



MARY: FINDING THE MOTHER OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE

Lecture 3 – June 9, 2011

OVERVIEW

- Lecture 3 – The teachings of the Church
 - The four dogmas
 - Mary the Mother of God
 - Mary Ever Virgin
 - The Immaculate Conception
 - The Assumption of Mary
 - Mary Our Mother
 - The Rosary



THE FOUR DOGMAS

- A dogma is a doctrine or teaching of the Church that has been solemnly defined as constituting the highest level of truth
- Something revealed directly by God
- May be declared by an infallible declaration by the Pope or by an ecumenical council that is subsequently confirmed by the Pope
- Ecumenical Council is a general assembly of bishops who guided by the Holy Spirit teach and define doctrine as revealed by God and this is binding on the universal church
- Prof Miravalle suggests that the four Marian dogmas come together to point us to Mary's position as the Mother of all humanity at the service of the Divine Trinity and also of all creation



THE FOUR DOGMAS

- Historically, the first revealed truth about Mary is as Mother of God. It tells us *who Mary is*
- This leads us to the second dogma, the Perpetual Virginity of Mary which expresses her unique privilege as the only created person to bear and give birth to God Incarnate. This gives us a special insight into the miracles that were worked upon her and the development of her role as the new Ark. It tells us *what she means to us*
- Meditating upon these mysteries leads us to understanding the Immaculate Conception. This tells us *how she came to be*
- And this in turn finally leads us to the Assumption and this tells us *what became of her*
- A deeper understanding of Mary brings us closer to her



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- The essence of this Dogma flows from the person and identity of Jesus rather than of Mary
- Its foundation is that Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ
- Jesus is God the Son, made Man
- Therefore Mary is the Mother of God the Son
- Doctrine was defined at the ecumenical council of Ephesus in 431 AD



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- At one level, the doctrine seems extremely simple
 - Mary is the mother of Jesus
 - Jesus is God
 - Mary is the mother of God
- Luke 1:31,35 – spoken to Mary by Gabriel
 - Behold, *you shall conceive in your womb and shall bring forth a son* and you shall call His name, Jesus...The Holy Spirit will overshadow you...therefore *the holy one who shall be born of you shall be called Son of God*
- There are numerous other scriptural references to Mary as the Mother of Jesus or Mother of the Child
 - Matt 1:18 – His mother, Mary had been engaged to Joseph
 - Matt 2:11 – they saw the Child with Mary, His mother
 - Mat 2:13, 14, 20, 21 – the Child and His Mother



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- Matt 12:46 – His mother
- Matt 13:55 – Is not His mother called Mary?
- Mark 3:31 – His mother
- Luke 1:43 – the mother of my Lord (NB Greek term used is Adonai which is title commonly used for God in the Old Testament)
- Luke 2:34 – Simeon blessed His mother, Mary
- Luke 2:48 – His mother said
- Luke 2:51 – His mother treasured all these things in her heart
- Luke 8:19 – His mother
- John 2:1 – the mother of Jesus was there



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- John 2:3 – the mother of Jesus said to Him
- John 2:5 – His mother said
- John 2:12 – He went to Capernaum with His mother
- John 19:25 – Standing near the cross of Jesus were His mother and his mother's sister
- John 19:26 – When Jesus saw His mother
- Acts 1:14 – including Mary the mother of Jesus
- Gal 4:4 – God sent His Son, born of a woman



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- The Apostles' Creed which reflects the essential beliefs of all Christians states - “Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary”
- This was confirmed at the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD
- Nestorius refused to call Mary the Mother of God because of the error he made in relation to the person and nature of Jesus
- Nestorius believed Jesus was two separate persons – one human, one divine whereas the doctrine known as the Hypostatic Union teaches that Jesus is one person with both a divine and a human nature
- In pronouncing Mary, Theotokos, or Mother of God, the Council was protecting the teachings about Jesus, from whom alone, Mary derives her identity



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- When Mary gives birth to Jesus, she does not give Him His divine nature or personhood because these existed from all eternity
- Mary gives Jesus His human nature when He becomes incarnate through the conception and gestation in her womb and through His birth
- But the Child she gives birth to has an inseparable divine nature and personhood and if we accept she is the mother of the Child then we must accept she is the mother of God Incarnate because the Child is God Incarnate. It is impossible to separate this divine personhood from Jesus



