



Rosary of the Seven Sorrows

The Rosary of the Seven Sorrows, also known as the Chaplet of Seven Sorrows or the Servite Rosary, is a prayer that originated with the religious order of the Servites. In 1240, the seven founders withdrew from the world to serve the Lord, leading a life of penance and prayer. They introduced the rosary of the Seven Sorrows, meditating on the principal sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and this new form of meditative prayer was approved by several popes. In biblical usage the number seven suggests covenant, fullness, completeness, and abundance. The chaplet recalls seven scriptural events in which the Blessed Virgin Mary suffered together with her divine son.

The rosary itself consists of:

“a ring of seven groups of seven beads separated by a small medal depicting one of the sorrows of Mary, or a single bead. A further series of three beads and a medal are also attached to the chain (before the first “sorrow”) and these are dedicated to prayer in honor of Mary’s tears, as well as to indicate the beginning of the chaplet. Conventionally the beads are of black wood or some other black material indicating sorrow.”¹

There is no mandatory method for praying this chaplet. The most widespread way begins with the sign of the cross and an act of contrition. After announcing each sorrow, a brief meditation can be read, or a segment from the hymn *Stabat Mater Dolorosa* can be sung or recited. An *Our Father* is prayed, followed by a *Hail Mary* on each of the seven beads. After each set of seven, either a *Glory Be* or a brief invocation to Our Lady of Sorrows (such as “Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary pray for us”) is prayed. The next sorrow is then announced, and carried out in the same manner until all seven have been meditated upon. The three *Hail Marys* dedicated to her tears are prayed, and then a closing prayer is said, traditionally the following:

V. Pray for us, O most sorrowful Virgin.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we now implore, both for the present and for the hour of our death, the intercession of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, your Mother, whose holy soul was pierced at the time of your passion by a sword of grief. Grant us this favor, Savior of the world, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosary_of_the_Seven_Sorrows



Promises

It was revealed to St. Bridget of Sweden (1303-1373) that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary's Seven Sorrows would bring great graces. Those promises included:

1. "I will grant peace to their families."
2. "They will be enlightened about the Divine Mysteries."
3. "I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work."
4. "I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of my Divine Son or the sanctification of their souls."
5. "I will defend them in their spiritual battles with the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives."
6. "I will visibly help them at the moment of their death. They will see the face of their Mother."
7. "I have obtained this grace from my divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to my tears and dolors, will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness since all their sins will be forgiven and my Son and I will be their eternal consolation and joy."

Prayer of consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus & Our Lady of Sorrows²

I give myself and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, my person and my life, my actions, pains and sufferings. Jesus, I desire honor, love and glorify your Sacred Heart with all my being. This is my purpose: to be all yours, and to do all things for the love of you. I renounce with all my heart whatever is displeasing to you. I therefore take you, O Sacred Heart, to be the only object of my love, the guardian of my life, my assurance of salvation, the remedy of my weakness and inconstancy, the atonement for all the faults of my life and my sure refuge at the hour of death. Be then, O Heart of goodness, my justification before God the Father, and turn away from me the strokes of his righteous anger. O Heart of love, I put all my confidence in you, for I fear everything from my own wickedness and frailty, but I hope for all things from your goodness and bounty. Remove from me all that can displease you or resist your holy will; let your pure love imprint your image so deeply upon my heart, that I shall never be able to forget you or to be separated from you. May I obtain from all your loving kindness the grace of having my name written in your Heart, for in you I desire to place all my happiness and glory, living and dying united to you. Amen.

² Taken in part from the prayer written by St. Margaret Mary Alcoque (1647-1690).



Novena Prayer Honoring the Seven Sorrows of Mary

(Approved by Pope Pius VII in 1815)

V. O God, come to my assistance;

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to the Father...

R. As it was in the beginning...

1. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in affliction of your tender heart at the prophecy of the holy and aged Simeon. O dearest Mother, by your heart so afflicted, implore for me the virtue of humility and the gift of the holy fear of God.

Hail Mary...

2. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the anguish of your most affectionate heart during the flight into Egypt and your sojourn there. O dearest Mother, by your anxious heart so troubled, obtain for me the virtue of generosity, especially toward the poor, and the gift of piety.

Hail Mary...

3. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in those anxieties which tried your troubled heart at the loss of your beloved Child Jesus. O dearest Mother, by your exceedingly troubled heart implore for me the virtue of chastity and the gift of knowledge.

Hail Mary...

4. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, on account of the horror with which your mother-heart was stricken when meeting Jesus bearing the Cross. O dearest Mother, by your exceedingly oppressed heart implore for me the virtue of patience and the gift of fortitude.

Hail Mary...

5. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, on account of that martyrdom which tortured your generous heart at the death-agony of Jesus. O dearest Mother, through this thy martyred heart, implore for me the virtue of temperance and the gift of counsel.

Hail Mary...

6. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, in the wounding of your tender heart, by the thrust of the lance that opened the side of Jesus and pierced His most adorable Heart. O dearest Mother, by this vicarious transfixion of thy own heart, implore for me the virtue of brotherly love and the gift of understanding.

Hail Mary...



7. I grieve for you, O Mary most sorrowful, on account of that agony which racked your most loving heart at the burial of Jesus. O dearest Mother, through this extreme torment that filled thy burdened heart, obtain for me the virtue of zeal and the gift of wisdom.

Hail Mary...

V. Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let Us Pray:

Let intercession be made for us, we beseech you, O Lord Jesus Christ, now and at the hour of our death, before the throne of your mercy, by the Blessed Virgin Mary, your Mother, whose most holy soul was pierced by a sword of sorrow in the hour of your bitter passion. Through you, O Jesus Christ, Savior of the world, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

Stabat Mater Dolorosa³

Stabat Mater Dolorosa is considered one of the seven greatest Latin hymns of all time. It is based upon the prophecy of Simeon that a sword was to pierce the heart of His mother, Mary (Lk 2:35). The hymn originated in the 13th century during the peak of Franciscan devotion to the crucified Jesus and has been attributed to Pope Innocent III (d. 1216), St. Bonaventure, or more commonly, Jacopone da Todi (1230-1306), who is considered by most to be the real author.

The hymn is often associated with the Stations of the Cross. In 1727 it was prescribed as a Sequence for the Mass of the Seven Sorrows of Mary (September 15) where it is still used today. In addition to this Mass, the hymn is also used for the Office of the Readings, Lauds, and Vespers for this memorial.

STABAT Mater dolorosa

iuxta Crucem lacrimosa,
dum pendebat Filius.
Cuius animam gementem,
contristatam et dolentem
pertransivit gladius.
O quam tristis et afflicta
fuit illa benedicta,
mater Unigeniti!

AT, the Cross her station keeping,
stood the mournful Mother weeping,
close to Jesus to the last.
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
all His bitter anguish bearing,
now at length the sword has passed.
O how sad and sore distressed
was that Mother, highly blest,
of the sole-begotten One.

³ From the Liturgia Horarum. Translation by Fr. Edward Caswall (1814-1878).



Quae maerebat et dolebat,
pia Mater, dum videbat
nati poenas inclyti.
Quis est homo qui non fleret,
matrem Christi si videret
in tanto supplicio?
Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
dolentem cum Filio?
Pro peccatis suae gentis
vidit Iesum in tormentis,
et flagellis subditum.
Vidit suum dulcem Natum
moriendo desolatum,
dum emisit spiritum.
Eia, Mater, fons amoris
me sentire vim doloris
fac, ut tecum lugeam.
Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
in amando Christum Deum
ut sibi complaceam.
Sancta Mater, istud agas,
crucifixi fige plagas
cordi meo valide.
Tui Nati vulnerati,
tam dignati pro me pati,
poenas mecum divide.
Fac me tecum pie flere,
crucifixo condolere,
donec ego vixero.
Iuxta Crucem tecum stare,
et me tibi sociare
in planctu desidero.
Virgo virginum praeclara,
mihi iam non sis amara,
fac me tecum plangere.
Fac, ut portem Christi mortem,
passionis fac consortem,
et plagas recolare.

