act of remembrance in memory of the day God saved His people when He hit the land of Egypt and fled them from there (Exodus 12:1-14) with the difference that the lamb and Unleavened Bread here is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and His Soul and Divinity, as He did not come to abolish the law but to accomplish, to accomplish the work of rescuing God's people from the bondage of sin, therefore having eternal life with Him (Deuteronomy 7:6-9), Jesus is the Lamb slaughtered for the forgiveness of sins, i.e. He is the 'Salvation'. The Jews didn't say that God had fled them from Egypt so there is no need for the Passover, but obeyed God's Word, slaughtered and ate, baked and ate unleavened bread. Also, the Jews didn't say that God don't want a sacrifice but verbal thanks and apology, contrition for their mistakes asking for forgiveness is enough for God to forgive their

sins, many people in the Old Testament asked for God's Mercy, take the example of King David (Psalm 51), nevertheless he offered sacrifices to the temple. In the same manner, in the Holy Mass the offering is brought to the altar and offered to God [i.e., within the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist], the offering and altar that Jesus Christ mentioned to the crowds in His sermon on the mount (Matthew 5:23-24), where if He didn't mean that there will be an altar and sacrifice for the people who will follow His Teachings, why then did He mention them? Or was this sermon just for the Jews who offered sacrifices in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem? So, we who believe in Jesus Christ should not be as someone who did not believe and say in his heart that God accept our verbal apology without an offering, or the wine we drink in the Church [The Blood of the New Covenant] is like any other wine that is sold in stores, and the breaking of the bread, for the forgiveness of sins, we can break it at home or in our gatherings without the need of a priest or a consecrated altar. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is not a 'Sacrament' without the Sacrament of Priesthood, both are based on what God established in the Old Testament when selecting a tribe from Jacob's Children, The Levites, to serve Him within offering sacrifices of thanksgiving and repentance and sin on behalf of the people, taking care of the Ark of the Covenant, explaining the Law to the people, and ... (The book of Leviticus).

When we become fully aware and understand the meaning of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist [i.e., being the real Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ] we'll know that the Holy Eucharist is not only a sacrifice for salvation but also the sacrifice of Thanksgiving to God the Father as through Him, Jesus The Holy One, Son-of-God, we offer God His "Complete love" instead of our incomplete fluctuating love. The Holy Eucharist is also one sacrifice shared by the whole community of believers, all coming to God as one body: "Body of Christ" (Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 12:27); and to this slaughtered body all tongues sing with joy while eating Him saying: "The Heavenly powers surround the altar with us to honor the Body and Blood of the Lamb who was slaughtered before us. As He forgive us, let us now approach for communion, Alleluia." (From "The Divine Liturgy according to the Syriac Rite of Antioch").

When we reflect on this mystery knowing that the Holy Eucharist is an offering to God, we realize the meaning of God's Mercy and how to be merciful as our Heavenly Compassionate Father (Luke 6:36). Where our offering is 'love and reconciliation' between man and his fellow men and

between God and man, so it will be said about us, "This cub is from that lion" (An Arabic Proverb), or in other words people would say about us that we are children of God, where Lord Jesus said:

1. *"So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering"* (Matthew 5:23-24). This saying urges us to not feel self-righteous but have a sense of recognition and admitting hurting others thus "requesting forgiveness from whom we've hurt" and repent, so that love would be kept in the heart.
2. *"Forgive, and you will be forgiven"* (Luke 6:37) and *"Yes, if you forgive others their failings, your heavenly Father will forgive you yours; but if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive your failings either"* (Matthew 6:14-15). These sayings urge us to forgive those who hurt us before coming to Church and having the Holy Eucharist to deserve forgiveness ourselves.

The purpose of filtering the hearts of any disagreement is to create pure loving hearts, as the example of God's Holy, Loving, Merciful and Forgiving Heart, before standing before him.

Fruit of the mystery: Be in communion with God, i.e. sharing God's Table on Earth to associate with Lord Jesus [become one flesh with Him]; Worship God; Purity; Keeping love that is without hypocrisy in the heart [i.e., free heart from hatred] ...

The General Content of the Luminous Mysteries

If we want to reflect upon the general content of the Luminous Mysteries, we find out that it invites us to pray to God for ourselves, sinners who live in darkness and would like to be in light, through His Virgin Mother to *"create in us a clean heart, and renew within us a resolute spirit"* (Psalm 51:10), and He shall give us the Heart of His Only begotten Son and His Holy Spirit to live in Him and He in us. And if we asked ourselves: "How can this happen?" then we need to reflect upon the readings of the Bible that accompanies each mystery.