THE FIRST DOGMA – THE MOTHER OF GOD

- Louisa Cozens in “A Handbook of Heresies (1974) put it thus:
 - Today as in the fifth century, in London as in Ephesus, the honour of Mary is the safeguard, the outpost of the adoration of her son. To acknowledge the Theotokos is to believe in God the Son made man
- Jesus though He had two natures, was a single person and both His natures were united in this single person
- Mary was the mother of the person, Jesus
- Mary is unique because in her we have in a single person, the Mother of God Incarnate, the daughter of God the Father and the temple of God the Holy Spirit



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- This dogma asserts that Mary was and remained a virgin throughout her life, before, during and after the birth of Jesus
- The dogma was pronounced at the Lateran Synod by Pope St Martin I in 649 AD
 - The blessed ever-virginal and immaculate Mary conceived, without seed, by the Holy Spirit, and without loss of integrity brought Him forth, and after His birth preserved her virginity inviolate



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- The virginal conception is repeated in scripture several times
 - Isaiah 7:14 – Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and his name shall be called Emmanuel
 - Luke 1:26-27 – ...the angel Gabriel was sent from God ...to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary
 - Luke 1:34 – Mary asked the angel, “How can this be, since I have not been intimate with a man?”
 - NB – at that time, Mary contemplated that any child would have to be conceived through a human father and seen in this light, this verse has been construed to mean that Mary had already taken a vow of celibacy
 - Luke 1:35 – The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- This was also reflected in the Tradition of the early Church and was taught by St Ignatius (d.107), St Justin Martyr (d. 165), St Irenaeus of Lyon (d.202)
- The Apostles' Creed – “conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary”
- Virginty *during* the birth of Jesus
 - The teaching here is that Jesus left Mary's womb without the loss of Mary's physical virginity
 - Thus there was no injury or violation to Mary's virginal seal by a divine miracle of God



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- This was a view subscribed to by, among others –
 - St Augustine
 - St Thomas Aquinas
- They likened it to light passing through glass
- Pope St Leo the Great taught – Mary brought Him forth with her virginity untouched just as with her virginity untouched she conceived Him
- Isaiah 7:14 states – Behold a virgin shall conceive *and bear* a son



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- There is no question that this assertion is founded on a miracle but it is no more miraculous than the Virginal Conception in the first place
- Compare the miracle in John 20:19 where the Risen Christ enters the room where the disciples are and the doors and windows of which had been shut and locked
- Moreover, it emphasizes the unique blessing that was Mary's where the womb which housed the Holy Infant remained pristine and intact forever



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- Virginity *after* the birth
 - The essence of this teaching is that Mary had no marital relations with Joseph and bore no other children
 - Rooted in the Tradition of the Church
 - Explicitly asserted by Popes St Siricius in 392 AD and St Leo the Great
 - 5th Council at Constantinople in 553 AD declared Mary Perpetual Virgin
 - Taught by the early church fathers including St Ambrose, St Augustine, St Jerome, St John Chrysostom and St Cyril of Alexandria
 - Many of the early fathers understood Luke 1:34 – How will this be since I know not man – to refer to a vow of eternal celibacy
 - Lest there be any doubt about this, it seems difficult to imagine that Mary would voluntarily surrender the virginity God had miraculously preserved through the conception of the Holy Infant



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- The idea that Mary would have voluntarily have surrendered her miraculous virginal state is akin to saying that the Ark could have been used not only to house the Tablets of God and the things He ordained but as a store for other things
- Historically, Mary's perpetual virginity was only denied by those who denied the divinity of Christ
- The early protestant reformers believed in her perpetual virginity
- There are doctrinal justifications for this, as Thomas Aquinas teaches
 - Jesus the only begotten Son of God the Father deserves at least as much to be the only-begotten Son of his human mother
 - While marital relations are a gift from God, celibacy is the giving of oneself wholly to God