Christ above in torment hangs,
she beneath beholds the pangs
of her dying glorious Son.
Is there one who would not weep,
whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold?
Can the human heart refrain
from partaking in her pain,
in that Mother's pain untold?
Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
she beheld her tender Child
All with bloody scourges rent:
For the sins of His own nation,
saw Him hang in desolation,
Till His spirit forth He sent.
O thou Mother! fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
make my heart with thine accord:
Make me feel as thou hast felt;
make my soul to glow and melt
with the love of Christ my Lord.
Holy Mother! pierce me through,
in my heart each wound renew
of my Savior crucified:
Let me share with thee His pain,
who for all my sins was slain,
who for me in torments died.
Let me mingle tears with thee,
mourning Him who mourned for me,
all the days that I may live:
By the Cross with thee to stay,
there with thee to weep and pray,
is all I ask of thee to give.
Virgin of all virgins blest!,
Listen to my fond request:
let me share thy grief divine;
Let me, to my latest breath,
in my body bear the death
of that dying Son of thine.



Fac me plagis vulnerari,
fac me Cruce inebriari,
et cruore Filii.
Flammis ne urar succensus,
per te, Virgo, sim defensus
in die iudicii.
Christe, cum sit hinc exire,
da per Matrem me venire
ad palmam victoriae.
Quando corpus morietur,
fac, ut animae donetur
paradisi gloria. Amen.

Wounded with His every wound,
steep my soul till it hath swooned,
in His very Blood away;
Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,
lest in flames I burn and die,
in His awful Judgment Day.
Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
by Thy Mother my defense,
by Thy Cross my victory;
While my body here decays,
may my soul Thy goodness praise,
safe in paradise with Thee. Amen.

Stabat Mater Speciosa⁴

Stabat Mater Speciosa is considered one of the seven greatest Latin hymns of all time and one of the tenderest. It is based upon the Gospel account of the birth of Jesus. The hymn originated in the 13th century and has been attributed to Jacopone da Todi (1230-1306).

STABAT Mater speciosa

iuxta faenum gaudiosa,
dum iacebat parvulus.
Cuius animam gaudentem
laetabundam et ferventem
pertransivit iubilus.
O quam laeta et beata
fuit illa immaculata,
mater Unigeniti!
Quae gaudebat et ridebat,
exultabat, cum videbat
nati partum inclyti.
Quisquam est, qui non gauderet,
Christi matrem si videret
in tanto solatio?
Quis non posset collaetari,
Christi Matrem contemplari
ludentem cum Filio?

BY, the crib wherein reposing,

with His eyes in slumber closing,
lay serene her Infant-boy,
Stood the beauteous Mother feeling
bliss that could not bear concealing,
so her face o'erflowed with joy.
Oh, the rapture naught could smother
of that most Immaculate Mother
of the sole-begotten One;
When with laughing heart exulting,
she beheld her hopes resulting
In the great birth of her Son.
Who would not with gratulation
see the happy consolation
of Christ's Mother undefiled?
Who would not be glad surveying
Christ's dear Mother bending, praying,
playing with her heavenly Child

⁴ From Latin Hymns, March, 1894. Translation by Denis Florence MacCarthy



Pro peccatis suae gentis
Christum vidit cum iumentis
et algori subditum.
Vidit suum dulcem Natum
vagientem, adoratum,
vili deversorio.
Nato, Christo in praesepe
caeli cives canunt laete
cum immenso gaudio.
Stabat, senex cum puella
non cum verbo nec loquela
stupescentes cordibus.
Eia, Mater, fons amoris
me sentire vim ardoris
fac, ut tecum sentiam.
Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
in amatum Christum Deum
ut sibi complaceam.
Sancta Mater, istud agas,
prone introducas plagas
cordi fixas valide.
Tui Nati caelo lapsi,
iam dignati faeno nasci,
poenas mecum divide.
Fac me vere congaudere,
lesulino cohaerere,
donec ego vixero.
In me sistat ardor tui,
puerino fac me frui
dum sum in exilio.

