



THE STAR

ROSARY NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

Dear Rosarians

In this issue of **The Star** I propose to begin presenting bit by bit the fruits of my reflections on the new mysteries of the Rosary. Issue by issue we will journey through the five mysteries of light in the order Pope John Paul II presented them. There is a growing body of writings already published on the topic and you may have encountered one or more of these. Neither these writings nor what we plan to present in **The Star** claim to be exhaustive; the Rosary is an *inexhaustible* treasure. Even with its clear and established form as a prayer, it is full of surprises. New discoveries, new experiences, new consolations and new ways of looking at the familiar are always possible.

A new challenge for me this Lent has been the matching up of our human sinfulness with the redeeming Passion of Our Lord. What's new in that? I suppose it's the "matching up". First there is the business of sin. It's a disorder, a spiritual malfunction of our choosing. It's a deliberate act or omission, *mistakenly* either attractive or off-putting, that takes us away from what we know to be God's will. Any or all of our human powers, passions, feelings, organs or members may be implicated. But the crucial defining feature is our act of will in choosing. And so there are many ways and degrees in which we can be spiritually "out of order". Every one of these leaves a mark on us, weakens us, and leaves us captive. The immensity of Our Lord's liberation of us through his suffering, death and resurrection can be more keenly appreciated as we try and see how he lovingly and obediently in his Passion enters into all the different ways our sins have damaged us. Without loss of his all-holy innocence he is "made to be sin" for our sake, as St Paul wrote. "Matching up" here gets us trying to see *in particular* how Jesus the Suffering Servant takes upon himself the manifold ways we humans sin. Mary Mother of the Church who stood under the Cross, stands by us, helping us to realise in gratitude the immensity of the liberation achieved on Calvary and celebrated with **Alleluias** every Easter. May the Risen Lord bless you with His light and joy!

Fr Ben Hensley OP
Promoter of the Rosary Confraternity

FR JOHN PHALEN CSC IN MEXICO

Fr John continues the work of Fr Patrick Peyton, "The Rosary Priest". You may remember his catch phrase: The family that prays together stays together. Fr John wrote of his visits to two cities in Mexico to speak on "The Importance of the Family Rosary" at the Fifth Annual Rosary Congress organised jointly by Family Rosary Mexico and the Dominican Order.

About 400 people attended, and by the end of the Congress I felt as if half of them had come to confession to me! That's a formula for hearing many confessions: just be a foreign priest who is leaving town in the morning. It works every time for drawing long lines! Of course I was happy to oblige.

I stayed with two beautiful families, one in each town. Seeing what their daily routine was like really helped me keep my talk practical. Here's a translation of grace before meals sung by one of the host families:

"Lord, bless this food which we are about to receive.
Bless those who prepared it. Give bread to the poor and a hunger for You to all who have bread."

The families could not do enough for me. Hospitality is alive and well in Mexico. And all seemed quite willing to talk about their prayer life together and their love for the Rosary. They would like to get to know the mysteries better, so they can reflect on the life of Christ as they pray the Rosary together. Their interest is keen, but they have been taught little.

One of the Dominican speakers said that their Superior General challenged the Order recently to make better use of the Rosary for the New Evangelisation. "We have lost 40 years since Vatican II in doing so", he is reported to have said. It's true, the Dominicans for centuries have promoted the Rosary as a way of explaining the life of Christ, but after Vatican II emphasising Mary and the Rosary seemed "uncool". Nothing could have disappointed Fr Peyton more!

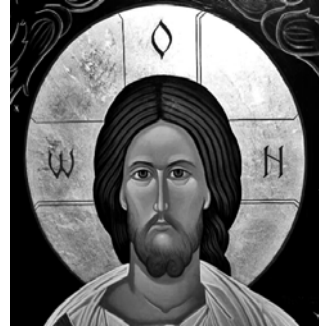
2001-2009 Holy Cross Family Ministries

Swept by an ecstatic joy, I cried: "Jesus, my love! At last I have found my vocation. My vocation is love! I have found my place in the bosom of the Church and it is You, Lord, who has given it me. In the heart of the Church, who is my Mother, *I will be love*. So I shall be everything and so my dreams will be fulfilled!" Why do I speak of "ecstatic joy"? It's the wrong phrase to use. Instead, I should speak of peace, that calm, tranquil peace which the helmsman feels as he sees the beacon which guides him into harbour. How brightly this beacon of love burns! And I know how to reach it and how to make its flames my own.

