

**Is it true the rosary was given to us directly by Mary herself? When and where and in what form? Did she specify the prayers and mysteries as we know them today?**

Last week I covered the first two parts of this three-part question and talked about how the 150 Hail Marys of the Angelic Psalter were broken up by St. Dominic into 15 groups of ten, called decades. Each decade was related to some aspect of the life of Jesus and Mary, referred to as a mystery, and was given a title. These mysteries give us an opportunity for reflection, an opportunity to walk with Jesus and Mary, as we pray the rosary.

These 15 decades, or mysteries, were divided up into three groups of five (Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious). The Joyful Mysteries begin with Jesus' conception and end when He was found in the temple. The Sorrowful Mysteries begin with Jesus' Agony in the Garden and end with His Crucifixion. The Glorious Mysteries begin with the Resurrection and end with the Coronation of Mary after her Assumption.

In 2002, Pope John Paul II suggested an additional five decades, the Luminous Mysteries. The Luminous Mysteries fit between the Joyful and the Sorrowful and trace the three years of Jesus' ministry. They begin with His Baptism in the Jordan and end when He instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

Mary did not give us the basic prayers of the rosary. The Our Father was given to us by Jesus. The Hail Mary evolved as a combination of Gabriel's and Elizabeth's greetings from scripture (Luke 1:28 & 1:42). The Glory Be was a form of praise to the Trinity developed around the 4<sup>th</sup> century. And the Apostles Creed was based on the teachings of the apostles. There is a new prayer, however, that has recently been added after each decade which *was* given by Mary to the children at Fatima: "*O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.*"

**Deacon Joe**