The Luminous Mysteries start with "the mystery of The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan" and here we reflect on what happened and why did the baptism of Jesus happen (Matthew 3:13-17)? The answer is found in Jesus' words

when He said to John the Baptist, "*It is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that uprightness demands*". And doing all that uprightness commands takes place when man/woman is born of water and spirit, so his/her deeds would reflect the presence and image of God to others; and Jesus Christ, through His actions, showed us how uprightness is fulfilled in all aspects:

- **Forgiveness of Sins:** Through: (1) Baptism of Water and the Holy Spirit (Forgiving original sin and other sins at the time of baptism), and (2) baptism of Blood and the Holy Spirit (Crucifixion of the Lamb that led to the existence of the Divine Heart in the Holy Eucharist) for the forgiveness of all sins.
- **Loving God The Father:** Through surrendering to The Heavenly Father's Will and obedience to all His commands till death including proclaiming the gospel.
- **Love and Mercy of the Father to all humanity:** Through doing for others what they cannot do themselves, i.e. His sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, and healing the sick in body and soul.
- **Thirst and Hunger for the Living Water and Bread (Righteousness):** Through listening to the written Word and burning it in the heart (John 7:37-38), and having the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist into our hearts to be united with Him (John 6:47-58).
- **Meekness and Humbleness:** Through pleasing God above all things where heavenly riches are the desire of the heart, thus accepting whatever God provide and do His Will with humbleness and joy.

And in order to answer the question "how we humans get to 'do all that uprightness demands' as Lord Jesus did?", we see that the answer is shown in meditating upon the second mystery "The Wedding at Cana" (John 2:1-11), where we hear our mother Virgin Mary saying to the servants: "*Do whatever he tells you*", and we see them obeying what was requested from them to do, '*they filled the jars to the brim with water*'. Here, Lord Jesus is asking us to fill our hearts in whole with God's Love and He is asking us not to let any place in it love anything else (as the love of money or other people and prefer the "joy of people" on account of the word of God), then and only then the miracle occurs, and all our deeds and sayings turns into deeds and sayings that pleases God [The president of the feast] and all whom we meet in our life [wedding invitees].

And this brings us to the third mystery "The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God" (Mark 1:15; 16:15-18), where we hear Lord Jesus saying to those around Him: "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is close at hand.*"

Repent, and believe the Gospel" and "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Gospel to all creation", as with faith in the good news [Atonement of Christ], repenting and filling the heart with the love of God and His Holy Spirit (Matthew 6:33), the Spirit of Lord Jesus Christ: Spirit of Wisdom, Spirit of Knowledge and Understanding, Spirit of Counseling, Spirit of Fortitude, and Spirit of Piety and Fear of God, we can be workers in God's Kingdom, i.e. His Field, to serve others who are in need, bodily and spiritually [as Lord Jesus Christ read: "The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)].

And then we get to the fourth mystery "The Transfiguration of the Lord" (Mark 9:1-8) where Lord Jesus Christ became light that radiates to those around him. This is what God want us as followers of Lord Jesus Christ to be, "A light to others", before His coming on judgement day, by: (1) keeping His commandments in our hearts, (2) working/acting by it and teaching it as Prophet Mosas, and (3) calling for repentance and removing hatred, iniquity and cruelty of the heart in preparation to receive Jesus in the heart, as Prophet Elijah and St. John the Baptist did (i.e. to prepare the way to His Coming in the heart).

After that, Lord Jesus come in the fifth mystery: "The Holy Eucharist (Mark 14:22-25): The Heavenly Manna that gives life to the world, the Living Bread (John 6:31-33; 48-51)" where we hear Him telling His Disciples of the bread and wine that is consecrated (Transubstantiation) by the power of the Holy Spirit: "*Take it, this is my body...This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many*" to make us steadfast in adhering to His love so that He will live in our hearts forever, spiritual food [*"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert and they are dead; but this is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person may eat it and not die. I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world... In all truth I tell you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you..."* (John 6:47-58)] that work in us and strengthen us to become one flesh with one heart and one mind: His Holy Heart and His Holy Mind (Colossians 2:6-19), thanking God all the time, Amin.

Therefore, when we contemplate upon these mysteries we find out that they point out the steps to be followed 'to be born anew and become Children of

God' or 'to return to the bosom of God after drifting in the wrong direction', as follows:

Repentance and baptism ... The change towards loving God wholeheartedly and loving His creation ... Working for the sake of God's glory, so God would glorify us by the love of others towards us as they accept us as light in their way ... Imitation of whom God sent as Prophets, i.e to be light revealing love and a horn warning about sin ... Steadfastness in love of Lord Jesus, and spiritual growth to perfection.

All of the above steps can be limited to "Obedience of The Word", a characteristic of young children, as we hear within all these mysteries, though indirectly in some, the statement "*Listen to Him*", as He is the One who said: "*If you love Me, you will keep My Commandments*" (John 14:15), "*Whoever holds to My Commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me*" (John 14:21), "*Anyone who loves Me will keep My Word*" (John 14:22), and "*My mother and My brothers are those who hear the Word of God and put it into practice.*" (Luke 8:21).