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- Some objections to this dogma
 - The notion in Scripture that Jesus had “brothers” or “brethren” or “sisters”
 - Matt 12:46 – His mother and His brethren were standing...
 - Mark 6:3 – Is this not... the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon and are not His sisters here with us?
 - John 7:5 – For even His brethren were without faith in Him
 - Acts 1:14 - ...together with Mary the mother of Jesus and the rest of the women and His brethren



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- But the term “brother” has a wide meaning in Scripture as does “sister” and “brethren”
 - Gen 14:14 describes Lot as Abraham’s brother though he is his nephew – Gen 11:26-28
 - Gen 29:15 – Jacob is called the brother of his uncle Laban
 - In Deut 23:7, 2 Esd 5:7, Jer 34:9 and 2 Kings 10:14 the term is used to mean kinsman
 - In 2 Sam 1:26, 1 Kings 9:13, 20:32 and Amos 1:9 the term is used to mean a friend or ally
 - Neither Hebrew nor Aramaic had a specific word for cousin and instead of describing the relationship (father’s sister’s son) the word brother or sister came to be used as a shorthand
 - When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the translators of the Hebrew into Greek used the word “adelphos” which usually means “brother” in the strict sense instead of the Greek word for cousin “anepsios” even when referring to true cousins
 - The writers of the New Testament, were thus brought up or used to using the Aramaic word which covers both cousins and brothers



THE SECOND DOGMA – MARY EVER VIRGIN

- Nowhere in Luke 2:41-51 or any other part of the Infancy Narratives is there any hint of any other siblings
- Another objection stems from Matt 1:25 – “... but they had no marital relations until she had borne a son and he named Him Jesus”
 - This suggests the word “until” connotes a terminal point when something changes
 - But this is not always the case
 - See eg 2 Sam 6:23; Gen 8:7; 1 Macc 5:54
 - Moreover the point of the emphasis is not to suggest that after this something changed. Rather it is to emphasize that there was no room whatsoever to doubt that this was a Child conceived with no involvement whatsoever of the man, Joseph



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- This was solemnly defined by the pronouncement of Pope the Blessed Pius IX in 1854
- It teaches that Mary was conceived without the stain of Original Sin
- It does not mean that she was conceived by the Holy Spirit
- She was conceived in a fully human way but by the grace of God she was conceived without the stain (macula) of sin. Hence “immaculate” or stainless
- Mary’s preservation from sin was an act of grace and a privilege accorded her by God because of the work that Jesus would do
- The principal scriptural bases:
 - Gen 3:15
 - Luke 1:28



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

○ Gen 3:15

- I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed
- Proto-evangelium or first good news
- Woman's seed is Jesus
- Woman must be Mary
- “Enmity” signifies a complete and radical opposition and it is the same type of opposition between Jesus and the devil as it is between the woman and the devil
- In fact we know that after original sin, mankind was in a fallen state and the devil was the master of the world and this is only reversed by the sacrificial death of Jesus – see eg John 6:51; 8:23-24; 12:31; 18:36



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- John 6:51 - I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is *my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*
- John 8:23-24 - But he continued, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins.”
- John 12:31 - Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.
- John 18:36 - Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- There was thus no enmity between Eve and the devil or between her offspring generally ie mankind and the devil
- We also understand this reference to Mary in the light of Luke 1:28 (see below) and Luke 1:42 and 42 – most blessed among women and mother of my Lord
- Original sin connotes a sense of union with Satan but from Gen 3:15 we see that there is and will be no union between Mary and Satan



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

○ Luke 1:28

- Hail full of grace; or Hail fully grace; or Rejoice, most highly favoured;
- Charis – means favour coming from God
- Kecharitomene – connotes a plenitude or being full of the favour of God; a perfection of grace
- “You who have been and remain filled with the divine favour”
- This is the essence of the third dogma – that Mary was from the very moment of her conception and throughout her life filled with divine grace and favour
- Consequently she was free of sin



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- Main objection to this dogma
 - But Mary needs a Saviour
 - Luke 1:47 – My Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour
 - Romans 3:23 – All have sinned
 - Indeed Mary needs a Saviour too but she benefitted from the grace of pre-redemption ie God who is not constrained by time was able to give her the gift of salvation that her yet to be incarnate Son would gain for her and all mankind
 - Romans 3:23 means only that all are subject to original sin and not that all have in fact sinned – see eg the child who dies before the age of reason and hence cannot in fact have committed a sin. Mary too is subject to original sin but by God's grace is preserved from it by her Son's divine work



