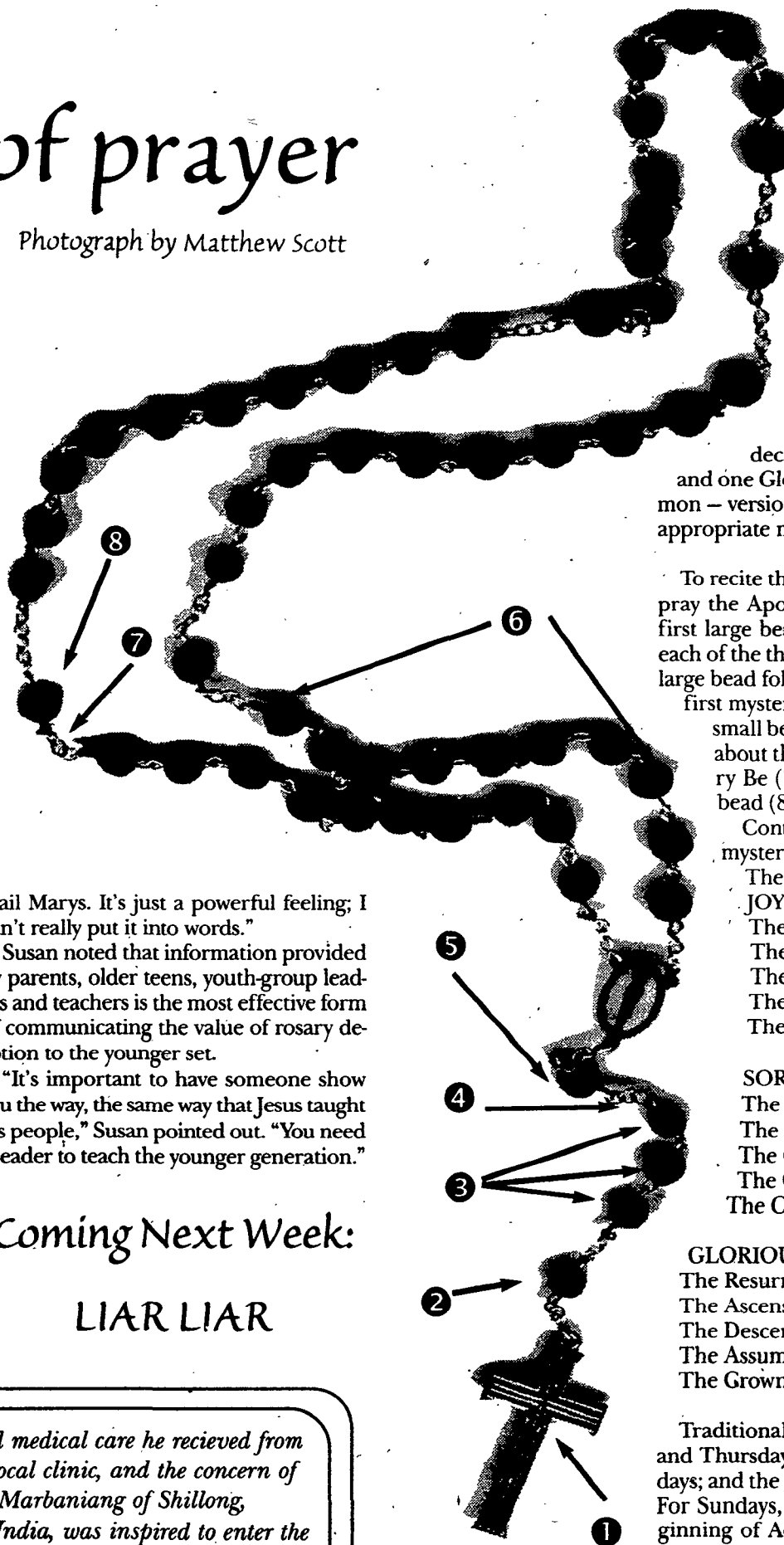


Rosary: A different form of prayer

Photograph by Matthew Scott



How to say the rosary

The rosary as a Catholic devotion arose in the 15th century. Its name came from a popular title for Mary: the "Mystical Rose." Because of the simplicity of the prayers — mainly Our Fathers, Hail Marys and Glory Be's — it was accessible to people of many ages and education levels.