Prayer from the Heart

Oh Lord ... I would like to enter "Your day of rest", i.e. to work in Your Kingdom, on Earth, and for that I surrender myself to You, and say "Here I am, I offer you myself, let it be Your Will, use me and employ me as you want to give You rest; I'll be Your servant, give me Your Graces and Gifts to do, in Your Beloved Son's Name: "Love, Mercy and Forgiveness", the work He did on the day that You named "A day of Rest", i.e. "Open the eyes of the blind, heal the sick, support widows and orphans, and set the prisoners to evil free", bringing your love to others and they will know that You have gifted them the Day of Your Rest because you love them dearly; in addition they will understand that my love towards them and my work for them is because of Your Love, for as I represent You in front of them, so they represent You in front of me. Amen.

My Lord and My God ... May Your Light shine in the hearts of all so Your Name will be honoured and exulted above all things. All glory and thanks is Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit one God, now and forever. Amen.

Additional Reflections on the Holy Rosary

In all areas, knowledge is not based only on one vision and looking at things from one corner, let alone if we want to know God the Unlimited!

In this chapter, we will reflect upon the mysteries of the Rosary from another angle: A comparison of each two mysteries facing each other within the circle on the cover page to see if there was a link between the events in the Gospel with the message that the event would like to tell us. Two comparisons are made based on the line of facing: Horizontal and Vertical, each has ten comparisons grouped into two groups:

1. Horizontal Facing:

- Joyful Mysteries and Sorrowful Mysteries
- Glorious Mysteries and Luminous Mysteries

2. Vertical Facing:

- Joyful Mysteries and Luminous Mysteries
- Sorrowful Mysteries and Glorious Mysteries

First: Horizontal Facing

Joyful Mysteries



And

Sorrowful Mysteries



- **The mystery of the Annunciation and the mystery of The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus:** Both events proclaim joyfully the start of the **Good News of Salvation:** Within the first mystery this proclamation was visible but known only to Virgin Mary, while in the second mystery the proclamation was in public and became a visible

reality to everyone, although for some they still have misty eyes and have not seen yet.

In addition, both events teach us to say to God, "In your hands I commit my spirit", as Jesus and His mother the Virgin Mary said.

- **The mystery of The Visitation and the mystery of The Carrying of the Cross:** Both events call for **love of others** by helping them to do the work that they cannot do, for it is too difficult for them in that time, regardless of the suffering that is required to do the work. Both events also show resolute intention to complete the work to the end.
- **The mystery of The Nativity and the mystery of The Crowning with Thorns:** Both events refer to the **Appearance of the King** whom the children of Israel were expecting.
In addition, both mysteries show the humbleness of God and His desire that everyone would know this fact, as He did not come in the form of a king who is crowned with jewels and dressed in brocade and jewelry, but came as a poor desolate baby who has nothing, and He even is not born at His parents' residence.
- **The mystery of The Presentation in the Temple and the mystery of The Scouring at the Pillar:** Both events refer to **the Saviour** who redeemed the people by carrying their handicap on His body, though in the first event this matter was announced within a verbal declaration only to Virgin Mary and Joseph her fiancé, while in the second event it was the actual happening in front of many though the real meaning of it was not understood at that time.
- **The mystery of The Finding in the Temple and the mystery of The Agony in the Garden:** In both events, Jesus say that He came to do the **Will of Hhis Heavenly Father as the Word of God: for education/enlightment and salvation**, and in both events Jesus was alone either far away from His family or His disciples were asleep, as well as in both events there is someone who is looking for Him either with fear and scared of losing Him, or fearing Him and want to hurt Him.

Glorious Mysteries



And

Luminous Mysteries



- **The mystery of The Resurrection and the mystery of The Institution of The Holy Eucharist:** Both events point to **The Living Body of Christ**, "the mystery of God's love for us", which was among us and no longer can be seen without believing in every word uttered by Lord Jesus.
- **The mystery of The Ascension to Heaven and the mystery of The Transfiguration:** Both events demonstrate **God the Rider on the Cloud** and His power, greatness and holiness.
- **The mystery of The Descent of The Holy Spirit and the mystery of The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God:** Both events refer to **the role of the Holy Spirit** on the workers in God's field to spread the Kingdom.
- **The mystery of The Assumption of Mary and the mystery of The Wedding at Cana:** Both events refer to **the reward of knowing God** and abiding to His Word as sons: Joy at the Heavenly Wedding Feast. In both events, there is wedding: The first one is in Heaven and not visible to the eyes till certain time when everyone will be drunk from God's Wine (i.e. God's Love) and they will see it, and the second is announced to all and the wine was never over as the Creator of the world was there in flesh.
- **The mystery of The Coronation of Mary and the mystery of The Baptism in the Jordan:** Both events point to **the bride of God "The Church as the community of believers"** who repented of their sins and washed them by the blood of Christ, and wore God's Splendour: "The Spirit of Christ".