St Therese of Lisieux: *The Story of a soul*

St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians - St Thomas' Divisions

Having dealt with what the sacraments of baptism, marriage and Eucharist mean, the Apostle now focusses upon the real heart of the sacraments. And here there are two issues: a) What is both indicated by the sign and contained (=the grace) and which is immediately conferred in the sacrament; and b) what is signified alright but not actually contained in the sacrament to be conferred there and then, viz. the glory of the resurrection awaited at the end.



First then, in chapters 12-14 we attend to the gifts of graces actually given, and then in Ch. 15 we will consider the glory of the resurrection.

Chapter 12 - The Gifts given

St Paul here treats first the graces freely given (sometimes called charisms) Ch. 12: 1-31

Announces his general intention 1

Carries out this intention 2-

Spiritual graces are necessary 2-3

Shown by comparison with the state in which they were lacking 2

Shows through its effects how necessary grace is 3

How it helps in abstaining from sin 3a

How it makes for doing good 3b

He begins to distinguish different charismatic graces 4-12

In general, under three headings: 4-6

What the headings are based on:

A threefold distinction: charismatic gifts 4-ministries 5-operations 6

He manifests in detail the general division, made above 7

Distinguishing them into various types

The terms upon which *charisms* are given 7

Their distinctiveness 8-10

He establishes the Author of these graces 11

He clarifies these differences by comparing them with a natural body 12-31

Comparison put in general terms: likeness introduced - adapted 12-13

Detailed explanation of this likeness 14-26

First he describes the natural body and its members 14-

Adverts to the body's wholeness 14

States intention

Clarifies by exemplifying: re movement – re knowledge 15-16

Proves through argument of inconvenience 17-20

Subtraction of necessary organ function 17

Negative consequence 17

Asserts the contrary as true 18

Arguing from lack in the body as a whole 19-20

States the untenable consequence 19

Asserts the very opposite to be the truth 20

Describes the interrelationships of members to each other 21-26
 From the standpoint of need among bodily members 21-22
 All members necessary, though some may be less noble 21
 Compares members on the basis of necessity 22
 Active & attentive care devoted to external organs 23-25a
 Diversity accorded to different members
 Esteem shown in adornments 23
 Appropriate care for respectability 24a
 States the cause of this diversity: efficient 24b - final 25a
 From the standpoint of members looking after each other 25b-
 What he affirms re their overall concern 25b
 He specifies attentiveness: re the bad – re the good 2
 He now applies the natural body likeness to the **Mystical Body** 27-31
 First, with regard to the unity of the Mystical Body 27a
 Then with regard to the differentiation of members 27b
 He takes up the distinguishing of *ministries* 28-
 He formulates an order among ministries 28-
 First, he sets forth the principal ministries 28a
 What pertains to them: government-teaching-miracles
 Orderly application to the various officials 28a
 Then, the lesser or secondary ministries 28b
 He emphasises clearly their distinction 29-30
 He exhorts them to love the aforesaid spiritual gifts 31



MEDITATIONS ON THE MYSTERIES OF LIGHT

Baptism of the Lord Jesus: Origin of Sanctifying Grace

Introduction

Where do we Rosarians start when it comes to exploring the mystery of Our Lord's baptism?

We need the right starting point in our approach to learning something new. For in all effective learning we are led from what we already know to what we don't yet know. It's a process, a kind of movement that has momentum, as the footy people like to say.

But perhaps before we start on the very first of the new mysteries, it will serve us well to have in our minds something of Pope John Paul's reason for introducing them. They are of course an addition; an expansion within the existing mysteries, swelling them out from fifteen to twenty. This was a big move when you bear in mind that no change like this has happened for over four hundred years. What remains so reassuring is that nothing of the time-honoured Rosary tradition has been lost with the addition of the Luminous Mysteries. Pope John Paul made sure that his initiative was a harmonious development designed to enhance his "favourite prayer" (as he named it) by drawing out its unexplored or forgotten treasures.

Nothing familiar and traditional in the prayer has been jettisoned to make way for the new. So what moved him? *The desire to draw out more convincingly the Christological character of Our Lady's Rosary.* Having summed up the Rosary as a "spiritual journey based on the constant contemplation – in Mary's company – of the face of Christ" (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, n.15), he goes on to say, "I believe, however, that to bring out fully the Christological depth of the Rosary it would be suitable to make an addition to the traditional pattern which, while left to the freedom of individuals and communities could broaden it to include *the mysteries of Christ's public ministry between his baptism and his Passion.*"(n. 19)

Back then to our quest for the right starting point. We know the immediately preceding mystery well – the Finding in the Temple -- so let's start there. And as we do we will be looking for signs of an incipient public ministry getting ready to emerge from Jesus' "hidden life", which is where that mystery left us. How did Jesus come to have a hidden life? The fifth joyful mystery should tell us.

