

Scrapbooking with Mary: The Rosary as a Family Album

By Martha Van Heyde Huggins

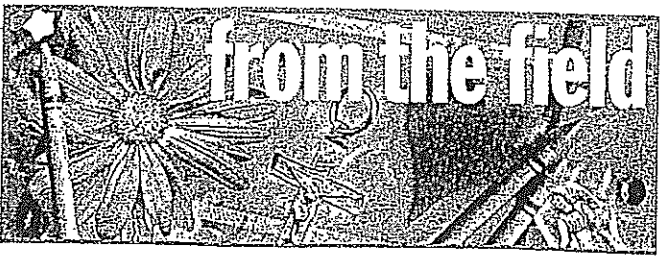
When we cherish photos and souvenirs, we often save them in a scrapbook because they represent the special events and important moments in the life of our family. In a similar way, when we pray the rosary, we remember important events in the lives of Mary and Jesus. We are, in a sense, going through the Holy Family's family scrapbook with Mary.

When we pray the rosary, we pray the Joyous Mysteries, the Luminous Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the Glorious Mysteries.

The Joyous Mysteries recall the early events in Jesus' life: 1) the moment of his Incarnation when Mary said "yes" to the angel who told her she would be the mother of the long-awaited Messiah (the Annunciation); 2) Mary's visit to see her cousin Elizabeth, who was also expecting (the Visitation); 3) the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem (the Nativity); 4) Jesus' first visit to the Temple as an infant (the Presentation); and 5) the family's "lost child" story (the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple).

The Luminous Mysteries are also known as the Mysteries of Light. The pope declared this new set of mysteries in October 2002. They recall the events of Jesus' life and celebrate Jesus as the Light of the World. The Luminous Mysteries are: 1) the Baptism of the Lord in the Jordan River; 2) the Miracle at Cana; 3) the Proclamation of the Kingdom; 4) the Transfiguration; and 5) the Last Supper.

The Sorrowful Mysteries remember the events of Jesus' suffering and death: 1) the Agony in the Garden; 2) the Scourging at the Pillar; 3) the Crowning with Thorns; 4) the Carrying of the Cross; and 5) the Crucifixion and Death of Jesus.

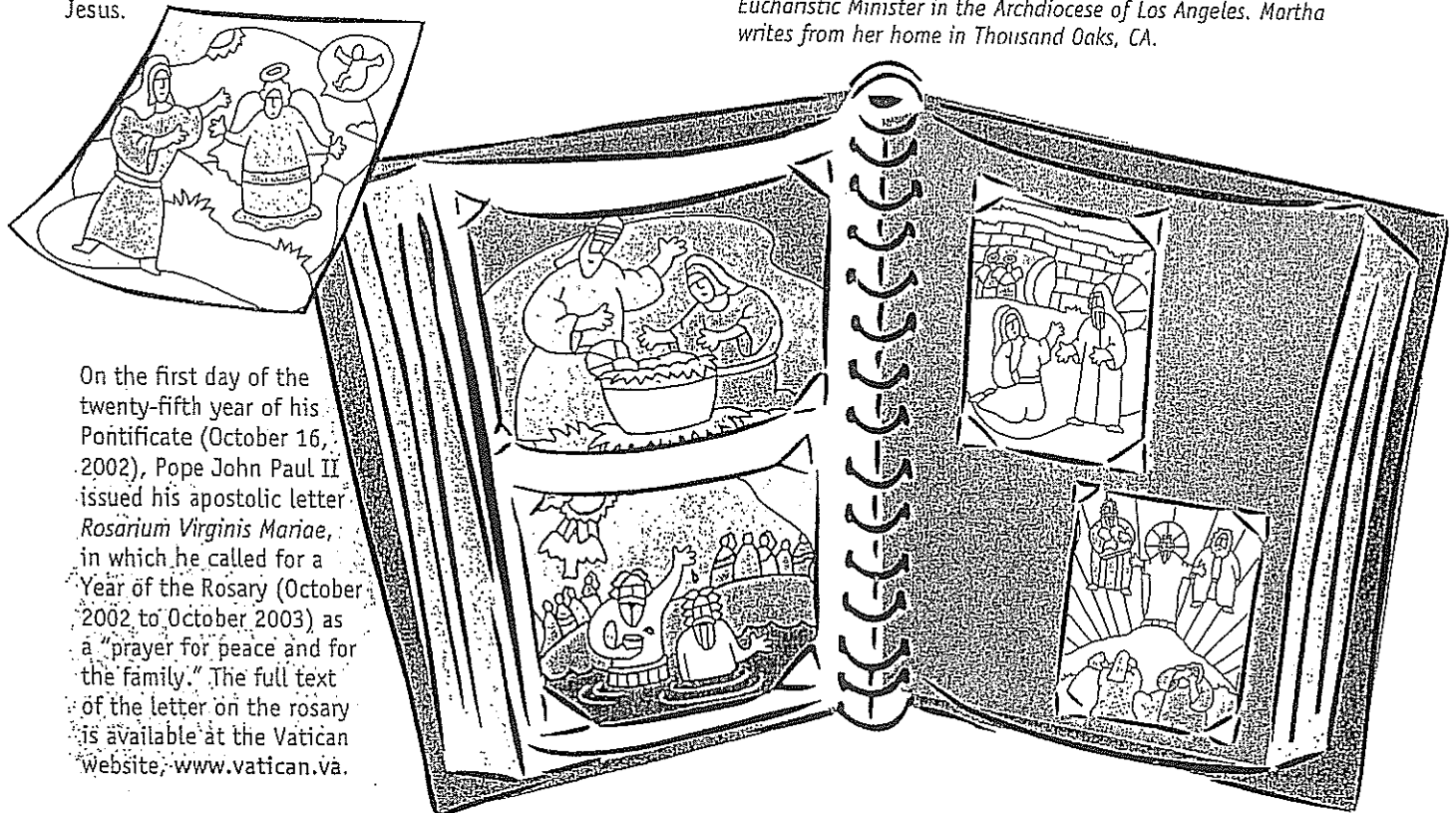


The Glorious Mysteries celebrate our faith in God to make all things work together for the good of the Kingdom of God: 1) the first Easter (the Resurrection); 2) Jesus' leaving the Apostles and ascending into heaven (the Ascension); 3) Pentecost (the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the Apostles); 4) the final moments of Mary's life on earth (the Assumption of Mary into Heaven); 5) the grand celebration of the Holy Trinity with Mary as God welcomes her home (the Coronation of Mary in Heaven).

Mary's scrapbook would be full of her memories—memories of her Son's life and her eternal faithfulness to God's plan of redemption. When we turn the pages of Mary's scrapbook, we remember the astonishing events in the history of our faith.

In his apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, Pope John Paul II writes that the rosary is a "compendium of the Gospel" and "it can present a *significant catechetical opportunity*" (italics used in the apostolic letter). The next time you pray the rosary, take a few minutes to imagine yourself sitting next to Mary as she turns the pages of the Holy Family's scrapbook. Let her tell you about the special memories that she treasured in her heart all these years. Then share with her what you have put in your family scrapbook: the joys, successes, sorrows, and triumphs. Together with Mary, look to her Son in thanksgiving for your family's joys and blessings. Pray for healing of your sorrows and look forward in hope for the day when you see Jesus face to face in heaven.

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On the first day of the twenty-fifth year of his Pontificate (October 16, 2002), Pope John Paul II issued his apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, in which he called for a Year of the Rosary (October 2002 to October 2003) as a "prayer for peace and for the family." The full text of the letter on the rosary is available at the Vatican website, www.vatican.va.