Second: Vertical Facing

Joyful Mysteries



And

Luminous Mysteries



- **The mystery of the Annunciation and the mystery of The Institution of The Holy Eucharist:** Both events refer to the secret of "**life**": God who cannot be seen. In the first mystery we see Him hiding inside the womb of Virgin Mary, and in the second mystery we see Him hiding inside a piece of bread.
- **The mystery of The Visitation and the mystery of The Transfiguration:** Both events spotlight on **Jesus as Lord and Light to the world:** "*The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on the inhabitants of a country in shadow dark as death light has blazed forth*" (Isaiah 9:1, Matthew 4:16).
- **The mystery of The Nativity and the mystery of The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God:** Both events point to **the Divine Providence** in helping people to recognize their salvation through Jesus Christ.
- **The mystery of The Presentation in the Temple and the mystery of The Wedding at Cana:** Both events refer to **the importance of righteous believers** in informing others about Jesus Christ and pointing to Him.
- **The mystery of The Finding in the Temple and the mystery of The Baptism in the Jordan:** Both events refer to **the importance of hearing and understanding the word of God** to act wisely and according to the Will of God [repenting and staying away from immorality and iniquity].

Sorrowful Mysteries



And

Glorious Mysteries



- **The mystery of The Agony in the Garden and the mystery of The Coronation of Mary:** Both events point to **the importance of surrendering oneself to God** to get eternal life.
- **The mystery of The Scourging at the Pillar and the mystery of The Assumption of Mary:** Both events point to **the importance of faith in Jesus as the Lamb of God, our Redeemer** to go into eternal life without judgment (John 5:24).
- **The mystery of The Crowning with Thorns and the mystery of The Descent of The Holy Spirit:** Both events point to **the importance of the Holy Spirit in giving authority to the bride of God as the authority of the Groom**, where He put a tongue of fire as a wreath on top of the disciples' heads to do the work that Jesus Christ asked them to do before He ascended into Heaven.
- **The mystery of The Carrying of the Cross and the mystery of The Ascension to Heaven:** Both events refer to **the importance of carrying the cross** to follow Jesus, to enter Heaven [Jesus said to all: *"If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me"* (Luke 9:23)].
- **The mystery of The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus and the mystery of The Resurrection:** Both events refer to the **"Christian Faith"** or **the importance of believing in the main two events** that a believer has, in order to say to His Heavenly Father that he loves Him and wants to live with Him eternal life in Heaven.

Additional Reflections

“Woman, what to Me and to you?”

Since the time that Jesus began work according to the mission that He came for, i.e. the salvation of the human soul, that is the period from His baptism by John the Baptist, and then calling the first twelve disciples, and the happening of the first miracle at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, i.e. the so-called period of The Epiphany of the Lord, we note that Lord Jesus was speaking with people with authority as of God's despite calling himself "Son of Man".

At the wedding at Cana in Galilee, Lord Jesus responded to people's prayer represented by the Virgin Mary as she prayed to Him, saying: "*They have no wine.*" by saying: "*Woman, what to Me and to you? My hour has not come yet.*" (John 2:3-4). Perhaps God wanted to test "People"/"The Church, the bride of Christ" how well do they know Him before granting their request, as this woman is "God's Bride" whom He selected to give birth to The Messiah, the Only Begotten Son-of-God [often we hear Jesus Christ saying to the person asking for His help, after responding to his request: "Your faith has saved you" or "Your request was granted because of your faith"].

And the fact that this woman is aware of her role and who He is, so we see her telling him without pronouncing a single word but by her actions, saying: "I am the one who loved you and put all her trust in You; I know who You are and know your ability and I've told those don't know you to obey Your Word as all glory is Yours", and when God saw her faith, He granted what she asked for.

Yes, He knew who this woman was, she is His Mother, but he wanted to announce to everyone that this woman is also "The Bride" that says to him: "You are the one who will feed me and won't let me go hungry, and with Your presence I will lack nothing as You will give me everything I need. You are 'The Groom', who protect His family and work with all His power for their sake". So, when Jesus said to Mary: "Woman, what to Me and to you?" He intended to say to the human race: "Do you know what our relationship is with each other?" in the hope to hear the same answer as the Virgin Mary replied.

Some people believe that Lord Jesus is dishonoring the Virgin Mary even as "His Mother" when he called her with the title "woman", but they are unaware that with this title He is actually lifting her position up from being "The mother of a man" to the position of being "The person who stands in front of God on behalf of humanity in prayer", i.e. "The mother of 'the human race'/'His own people'" [As 'The Mother' often represents the children in submitting their applications to their father], and this is confirmed by the title that Jesus Christ gave her prior to His death on the cross, while entrusting his beloved disciple to her, and her to him (John 19:26-27).