"To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate the face of Christ", as John Paul II insisted, RVM n.3) And even though, as the pope says, "In a unique way the face of the Son belongs to Mary" (n.10), the fifth joyful mystery presents us with the face of the Son *lost* to his Mother and then finally *found* by her and St Joseph.

Following on from the Passover celebration, their twelve year old had become lost in work with his Father. The boy Jesus was engrossed. Mary and Joseph had no idea, so they searched, anxiously. After three days' searching they found him. There he was, to their surprise, busy, absorbed in what we could call the work of the theology classroom.

He was listening to the temple teachers and asking them questions. These learned teachers had tenure at the Temple School as God's official theologians. He was engaged with them in his Father's work. In this mystery of interactive teaching and learning we ponder first, Jesus among the (amazed) scholars in a teaching dialogue, then Jesus teaching Mother Mary (and Joseph) about his work in answer to *her* pained question, and thirdly Jesus obedient to them in the hidden years of life in Nazareth. This is a mystery of Jesus the Teacher, by word and example. And so it is that having given a glimpse of his Father's face to face work in temple teaching he disappears from view as it were, to live (and teach us) the hidden life of family obedience. It is this feature of Jesus the Teacher, already noticed in this final Joyful Mystery, that we will find emerging as a dominant factor in his public ministry.

And yet there is something inconclusive about contemplating the face of Jesus the Teacher in this mystery. The teaching exchange of questions and answers between Son and Mother when she finds him in the temple challenges us to wonder, because we are told that Mary and Joseph, "did not understand the saying which he spoke to them".

What was it that they did not understand? Was it the nature of his Father's work?

If Mary and Joseph were left wondering, the mystery would have to be even greater and more enduring for us lesser mortals.

But now Pope John Paul has opened the way for us in the Rosary to continue contemplating the face of Jesus-in-ministry as he reveals it in his public life. The Finding in the Temple thus becomes the starting point that leads us into the public life of Our Lord. After the many hidden years of family life of Nazareth he reappears, joining John the Baptist on the banks of the river Jordan. In that most special meeting he will prepare himself for his public ministry of teaching and healing, by being baptized.

But while this was happening we can ask, "What was that cousin John up to?"

A dozen or more years prior to the Finding in the Temple they had met, so to speak, before they were even born, through their mothers Mary and Elizabeth. It was a most significant meeting, that Visitation. For we can see how it was part of God's design. The Angel's mention to Mary concerning Elizabeth at the Annunciation communicated a little more of the unfolding plan of God's saving providence, as had the same Angel's revealing Temple visit to the (initially) unbelieving father Zachary. The seniors Zachary and Elizabeth were to have a son, miraculously, who would be the planned Saviour's "go before" man. Perhaps even before he was born, and certainly eight days afterwards, John was beginning to fulfil the angelic prophecy to Zachary that he would "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" (Lk. 1:17). For in the great canticle we call the *Benedictus* John's father Zachary at the circumcision proclaims his baby son's destiny, revealing at the same time his own fatherly heart now turned and made ready for the Lord.

So what happened to John after all that?

“And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness till the day of his manifestation to Israel.” (Lk. 1:80)

And that manifestation to Israel took place in a striking way through his preaching and baptizing at the Jordan, for we are told that “the multitudes” came out to him. *“In those days”* writes St Mark, as all the country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem were coming out to him, *“Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan”* (Mk 1:9)

In a sense, then, both John and Jesus came out of hidden lives to begin the work God had for them. For each of them it was to be a work of making God’s saving act manifest. John’s task was to ensure that the Saviour be revealed to Israel (Jn. 1:31) and for that he had to stand out as an extraordinary figure among God’s chosen people. And Jesus’ mission was to reveal in himself the presence and action of the all holy Trinity, healing, cleansing and elevating the damaged human spirit. And as we shall see, he was to do this as *head of the body, the Church* (Col. 1: 18)

How can we begin to appreciate the magnitude of this event?

St Mark’s telling of Jesus’ saving events in his gospel (supposedly the earliest one) is generally briefer than is found in either Matthew or Luke. And that is borne out in his account of the baptism of Jesus, though Luke’s longer account overall gives no more than the bare fact that Jesus was baptized. Regarding the act of baptism Luke’s account is even more sparing than that of Mark. Nevertheless Mark’s positioning of the event and his succinctness is a great help to us in our trying to grasp the significance of Our Lord’s baptism.

