

SCRIPTURE & *the* ROSARY

**NEW TESTAMENT MYSTERIES
OLD TESTAMENT PARALLELS**

Lessons 4–6: Open with the Creed
God the Father, God's only Son, the Holy Spirit

**JENNIFER MCGAW PHELPS
& TAMI PALLADINO**



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THE ROSARY IS A SCHOOL of contemplation and silence.

At first glance, it could seem a prayer that accumulates words, therefore difficult to reconcile with the silence that is rightly recommended for meditation and contemplation. In fact, this cadent repetition of the Hail Mary does not disturb inner silence but indeed both demands and nourishes it. Similarly to what happens for the *Psalms* when one prays the Liturgy of the Hours, the silence surfaces through the words and sentences, not as emptiness, but rather as the presence of an ultimate meaning that transcends the words themselves and through them speaks to the heart.

—POPE BENEDICT XVI



FOREWORD

One of my life blessings is the ongoing companionship of Mary through her signature prayer, the Rosary. Beginning in my teenage years I have experienced this gift enabling me to be in touch with her Son, Jesus, through her intercession.

For me as a Catholic, the praying of the Rosary joins the litany recitation of the Hail Mary with opportunity for meditation on the significant events in the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mother. Jennifer McGaw Phelps and Tami Palladino have immeasurably enriched such meditation by comparing the mysteries of the Rosary with citations from the Old Testament, bringing together the events of salvation history from the Old and New Testaments.

In providing thought-provoking questions, the authors introduce rewarding meditation on the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, and Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary. Moreover, the inspiration for the book is derived from the beautiful stained glass windows of St. Augustin Church here in Des Moines, thus blending two art forms.

For those who have grown to love the Rosary as I have and also for novices searching for a fruitful and readily accessible form of prayer, powerful insight into the mysteries of faith has been provided by Jennifer McGaw Phelps and Tami Palladino in *Scripture & the Rosary: New Testament Mysteries, Old Testament Parallels*.

It is a pleasure to give approval to this work. I urge all to use this tool to grow in appreciation and further discovery of abundant riches to be found in the praying of the Rosary.

✠ the Most Reverend Richard E. Pates
Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Des Moines

GOD THE FATHER: CREATION & FAITH

THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Apostles' Creed traditionally is prayed as an introduction to the Rosary. The stained glass windows featured in this study depict the biblical foundations behind this practice, paying special attention to the portrayal of the Blessed Virgin Mary's relationship with each person of the Most Holy Trinity. The first window depicts God the Father's act of Creation paired with the theological virtue of faith exemplified in the Old Testament by the actions of the patriarch Abraham. In the Creation account in the book of *Genesis* 1:26–31, God blesses Adam and Eve and instructs them to be fruitful. The principal Rosary prayer, the Hail Mary, celebrates the Virgin Mary and praises God's fruitfulness in her life.

In what ways might God consider your life to be fruitful?

GENESIS 1:26–31

1²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."²⁹ And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food."³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.



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1 Read the book of *Genesis* 1:26–31, 18:2–5 & 18:8–10. Refer to the book of *Genesis* 1:1–2 and the *Gospel According to John* 1:1–3 to consider the role in Creation of each person of the Trinity.

2 Abraham is an Old Testament patriarch, a word that means father. What does Scripture reveal about Abraham, and in what ways does this “father of believers” resemble God the Father? In the book of *Genesis* 12:1–4, what might explain how Abraham can recognize the voice of the LORD telling him to leave his home?

3 A Creation parallel is seen in the story of the “Old Testament Trinity,” three strangers who tell good news to Abraham. What is this news, and how might it be related to the Gospel good news?

4 The blossom on the tree of the knowledge on page 12 represents fruitfulness as well as problems related to eating forbidden fruit. The sinuous curves of foliage hint at the serpent to come. In the book of *Genesis* 3:1–7, what sin do Adam and Eve commit? What is the serpent’s role? If necessary, refer to paragraph 397 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. How is original sin transmitted? If necessary, refer to paragraph 404 in the *Catechism*.

5 The book of *Genesis* 3:8–20 recounts events in the Garden of Eden following humanity’s Fall. The book of *Genesis* 3:15 is known as the *Protoevangelium* (first Good News) because it is the first announcement of the Gospel in the Scriptures. How is the Blessed Virgin Mary depicted in the Creation Window on page 12? Explain her role in God’s plan for the salvation of men and women.

Sa•cred Te•tra•gram•ma•ton

four Hebrew letters that form the proper name of God

On page 12, Adam and Eve gaze at a triangular representation of the Trinity based on the **Sacred Tetragrammaton**. God the Father is depicted with outstretched arms, and Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is symbolized by the Hebrew letters for Adonai (indicated by LORD [small caps] in some Bible translations). The stylized scallops represent a cloud of mystery, one of several images of the Holy Spirit commonly used in art.