Whoever has not read the Book of Joel from the Old Testament will not understand that Virgin Mary was representing the Israelites, and by saying to the Lord Jesus "they have no wine" she was telling God that the time has come and the trumpet has been blown, and your people are screaming "*Have pity Lord on your people, who have repented and fasted from sin, and don't make Your heritage a disgrace, mocking them for what is said in peoples: Where is their God?*", and God will have pity and send to them wheat, wine and oil, and they will be satisfied and He will keep all evil away from them, and His Spirit will overflow on all Human beings and they will know that God is in their midst.

Yes, at the wedding at Cana, Virgin Mary is saying to her son "The Son-Of-God": "I am Your people who realized that the Grapevine had become ruins and we have no more wine because we have abandoned You, but now we have repented and are coming back to You and we shall obey Your Word [*His mother said to the servants: "Do whatever He tell you."* *There were six stone jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews ... Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water" and they filled them to the brim. Then He said to them: "Draw some out now and take it to the president of the feast."* *They did this.* (John 2:5-9)]. And, we are in that time that You've promised to overflow upon us our offering along with the wine and oil which are poured on it." And, that's what happened, and will remain forever with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Here we cannot but remember Eve, the mother of the human race, who was named by Adam "Woman" with the authority that God gave him (Genesis 2:23) and what she did in comparison with the new mother of the human race, Virgin Mary who was named "Woman" by the incarnated Son-of-God with His authority:

- The first woman is the one that spurred man to disobey God and even to listen to Satan (Genesis 3:1-6), while the second woman has the true knowledge of God and has asked people to obey God. Both women were tested, but victory was for the second.
- The first woman is the reason behind man being expelled from paradise that was full of fruitful trees and running water and where the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was. While the second woman is the one that requested God to bring to life the barren land so that humans would live always in true paradise: God's Heart, i.e. the Sacred Heart of Jesus: the promised land that generates honey, milk and curd.
- The first woman allowed Satan to invade the hearts of her children and to inject poison so they'll die, while the offspring of the second woman has crushed the Devil's head and removed his poison from the hearts of many to live (Genesis 3:15).
- The first woman expelled man from the face of God, while the second woman gave birth to the "Incarnated God" who was to be seen by the entire human race so they enjoy the warmth of His Love.

Let us pray:

My Lord and my God, thank you for blowing the trumpet to start a new era for giving your Love to us without limits. Amen.



He Chose Her and Sent Her

My Lord and my God ... Heavenly Father ... After you chose the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of God, The Word Incarnate, and she accepted this role as she said "*You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said*" (Luke 1:38), You sent her as a Divine grace to an elderly woman who had been infertile and was now pregnant, a woman who could not bear the troubles and hardships of the pains of childbirth; You sent her to help that woman until birth. Although the woman's name is Elizabeth, which means "God has sworn" or "God's promise", "oath of God", or "I am God's daughter" [source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth>], but she represents everyone of us who was asleep to your knowledge (barren) and woke up and started knowing You (pregnant), to give birth to a spirit that loves and longs for working in Your field for Your Glory. This period of pregnancy and giving birth required Your Divine Providence so that Your promise is fulfilled: "*I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws, and respect and practice my judgments*" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). The pregnancy period is not an easy period, neither is the delivery. They require a lot of patience and effort, as within pregnancy, body changes occur that the owner gradually adapts to. Here, Your Divine Providence came in the person of Virgin Mary, full of grace, whom Jesus Christ gave as a mother to everyone who loved Him, to take His Love to him [as she did with Elizabeth who knew by the power of the Holy Spirit that the Virgin Mary came having God in her womb], and to lead him in his spiritual journey towards Him and accordingly to You and The Holy Spirit.

My Lord and my God ... You whom have blessed the Virgin Mary with special and unique graces, and without me seeing her You've made her a mother of mine, who knows my needs, takes care of me, and prays for me, I love you and thank you always for giving her to me. Amen.



Jesus: The Redeemer

On the Cross ... Feelings ... Sin ... Redemption ... New Birth

Many things have taken place on the cross, and contemplating upon this event, it makes us surprised, standing silently before God's Love for us. When we compare God's Love for us and our love to Him, we find that whatever we do, we cannot love God as He loved us. On the cross we understand that God's compassion towards us is more than a compassion of The Creator to His creation, as He could create others if we did not love Him as we should, but He loved us as His Children, i.e. as part of Him, and He fear for us as His Eye's pupils, and defend us by Himself. So, what happened on the cross?? On the cross:

1. That is when Jesus Christ, Son-of-Man, son of Joseph (as it was thought), of King David's descendant, of Adam, son of God (Luke 3:23-38), had took on Himself (on His own body) to represent the sinful nation of Israel (i.e., they would represent any sinful person) as described in Isaiah 1:5-6: *"The whole head is sick, the whole heart is diseased, from the sole of the foot to the head there is nothing healthy: only wounds, bruises and open sores not dressed, not bandaged, not soothed with ointment"*. That is when He asked His Father, on behalf of the nation: *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?"* (Mark 15:34) as King David asked in his prayer (Psalm 22:1), and then, again on behalf of the nation, He cried: *"Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit"* (Luke 23:46), trusting that His Father love this repented nation, and in what He is doing His Father is telling them that their souls will resurrect and have eternal life, as their sins will be forgiven as long as they repent and come back to Him through Jesus Christ.
2. That is when Jesus Christ fulfilled, for the second time, what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: *"He Himself bore our sicknesses away and carried our diseases"* (Isaiah 53:4) where our diseases here are the sins that deformed His Body. During His life, He fulfilled this prophecy when He cured the sick, as sickness is the result of the original sin of Adam and Eve (Matthew 8:16-17).
3. That is when Jesus Christ became the easy catch (Revelation 3:20), the big fish (Tobit 6:2-9), that was caught by Tobias on the request of Angel Raphael; caught with full strength so that it will not go back to the Tigris river, caught and:

- a) Part of its flesh was used as immediate food, and the rest was reserved by salting for future food just as Jesus Christ's flesh that was given to His disciples in the form of bread while He was on earth and later on, after His death, given to anyone who would believe in Him through the Holy Eucharist; also His flesh being God's Word was heard by the people at His time and after His death.
- b) Its gall was used as ointment to remove the white spots on the eye of a blind person to give him back his sight, in the same way the bitterness of the passion of Jesus Christ has cured our blindness (sinful state) and gave us our sight to see God's Glory.
- c) Its heart and liver were burnt so that the smoke would remove any affliction caused by evil spirits or demons, in the same way Jesus Christ's Heart suffered (Psalm 22:14) and His Blood was poured out as if He was offered as an incense to God (prayer) and a sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins so that the weary will find rest in Him (i.e. remove the pain due to sinning and its eternal consequences).

And as both organs are important to the human body so is Jesus Christ to our soul. Where:

- As the heart is the key to life and an instrument that pumps blood to the whole body, so is Jesus Christ's Heart with His Love towards all and joining all in one body to God; and
 - As the liver produces red blood cells at infancy and childhood, and then in adults and later on it is a major factory in the body that: (1) regulates the metabolism, (2) produces immune complex that fight infection and increase body resistance, and (3) detoxifies the body from toxic, so does the Blood of Jesus Christ that do not perish and give healthy life to all generations throughout their life till end of time. Amazing, how if the liver is affected by a disease then it will not function properly and the person becomes inactive; and in the same manner if our faith in Jesus Christ as Savior is not solid and it is affected by other beliefs then we will not be able to function properly as a light to the world.
4. That is when the pain caused by people towards God by hurting His Feelings (by not loving Him as they should, not obeying Him, and turning into worshiping false gods) is transformed into actual pain. And accordingly, that is when the words of Psalm 22, though spoken by

King David, but actually inspired by the Holy Spirit, are fulfilled by Jesus Christ, Son-of-God, in His Passion and crucifixion.

5. That is when Jesus Christ took on Himself all this pain as:
 - (a) Physical pain all over His Body caused by: inserting the crown of thorns into His forehead, struck with fists, struck on the head and in the face with a staff, scourging Him all over His body, bearing the heavy cross on His shoulder, inserting nails into His hands and legs, and
 - (b) Emotional pain caused by: the insults He heard, stripping Him from His clothes, mocking and the spit He received on His Holy Face and Body.
6. That is when Jesus Christ covered and washed away all these causes of pain (sins) from the top of His head till the bottom of His legs with His Precious Blood that came out from His Wounds. It is Jesus Christ's second baptism (Luke 12:50) with His own Precious Blood, where blood ran on His Body as water runs when it is poured on the top of the head.
7. That is when He asked His Father to forgive us; forgive our actions that hurt His feelings, forgive what we call a sin, forgive our selfishness in not loving Him as we should and walking away from Him and not listening to Him, forgive our hurting other people's feelings as all souls belong to Him.
8. That is when Jesus Christ became the Lamb sent from God to us (as a sign of love) to shed His Blood to:
 - a. Be the "Sacrifice for Sin", i.e. take away our sins, sanctify us and give us life (Leviticus 6:17-23, 7:1-6).
 - b. Inaugurate and authenticate the Covenant between God and Mankind for their salvation through the forgiveness of their sins (Hebrews 9:15-28, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Matthew 26:27-28). The New Covenant that will not be broken by God if we believed in the One whom He sent and obeyed His Word (Matthew 17:5, John 17:3-8), as this Covenant is sealed with Jesus' Life where God said that the "*blood is life*" (Deuteronomy 12:23). A Covenant that is everlasting as Jesus is Immortal God in Heaven (Mark 16:19).

In other words, that is when God showed His Love to us; and when we acknowledge this love we will become Children of God as we were given a share in His Spirit (1 John 4:7-17).

