

Praying the Rosary

FOR IMMIGRANTS AND
THEIR ADVOCATES



A Prayer of Welcome

Lord, we welcome You.
We will not turn away when You come to our door
In one who is lonely and afraid.

We ask for Your blessings upon all those who are forced
To leave their homeland, searching for safety, peace
And a future for their families.

Empower our immigrant friends and all who find themselves lost
In difficult, new terrain;
Reveal the truth to all that we are one family in Christ.

Amen

The Sisters of Charity are privileged to minister with many immigrants who left their homelands out of fear, persecution, or simply the dream of a better life for their children. Year after year we celebrate the outward signs of progress achieved through our ministries – ESL and citizenship classes, health care and housing advocacy, food assistance, community centers and more – all made possible through your generosity.

At the core of these efforts is an inward, spiritual journey that we would also like to share with you. The Rosary, described as an “echo of the prayer of Mary” by Pope John Paul II, is a beautiful way of connecting with the Blessed Mother’s faith and love for all of God’s children. Enclosed is an adaptation of the *Mysteries of the Rosaries* prepared to foster a unique meditative experience on the plight of immigrants, and the role we can all play by bearing the light of Christ.

We invite you to pray the Rosary with our Sisters and immigrant friends in this special way, opening your heart to new avenues of awareness and compassion.

FOR THE IMMIGRANT: THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

The First Mystery: The Annunciation

Just as Mary was chosen to be the Mother of God, of Jesus our Savior, of our Eternal Redeemer, every day in poor countries, family members are chosen - or choose - to do something so selfless as to leave family and homeland... all for a better life for their loved ones. Their YES often means hardships along the way, but they offer hope for the future for those back home.

The Second Mystery: The Visitation

Just as Mary journeyed to accompany Elizabeth, many immigrants journey together to their unknown, yet hope-filled future, encouraging, comforting, protecting and supporting one another through dangerous territory. Together they trust in God, and thank and praise Him for His presence and protection.

The Third Mystery: The Nativity

Just as Mary and Joseph struggled to find a “proper” place for Jesus to be born, immigrants also often find it difficult to find a “proper” place to settle...to start working. They are often subjected to unjust wages and working conditions. Despite the pains, the struggles, and the tears, the exhausting work of making a new life and new beginnings brings hope to a suffering world back home.

The Forth Mystery: The Presentation

Mary offered the Christ Child to God. Think of all that immigrants offer to go through, understanding the risks... the arduous journey...the unforgiving desert...dangers of dehydration, injury, trafficking, being sent back home, or even death. Immigrants put it on the line. They put all trust in God, placing themselves and their journey under His guidance and protection.

The Fifth Mystery: The Finding Of The Christ Child

What relief must have come to Mary and Joseph upon finding Jesus, considering all the possible things that could have happened. Immigrants travel in groups through treacherous lands. Some fall behind...or get injured or dehydrated...or are victims of trafficking...or get caught and sent back to their country... or die. What joy and relief come to family and friends when their loved one is found to be safe.

FOR THE IMMIGRANT’S ADVOCATE: THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

The First Mystery: The Baptism of Jesus

At our Baptism, we are claimed for Christ. Is this the only time we accept and claim those of other origins - only in faith? God’s Kingdom is here and now; there are no borders. Immigrants are God’s adopted sons and daughters, too. Let us claim them as beloved brothers and sisters.

The Second Mystery: The Miracle at the Wedding at Cana

The U.S. is called the “Great Melting Pot”. But hearts are becoming hardened, resisting welcoming immigrants. Mary, the Mother of the Americas, sees what is happening and intercedes. Jesus tells us to welcome the stranger. Let us listen to Him and do whatever He tells us to do. May we obey, and by His grace enrich the flavor of the “melting pot”, creating the best wine - the best community of faith. Our hour has come.

The Third Mystery: The Proclamation of the Kingdom

“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” We live in the darkness of injustice and oppression, particularly against foreigners. We are called to live in the light, and to be light for all people. The kingdom Jesus calls us to is one of peace and unity. May we follow in His footsteps and speak out against the great divisions among us.