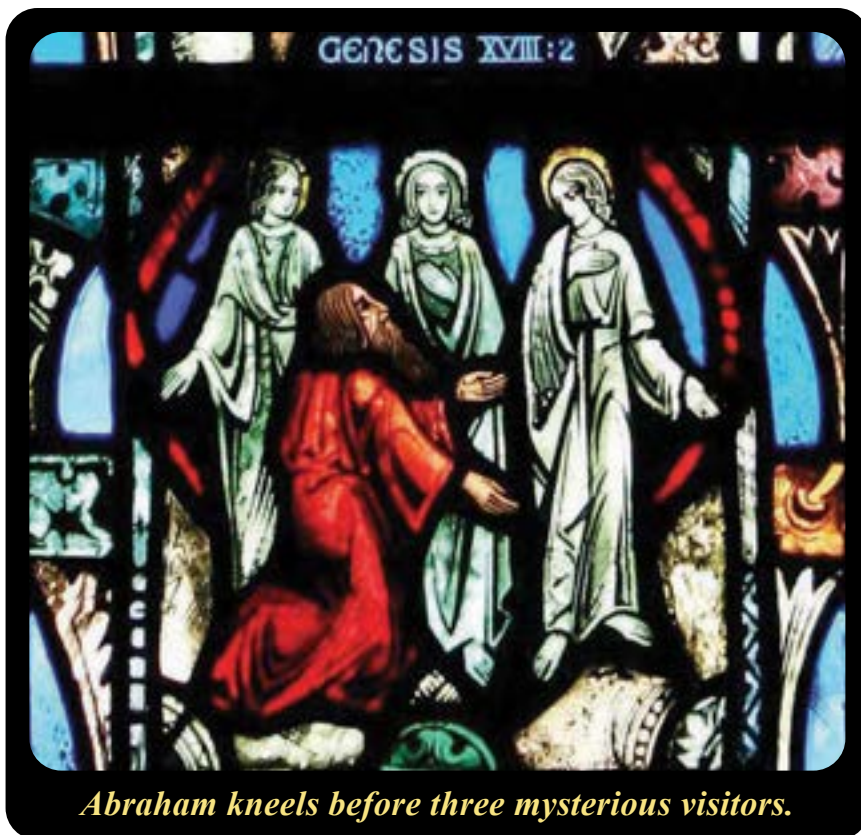
THE APOSTLES’ CREED

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 Apostles’ Creed summarizes the faith and is the ancient Baptismal symbol of the Church of Rome. Its Christian authority arises from this fact. Paragraph 194 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that it is “the Creed of the Roman Church, the See of Peter, the first of the apostles, to which he brought the common faith.”

HUMANITY’S JOURNEY TOWARD GOD

The Garden of Eden often is thought to represent perfection. Paragraph 302 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, however, teaches that Creation did not spring forth complete from the hands of God. Instead, the world and everything in it was created “in a state of journeying” toward the ultimate perfection to which God has destined it. About this mystery, St. Thomas Aquinas wrote: “There is nothing to prevent human nature’s being raised up to something greater, even after sin.”



Abraham kneels before three mysterious visitors.

GENESIS 18:2–5, 8–10

18²[Abraham] lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men stood in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth,³ and said, “My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.⁴ Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree,⁵ while I fetch a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.”...⁸ Then he took curds, and milk, and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

⁹They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.”¹⁰ The LORD said, I will surely return to you in the spring, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.”



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OUR FATHER ABRAHAM

The Old Testament parallel to Creation is the theological virtue of faith viewed in connection with God’s promise to give a son to Abraham (who received that name from God in the book of *Genesis* 17:5). The Scriptures allude to the mysterious nature of the trio who appear to the patriarch by alternately referring to them in the singular and the plural, and they have come to be known as the “Old Testament Trinity.”

The book of *Genesis* 12:1–2, 13:14–16, and 15:4–5 record God’s promise to Abraham, and the three visitors announce that Abraham’s aging wife, Sarah, soon will give birth. Such fruitfulness reinforces the theme of Creation by drawing attention to the idea of fatherhood, the most common image of God. Abraham’s fatherhood is linked to his faith; the book of *Genesis* 21:5 records that he was 100 years old when Isaac was born.

The *Letter to the Hebrews* 11:8–12 lauds Sarah for her faith as well, and points out that Abraham’s many descendants are the result of his faith in God’s word. Paragraph 144 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sees Abraham as a model of obedience.

Pairing the announcement of the birth of Abraham’s son with God’s Creation of the world emphasizes the image of God as a Father while pointing to the role that God’s Son, Jesus Christ, will play in freeing men and women from bondage to sin and death.

6 Why is Abraham considered a model of obedience? If necessary, refer to the book of *Genesis* 12:1–22:19. Paragraph 144 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “To obey in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself.” Consider why the Church views the Blessed Virgin as the most perfect embodiment of obedience. How is obedience to God essential for Christians?

7 The *Letter to the Hebrews* 11:8–12 lauds Abraham’s wife for her faith. What does the author see happening as the result of Abraham and Sarah’s faith? Refer to the book of *Genesis* 12:1–2, 13:14–16, and 15:4–5 to explain how this fulfills God’s promises.

8 Paragraph 760 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “The world was created for the sake of the Church.” How can God be seen to be working creatively within the present-day Church to bring about communion with the divine life of the Blessed Trinity?

9 In contrast to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a cross appears at the top of the window on page 12. Consider how the cross of Christ serves as a symbol of the tree of life.

10 Refer to paragraphs 222–227 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to consider the specific consequences that faith or trusting in God has in the lives of Christians. What are some results of faith at work in the present-day world?

FAITH & FREEDOM

“The Church always has considered the act of entrusting oneself to God to be a moment of fundamental decision that engages the whole person. In that act, the intellect and the will display their spiritual nature, enabling the subject to act in a way which realizes personal freedom to the full. It is not just that freedom is part of the act of faith; it is absolutely required. It is faith that allows individuals to give consummate expression to their own freedom.... Men and women can accomplish no more important act in their lives. It is here that freedom reaches the certainty of truth.”

—*Fides et Ratio*
(The Relationship Between Faith and Reason)



IN THE BEGINNING

The Apostles’ Creed on page 13 contains the essential Christian beliefs about God, beginning with the profession that God is the Creator of heaven and earth. Paragraph 326 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “The Scriptural expression ‘heaven and earth’ means all that exists, creation in its entirety. It also indicates the bond, deep within creation, that both unites heaven and earth and distinguishes the one from the other: ‘the earth’ is the world of men, while ‘heaven’ or ‘the heavens’ can designate both the firmament and God’s own ‘place’—‘our Father in heaven.’”

God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit all appear in the triangular representation of the Blessed Trinity in the stained glass window dedicated to God the Father on page 12, a visualization of the presence of all three at Creation.