9. That is when God showed His true love to us, the love that He spoke about to Hosea; a compassionate forgiving love of a husband who will never desert his disloyal wife but came to her tenderly and stay in her midst (Hosea 11:8-9), and on that day the Canticle of Isaiah was sang and became a reality not only by the Virgin Mary and Simeon the righteous man but by every person who believed in God's promise as what was written was fulfilled: *"And, that day, you will say: 'I praise you, Yahweh, you have been angry with me but your anger is now appeased and you have comforted me. Look, he is the God of my salvation: I shall have faith and not be afraid, for Yahweh is my strength and my song, he has been my salvation.' Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of salvation and, that day, you will say, 'Praise Yahweh, invoke his name. Proclaim his deeds to the people, declare his name sublime. Sing of Yahweh, for his works are majestic, make them known throughout the world. Cry and shout for joy, you who live in Zion, For the Holy One of Israel is among you in his greatness."* (Isaiah 12:1-6).

And every time we look at the cross we can sing it, remembering the water and blood that ran out of Jesus Christ's pierced heart after His death as a fountain of Mercy to all humanity who are thirsty for God's love.

10. That is when He fulfilled what He said in the Last Supper about His Body and Blood, and gave us for the first time the eternal Korban (and later on through the Holy Eucharist by the power of The Holy Spirit) to be offered always to God for the forgiveness of the sins that we commit.
11. That is when God, The Father, splash His anger on our enemy Satan (by forgiving our sins) and tell him that he and his evil spirits are no more the one who have dominion and power over humanity, and handed this power to His Son Jesus Christ so that whoever trust in Him, repent and start drinking from the fountain of His Love and Mercy shall never die but have eternal life even though he/she committed earlier deadly sins (John 12:31-32, 1 John 5:19-20, John 3:35-36).
12. That is when Jesus Christ, a traveler on earth (Matthew 8:20), became the Good Samaritan who bandaged the wounds of the sinners, pouring oil and wine on them and looked after them in an inn (earth) and asked the innkeeper (Jesus Christ's followers) to look after them with what He gave us in the Old and New Testament (His Word and His presence in

the Holy Eucharist), and He will give us our wages on the last day. That is why, as Children of God, we need to imitate Him and have His tender Heart to feed His creation so that everyone will be cured and saved (Luke 10:33-37).

13. That is when Jesus Christ gave us an utmost example of the unity between Him and the Father and He ask us, as Christians, to have the same unity with The Father and His Word [Jesus Christ (The Son)]; i.e., a unity of love and holiness (John 17:20-26), a unity of obedience based on faith (Letter of Saint Paul to the Hebrews). Such unity is not just words on paper but is lived through perseverance/fortitude which is a gift/grace of the Holy Spirit that we need to ask God to fill our hearts with.
14. That is when the prophecy of Simeon is fulfilled and *a sword pierced Mary's soul so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare* (Luke 2:34-35) for God's Glory as inspired by the Holy Spirit, The Paraclete, who is sent to Jesus Christ's disciples and His followers by the Father, upon His request, after His Resurrection.
15. That is when Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, became the first person who would see and understand God's Love for all of us in the pain her Son endured silently in His painful passion. That is when she understood what her Son used to tell her and the other disciples about God's Love and His death to be given as a sacrifice (a lamb) for the forgiveness of our sins.

These sins though they do not cause physical pain to God, still cause emotional pain and need to be covered with Jesus' Blood to be forgiven. A pain similar to the deep pain caused by the betrayal of the loved ones to us after giving them all that we have; but how soon we forgive, forget and rejoice when they come to their senses and ask for forgiveness. Jesus Christ endure these pain just like a mother enduring the pain of giving birth; and how soon these pains are forgotten once she hears her baby's cry as a sign of life into him/her. Oh how happy is Our Father Who rejoice with the return of the lost child (Luke 15:11-32) and how pleased He is with Jesus Christ "His Heart" Who came searching for us and He had found us (Luke 15:1-10) and gave us life by reconciling us to Him (i.e. preparing us and putting on us the dress worthy for the wedding that we are invited to, where we will meet Him; preparing us to be God's Bride (Matthew 22:1-14)).