The Fourth Mystery: The Transfiguration

“It is so good for us to be here.” We are inspired by the prophets of recent years, like Oscar Romero, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Martin Luther King. We get caught up in their message for us at the time, but how are we when we come down “off the mountain”?

The Fifth Mystery: The Institution of the Eucharist

“When you do this, remember me.” We celebrate Christ’s Passion at the Eucharist. But what about our passion? We often give thanks and praise to the Father; but what of our body and blood, our comfort and security...what do we give up for the oppressed?

FOR THE UNDOCUMENTED: THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

The First Mystery: Agony in the Garden

Jesus was in the garden for hours before he was captured, betrayed by a friend. Anticipating this, he prayed to his Father that it might not happen... then said “not my will, but Your will be done.”

Day by day, hour by hour, the undocumented person lives this agony in the garden. They never know when immigration officials may come to take them, making them feel betrayed by the country they came to for refuge. They live with hope against hope, praying that they will not be taken away from family and work. But, because they have no official documentation, they have no choice.

The Second Mystery: Scourging at the Pillar

Jesus was stripped and beaten, draining any power or strength out of Him-physically, emotionally, maybe even spiritually.

The undocumented person who is arrested and detained is stripped of family, work, support, and much of what has been most important to him/her. It is draining not just for the undocumented person, but for the whole family in so many ways-emotionally, financially, and spiritually. The ‘scourging’ is far-reaching.

The Third Mystery: Crowning with Thorns

“You are no king”, they say to Jesus. They mockingly pressed a painful symbol of royalty onto His head.

“You are not a citizen here, so your residency should not be here, either.” The undocumented go through the painful and shameful process of the court system. Every argument against them is a painful experience of a ‘justice system’ that seems to be so unjust.

The Forth Mystery: Jesus Carries the Cross

Jesus was forced through the streets as He carried His cross. It was not an easy road, or an easy burden. The journey of the undocumented back to their country is their road to Calvary’.

The Fifth Mystery: Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

The cross may have been the vehicle for Jesus’ death, but what He did gave us life. Migrants leave their country for *life* for themselves and their family. The poverty, oppression, and all kinds of injustices in their country of origin are crosses those citizens are bound to and often die from.

FOR THE FAMILIES OF IMMIGRANTS: THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

The First Mystery: The Resurrection

At first Jesus’ disciples felt great distress upon seeing His empty tomb. Similarly new immigrants often struggle with the fear and pain of dislocation, especially when faced with the cruelty of prejudice. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus they need a sign that He is with them. The glorious miracle of the Resurrection restores our faith, calling us to reach out and love one another in his name.

The Second Mystery: The Ascension of our Lord

Christ ascended into Heaven, filling us with new hope to carry us through all of life’s Journeys. It is this hope that gives oppressed and persecuted people throughout the world the strength to seek a better life for their families in new lands.

The Third Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit lives within us today, providing us with wisdom, guidance, and love for the Lord. In Christ we are given the ability to see beyond race, national origin, and immigrant status. We learn to recognize the Holy Spirit who dwells within each of our brothers and sisters.

The Fourth Mystery: The Assumption of Mary

As we rejoice with Mary joining her Son in Heaven, we remember the many immigrants who are currently separated from their family members because of political and economic injustice. The Assumption instills our hope that all mothers and fathers will one day be reunited with their children.

The Fifth Mystery: The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth

Mary does not discriminate in her motherly love for God’s children of all nations. Her tenderness and mercy are available to all who seek it. May the Queen of Heaven strengthen our immigrant friends, and bind us all together in loving kindness as one human family.

For almost 195 years, the Sisters of Charity of New York have been joyfully sharing Christ with the poor in hospitals, schools, parishes, and a variety of other ministries. Today we are approximately 350 strong, finding new ways to bring peace, love, and justice into the lives of those we serve through the kindness of our benefactors.

In the tradition of our foundress, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, we are deeply committed to living out the Gospel as we respond creatively to the signs of the times.

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