

EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM



WELCOME TO OUR

Winter Newsletter

Spirituality Team

THE ROSARY UNPACKED PART II

In the last newsletter, the topic of Unpacking the prayers of the Rosary was premiered. Continue this journey as we go from Sir Deacon Carl 's reflection on the Our Father prayer to the to another source; the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). We often forget that our faith and Church doctrine is written down for all to understand in the CCC. With this context, let's break down the sentences of the prayer with the help of the CCC.

THE ROSARY UNPACKED PART II

Prayer Text	Meaning (from the Catechism)	CCC Reference
“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.”	Gabriel’s greeting. Mary is filled with God’s grace; the Lord is uniquely present with her. When the Church prays this, it participates in Gabriel’s praise for God’s work in Mary.	CCC 2676
“Blessed art thou among women...”	Elizabeth, moved by the Holy Spirit, recognizes Mary as uniquely blessed because of her faith and because she bears the Messiah.	CCC 2676
“...and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.”	The blessing focuses on Jesus , whom Mary carries. Christ is the “blessed fruit of Mary’s womb,” and the prayer is ultimately Christ-centered.	CCC 2676
“Holy Mary, Mother of God...”	Mary is called <i>holy</i> because she is full of grace. She is the Mother of God because she is the mother of Jesus, the Son of God. The faithful entrust their petitions to her motherly intercession.	CCC 2677
“...pray for us sinners...”	The Church asks Mary to intercede. By asking this, we acknowledge we are sinners and appeal to her as “Mother of Mercy,” whose prayer is powerful because she is our Mother in the order of grace.	CCC 2677
“...now and at the hour of our death.”	Christians ask Mary to pray for them in the present and especially at the moment of death—when eternal destiny is at stake.	CCC 2677

The Roman Catholic Church is unique in that it is the only Christian body with a single, universal catechism intended to summarize the entire faith for all believers. The Hail Mary prayer is a small example of our doctrine and traditions documented. We hope that this both helps you gain deeper spiritual insights of this prayer and inspiration to enhance your knowledge through reading the CCC.

JUBILEE 2025, THE PILGRIMS OF HOPE



We continue the theme from the Fall newsletter on Pilgrimages; our focus goes to a reflection on the Jubilee 2025 and its theme; Pilgrims of Hope. On December 24, 2024, Pope Francis opened the Jubilee year of Hope. On January 6, 2026, Pope Leo IV closed the Jubilee year reciting the prayer of thanksgiving for the ordinary holy year, proclaiming: "This Holy Door is closed, but the door of your mercy is not closed." (source: Victoria Cardial. Catholic News Agency). It is estimated that over 33M Pilgrims attended the Jubilee in Rome. This included a delegation of over 3,700 EOHSJ members in the EOHSJ Jubilee Pilgrimage on October 21-23. The delegation was primarily European, however there were over 30 people from the Western Lieutenancy.

"The highlight from our EOHSJ Jubilee Pilgrimage was the celebration of the Mass at the basilicas with our Grand Master and thousands of members from our Order. We were all wearing our robes sitting next to Knights and Dames from all over the world. Each Mass was both beautiful and spiritually inspiring." Viktor Rzeteljski, KCHS, Chancellor Western Lieutenancy

Sir Robert Barbarowicz, KGCHS & OLA Area Ambassador, wrote: "On Thursday, October 23, 2025, our Order concluded its Jubilee Pilgrimage to Rome. On Thursday morning, prior to entering the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica for final prayers and Mass, there was a private audience with Pope Leo. The audience was held at the Paul VI Audience Hall, also known as the Hall of the Pontifical Audiences. The 3,700 of our Dames, Knights and families from 40 countries attended the audience. The Pope spoke for about 30 minutes and gave his apostolic blessing. The text of his address to the Order is below. In the address, his Holiness focused on our mission to support the Christian communities of the Holy Land and urges us to continue to be guardians of the Tomb of Christ by embodying the virtues of hope, charity and faith."



POPE LEO'S ADDRESS TO THE EOHSJ



Paul VI Audience Hall – Thursday, October 23, 2025

It is wonderful, in this Jubilee Year, to meet with all of you, Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. They have come to Rome from various parts of the world, which reminds us that the practice of pilgrimage is at the origin of their history. In fact, they were born to guard the Holy Sepulchre, to care for pilgrims, and to support the Church of Jerusalem. They still do so today, with the humility, dedication, and spirit of sacrifice that characterize the orders of knighthood, in particular with “a constant witness of faith and solidarity toward the Christians residing in the Holy Places” (Saint John Paul II, Address to the Participants in the Jubilee of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, March 2, 2000).

In this regard, I am thinking of the remarkable help they provide, quietly and without publicity, to the communities of the Holy Land, supporting the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in its various activities: the seminary, schools, charitable and relief works, humanitarian and educational projects, the university, aid to the Churches, with special interventions in times of greatest crisis, as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the tragic days of the war.

With all this, you demonstrate that safeguarding the Sepulchre of Christ does not simply mean preserving a historical-archaeological or artistic heritage, however important that may be, but rather supporting a Church made of living stones (cf. 1 Pet 2:4-5), which was born around it and still lives today, as an authentic sign of Easter hope. For this reason, in the Jubilee of Hope, I would like to contemplate it with you, for a moment, highlighting three dimensions. The first is that of trusting hope (cf. Francis, Bull *Spes non confundit*, 4). Remaining at the Lord's tomb means, in fact, renewing one's faith in the God who keeps his promises, whose power no human force can defeat. In a world where arrogance and violence seem to prevail over charity, you are called to bear witness that life conquers death, love conquers hatred, forgiveness conquers revenge, and mercy and grace conquer sin. May your “vigilance” in the Holy Places be above all a “vigilance of faith” that helps the men and women of our time to pause with their hearts at Christ's tomb, where pain finds a response in trust and where, for those who know how to listen, the proclamation continues to resound: “Do not be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen [...] as he said” (Mt 28:6). And they will be able to do this by nourishing their hearts with an intense sacramental life, with listening to and meditating on the Word of God, with personal and liturgical prayer, and with the spiritual formation so carefully maintained in the Order.