The three persons also appear in the account of Creation in the book of *Genesis* 1:1–3: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.”

In the window, double images of a dove depict the Holy Spirit in motion over the face of the waters, which are seen below the earth under the feet of Adam and Eve. Jesus, the Word of God and light of the world, is seen in the Hebrew word for LORD in the Sacred Tetragrammaton above the sky.

The Church considers the Holy Trinity to be the central mystery of Christian faith and life because it is the mystery of God in himself—and therefore is the source of all other mysteries of the faith.



GOD'S ONLY SON: REDEMPTION & HOPE

THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Redemption Window focuses on Jesus as the Son of God and Son of Mary, emphasized in the middle section of the Apostles' Creed on page 13. This window also illustrates the corresponding theological virtue of hope. The anchor at the top—a traditional symbol of Christian hope in the redemption of humanity brought about by Jesus' Passion, death, and Resurrection—incorporates the shape of a cross. Because of Jesus' willingness to die in expiation for the sins of the world, men and women now are able to share in the promise of eternal life. Christians have only to seize the hope that is offered and cling to the cross as the anchor of their immortal souls. The opposite of hope is despair, which frequently goes hand in hand with depression.

What present-day difficulties threaten to overwhelm the world with despair? What poses a challenge to hope in your life? Ask God to bring more hope to your life and to the world.

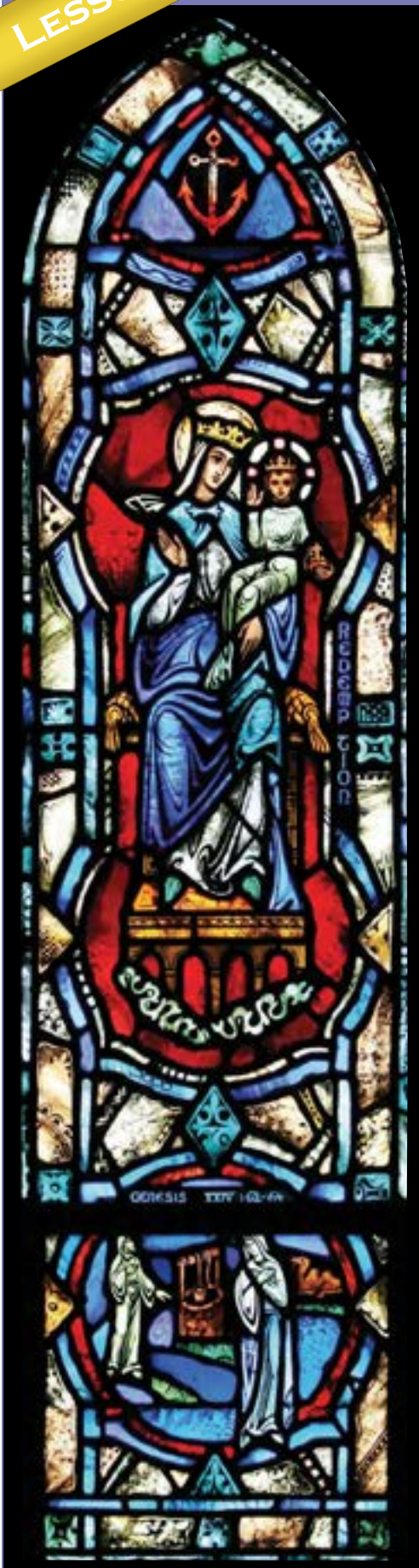
HEBREWS 6:13–20

6¹³For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, ¹⁴saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." ¹⁵And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. ¹⁶Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, ¹⁸so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. ¹⁹We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, ²⁰where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.



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1 Read the *Letter to the Hebrews* 6:13–20 & the book of *Genesis* 24:58–60 & 24:62–67. Paragraphs 457–460 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teach four reasons for the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. What is the first reason? From what did humanity need to be saved? What are the other three reasons? What explanation might be behind the order in which these reasons are listed?

2 The *Letter to the Hebrews* 6:19–20 uses an anchor as an image of Christian hope. Why might the author have chosen that image, which suggests other nautical images such as a boat and the sea. What are some things that these images represent in Christianity?

3 Paragraph 605 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “There is not, never has been, and never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer.” Consider how this understanding about Jesus is linked to the theological virtue of hope.

4 Refer to the book of *Genesis* 22:1–18 to list the ways that Abraham resembles God the Father and ways that Isaac resembles Jesus. In the *Letter to the Hebrews* 11:19, what reason does the author give for why Abraham is able to be obedient in consenting to sacrifice his son Isaac? Consider whether this seems rational.

5 St. Irenaeus wrote about the Blessed Virgin Mary: “Being obedient, she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.” To whom was Mary obedient? Consider how Mary’s obedience led to salvation for herself and all humanity.

THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

In the three windows that represent the Apostles’ Creed, the theological or supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and love (sometimes called charity) correspond to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These theological virtues dispose Christians to live in relationship with the Blessed Trinity. Paragraph 1813 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the theological virtues give life to all the moral virtues: “They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. They are the pledge of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the faculties of the human being.”



THE THRONE OF WISDOM

In the stained glass window on page 16 emphasizing the role of the Son of God as Redeemer of humanity, the Blessed Virgin Mary appears prominently in the primary panel. The design of this window is patterned after the famous *Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière* (Our Lady of the Beautiful Window) in Chartres Cathedral in France. That window, a rare Romanesque panel surviving from 1150, was inspired in turn by Chartre’s most notable relic, the *Sancta Camisa* (Sacred Veil), said to be the tunic worn by Mary at the birth of Jesus.

The throne upon which Mary is seated rests on the Temple of the new Jerusalem, which in turn rests on clouds of heaven. Mary herself forms the seat, or “throne,” upon which Jesus sits, and this classic artistic composition is known as *Sedes Sa-*

pietiae (Seat of Wisdom). Both the Blessed Virgin and the child Jesus wear crowns, and with his right hand Jesus imparts a blessing. In his left hand, Jesus holds a globe topped by a cross, symbolizing his role as Redeemer of the world.