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- Understanding the implications of the dogma
 - This grace as every other is unmerited
 - It is a gift from God
 - Mary, despite being conceived free of sin, retained free will and so retained the ability to make a choice to disobey God
 - But by her “fiat” she most completely obeyed God’s will and submitted herself completely to Him
 - Mary owes more to Jesus than does any other creature because by His work she was preserved from sin whereas the rest of us are raised from our fallen nature



THE THIRD DOGMA –THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

- Although pronounced in 1854, this again was a teaching that was well established in the writings of the early church fathers including:
 - St Ephraem d.373
 - St Ambrose d.397
 - St Severus of Antioch d.538
 - St Sophronius of Jerusalem d.638
 - St Andrew of Crete d.740
 - St Theognostes of Constantinople



THE FOURTH DOGMA –THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

- Defined by Pope Pius XII in 1950
- This received the unanimous consensus of the Magisterium of the Church with 1210 out of 1232 bishops favouring the definition of this dogma
- Gen 3:15 in equating the enmity between the woman and the devil with the enmity between Jesus and the devil foreshadows that she will share in His victory by His grace
- Paul tells us that the consequences of Satan's seed are sin and death – Rom 5:12; 6:23 and Mary was spared from sin (Immaculate Conception) and from death (Assumption)



THE FOURTH DOGMA –THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

- The Assumption is the logical consequence of the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and of the Scriptural verses at Gen 3:15 and Luke 1:28
- Similarly Rev 12:1 which gives us a picture of Mary's coronation also points to her Assumption
- NB that in Scripture there are other examples of those who were assumed:
 - Enoch – Gen 5:23-24; Hebrews 11:5; Sir 44:16; 49:14
 - Elijah – 2 Kings 2:1, 11; 1 Macc 2:58



THE FOURTH DOGMA –THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

- It is unsurprising then that Mary who was conceived immaculately, whose virginity was preserved forever and who bore God Incarnate in her womb should also be Assumed into heaven
- The early Christians referred to the “dormitio” or transition of Mary when she passed from this life to eternity with God. Catholic commentators and even popes accept that Mary experienced earthly “death” though the Church has not pronounced on this issue
- But the dogma asserts that at the end of her earthly life she was assumed body and soul into heaven and her body never experienced decay



THE FOURTH DOGMA –THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY

- Unlike Jesus who through His divine power Himself ascended to heaven, Mary was assumed into heaven by the power of God
- Significantly, no city claims her remnants or relics
- The feast of the Assumption has been celebrated since around 400 AD



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- When we speak of Mary's role as our spiritual mother, we tend to relate it to three principal aspects of her role
 - Co-redemptrix
 - Medatrix of graces
 - Advocate
- St Augustine draws a parallel between her role as mother of the God Incarnate Jesus, and her role as mother of the Body of Christ, the Church – Col 1:18; Eph 4:15-16
- When Mary said Fiat to being mother of Jesus, she was also expressing the same response to being the mother of the Church, His Body on Earth and this is manifested in the pronouncement by Jesus to her and to John at the foot of the Cross – John 19:26-27



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Pope the Blessed John Paul II:
 - The man at the foot of the Cross is John, “the disciple whom He loved”. But it is not he alone. Following tradition, the Council of Vatican does not hesitate to call Mary the Mother of Christ and mother of mankind
- The early Church fathers recognised Mary’s role as spiritual mother
 - St Jerome – death through Eve, life through Mary



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Mary as mediator
 - In Christianity there is only one primary and divine mediator – Jesus
 - Jesus the person who intervenes between two persons for the goal of uniting them and reconciling them
 - 1 Tim 2:5 – For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ
 - But this unique and supreme and perfect mediation of Jesus does not exclude other subordinate mediation by angels and humans
 - 1 Tim 2:1-4 Paul asks for subordinate human mediation by asking that supplications prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Other examples
 - Prophets in the Old Testament who mediated between God and Israel
 - The Angel Gabriel mediates on behalf of God at the Annunciation
 - The Apostles were allowed to mediate for God – Matt 28:19; Luke 22:19
 - Pope the blessed John Paul II explains 1 Tim 2:5
 - Mary's maternal mediation does not obscure the unique and perfect mediation of Christ
 - The Blessed Virgin's influence on men flows from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on his mediation and depends entirely on it and draws all power from it
 - Paul excludes any other parallel or rival mediator to Christ but not subordinate mediators



