

Reflections to Accompany a Rosary Novena for a Couple Preparing for Marriage

By Dianne M. Traflet, J.D., S.T.D.

Joyful Mysteries: 1st, 5th, and 9th Days

The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-35)

Mary gives her fiat to the Angel's invitation to be the Mother of the Son of God.

Lord, may this couple give their “yes” to life, and to God’s will in all circumstances and challenges of their daily lives. As they grow in love for one another, may they also draw ever nearer to You and your Mother.

The Visitation (Luke 1:39-56)

Carrying Divine life within her, Mary visits Elizabeth, Zechariah, and their unborn child, John. From the darkness of his mother's womb, John recognizes the Son of God within Mary, and leaps for joy.

Lord, may this couple know the joy of parenthood. May, they, too, in their own unique ways, carry You close to their hearts, carry your life and love, and reflect your presence (even in darkness) to their families, friends, and all those whom they may encounter.

The Birth of Our Lord (Matt. 1:18-25)

When Mary gives birth to Jesus, she and her husband, Joseph, gaze together into the face of the Son of God.

Lord, may this couple learn to gaze together on your face—praying with one another and for one another, and learning to see the image and likeness of God in each other and in their neighbor. May they one day experience the grace of holding a newborn in their arms as they recognize God’s creative love in their lives.

The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40)

Mary and Joseph follow the law, and present their Son in the Temple. In witnessing Anna and Sim-

eon gazing into their Son's face, they know their Son has a mission beyond the confines of their immediate family. Simeon proclaims that Christ will be "a Light to the revelation of the Gentiles."

Lord, may this couple always know and appreciate your light and love, and may their love radiate beyond their home, helping others to experience your salvific presence.

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-52)

After Mary and Joseph search for Jesus for three days, they find Him in the Temple, amazing the teachers with His wisdom. Mary cries: "Your father and I have sought you with sorrow." Jesus responds to his parents' concern by asking: "Did you not know that I had to be about my father's business?" He then returns to his parents' home where he "grew in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and man."

Lord, may this couple always seek You, as they strive to deepen their relationship with You, your Father and the Holy Spirit. May, they, too, learn to be "about their Father's business." May their relationship with You help their children someday, and all those entrusted to their care, to grow "in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and man."

Sorrowful Mysteries: 2nd and 6th Days

The Agony in the Garden (Luke 22:39-46)

Jesus weeps in the Garden, as he cries out, "Lord, if it is your will, let this cup pass me by, but not my will but your will be done." During Jesus' agony, He is comforted by an angel.

Lord, in the trials and challenges that this couple may face in their long years together, may they follow Your example and ask the Father if He would take away their sorrow, but only if it be His will. In seeking to fulfill God's will, may they know the comfort of His ministering angels.

The Scourging at the Pillar (Matt. 27:15-26)

Jesus is brutally scourged by the soldiers who do not recognize that they are torturing the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. Jesus' precious body is ripped apart, and his blood falls to the ground as He endures each blow.

Lord, may this couple know the great sacrificial love that You have for them, for their families, and for us all. May this realization help them to draw closer to your heart, and to sacrifice generously and lovingly for each other and for others.

The Crowning with Thorns (Matt. 27:31)

Jesus is stripped of his garments, and clothed with a scarlet robe. He is spat upon, and crowned with thorns, as the soldiers mock: "Hail, King of the Jews."

Lord, may this couple's lives be clothed with respect and kindness. In recognizing You as King, may they realize their own royal dignity and that of their neighbor; may their actions help to build your Kingdom.

The Carrying of the Cross (Luke 23:26-32)

As Jesus carries His Cross, he is helped by Simon of Cyrene, a stranger forced by a soldier to share Jesus' burden. Jesus falls three times, and each time, He is able to stand up again, and continue to Golgotha.

Lord, may this couple see and appreciate your courage in fulfilling the Father's will. May they know the true meaning of Christian courage—that great courage that flows from the heart and perseveres in suffering. May they lovingly help each other to carry the various crosses of daily life, and may they accept help from friends and strangers alike, recognizing in their kindness your loving hand.

The Crucifixion (Lk. 23:33-43; Jn. 19:25-27; Mk. 15:33-39)

From the Cross, Jesus forgives his persecutors, assures a repentant criminal of his place in heaven, and gives us His mother. After suffering unquenchable thirst, and the darkness of desolation, He abandons Himself to His Father, and breathes His last.

Lord, may this couple gaze upon your wounds, and ponder your words from the Cross, realizing the vast ocean of your mercy. Close to your merciful heart, may they love with your love and forgive with your forgiveness. May they come to rely on your mother as their mother, seeking her intercession, relying on her help, and imitating her virtues.