The Council of Ephesus in 431 proclaimed Mary the Mother of God, “not that the nature of the Word or his divinity received the beginning of its existence from the holy Virgin, but that, since the holy body, animated by a rational soul, which the Word of God united to himself... was born from her, the Word is said to be born according to the flesh.” In consenting to give birth to the Savior, Mary cooperated with God’s plan, setting in motion the hope of salvation through events that ultimately would lead to the redemption of sinful humanity.





Rebekah covers herself with a veil to meet Isaac.

GENESIS 24:58–60, 62–67

24⁵⁸ And [Laban and Bethuel] called Rebekah, and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” She said, “I will go.”⁵⁹ So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men.⁶⁰ And they blessed Rebekah, and said to her, “Our sister, be the mother of thousands of ten thousands; and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them!”...

⁶² Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was dwelling in the Negeb.⁶³ And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there were camels coming.⁶⁴ And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel,⁶⁵ and said to the servant, “Who is the man yonder, walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took her veil and covered herself.⁶⁶ And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into the tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.



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ISAAC: THE HEIR OF GOD’S PROMISE

In the Old Testament, Isaac can be seen as a prefiguration of Jesus Christ, God’s beloved Son and Savior of the world. Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son at God’s request is recorded in the book of *Genesis* 22:1–14 and reinforces Abraham’s role as our strong father in the faith.

As the intended victim of the sacrifice, Isaac becomes a type of Jesus, Son of God the Father. In the *Letter to the Hebrews* 11:17–19, the author writes: “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.’ He considered that God was able to raise men even from the dead; hence he did receive him back and this was a symbol.”

As a result of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son, in the book of *Genesis* 22:15–18, God promises to bless Abraham, multiply his descendants, and make them a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

In the New Testament, Jesus fulfills all of the Old Testament promises made by God to Abraham. Through his sacrificial death, Jesus fulfills his Father’s will and institutes the new, eternal covenant. This covenant redeems sinful humanity and promises eternal life to those men and women willing to place all of their hope in Jesus Christ.

6 Refer to paragraph 616 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to explain what Jesus sacrificed in order to bring about the redemption of humanity. Why was no one else able to make such a sacrifice? How are Mary’s obedience and Jesus’ sacrifice related?

7 The book of *Genesis* 3:20 records that Adam named his wife Eve “because she was the mother of all living.” Church fathers referred to Mary as the “new Eve” and “Mother of the living.” Consider how Mary and Eve are similar and how they differ. What qualities are shared by Isaac’s wife Rebekah and the Blessed Virgin?

8 In order for Abraham to have numerous descendants, it is necessary for Isaac to father children. In the book of *Genesis* 24:1–67, Abraham asks a trusted servant to choose a wife for his son. What sign does the servant seek in order to identify Isaac’s bride?

9 Isaac the bridegroom is seen as a type of Christ. Refer to the *Gospel According to John* 3:28–29 and the *Gospel According to Mark* 2:19 to explain who in the New Testament also is a bridegroom. Refer to the book of *Revelation* 19:7–8 and 22:17 to learn who becomes the bride of that New Testament figure.

10 Paragraph 1641 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that marriage is a sacred relationship between a man and a woman, intended to strengthen their unity and to welcome children through openness to life. Consider how unity and increased life result from the marriage between Jesus and the Church.

A GREAT HOPE

“Man is redeemed by love. If this absolute love exists, with its absolute certainty, only then is man “redeemed,” whatever should happen to him. This is what it means to say: Jesus Christ has “redeemed” us. Through him we have become certain of a God who is not a remote “first cause” of the world.

Everyone can repeat the statement in Paul’s *Letter to the Galatians* 2:20: “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” In this sense it is true that anyone who does not know God, even though he may entertain all kinds of hopes, is ultimately without the great hope that sustains the whole of life.”

—*Spe Salvi*
(Christian Hope)

BRIDEGROOM & BRIDE: CHRIST & HIS CHURCH

The Redemption Window on page 18 looks at a key scene in the life of Isaac. In order for God to fulfill his promise to give Abraham numerous descendants, it is necessary for Isaac to become a father. Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, is chosen for him by a trusted servant of his own father.

The window that shows Isaac’s first meeting with Rebekah depicts a well, indicating the circumstances that surround Rebekah becoming Isaac’s wife, as recorded in the book of *Genesis* 24:1–27. The depiction of the well introduces the idea of covenant fulfillment, a common Old Testament theme. The book of *Genesis* 26:17–25 records that only after Isaac has dug a series of wells does the LORD appear to him at Beersheba and renew with him the promises originally made to Abraham. Isaac is a type of Jesus, and the covenantal fulfillment seen in his marriage to Rebekah can be viewed as a foreshadowing

of New Testament events. The Old Testament describes the longing of God’s people for a Messiah. The descendants of Jacob represent a bride longing for a bridegroom. In the *Gospel According to John* 3:28–29, John the Baptist refers to Jesus as the bridegroom, and in the *Gospel According to Mark* 2:19, Jesus refers to himself the same way. In the *Second Letter to the Corinthians* 11:2 and in the *Letter to the Ephesians* 5:23–27, the Apostle Paul describes the Church as a bride betrothed to Jesus Christ.

The book of *Revelation* 19:7–8 and 22:17 indicate that the author of the final book of the New Testament also understands the Church to be the bride of Christ. Paragraph 796 of *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that this imagery expresses the unity of Jesus Christ and his Church while also implying “the distinction of the two within a personal relationship.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT: SANCTIFICATION & LOVE

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Sanctification or holiness is the primary theme of the window related to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity and spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This window is the last of the windows devoted to the Apostles' Creed, which is prayed as an introduction to the Mysteries of the Rosary. The heart at the pinnacle of the window emphasizes the essential link between sanctification and love.

