

Pope St. John Paul II called the Rosary his favorite prayer.

In his 2002 apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, he offered a simple way to keep it from becoming a rush of words: pray it as contemplation of the face of Christ with Mary. He wrote that without contemplation, the Rosary is “a body without a soul.”

These five tips come from the method he proposed in that letter:

- 1.) Announce each mystery before the decade, and if you can, look at an icon or image of it. The words and the picture open a scene for the mind to enter, so the decade is not only counted but seen.
- 2.) Follow the announcement with a short passage from Scripture. No other words, he said, match the force of the inspired word, spoken for today and spoken “for me.”
- 3.) Pause in silence before the Our Father and the Hail Marys. Listening and meditation are nourished by silence. A brief stop after the reading lets the mystery settle before vocal prayer begins.
- 4.) In each Hail Mary, linger on the name of Jesus and, if it helps, add a short clause tied to the mystery: “Jesus, born in Bethlehem,” or “Jesus, crowned with thorns.” Paul VI had already praised this custom. John Paul II called it a way of keeping Christ at the center of the prayer.
- 5.) Give the Glory Be real weight, as the high point of the decade, and close with a short prayer for the fruit of that mystery. The old liturgical petition asks that, by meditating on these mysteries, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise.

He also added the Luminous Mysteries, so the public life of Jesus would not be passed over between the hidden years and the Passion. The point of all of it, he insisted, is not a new technique. It is to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ.

Source: Pope St. John Paul II, Rosarium Virginis Mariae (October 16, 2002), especially nn. 29–35.

Source: the FB group “Totus Tuus”