

Praying the Rosary

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *Praying the Rosary* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

The Rosary is a devotional that helps us pray to Jesus through Mary. It consists of a string of beads and a crucifix, and can be recited aloud in a group setting, or prayed silently in private. The Rosary is a scriptural prayer because it invites us to meditate on the Biblical events in the lives of Jesus and Mary. We call these events Mysteries.

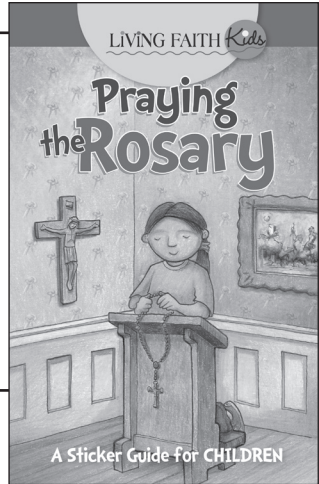
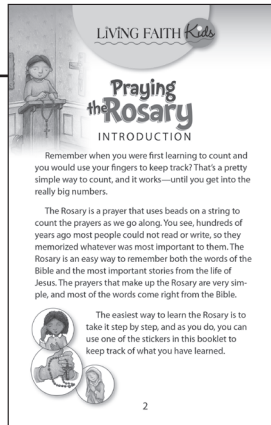
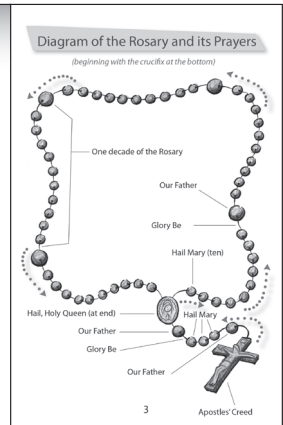
Saint John Paul II wrote that the Rosary is meant to be experienced as "a path to contemplation." Everything about the Rosary, from the meditations on the Mysteries, to the repetition of prayers, to the fingering of the beads is meant to gently guide us away from distractions and into God's restful, loving presence. By helping children pray the Rosary, we help them contemplate God's gift of salvation as a reality they can picture in their own minds, as it is given to us by Jesus, who was born of Mary.

Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

Loving Father, open our hearts as we join Mary in the prayers of the Rosary. Send your Holy Spirit to help us reflect on the saving power of your Son Jesus, so that we can grow in wisdom, faith, and love. Amen.

Teaching Steps

Page(s)		
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Say, <i>We will be learning about the Rosary. The Rosary is a way to pray to Jesus through his mother Mary.</i> • Discuss the art. Point out how the child is holding the Rosary beads. Ask, <i>How does the child seem to feel? Peaceful? Relaxed?</i> Note that although kneeling is a prayerful posture, it is not the only way to pray the Rosary. Many people pray while sitting, standing, walking, and even lying in bed! 	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read aloud the text. Repeat the phrase, "the most important stories from the life of Jesus." Ask, <i>Have you ever prayed by remembering a story?</i> Explain that the Rosary is a way to pray using our imaginations to think about stories of Jesus and Mary in the Bible. Ask, <i>Where do we get the prayers that make up the Rosary?</i> (From the Bible) 	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the children to look at the picture of the Rosary beads. Ask, <i>Does this look like a Rosary you have seen? How is it the same, or different?</i> Call their attention to the crucifix. Invite them to place their finger on the crucifix and trace the beads with their fingers, following the arrows. Point out the large and small beads as they go. Ask, <i>How many of the large beads can you count?</i> 	<div>   </div>

- **Read the first paragraph.** Follow the directions for making the Sign of the Cross, and practice it together.
- **Read the next paragraph.** Ask, *Who is the Holy Trinity?* (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.)
- **Read the third paragraph.** Point out the words **Apostles' Creed** in block letters. Ask, *What are some things we mention when we say a creed?* (What we believe, important events and people.) Ask, *Why do you think it's helpful to state our beliefs in our prayer?* (Affirm positive responses. Point out that the Holy Spirit helps us to be faithful to our beliefs.)

Getting Started

Rosaries are made up of a loop of beads and a pendant. The beads may be made of wood or glass or even plastic, but the important thing is how you use them. At the end of the pendant is a cross, and that's where you begin. To make the **Sign of the Cross**, use your right hand to touch your forehead, then your waist, your left shoulder and your right shoulder while saying these words:



In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Sign of the Cross tells us that we are directing our prayer to God in the Holy Trinity. As we pray, we will also ask the help of Mary, the Mother of God.

The next prayer is the **Apostles' Creed**, and you pray it on the cross at the bottom of the string of beads. A "creed" reminds us what we believe about God by listing some very important events and people. This prayer is called the Apostles' Creed because it is what Christians have believed going all the way back to the time when Jesus walked the earth.



For each page from 5 through 9, follow these steps:

- **Rosary images:** Call the children's attention to the Rosary section at the top of each page. Invite them to place their index fingers on the crucifix or bead as you say the prayers together.
- **Read aloud the text explaining each prayer.** Invite the children to follow along in their booklets.
- **Pause after reading aloud the names of the prayers.** Some children will know all the prayers, a few, or none at all. To accommodate all learners, invite the children to underline everyone who is mentioned in each prayer. (For example: Mary, the Lord, women, Jesus, God, us, and sinners are all mentioned in the Hail Mary.)
- **Refer to page 3 as needed.** This can help children see how the prayers fit into the full devotion.
- **Stickers:** After completing each prayer, have the children turn to the sticker insert and find the corresponding sticker to place on the page.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived
by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to
judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

THE OUR FATHER

After the Apostles' Creed, we come to the first bead, and it's a little different from most of the other beads. Sometimes it's larger than the others or carved in a special way, but it's always set apart from the cross and the other beads. This bead, and all those like it, are for praying the Our Father, the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

THE HAIL MARY

After the first bead on three beads right together. These are beads for saying the **Hail Mary**, the prayer most often said during the Rosary. The Hail Mary combines words from the Gospel of St. Luke. The first sentence is the angel's greeting to Mary (Luke 1:28), and the second sentence is Elizabeth's greeting (Luke 1:42). The last sentence asks Mary to pray for us always.