Think of the person in your life who most exemplifies Christian love. Where can you see love and holiness burning in the present-day Church? What do you love most about the Church? Ask God to help you bring more love into the world.

1 CORINTHIANS 13: 1–10, 12–13

13 ¹If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; ⁵it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends; as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. . . . ¹²For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been understood. ¹³So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.



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1 Read the *First Letter to the Corinthians* 13:1–10, 13:12–13 & the book of *Genesis* 46:26–30. In what ways does the Blessed Virgin Mary symbolize the Church? Paragraph 2708 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that “knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus” is a goal of meditating on the mysteries of Christ. Which Rosary Mystery might best demonstrate God’s love?

2 Paragraph 724 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that Mary is “the burning bush of the definitive theophany.” A theophany is a visual manifestation of God. The book of *Exodus* 3:1–10 describes the burning bush. What is its role in salvation history? Consider how the burning bush is a fitting image for Mary.

3 Parallels exist between Mary’s husband Joseph and his Old Testament namesake. Joseph in the book of *Genesis* 37:5–11 experiences prophetic dreams. Refer to the *Gospel According to Matthew* 1:18–25, 2:13–15, and 2:19–23 to explain how Joseph’s dreams in the New Testament play a role in the early life of Jesus.

4 In the Old Testament book of *Genesis* 37:12–28, Joseph’s dreams lead to jealousy. Where is Joseph taken after being sold into slavery? What worse fate were his brothers considering?

5 List means of sanctification or attaining holiness, and explain how each is related to love. How is the Holy Spirit active in each means of sanctification on the list?

WHAT IS CHARITY?

“ Paul answers by giving a great number of properties of it, all distinct and special. In one sense charity is all virtues at once, and therefore Paul cannot describe it more definitely, more restrictedly than he does. In other words, it is the root of all holy dispositions, and grows and blossoms into them. They are its parts; and when it is described, they of necessity are mentioned. Love is the material, so to speak, out of which all graces are made, the quality of mind which is the fruit of regeneration, and in which the Spirit dwells. Faith and hope are graces of an imperfect state; but love is greater, because it is perfection. ”

—from a homily by Blessed John Henry Newman



LOVE THAT NEVER ENDS

The Sanctification Window on page 20 depicts God the Father in human likeness, something relatively rare in art. This is not unfitting, however. Paragraph 705 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the Father’s plan restored humanity to the likeness of God in his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Father is shown holding a scepter of power, and a triangular halo or nimbus appears behind him. He shares his throne with his Son. Father and Son together hold the world in their hands.

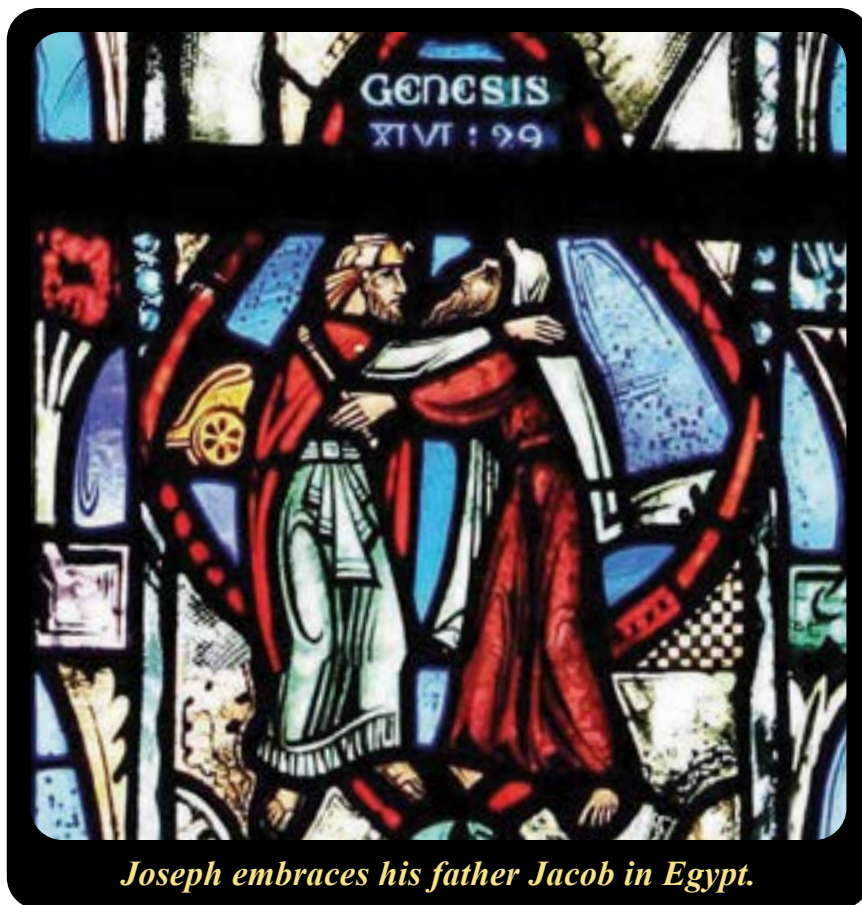
The third person of the Most Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit, hovers above as a dove extending rays of love. In his *Letter to the Romans* 5:5, Paul describes how the gift of the love of God is transferred to men and women: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” Paragraph 734 in the *Catechism*

of the Catholic Church teaches: “The communion of the Holy Spirit in the Church restores to the baptized the divine likeness lost through sin.”

The presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary kneeling before Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can be interpreted as a sign that the kingdom of heaven now is open to humanity. It also reinforces the idea of God’s burning love for all men and women. Paragraph 724 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that Mary “is the burning bush of the definitive theophany” who manifests the Son of the Father to make God’s Word visible in flesh.