Glorious Mysteries: 3rd and 7th Days

The Resurrection (Matt. 28:1-10)

Three days after the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary visit the tomb of Jesus. There, they see an angel who declares that Jesus has risen from the dead. The angel commissions them to share the news with the disciples.

Lord, may this couple live with great joy and enthusiasm, spreading the good news in word and example: You are alive!

The Ascension (Matt. 28:16-20)

At the Mount of Olives, the disciples are assured by Jesus: "...and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Jesus then is lifted up in a cloud until the disciples no longer could see him.

Lord, may this couple recognize your abiding presence in their marriage, in their family life, and in the joys and sorrows of everyday life. When they have a difficult time know-

ing your presence, may they, like the disciples, pray together seeking You in hope and perseverance.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-17)

In the form of fiery tongues, the Holy Spirit descends upon Christ's followers gathered in the Cenacle. The disciples then are able to speak and to hear in languages they had not known, prophesying to those assembled outside the house from various countries. Thousands of people hear the disciples' words, believe, and are baptized.

Lord, may this couple grow closer to the Holy Spirit, be animated by the Spirit's gifts, and guided by the Truth. May their lives of faith, their witness of love and their words of Truth bring people the good news in such a way as to move their hearts to draw closer to *your* heart.

Assumption of Mary

Mary is taken up to heaven, her body incorrupt. In heaven, she intercedes for us, as she interceded for the bride and groom at Cana.

Lord, may this couple realize that just as Mary interceded for the couple at Cana, so, too, does she wish to intercede for them. She desires their happiness and wishes to deepen their relationship with You, where they may experience your immeasurable and unconditional love.

The Coronation of Mary

God the Father crowns Mary, honoring her as Queen of Heaven.

Lord, may this couple come to know Mary as Queen Mother who exercises her royalty in a maternal way, gently encouraging them to draw closer to You. May their faith, like the disciples, grow deeper because of her maternal presence as they take her words at Cana to heart: "Do whatever He tells you."

Mysteries of Light: 4th and 8th Days

The Baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:17)

When Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan, a voice from heaven declares: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Lord, may this couple realize their baptismal identity and vocation as children of God. In knowing that they are part of God's family, may they strive to please the Father in all their responsibilities, in home and in the world. May they draw close to their neighbors, recognizing in them their spiritual brothers and sisters.

The Wedding of Cana (John 2:1-12)

Mary, Jesus and His disciples are invited to a wedding at Cana in Galilee. During the celebration, Mary advises her Son that all the wine has been consumed. Jesus replies, "Woman, what does this have to do with you and me? My hour has not yet come." Mary turns to the servants and instructs, "Do whatever he tells you." Jesus tells the servants to fill six jars with water. After they do, Jesus directs them to draw some out, and bring it to the master of the banquet. The master tastes the water that had turned to wine, and realizes that the best has been saved until last. Jesus performs this first miracle, and the disciples grow in their faith.

Lord, may this couple celebrate their love as a gift from You. May they invite You to their wedding, to their married lives, to their families, and to all their celebrations, recognizing that You rejoice at their love. As they witness to your miraculous work in their lives, may they together grow in their faith, embarking on a spiritual adventure of faith and love.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Mk. 1:15; Mk. 2:3-13; Lk. 7:47-48; Jn. 20:22-23)

In proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom, Jesus calls for conversion, repentance, and belief in the good news.

Lord, may this couple's journey of love be a spiritual journey towards You, one that inspires them to delve deeply into the mystery of your merciful love. May their experience of your mercy help them to forgive each other, and to have recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May each step of their journey bring them ever closer to your Sacred Heart.

The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28-35)

On a mountain top, Jesus begins to pray in the presence of three of his disciples. Suddenly, his face changes, and his clothes are illuminated. Moses and Elijah appear and speak to Jesus. Peter, awakening from sleep, sees Jesus and two men, and declares: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. Let us build three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." Then, a cloud descends upon all of them, and a voice from the cloud, instructs: "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to Him."

Lord, may this couple discern the voice of God, reminding them to listen to You. As they do so, may they realize the beautiful divine calling of their marital love. In their lives together and in their homes, may they lead lives that echo Peter's words: "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

The Institution of the Eucharist (Mk. 14:22-25; Jn. 13:1)

"While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. 'This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many,' he said to them."

Lord, may this couple lead Eucharistic lives, appreciating and relying on the Sacrament of Love as they seek to live and embrace Your great love for them. May the Eucharist nourish them with your life, and ignite a flame of pure love within their hearts that inspires every day of their married lives.

**A similar novena was created, and prayed, by the author
for Catherine Phelan and Edward Cunning
as they prepared for their wedding day, November 1, 2008.**

**This is now dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Cunning,
as they celebrate their first anniversary.**

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