The rosary is often emphasized during the month of May, when Catholics observe the crowning of Mary as the Queen of Heaven.

The "complete" rosary involves reciting 15 decades consisting of 10 Hail Marys, one Our Father and one Glory Be each. However, a briefer — and more common — version is to recite five decades while reflecting on the appropriate mysteries for the day.

To recite the rosary, first make a sign of the cross. Then: (1), pray the Apostles' Creed while holding the crucifix. On the first large bead (2) say the Our Father. Pray a Hail Mary on each of the three small beads (3), then the Glory Be (4). On the large bead following the three small beads (5), think about the first mystery, then recite the Our Father. On each of the 10 small beads (6), say a Hail Mary while continuing to think about the first mystery. Follow the Hail Marys with a Glory Be (7), then recite the Our Father on the next large bead (8) while thinking of the second mystery.

Continue through all five decades reflecting on the mysteries of the day.

The mysteries are as follows:

JOYFUL MYSTERIES

- The Annunciation
- The Visitation
- The Nativity
- The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
- The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

- The Agony in the Garden
- The Scourging
- The Crowning with Thorns
- The Carrying of the Cross
- The Crucifixion

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

- The Resurrection
- The Ascension
- The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
- The Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven

Traditionally, the joyful mysteries are recalled on Mondays and Thursdays; the sorrowful mysteries on Tuesdays and Fridays; and the glorious mysteries on Wednesdays and Saturdays. For Sundays, the joyful mysteries are observed from the beginning of Advent to the third Sunday before Lent; the sorrowful mysteries, from the third Sunday before Lent through Palm Sunday; and the glorious mysteries, from Easter Sunday until the beginning of Advent.

your petitions; Mary will help you in all your needs, whatever they are; and Mary will adopt you as her son or daughter — making you a brother or sister of Christ.

Along with Brown's work in Geneva, efforts are also made elsewhere, often at the parish level, to introduce the rosary to young people. For instance, St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls, under youth minister Kitty Petersen, is devoting two youth-group meetings this month to the rosary. In addition, Mary Bodine and Peg Hilton, youth ministers at St. Theresa's Church in Stanley and St. Mary's Church in Rushville, offer frequent rosary instruction.

"I think it's good to say the rosary," said Melissa Greene, 17, from St. Theresa/St. Mary. "It helps you to meditate on the life of Christ. It's very relaxing; I can feel God's presence very closely."

"I feel more at peace," stated John Bodine, 16, also a member of St. Theresa/St. Mary.

"For me, it's a different kind of prayer," added Chris from Seneca Falls. "It's something different, something extra."

Shannon Gaffney, 18, is another person who takes rosary devotion to heart. A member of the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community, Shannon has recited the rosary regularly since she was in fourth grade.

Shannon publicly promoted the rosary last fall, when she lectured at a Hands of Christ ceremony honoring diocesan high-school seniors for their church and community accomplishments. During her speech, Shannon emphasized devotion to Mary and how teens can offer such homage by way of the rosary.

"I don't know if they know the power and the grace you can get from it," Shannon said. "The meditation part of it, it's real easy to get into the repetition of the

Hail Marys. It's just a powerful feeling; I can't really put it into words."

Susan noted that information provided by parents, older teens, youth-group leaders and teachers is the most effective form of communicating the value of rosary devotion to the younger set.

"It's important to have someone show you the way, the same way that Jesus taught his people," Susan pointed out. "You need a leader to teach the younger generation."

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