Through the Blessed Virgin Mary’s cooperation, the Holy Spirit is able to bring men and women into communion with the Trinity. The shared mission of Jesus the Son and of the Holy Spirit then can be brought to completion in the Church.





Joseph embraces his father Jacob in Egypt.

GENESIS 46:26–30

46 ²⁶All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own offspring, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all; ²⁷and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob, that came into Egypt, were seventy.

²⁸He sent Judah before him to Joseph, to appear before him in Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. ²⁹Then Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. ³⁰Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive."



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IN THE LINE OF THE PATRIARCHS

The emotional reunion between Joseph and his father Jacob (Israel) is the theme of the Old Testament panel in the Sanctification Window on this page. Many details of Joseph's life make this an appropriate choice. Foremost, of course, is the love Jacob has for his son Joseph, described in the book of *Genesis* 37:3.

Despite Joseph's special standing with his father, Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt, where he manages to rise to great power. After Joseph saves his family and all of Egypt from famine, the family moves to Egypt. The book of *Genesis* 50:24–25 significantly records Joseph asking that his remains be carried to the Promised Land when the family returns. The *Book of Joshua* 24:32 records that 400 years later Joseph's bones are buried in his family's resting place at Shechem, establishing him as an ancestor of much importance.

Joseph's status among his brothers is fixed in the book of *Genesis* 48:8–22 when Jacob adopts and blesses Ephraim and Manasseh, and he divides Joseph's inheritance between the two boys. Joseph appears to be bypassed, but that is, in fact, an indicator of his special standing before God. Joseph is the favorite son of Jacob, who in turn is the son of Isaac and heir of God's promise. After his death, Joseph is counted among the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 In addition to other similarities, the Josephs of the Old and New Testaments both have fathers named Jacob. In the Old Testament, Joseph and his brothers are direct descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Where are those patriarchs’ buried? If necessary, refer to the book of *Genesis* 49:28–32. Refer to the *Book of Joshua* 24:32 to learn where in the Promised Land Joseph is buried.

7 Paragraph 61 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that patriarchs, prophets, and some other Old Testament figures are honored as saints by the Church, which means that they serve as examples of holiness for Christians. How does the relationship between Joseph and Jacob show holiness and exemplify divine love?

8 The ultimate goal of humanity is entry into the perfect unity of the Blessed Trinity. Paragraph 260 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that even in his or her lifetime, each Christian is called to be a dwelling for the Most Holy Trinity. Refer to the *Gospel According to John* 17:20–23 and to paragraphs 733–736 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to explain how this is made possible. What role does the Holy Spirit play in this process?

9 In his *First Letter to the Corinthians* 13:4–7, Paul lists distinguishing qualities of love. Consider which quality is most needed in the present-day world. What specific things can be done to bring about an increase of love in workplaces and in families?

10 In his *First Letter to the Corinthians* 13:8–13, Paul writes that “when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away.” To what might Paul be referring? According to Paul, what benefits will accrue when this perfection occurs?

sanc•ti•fi•ca•tion

being set apart for a sacred purpose; holiness

Sanctification is the process of being made holy. In Christianity, **sanctification** includes being cleansed from sin. Consecration often is used interchangeably with **sanctification**, but the word “consecration” typically implies a ceremonial liturgical act.

JOSEPH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Joseph’s favored status in his father’s eyes is alluded to in the *Gospel According to Matthew* 1:1–16, a genealogy that lists Jesus’ earthly father as Joseph and lists Joseph, in turn, as the son of Jacob. This genealogy suggests Jesus has a place in the line of the Old Testament patriarchs, and Jesus is seen as the fulfillment of God’s promises to the Old Testament patriarchs.

COLORS HELP TELL THE STORIES

The vibrant colors used in stained glass church windows are a distinguishing feature of this type of religious art. These colors do more than add visual interest, however. Each color—including plain white—often is used symbolically. Knowing the traditional meanings of the different colors can aid in understanding more about the biblical scenes depicted.

White usually denotes purity, and it is used for Mary’s veil.



It also is the color of the Transfiguration.

Gold symbolizes the radiance of the divine presence, the glory of God, and also can indicate spiritual riches.



Green indicates spiritual growth and renewal, but sometimes can represent the presence of evil.



Red is the color of blood and fire. It depicts Jesus’ Passion and the Holy Spirit’s tongues of flame at Pentecost.



Blue, the color of the sky and of water, is used to denote heavenly backgrounds. It is the traditional color of the Blessed Virgin’s mantle.



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all Scripture is inspired by God

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

—2 Timothy 3:16–17

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CCC 61 (page 23): That prophets and patriarchs are honored as saints in the Christian tradition.

CCC 144 (pages 8, 14, 15 & 98): An explanation of the link between listening and obedience of faith.

CCC 149 (page 39): That the Church venerates the Blessed Virgin for her pure and unwavering faith.

CCC 194 (page 13): An explanation about why one of the Creeds is called the Apostles' Creed.

CCC 222–227 (page 15): Paragraphs stating the implications of having faith in the one God.

CCC 260 (page 23): The need to prepare now for the ultimate goal of the divine economy.

CCC 302 (page 13): The unexpected teaching that the world wasn't created in a state of perfection.

CCC 326 (page 15): What is meant in Scripture by the phrase "heaven and earth."

CCC 397 (page 13): A look at what's behind original sin and all subsequent sin.

CCC 404 (page 13): How the sin of Adam is transmitted as original sin to all men and women.

CCC 405 (page 25): That original sin isn't a personal fault but nevertheless instills human weakness.

CCC 457–460 (page 17): The four positive effects for humanity that result from Jesus' Incarnation.

CCC 475 (page 45): Church teaching regarding Jesus' human will and his divine will.

CCC 489 (page 27): That many women in the Old Testament prepared for the Blessed Virgin.