Why the positioning?

Well, he chose to begin his whole gospel with it. He doesn’t begin with the conception and birth of Jesus as Matthew and Luke do, nor with the timeless divine birth of the divine Word entering our time and our world as John does. Instead he begins with Jesus entering the world as an adult. The Bridegroom comes seeking his Bride, as an ancient antiphon puts it. And John, the Bridegroom’s friend, introduces them.

Even though Mark does not begin with the origin of Jesus as the other gospels do, he does emphasise the idea of **beginning**. It is the first word of his gospel, just as it is the first expression in Genesis, the first book of the Bible, and the first expression in St John’s gospel. But as Genesis presents (in poetic form) the divine origin of the *World* by creation, and John the evangelist presents the divine origin of the uncreated *Word* entering into creation, so Mark is concerned to recount the divine origin of the *Gospel*, the good news of the re-creation of humanity in Christ. All three are making the point: Let us attend to origins!

How can we appreciate the significance of St Mark's opening?

By keeping in mind the beginning of the world and the beginning of Jesus.

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mk. 1:1)

God creates in the great beginning, as portrayed in the book of Genesis. At the beginning of St John's gospel the timeless, eternally-being-born Word is made flesh. And within the gospel of St Mark, at its very beginning we find the Baptism of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Creation, Incarnation and Baptism mark three great beginnings; the birth of the world, the birth of the Word, and the birth of the Saviour's public ministry.

The world owes its existence to God the Creator, absolutely. More specifically, the human creation owes its existence, its illumination and its life to the Divine Word. And most specifically, that realm of creation which is humanity owes its healing from sin and growth in holiness to Jesus the Christ. L. Bouyer (**The Christian Mystery**, 115) insists that the opening words of the gospel must be translated thus: “The beginning of this Gospel *which* is Jesus Christ the Son of God”. Jesus is therefore being identified with the gospel. And here we note that the first gospel event is his baptism. We can begin to see something of its significance.

So where is our meditation leading us so far?

Baptism is the point of departure for the public ministry of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Digging deeper, can Jesus' baptism therefore be seen as *the principle* of his public ministry, the fount or source from which all else flows, and to which it refers back? Our meditative exploration of this first Luminous Mystery and the subsequent mysteries seeks an answer to this question. One issue that will have to be considered is the relationship between Jesus' Baptism and the Cross, since the Cross lies at the heart of the gospel (Cf. 1Cor. 1:17-18).

“As for me”, wrote St Ignatius of Antioch to the Ephesians, “my spirit is now all humble devotion to the Cross: the Cross which so greatly offends the unbelievers, but is salvation and eternal life to us.” (*To be continued*)

B.H.



HOLY THURSDAY

The Hebrew Pasch was and is a family feast. It was not celebrated in the Temple, but at home. In the account of the Exodus the home already appears as the place of salvation and of refuge in that dark night of the passing over of the Angel of the Lord. In another way that night in Egypt is an image of the power of death, of the destruction and chaos which are always rising up from the depths of the world and of humankind, and which threaten to destroy the 'good' creation and transform the world into a desert, into something uninhabitable. In this situation the home and the family offer a place of shelter; in other words, the world has to be continually defended from chaos, creation must always be protected and made new...

Jesus, too, celebrated the Pasch in compliance with the prescription: at home with his family, for the Apostles had become his new family. In this he was, on the other hand, obeying a precept then existing according to which the pilgrims who made their way to Jerusalem could form pilgrim groups called *chaburot* which for that night constituted a home and family for the Pasch. And so the Pasch has become a Christian feast also. We are the *chaburah* of Jesus, the family he has founded with his company of pilgrims, with the friends who travel the way of the Gospel with him through the land of history....

This feast should be once again today a feast of the family, the true bulwark for the defence of creation and humankind.

Selections from a retreat lecture given to Pope John Paul II by the then Cardinal Ratzinger at the beginning of Lent in 1983. His retreat lectures were published as Journey Towards Easter.

**Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that made us
whole,
and with his stripes we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone stray;
we have turned every one to his own way:
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.**

Isaiah 53: 4-6

WHOLE BIBLE CATECHISM (Continued)

From St Thomas' Summa Theologica II/II

On the Subject of Hope - Question 18

Article 2 *Whether in the blessed there is hope?*

Objection: The blessedness of the saints will involve not only glory of soul but of body as well, whereas the holy souls already in heaven still await the glorification of their bodies, as is evident from the Apocalypse and St Augustine. Hope then can be in the blessed.

