

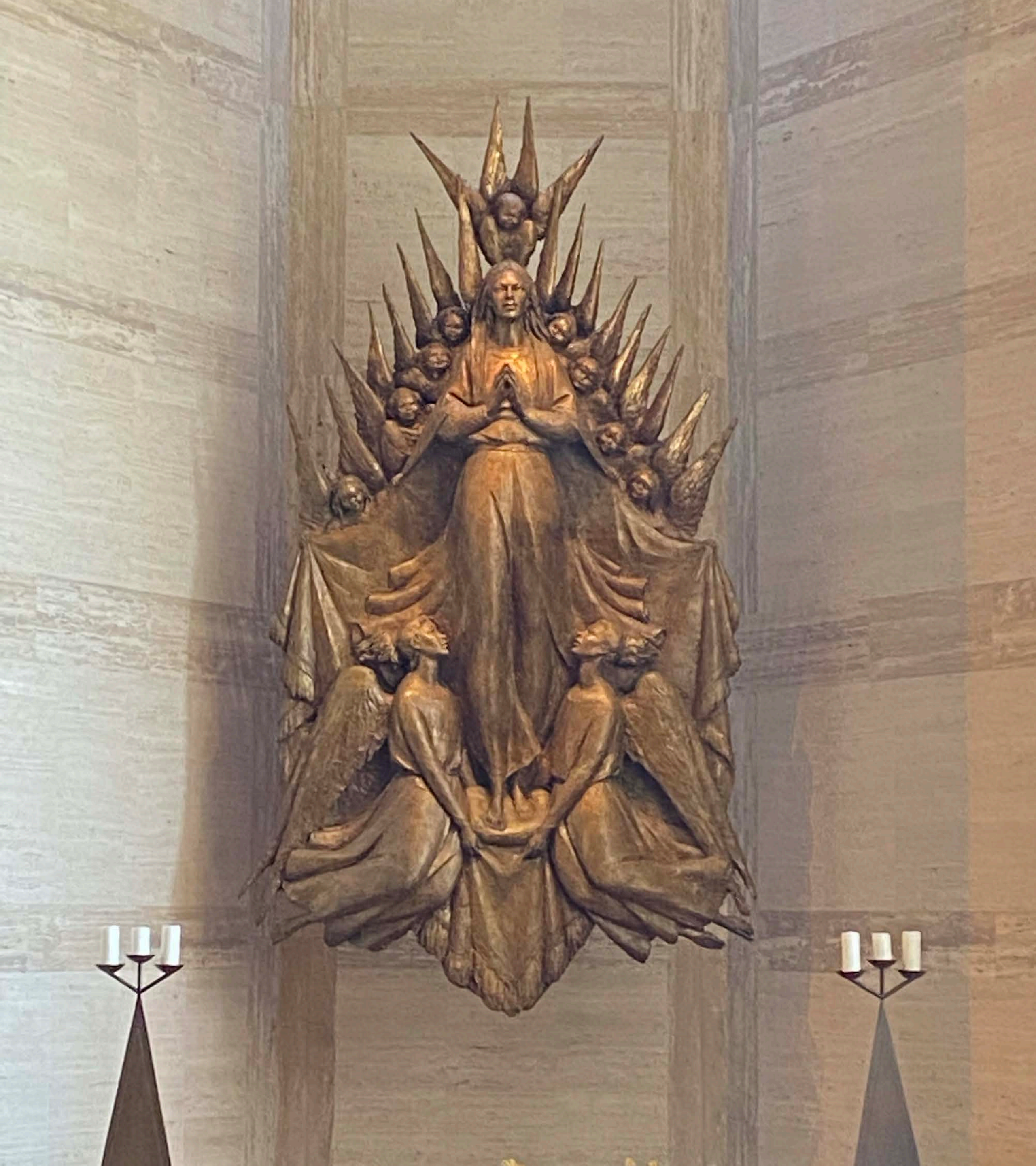
The Rosary and Contemplative Prayer

Conclusion

ANTHONY LILLES OCTOBER 15, 2022

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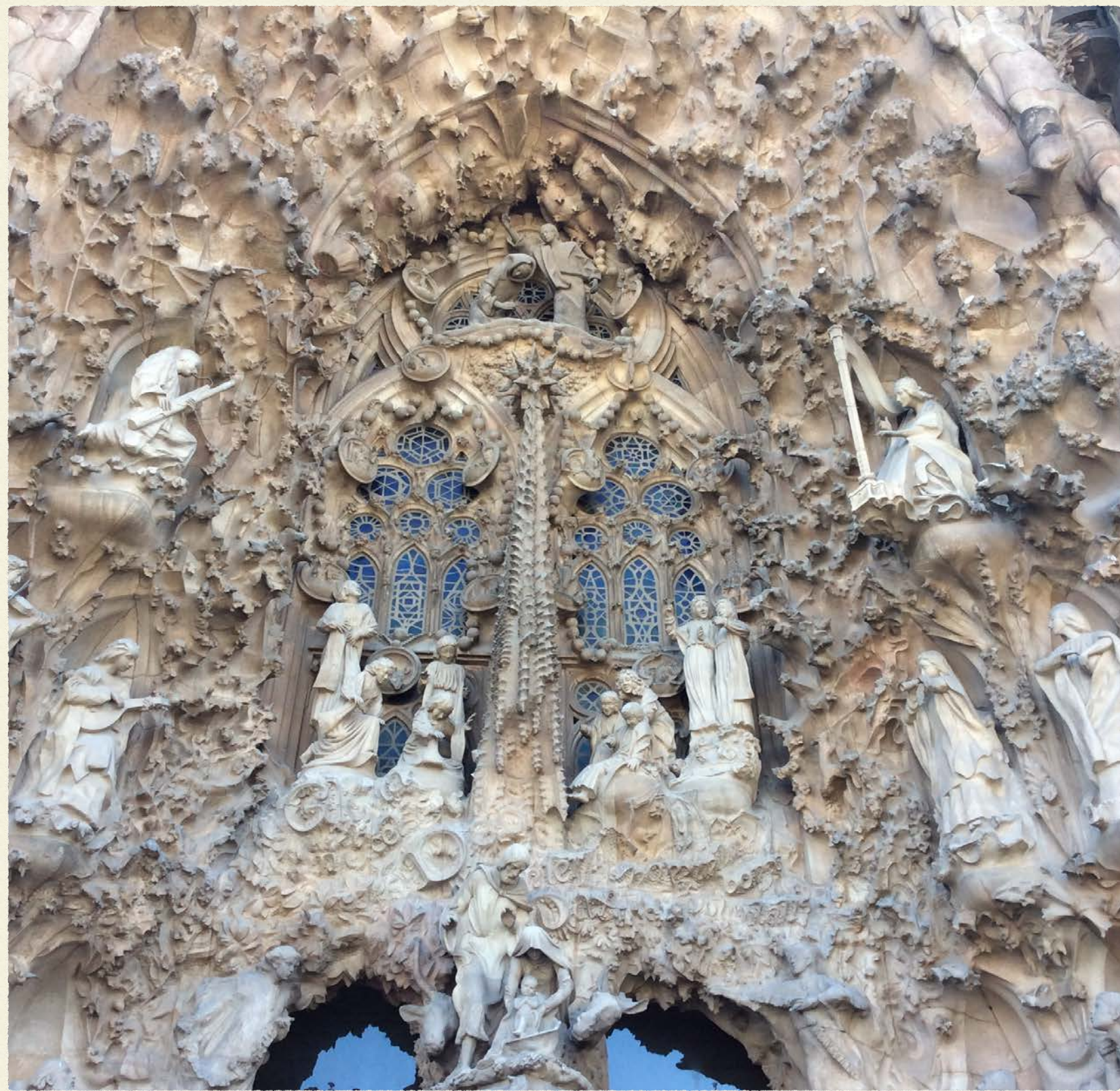


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Mary teaches how to “ponder in the heart”

The Rosary as a method of entering into contemplative prayer requires attention to the place and pace of prayer.

The Place and Pace of Prayer help recitation of the Rosary become a gateway to contemplative prayer



- * **As a method, it serves as a means to an end and cannot become an end in itself.**
- * **A Sacred Space:** Concerning “where” the rosary is prayed, attention to external and internal composition of place is helpful.
- * **A Pace of Prayer:** Concerning “how” the rosary is prayed, slowing down and allowing the words of the Bible to enter the heart allows us to ponder, as did Mary, in our hearts.