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Mary's role as Mediatrix refers to her secondary and subordinate participation in the perfect mediation of Jesus
- But because she participates in His mission unlike any other created person, she bears the title of Mediatrix
- The Church refers to Mary as the Mediatrix of Graces in two senses
- First in the sense that as the person who gave birth to Christ and in so doing brought the source of all graces to us
- Second, in the sense that she had uniquely been given the ability to distribute the graces that belong to and come from God and she does this through her intercession
- The Church teaches that Mary has been privileged in this way because she participated uniquely in the acquisition of the graces of redemption by Jesus



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- In Luke 1:41 we see two examples of her mediating the presence of the unborn Christ – first to Elizabeth who is filled with the Holy Spirit when she hears Mary's greeting and then with the unborn John the Baptist who is filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb
- In John 2, at the wedding at Cana we see another example of Mary's mediation on behalf of the bridal couple when her instruction to the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them leads to the amazing grace of His first miracle
- Prof Miravalle recalls Pope the Blessed John Paul II's commentary on the wedding at Cana where he points out her mediation in the fullest sense by standing in the middle between the couple and Christ; drawing their needs to the Lord and instructing the servants to follow His commands
- Because of her role as Mediatrix, all our graces come to us through her intercession even if we do not know her or ask her to pray for us. We see this manifested in the mediations with Elizabeth, John the Baptist and the wedding couple at Cana



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- The second aspect of her role as our spiritual mother is as Co-redemptrix
- Again it is essential to be clear that nothing here can or should ever be thought to equate her with Christ, who alone is Redeemer
- The title recognises her participation in her Son's redemptive work but in a wholly subordinate and dependent way
- Hebrews 10:10 says that we are redeemed by the offering of the body of Christ. That body which redeems us came to us through Mary
- Her role begins at the Annunciation with her Fiat; but its further development is foretold by Simeon who tells her that a sword would pierce her soul – Luke 2:25 and this comes to pass when the nails pierce His Hands and Feet and the lance pierces His Side



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Mary's suffering at the Crucifixion is unique and comes just after the suffering of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- She alone of all creation experienced the pain of a Son dying a sacrificial, innocent death of unimaginable pain and suffering
- And she surrendered herself to this in obedience to the Father in atonement for our sins
- As Eve participated with Adam in humanity's fall, Mary participated with her Son, Our Lord, in humanity's redemption



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Aside from many Popes and the early Church fathers, many saints including St Bridget of Sweden, St Catherine of Siena, St John Eudes, Cardinal John Newman, St Maximilian Kolbe, St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross and St Pio of Pietrelcina, St Jose Maria Escriva and Blessed Mother Teresa have all written of the authenticity of this teaching
- Where Mary as Co-redemptrix participates in the redemptive work of her Son in a subordinate and dependent way, and as Mediatrix, participates in the distribution of His graces, as Advocate, she presents our petitions for us to the Supreme Lord and King.
- The Queen Mother of the Old Testament (1 Kings 2:19) gives us a picture of the Queen as Advocate and Intercessor for the People
- With Mary's coronation (Rev 12:1) we see her as our Spiritual Mother and Advocate who presents our petitions to her Son



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- Mary is –
 - Mother of the Church because by her “Yes” she allows and co-operates in the birth of the Church having given birth to the Redeemer and having participated in His redemptive work
 - The perfect member of the Church and the perfect disciple
 - Our spiritual mother who mediates for us, and intercedes for us
- Main objections
 - As Co-redemptrix stems from a complete misunderstanding of the idea and thinking that Catholics equate her participation in Christ’s redemptive work. This is entirely incorrect