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners, now and
at the hour of our death. Amen.

THE GLORY BE

After saying a Hail Mary on each of the three beads, we come to a space between the last Hail Mary bead and the next Our Father bead. In this space we say a **Glory Be**:

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN

The Rosary is made up of five decades. Each decade is made up of one bead for the Our Father, ten Hail Mary beads and a Glory Be in the space following the last Hail Mary bead in a set. When we finish all five decades of the Rosary, we conclude with the **Hail, Holy Queen**:

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness and our hope.
To you do we cry, poor banished
children of Eve;
To you do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this
valley of tears.
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy towards us, and
after this, our exile, show us to be the
blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus,
O clement, O loving,
O sweet Virgin Mary!

Praying the Rosary

You have all the prayers, so you are ready to pray the Rosary.

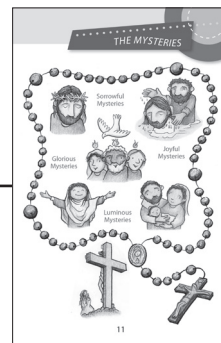
Each decade also features a "mystery." The Mysteries of the Rosary are not detective tales, but marvelous stories of God's love for us, usually taken from the Gospels.

To pray the Joyful Mysteries, for example, think about the first Joyful Mystery as you pray the first decade: the Annunciation, when the angel visited Mary with the news that she would be the mother of Jesus.

For the second decade, call to mind the second Joyful Mystery—the Visitation—and so on through all five Joyful Mysteries. The entire Rosary includes the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, the Glorious Mysteries and the Luminous Mysteries, but usually we just pray one set of mysteries (five decades) at a time.

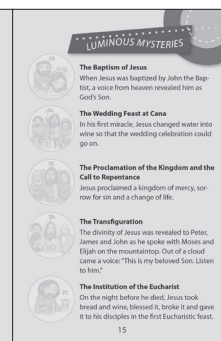
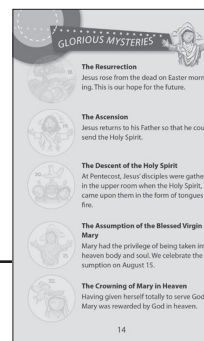
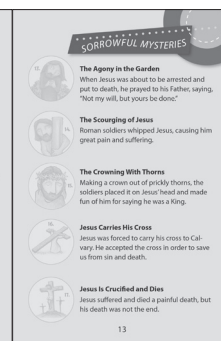
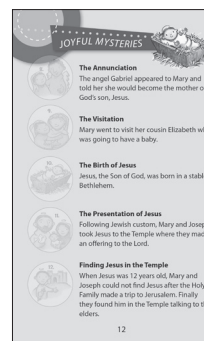
- **Read the head and first paragraph on page 10.** Say, *The prayers we say are an important part of the Rosary, but there is another part that helps us listen to what God is saying to us, and how he wants to help us. This is the "imagination" and "stories" part of the Rosary we talked about.*
- **Read the second paragraph.** Invite the children to mention any Bible stories they know. (Use the pictures on page 11 to prompt ideas, if needed.) Point out how these stories show God's love.

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| 10-11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the third and fourth paragraphs. Ask the children to share what they know about the Annunciation and Visitation. (Read Luke 1:26-38 and/or Luke 1:39-45 if necessary.) • The Mysteries: Read the names of the Mysteries on page 11. Ask, <i>Which of these pictures do you think are Sorrowful Mysteries? Which are Joyful or Glorious Mysteries?</i> |
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| 12 through 15 | <p>To pray the Rosary with the children, follow these important tips.</p> <p>Plan to pray no more than one full Rosary (one set of Mysteries) at a time.</p> |
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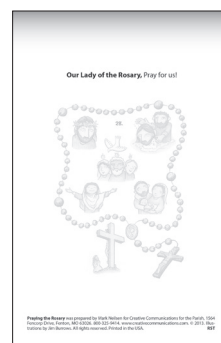
- **Engage.** Invite the children to look at the pictures of each Mystery while you recite the prayers together as a group. Encourage them to picture what is happening in their imaginations.
- **Announce.** Before praying each decade, announce the Mystery. Invite the children to place each Mystery sticker after you have finished each decade.
- **Gauge your group.** Some children can pray an entire Rosary in one sitting. Some may be able to pray a decade or two. (If you have just finished the booklet, you may choose to pray one decade now and finish the rest later.) If children become overly restless, close the prayer and begin again later.
- **Rosary beads.** If you do not have Rosary beads for the children, refer to the picture on the back of the booklet or on page 3 as you pray.



Closing Prayer

Conclude Living Faith Kids: Praying the Rosary by praying together the following prayer.

God, thank you for the gift of our imagination, which we use while praying the Rosary. Help us grow closer to your Son Jesus and honor our mother Mary by making the Rosary part of our daily prayers. Amen.



Living Faith Kids

Praying the Rosary was written by Mark Neilsen and corresponding Teaching Pages developed by Connie Clark, David Dziena, and Lindsay Taylor for Creative Communications for the Parish, 1564 Fencorp Drive, Fenton, MO 63026, 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com © 2020, 2013. Illustrations by Jim Burrows. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

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