Compositio Loci - Composition of Place

Incarnational Contemplation

- * Composition of place can be internal and external —
 - * External: best when praying the Rosary to have sacred images, a candle, a Crucifix. (St. Francis of Assisi's Nativity scenes or stations of the Cross)
 - * Internal: the use of the imagination whereby we allow we use our internal powers to make the memories of Mary alive in our hearts (The exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola)
- * "This is a methodology, moreover, which corresponds to the inner logic of the Incarnation: in Jesus, God wanted to take on human features. It is through his bodily reality that we are led into contact with the mystery of his divinity." #29

The Pace of the Rosary and *Lectio Divina*

- * Saint John Paul II explains that the Rosary is no substitute for Lectio Divina - but presupposes this practice of prayerfully reading the Scripture and studying the Bible.
- * *Lectio Divina* is the practice of prayerfully reading the Scriptures, taking time to ponder their meaning, and with discernment appropriating them to one's own life before God. For the Carthusians, the practice is progressive - from simple reading to deep contemplation:
 - * This method of prayer begins with reading (lectio) in the presence of God and moves on to thinking about the passage (meditatio) in the light of His Holy Presence and one's own life.
 - * As one ponders a passage, the heart is moved with holy desires - articulating these desires in the forms of petitions is prayer (oratio). Here, the prayer moves from thinking about God to speaking to Him.
 - * As prayer is poured from the heart, a great silence is entered and this place of awareness of the presence of God is contemplation (contemplatio). Human words give way to movements of heart no words can express.
- * In the Rule of St. Benedict, this practice is associated with *conversatio morum*, a ongoing commitment to bring every aspect of one's life into dialogue with the Gospel of Christ.

The Bible and the Rosary

- * In order to supply a Biblical foundation and greater depth to our meditation, it is helpful to **follow the announcement of the mystery with the proclamation of a related Biblical passage**, long or short, depending on the circumstances.
- * **No other words can ever match the efficacy of the inspired word. As we listen, we are certain that this is the word of God, spoken for today and spoken “for me”.**
- * If received in this way, the word of God can become part of the Rosary's methodology of repetition *without giving rise to the ennui derived from the simple recollection of something already well known.* #30





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The Elements of the Rosary

- (1) Silence, (2) the "Our Father," (3) the 10 Hail Marys,"(4) the "Gloria," (5) praying for the graces of the mysteries, (6) the Rosary Beads, (7) opening and closing, and (8) Distribution over time.

The Element of Silence

- * **Listening and meditation are nourished by silence.** After the announcement of the mystery and the proclamation of the word, it is fitting to **pause and focus one's attention for a suitable period of time on the mystery concerned, before moving into vocal prayer.**
- * **A discovery of the importance of silence is one of the secrets of practicing contemplation and meditation.**
- * **One drawback of a society dominated by technology and the mass media is the fact that silence becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. #31**





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The Lord's Prayer

- **An Ecclesial Experience:** After listening to the word and focusing on the mystery, it is natural for the mind to be lifted up towards the Father. In each of his mysteries, Jesus always leads us to the Father, for as he rests in the Father's bosom (cf. Jn 1:18) he is continually turned towards him. He wants us to share in his intimacy with the Father, so that we can say with him: "Abba, Father" (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). RVM #32

The Ten Hail Marys #33

- This is the most substantial element in the Rosary and also the one which makes it a Marian prayer par excellence. Yet when the Hail Mary is properly understood, we come to see clearly that **its Marian character is not opposed to its Christological character, but that it actually emphasizes and increases it.**
 - **The first part of the Hail Mary**, drawn from the words spoken to Mary by the Angel Gabriel and by Saint Elizabeth, is a contemplation in adoration of the mystery accomplished in the Virgin of Nazareth.
 - These words express, so to speak, the wonder of heaven and earth; they could be said to give us a glimpse of God's own wonderment as he contemplates his "masterpiece" - the Incarnation of the Son in the womb of the Virgin Mary.
 - If we recall how, in the Book of Genesis, God "saw all that he had made" (Gen 1:31), we can find here an echo of that "pathos with which God, at the dawn of creation, looked upon the work of his hands".(36)
 - **The repetition of the Hail Mary in the Rosary gives us a share in God's own wonder and pleasure: in jubilant amazement we acknowledge the greatest miracle of history.** Mary's prophecy here finds its fulfilment: "Henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (Lk 1:48).
 - **The centre of gravity in the Hail Mary, the hinge as it were which joins its two parts, is the name of Jesus.**
 - Sometimes, in hurried recitation, this centre of gravity can be overlooked, and with it the connection to the mystery of Christ being contemplated.
 - **Yet it is precisely the emphasis given to the name of Jesus and to his mystery that is the sign of a meaningful and fruitful recitation of the Rosary.**
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The Beads