On the cross, our redemption was fulfilled from God's side for all nations as Jesus Christ died naked without clothes to identify Him from which tribe or nation He came from. He died and His Holy Face was without features ("*Without beauty, without majesty, no looks to attract our eyes*" Isaiah 53:2-3). It is a Gift that was given to us freely but with lots of pain; a Gift that gave us the chance to be born of the Spirit and be part of God's Kingdom. In John 3:1-21, Jesus Christ wisely explained to Nicodemus who came to Him at night (not because he was scared but as he had thirst for knowing God, he wanted **to be alone with Jesus** and ask Him about God without any interference from other people) that in order to be born of Spirit, we need to fulfill our thirst through the Living Water that kindle God's Love, shown in His Son's sacrifice, in our heart and fill it with joy (similar to the joy of the widow woman whose son Jesus Christ rose from the dead (Luke 7:11-17) and the joy our Mother, the Virgin Mary, felt when she saw her Son's resurrection). This love, i.e. God's Love will be poured into our hearts and sealed through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) and give us power to love others as God loved us for God's Glory because God is Love. This love (when 'our thirst for it' is fulfilled through the Living Water) will give us power to surrender totally to God's will and put our trust in Him, repent wholeheartedly, reject sin, and do acts that will reflect God's Holiness to others by loving and forgiving others, doing charitable work towards the needy, and leading others to God's Love, i.e. we will be God's witnesses to others (Acts 1:8) as children imitating their Father. The Living Water that quenches the thirst is the same Living Water that washes and cleanses sins to show the purity of the heart. The Living Water is God's Word, God incarnated as Jesus Christ, Son of Man, The Redeemer who said: "*No one who drinks the water that I shall give him (i.e., believes in me) will ever be thirsty again; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water, welling up for eternal life*" (John 4:14, 6:35). The Living Water that was held by the man (representing Jesus Christ) who led the disciples to the house (i.e., God's Kingdom) where the Passover is to be eaten (i.e., God's Table) (Luke 22:7-13) [Jesus Christ will show the way To God The Father; he/she who follows Him will reach Heaven (i.e., the upper room) and share His Passover Table]; and it is the same upper room where the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and they became His witnesses. And, the Living Water that flows from God's Heart is the Holy Spirit that we would receive from Jesus Christ when we believe in Him (John 7:37-39), and that would give us a new heart to be children of God (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

On the cross, Jesus Christ asked His Mother, the Virgin Mary, to be a mother for the disciple whom He loved, and He asked that disciple to make His Mother as his own. By doing so, Jesus Christ, entrusting His Mother for a great role, is asking His Mother to be a mother for all of us who would like to be disciples/followers of Him and even to be loved by Him as much as He loved that disciple, and accordingly we will love Her as our own mother and she will have that role in our life.

On the cross, “The Immaculate Conception”, the name Virgin Mary gave Saint Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes, France (in one of Her Apparitions) to indicate to herself, came to life not only to mean that she is The One who was conceived at birth without original sin, but also she is a symbol for holy souls who are God’s Children and Bride in His Kingdom; a symbol for the Church as a communion of Saints; a symbol for the Kingdom in Heaven; the New Jerusalem that was conceived by the Blood of Jesus Christ, The Lamb. In other words, “The Immaculate Conception” signifies also her role as the Mother of the Church as she is the Mother of the First-Born-Child of this Church (1 Corinthians 15:13-28); the Church who are born new through Water and The Spirit; who are born of The Spirit. This birth through an immaculate conception will make them Children of God; they will be part of the Kingdom of God in Heaven. This Kingdom that though its People’s Holiness will shine in God’s Glory to praise God with the angels, but it was through the earthly Jesus Christ, God’s Love and Mercy, the Son of Mary, and what He did on the cross, that it is conceived. All her children, being purified by The Son, loved God as a Heavenly Father, trusted Him and surrendered totally to His Will, carried their cross with joy and became His children on earth, thus creating God’s Kingdom in their hearts (Luke 17:20) and souls before reaching Heaven. This Church with its Queen and Mother is robed with the sun to give light to other creatures on earth (Revelation 12).



*“A pure heart create in me O Lord,
and a resolute Spirit renew within me” (Psalm 51:10)*

Let us pray:

O Jesus Christ, when I take Your Holy Body and drink Your Sacred Blood please put my sins onto your Body, cover them with Your Blood, baptize me and wash them away. Then, please put me as a seed into Your Heart and feed me with the water and blood that came out from Your Heart and create in me a pure heart (having the power of God's Love that The Holy Spirit pour into our hearts), just like Yours worthy to call My God "My Father", to please Him, and to do His Will. Just as Your flesh was formed from the pure water and blood in Immaculate Mary's womb (as she was conceived without sin) by the power of The Holy Spirit, My Lord, let Your Holy Heart be the womb that give me new birth. Amen.

"Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us and give us peace. Blessed be God! Blessed be His Great Holy Name! Glory be to The Father, and to The Son and to the Holy Spirit One God for evermore". Amen.



The Benedictus

*Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
He has come to His people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a Mighty Savior,
born of the house of His servant David.
Through His holy prophets He promised of old
that He would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember His Holy Covenant.
This was the oath He swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship Him without fear,
holy and righteous in His Sight all the days of our life.
You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare His way,
to give His people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

*Glory 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.

Psalm 23

Yahweh is my shepherd, I lack nothing. In grassy meadows He lets me lie. By tranquil streams He leads me to restore my spirit. He guides me in paths of saving justice as befits his name.

Even were I to walk in a ravine as dark as death I should fear no danger, for You are at my side. Your staff and your crook are there to soothe me.

You prepare a table for me under the eyes of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup brims over.

Kindness and faithful love pursue me every day of my life. I make my home in the house of Yahweh for all time to come.