Virgo virginum praeclara,
mihi iam non sis amara,
fac me parvum rapere.

For a sinful world's salvation,
Christ her Son's humiliation
She beheld and brooded o'er;
Saw Him weak, a child, a stranger,
yet before Him in the manger
kings lie prostrate and adore.
O'er that lowly manger winging,
joyful hosts from heaven were singing
canticles of holy praise;
While the old man and the maiden,
speaking naught, with hearts o'erladen,
pondered on God's wondrous ways.
Fount of love, forever flowing,
with a burning ardor glowing,
make me, Mother, feel like thee;
Let my heart, with graces gifted
all on fire, to Christ be lifted,
and by Him accepted be.
Holy Mother, deign to bless me,
with His sacred Wounds impress me,
let them in my heart abide;
Since He came, thy Son, the Holy,
to a birth-place, ah, so lowly,
all His pains with me divide.
Make me with true joy delighted,
to Child-Jesus be united
while my days of life endure;
While an exile here sojourning,
make my heart like thine be burning
with a love divine and pure.

Spotless Maid and sinless Woman,
make us feel a fire in common,
make my heart's long longing sure.
Virgin of all virgins highest,
prayer to thee thou ne'er denyest,
let me bear thy sweet Child too.



Fac, ut pulchrum infantem portem,
qui nascendo vicit mortem,
volens vitam tradere.
Fac me tecum satiari,
Nato me inebriari,
stantem in tripudio.

Inflammatum et accensum,
obstupescit omnis sensus
tali me commercio.
Fac, me Nato custodiri,
verbo Dei praemuniri
conservari gratia.
Quando corpus morietur,
fac, ut animae donetur
tui nati gloria. Amen.

Let me bear Him in my bosom,
Lord of life, and never lose Him,
since His birth doth death subdue.
Let me show forth how immense is
the effect on all my senses
of an union so divine.

All who in the crib revere Him,
like the shepherds watching near Him,
will attend Him through the night,
By thy powerful prayers protected,
grant, O Queen, that His elected
may behold heaven's moving light.
Make me by His birth be guarded,
by God's holy word be warded,
by His grace till all is done;
When my body lies obstructed,
make my soul to be conducted,
to the vision of thy Son. Amen.

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

In 1899, Pope Leo XIII approved the Latin version of the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for public use. It was a synthesis of prior versions, and varied translations of the litany exist.⁵

V. Lord, have mercy on us.
R. Christ, have mercy on us.
V. Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.
R. Christ, graciously hear us.
V. God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father, have mercy on us.
Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mother's womb,
Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God.

⁵ See for example <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/litanies/litany-of-the-sacred-heart-of-jesus.cfm> and https://www.ewtn.com/devotionals/litanies/sacred_heart.htm.



Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty.
Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God.
Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High.
Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven.
Heart of Jesus, glowing furnace of charity.
Heart of Jesus, vessel of justice and love.
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love.
Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues.
Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise.
Heart of Jesus, King and center of all hearts.
Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Heart of Jesus, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead.
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father was well pleased.
Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received.
Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills.
Heart of Jesus, patient and rich in mercy.
Heart of Jesus, rich to all who call upon You.
Heart of Jesus, fount of life and holiness.
Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our offenses.
Heart of Jesus, overwhelmed with reproaches.
Heart of Jesus, bruised for our iniquities.
Heart of Jesus, obedient even unto death.
Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance.
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation.
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection.
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation.
Heart of Jesus, victim for our sins.
Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who hope in You.
Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in You.
Heart of Jesus, delight of all saints.

V. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
R. spare us, O Lord.

V. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
R. graciously hear us, O Lord.

V. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
R. have mercy on us.

V. Jesus, gentle and humble of heart,
R. Make my heart more like yours.



Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, look upon the Heart of your most beloved Son and upon the praises and satisfaction which he offers you in the name of sinners; and to those who implore your mercy, in your great goodness, grant forgiveness in the name of the same Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you forever and ever. Amen.