POPE LEO'S ADDRESS TO THE EOHSJ

(cont'd)



The second dimension of hope on which I would like to dwell is embodied in the image of the women who go to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body (cf. Mk 16:1-2). This is the face of service, through which not even the Master's death prevented Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome from caring for him. I have already expressed my gratitude to them for the great good they do, following the ancient tradition of assistance that characterizes them. How often, thanks to their work, a ray of light opens for individuals, families, and entire communities who risk being swept away by terrible tragedies, at every level, especially in the places where Jesus lived. Their charity sustains them, grasping in their needs those "signs of the times" that Pope Francis has invited us to make our own, transforming them into "signs of hope" (cf. *Spes non confundit*, 8).

But there is a third dimension of hope to which I wish to refer: the one that leads us to look toward the goal. The image we can evoke is that of Peter and John running toward the tomb (cf. Jn 20:4-10). On Easter morning, after listening to the women, they immediately set off in haste, in a race that will lead them, at the side of the empty tomb, to renew their faith in Christ in the light of the Resurrection. Saint Paul uses the same image when he speaks of his life as a race in a stadium, not without a goal, but oriented toward the encounter with the Lord (cf. 1 Cor 9:24-27). This is what is expressed in the gesture of pilgrimage, as a symbol of the search for the ultimate meaning of life (cf. *Spes non confundit*, 5).

You too have realized this, and I invite you to live your time here not as a point of arrival, but as a stage from which to set out again, moving toward the only true and definitive goal: full and eternal communion with God in Paradise. Make this also a witness to the brothers and sisters you will meet: an invitation to experience the things of this world with the freedom and joy of those who know they are journeying toward the infinite horizon of eternity.

Dearly beloved, the Church entrusts you today once again with the task of being guardians of Christ's tomb. Be so, in the confidence of expectation, in the zeal of charity, in the joyful impulse of hope. As Saint Augustine said to the Christians of his time: "Go forward, go forward in goodness [...]. Do not stray from the path, do not look back, do not stand still!" (*Sermo* 256,3). I bless you from my heart and pray for all of you.



As we reflect on the year that passed and the meaning of Pilgrims of Hope theme, Fr. Michael Murphy, Pastor of Sacred Heart Church Coronado, sheds light on this. The following is an excerpt from a recent homily.

During this Jubilee year, we are called to be a people of hope; to keep our eyes fixed on Christ. In today's passage, we heard a description of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit: "It is a spirit, intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle... loving the good, beneficent, kindly" (Wisdom 7:22ff). People of hope possess these qualities. But how do we come into possession of them? Cultivation of this hope is supported by three important principles.

First, we must keep our eyes on the Lord. Someone once said: "Life is a lot less about what you are facing, and a lot more about where you are looking". Our gaze, where we look, determines what grounds us. When our gaze is on †Jesus, even during challenging times, we are anchored in truth that is stable and strong. This stability requires more than occasional prayer, checking-in with God. It demands a true intimacy with the Lord, a deep, personal relationship with God. We must intentionally carve out space, daily, for prayer; prayer that is characterized by honesty, affection and persistence. Prayer is how we are rooted in hope, especially during challenging times.

A second principle is to choose unity over division. Polarization is dominating the world, and the Church. Too often, we are identified by labels: liberal, conservative, progressive, traditional. These categories only result in greater division and separation from God's will for us. People of hope embrace that which is stable and eternal: the mind of Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:16). We must discern God's will in all things. Let us embrace only one label: a person of discernment; one who, prayerfully, listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit. We must not allow secular categories to determine how we live our faith. The mind of Christ is the standard. †Jesus, the Word of God, created the heavens and the earth, is the One who builds the "new heavens and new earth" (2 Peter 3:12-13) with our help. People of hope are co-creators, in this bridge-building apostolate. People of hope create a space for seeing all things in the light of Christ. This is what illuminates our path.



Finally, surround yourself with hopeful people. “Never hang around people who don’t believe in you, because you never know how far they can drag you down”. The people we choose to be around will determine our spiritual well-being. They can determine the attitudes we adopt, good or bad. This does not mean only surrounding ourselves with those who agree with us. We are called to proclaim the good news “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). But hopelessness and negativity can infiltrate our thoughts and feelings. Yet, surrounding ourselves with people who share our hope results in joy and optimism, shaping our lives with the fruits of the Holy Spirit. “A hopeful heart is not born in isolation; instead, it thrives in the rich soil of communion with others” (Hope and Mission In the Pews, Fr. Mark Toups, The Priest, September 2025). This is how we cultivate a life where hope can flourish. We can rise above daily difficulties.

During this Jubilee year, we are called to be a people of hope; to keep our eyes fixed on Christ. We must be committed to unity and choose to cultivate hope. In this way we will heal divisions and find a light in the darkness, guiding along the way to holiness.

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawakened in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom. May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally. May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

SPECIAL JUBILEE YEAR FOR ST. FRANCIS

Although we conclude this Jubilee Pilgrimage Year of Hope inaugurated by Pope Francis, Pope Leo has declared a special Jubilee Year of Saint Francis of Assisi, to be observed from January 10, 2026, to January 10, 2027, on the occasion of the eighth centenary of his death.
<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/vatican-city/news/2026-01/year-saint-francis-indulgence-assisi.html>