CCC 517 (page 41): That the mystery of redemption is at work throughout Christ's life.

CCC 536 (page 87): The baptism of Jesus as a signal of his acceptance of his mission.

CCC 555 (page 97): A discussion of the meaning of Jesus' Transfiguration.

CCC 605 (page 17): That Christ suffered and died to bring the possibility of salvation to all humanity.

CCC 609 (page 9): About the importance of Jesus' humanity as an instrument of salvation.

CCC 613 (page 103): The two sacrificial meanings connected with the death of Jesus.

CCC 616 (page 19): Jesus' sacrifice as redemption, reparation, atonement, and satisfaction.

CCC 638 (page 65): Church teaching that Jesus' Resurrection is the crowning truth of Christianity.

CCC 691 (page 73): The proper way to address the third person of the Blessed Trinity.

CCC 694 (page 71): Church teaching regarding water as a symbol of the sacrament of Baptism.

CCC 696 (page 71): An explanation about why fire is a suitable symbol of the Holy Spirit.

CCC 701 (page 87): A look at the dove as a fitting symbol for the sacrament of Baptism.

CCC 705 (pages 21, 35 & 97): The theological difference between image and likeness.

CCC 717 (pages 29 & 32): That Mary's visit to Elizabeth is viewed as a visit from God.

CCC 718 (page 29): That the prophet Elijah is foretold to return before the Messiah appears.

CCC 720 (page 85): That Jesus' cousin prefigures humanity's restoration to divine likeness.

CCC 724 (page 21): A view of the Blessed Virgin as the burning bush who makes God visible.

CCC 733–736 (page 23): An explanation of the Holy Spirit as God's gift to humanity.

CCC 734 (page 21): Forgiveness of sins as the first effect of God's love experienced by humanity.

CCC 760 (page 15): The startling teaching that the world was created for the sake of the Church.

CCC 796 (page 19): Teaching about why the Church is considered to be the Bride of Christ.

CCC 797 (page 77): That the Church is considered the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

CCC 811: The four characteristic marks that distinguish the Church.

CCC 817: Teaching that ruptures within the Church don't occur without human sin.

CCC 845: That Noah's ark serves as a prefiguration of the salvation available only in the Church.

CCC 881 (page 73): A discussion of Peter's pastoral office as the foundation of the Church.

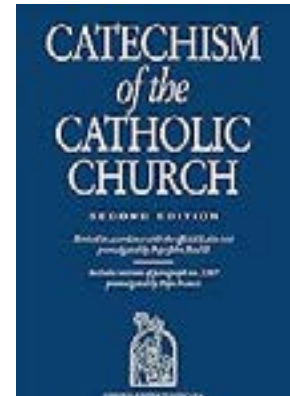
CCC 963–970 (page 63): Paragraphs that explain Mary's role as Mother of the Church.

CCC 966 (page 81): Church teaching about the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

CCC 972 (page 81): That the Blessed Virgin Mary is seen as an eschatological icon of the Church.

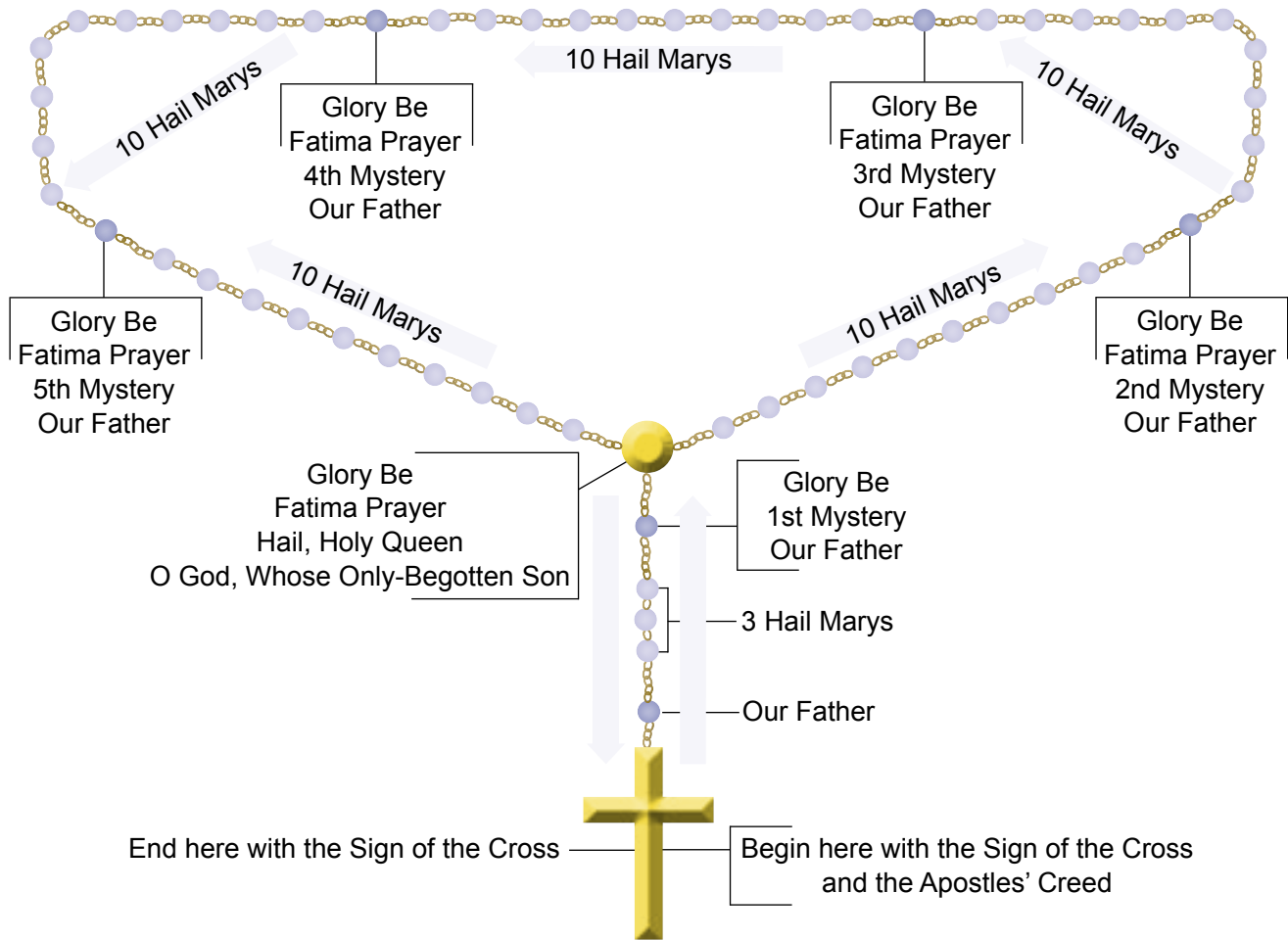
CCC 1003 (page 99): Church teaching about the mystery of Christians' hidden life with God.