MARY, OUR MOTHER

- As Mediatrix and as Advocate
 - Stems from a failure to recognize that those in Heaven are alive (Luke 20:38 - He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive)
 - Heaven is a place of God's living saints (Mark 12:26-27 - Now about the dead rising — have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!)
 - Asking others to pray is an intensely scriptural act – Rom 15:30, Col 4:3; 1 Thes 5:25; 2 Thes 1:11
 - Mary interceded on Earth at the Wedding at Cana – John 2:1-11



THE ROSARY

- The Rosary is a combination of oral prayer and meditation
- It is entirely Christ-centered
- The Meditations all concern the key points in the life of Jesus and secondarily they concern the person of Mary
- The Rosary imitates the act of Mary who “pondered and treasured all these things in her heart” – Luke 2:19. In the same way when we pray the Rosary we are pondering and treasuring the marvelous deeds and events of and about Jesus in our hearts



THE ROSARY

- The full Rosary consists of 20 decades divided into 4 sets of 5 Mysteries each
- At each decade one of the central Scriptural Mysteries of our faith is meditated upon
- Each decade consists of an oral petition asking Mary to pray for us and each line of the decade, as previously seen comes from Scripture – Luke 1:28, 42, 43
- Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of our death
- The Mysteries are the Joyful, Sorrowful, Luminous and Glorious Mysteries
- These mysteries focus on the Incarnation of Jesus (the Joyful Mysteries), His Public Ministry (the Luminous Mysteries), His Redemptive Work (the Sorrowful Mysteries) and the Eternal Life to which He calls us (the Glorious Mysteries)



THE ROSARY

- The Joyful Mysteries
 - The Annunciation
 - The Visitation
 - The Nativity of Jesus
 - The Presentation at the Temple
 - The Finding at the Temple
- The Luminous Mysteries
 - The Baptism of Jesus at the Jordan
 - The Wedding at Cana
 - The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Matt 4:17)
 - The Transfiguration at Mt Tabor
 - The Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper



THE ROSARY

- The Sorrowful Mysteries
 - The Agony in the Garden
 - The Scourging at the Temple
 - The Crowning with Thorns
 - Jesus Carries His Cross
 - The Crucifixion
- The Glorious Mysteries
 - The Resurrection
 - The Ascension
 - The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
 - The Assumption
 - The Crowning of Mary



THE ROSARY

○ History

- First devised under inspiration of our Lady by St Dominic founder of the Dominicans around 1200s
- St Dominic was preaching against the Albigensian heresy which taught that all matter was evil and that God was purely spiritual and therefore that Jesus could not have taken on human form
- The Rosary was a way of combating this heresy by combining a prayer with a credo and a meditation upon the reality of the Incarnation and Life of Jesus
- Evolved into its present form over next 300 years until around 1569



THE ROSARY

○ Structure

- It is scriptural
- Starts with the Annunciation at Luke 1:26 and ends with the coronation at Rev 12:1
- The Hail Mary or the Angelic Salutation is a linking of Luke 1:28 and 1:42
- The prayer is a lesson where Mary leads us to contemplate the face of her Son as we meditate on every aspect of His life for us
- It is entirely Christ-centered
- The repeated phrase “Blessed is the fruit of your womb” is a repetition of the Angel’s pronouncement in Lk 1:42
- The last two mysteries reveal the application of Christ’s graces to Mary and foreshadow what we also will inherit as God’s children
- It is a blend of prayer, belief and meditation. To grow bored of meditating on the Rosary is to grow bored of the life of Christ



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- In Col 1:24-25, Paul says:
 - Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness
- Of course Christ's sacrifice lacks nothing but the fact is He chose to achieve His mission with the co-operation of His creatures: Mary, the apostles, and Christians of every age who respond to His call to go make disciples of all the nations
- Mary exemplifies the perfection of this response – from her Fiat, to her journeying with Jesus throughout His childhood and His Ministry and forever more
- If Mary cannot make an intercession on our behalf, then none of us can ever do so for anyone else. Yet as we have seen, to pray for one another is a central part of our Christian faith
- She draws her unique role, her worth and her mission from her relationship to the Father who asked her; to the Son she bore and loved as only a mother can; and the Holy Spirit by whose power she conceived. She embodies all that humanity can aspire to and God gives her to us to help us draw closer to Him by obeying her instruction to do whatever Jesus asks us