- * **Note the way the beads converge upon the Crucifix, which both opens and closes the unfolding sequence of prayer.** The life and prayer of believers is centred upon Christ. Everything begins from him, everything leads towards him, everything, through him, in the Holy Spirit, attains to the Father.
- * **As a counting mechanism, marking the progress of the prayer, the beads evoke the unending path of contemplation and of Christian perfection.**
- * [The Beads] remind us of our many relationships, of **the bond of communion** and fraternity which unites us all in Christ.





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Other elements of the Rosary

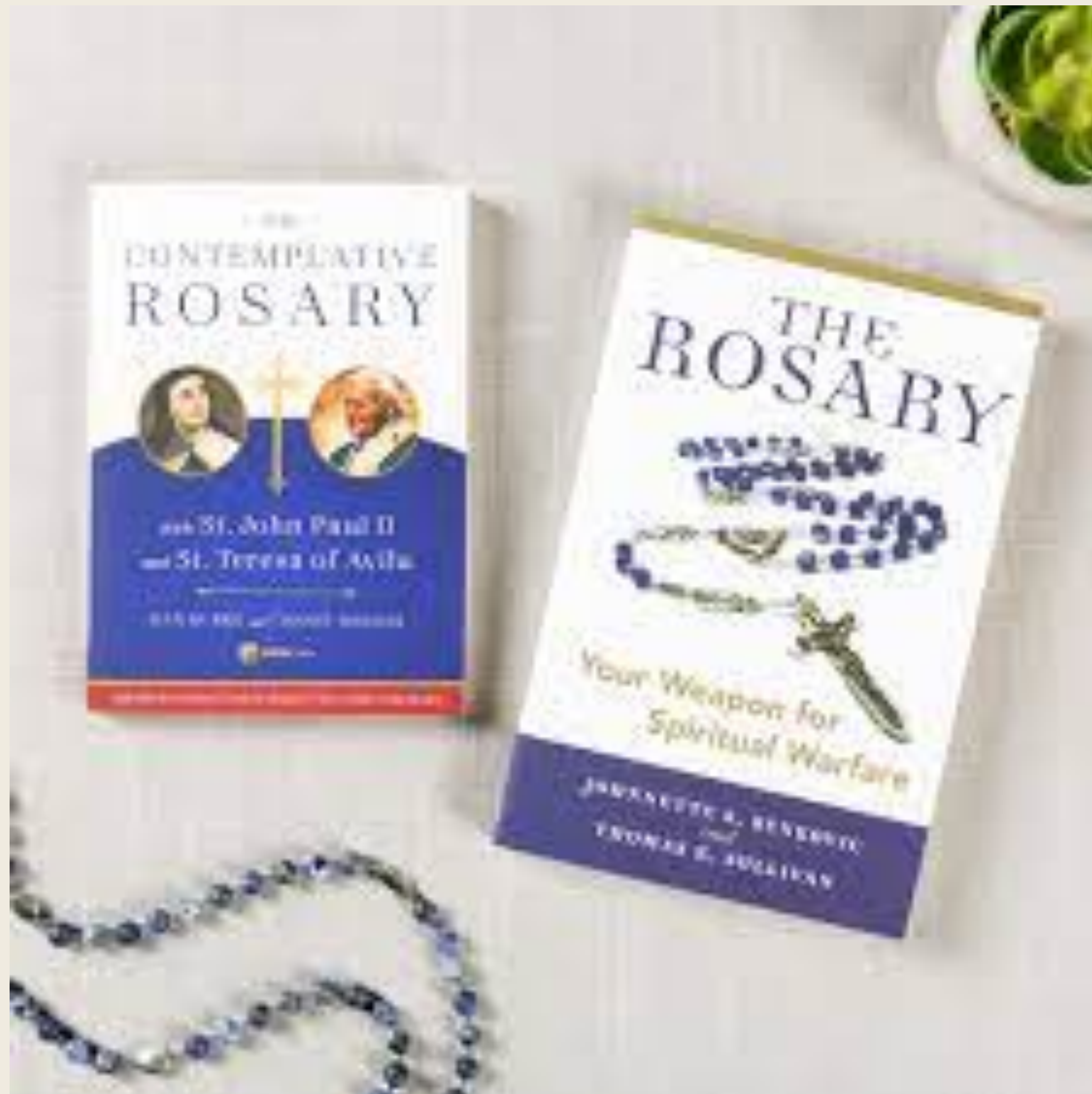
- The "Gloria,"
- Praying for the graces of the mysteries,
- Opening and closing