St Paul writes, **“How could a man still hope for something he sees?”**
(Rom. 8:24)

Article 3 *Whether there is hope in the damned?*

Objection: Hope can be animated by charity or not, even as is the case with faith. But such lifeless faith can be in the devils and the damned according to James who writes, “The demons believe and tremble”. so by the same token, it would seem that the damned too could have a lifeless hope.

Hope causes joy, according to St Paul, **“Rejoicing in hope”** (Rom. 12:12). Yet the damned are not in a state of joy, but rather one of sorrow and grief: as Isaiah says, **“My servants shall shout for joy of heart, but you shall cry out for grief of heart, and shall howl for anguish of spirit”**. (Is. 65:14)

Article 4 *Whether there is a certitude to hope in this life?*

Objection: It would seem that there is no certitude in hope during this life. For hope is in the will and certitude is rather a matter of the intellect.

Peter Lombard teaches that hope is the certain expectation of future beatitude, and the same truth is able to be gathered from 2Tim. 1:12—**“I know in whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to guard the trust committed to me.”**

The Gift of Fear - Question 19

Article 1 *Whether can be an object of fear?*

Objection: It seems that God is not able to be feared, for the object of fear is some future evil, and God, being goodness itself is free of all evil. Thus God cannot be feared.

Jeremiah says, “Who shall not fear you, O King of nations” (Jer. 10:7): and Malachi, “If I am a master, where is my fear?” (Mal. 1:6)

Article 3 *Whether worldly fear is always evil?*

Objection: Anything that is natural in human beings would not appear to be evil,

from the very fact that such natural leanings are from God. To fear injury to one's own body and the loss of worldly goods which sustain life is surely natural to human beings so it would appear that worldly fear is not always evil.

The words of Our Lord forbid worldly fear: **“Be not afraid of those who kill the body”**.
(Matt. 10:28)

Article 7 *Whether fear is the beginning of wisdom?*

The words of the Psalmist: **“The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.”**
(Ps. 110:10)

Article 9 *Whether fear is a gift of the Holy Spirit?*

Objection: The gifts are perfective of the virtues, being given, in St Gregory's words, in aid of the virtues. Yet hope is more perfect than fear, being concerned with the good, whereas fear regards evil. Hope being a virtue, we should not say that fear is a gift.

In Isaiah fear of the Lord is numbered among the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. (Is. 11:3)

Article 11 *Whether fear remains in heaven?*

Objection: John's phrase: “When he appears we shall be like unto him”, means that in heaven human beings will be conformed to God. But God fears nothing; so in heaven humans shall be without fear.

The Psalmist has written, **“Holy fear of the Lord perdures forever.”** (Ps. 18:10)



St Thomas Aquinas was born in Rocca Secca, Southern Italy in the mid 1220's. He was a theological giant, teaching and writing ceaselessly and systematically on the whole range of biblical, theological and philosophical topics as he travelled to Rome, Naples, Orvieto, Cologne and Paris. He died in 1274 probably under the age of 50. His output was immense. Widely known as “Angelic Doctor”, a less familiar and even more appropriate title applied to him was “Master of the Sacred Page”. And the saying of Ben Johnson about Shakespeare fits Thomas: “He was not for an age but for all time”.

Our picture attempts to capture the occasion in which the Crucifix spoke to him, “You have written well of me, Thomas.”

The Rosary is a prayer of lingering. One must take one's time for it, putting the necessary time at its disposal, not only externally but internally.

Romano Guardini



The Rosary is made up of two things: mental prayer and vocal prayer. In the Holy Rosary mental prayer is nothing other than meditation on the chief mysteries of the life, death and glory of Jesus Christ and of his Blessed Mother. Vocal prayer consists in saying fifteen decades of the Hail Mary, each decade headed by an Our Father, while at the same time meditating on and contemplating the ...principal virtues which Jesus and Mary practiced in the ...mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

St Louis De Montfort

[The number 15 has been omitted from this quotation in deference to Pope John Paul 's introduction of the five Luminous Mysteries. Let us remember that in his Apostolic Letter doing so, Pope John Paul mentioned St Louis' "excellent work on the Rosary" as well as quoting his explanation of Our Lady's role in the process of our configuration to Christ : *Our entire perfection consists in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ.*—**Rosarium Virginis Mariae n. 8; n.15]**

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