The Gloria - the end and high point of contemplation RVM #34

Trinitarian doxology is the goal of all Christian contemplation.... To the extent that meditation on the mystery is attentive and profound, and to the extent that it is enlivened – from one Hail Mary to another – by love for Christ and for Mary, the **glorification of the Trinity at the end of each decade, far from being a perfunctory conclusion, takes on its proper contemplative tone, raising the mind as it were to the heights of heaven and enabling us in some way to relive the experience of Tabor, a foretaste of the contemplation yet to come: “It is good for us to be here!” (Lk 9:33).**

Distribution of the Mysteries over the Days of the Week

- The Rosary can be recited in full every day, and there are those who most laudably do so. In this way it fills with prayer the days of many a contemplative, or keeps company with the sick and the elderly who have abundant time at their disposal.
 - Yet it is clear – and this applies all the more if the new series of mysteria lucis is included – that many people will not be able to recite more than a part of the Rosary, according to a certain weekly pattern.
 - This weekly distribution has the effect of giving the different days of the week a certain spiritual “colour”, by analogy with the way in which the Liturgy colours the different seasons of the liturgical year.
 - According to current practice, Monday and Thursday are dedicated to the “joyful mysteries”, Tuesday and Friday to the “sorrowful mysteries”, and Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday to the “glorious mysteries”.
 - Where might the “mysteries of light” be inserted? If we consider that the “glorious mysteries” are said on both Saturday and Sunday, and that Saturday has always had a special Marian flavour, the second weekly meditation on the “joyful mysteries”, mysteries in which Mary's presence is especially pronounced, could be moved to Saturday.
 - Thursday would then be free for meditating on the “mysteries of light”.
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The Contemplative Rosary

- Authors Dan Burke and Connie Rossini

The Battle for Peace and Contemplative Prayer

The grave challenges confronting the world at the start of this new Millennium lead us to think that only an intervention from on high, capable of guiding the hearts of those living in situations of conflict and those governing the destinies of nations, can give reason to hope for a brighter future.

The Rosary is by its nature a prayer for peace, since it consists in the contemplation of Christ, the Prince of Peace, the one who is “our peace” (Eph 2:14). **Anyone who assimilates the mystery of Christ - and this is clearly the goal of the Rosary - learns the secret of peace and makes it his life's project.**

Moreover, **by virtue of its meditative character, with the tranquil succession of Hail Marys, the Rosary has a peaceful effect on those who pray it**, disposing them to receive and experience in their innermost depths, and to spread around them, that true peace which is the special gift of the Risen Lord (cf. Jn 14:27; 20.21).

The Rosary is also a prayer for peace because of the fruits of charity which it produces. When prayed well in a truly meditative way, **the Rosary leads to an encounter with Christ in his mysteries** and so cannot fail to draw attention to the face of Christ in others, especially in the most afflicted.

By focusing our eyes on Christ, the Rosary also makes us peacemakers in the world. By its nature as an insistent choral petition in harmony with Christ's invitation to “pray ceaselessly” (Lk 18:1), the Rosary allows us to hope that, even today, the difficult “battle” for peace can be won.

“O Blessed Rosary of Mary, sweet chain which unites us to God, bond of love which unites us to the angels, tower of salvation against the assaults of Hell, safe port in our universal shipwreck, we will never abandon you. You will be our comfort in the hour of death: yours our final kiss as life ebbs away. And the last word from our lips will be your sweet name, O Queen of the Rosary of Pompei, O dearest Mother, O Refuge of Sinners, O Sovereign Consoler of the Afflicted. May you be everywhere blessed, today and always, on earth and in heaven”.

Blessed Bartolo Longo