CCC 1219 (page 85): The Church's view of Noah's ark as an Old Testament type of Baptism.



- CCC 1221 (page 87): Teaching that crossing the Red Sea is a symbol of freedom from slavery to sin.
- CCC 1225 (page 63): That Blood and water are symbols of Eucharist and Baptism.
- CCC 1265 (page 39): Church teaching that in the sacrament of Baptism all sins are forgiven.
- CCC 1270 (page 84): That religious duties are expected of those who've been Baptized.
- CCC 1285 (page 72): That Confirmation is considered one of three sacraments of initiation.
- CCC 1324 (pages 100 & 101): About the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.
- CCC 1333 (page 101): That bread and wine are at the heart of the celebration of the Eucharist.
- CCC 1334 (page 102): Eucharistic prefigurations found in the Old Testament.
- CCC 1335 (page 91): That New Testament miracles prepare for and testify to the Eucharist.
- CCC 1339 (page 103): The connection between the Passover and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.
- CCC 1340 (page 101): That Jesus gives the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning.
- CCC 1391 (page 103): That receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist helps cement union with Jesus.
- CCC 1393 (page 103): Teaching that receiving the Eucharist separates believers from sin.
- CCC 1395–1398 (page 103): Paragraphs discussing additional benefits of receiving the Eucharist.
- CCC 1641 (page 19): Church teaching regarding the special role assigned to Christian spouses.**
- CCC 1670 (page 6): A discussion of the difference between a sacrament and a sacramental.
- CCC 1723 (page 95): That Christian blessing brings with it confrontation with moral choices.
- CCC 1813 (page 17): That the theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity.**
- CCC 1831 (page 85): The Church's list of seven gifts given to humanity by the Holy Spirit.
- CCC 1900 (page 37): A discussion of how Christian obedience includes respect for authority.
- CCC 1954 (page 49): That natural law and moral ability enable humanity to discern good from evil.
- CCC 2015 (page 59): Regarding how renunciation and spiritual battle are essential to holiness.
- CCC 2056 (page 95): About the meaning of the Old Testament Decalogue or "10 words."
- CCC 2089 (page 7): The Church's definitions of incredulity, heresy, and apostasy.
- CCC 2148 (page 53): Ways in which blasphemy is opposed to the second commandment.
- CCC 2177 (page 77): That Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of Christian life.
- CCC 2185 (page 79): What behavior is expected of Christians on Sundays and holy days.
- CCC 2186: Suitable activities in which Christians can engage on Sundays and holy days of obligation.**
- CCC 2190: That the day of Jesus' Resurrection replaces the Jewish sabbath for Christians.**
- CCC 2305 (page 33): Regarding earthly peace as the image of the messianic peace of Christ.
- CCC 2360 (page 25): That physical intimacy in marriage is a sign of spiritual communion.
- CCC 2361 (page 25): A discussion of the relationship between sexuality and love.
- CCC 2520 (page 39): Spiritual assistance for those struggling with issues surrounding purity.
- CCC 2618 (page 89): That the Gospels offer examples of ways in which the Virgin Mary prays.
- CCC 2658 (page 73): That the theological virtue of hope is nurtured through prayer.
- CCC 2675 (page 31): A look at the Church's communion with Mary, the Mother of God.
- CCC 2679 (page 7): The benefit of aligning prayers with those of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- CCC 2682 (page 7): That the Church loves to pray in conjunction with the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- CCC 2684 (page 71): A look at the varied richness of spiritualities that have arisen within the Church.
- CCC 2700 (page 11): Church teaching regarding the proper approach to vocal prayer.
- CCC 2706 (page 11): A discussion of the spiritual benefits of Christian meditation.
- CCC 2708 (pages 21 & 59): Regarding *lectio divina* as an effective approach to prayer.**
- CCC 2712–2718 (page 11): A discussion of the nature and importance of contemplative prayer.
- CCC 2733 (page 45): An explanation of acedia as a form of spiritual depression.
- CCC 2777: A discussion of the boldness involved in praying to God as Father.**
- CCC 2795: Heaven as it relates to the covenant between God and humanity.**
- CCC 2849: About Jesus' ability to vanquish the tempter through prayer.**
- CCC 2851: Regarding the Church's understanding of the devil as a person, the Evil One.**

HOW TO PRAY THE ROSARY



The Rosary prayers can be found on the Turning to God's Word website.

*The beads converge upon the crucifix,
which both opens and closes the unfolding sequence of prayer.
The life and prayer of believers is centered upon Christ.
Everything begins from him, everything leads toward him,
everything, through him, in the Holy Spirit, attains to the Father.*

—Pope St. John Paul II, 16 October 2002

ABOUT THE ARTWORK IN THIS BIBLE STUDY

Scenes from the Creed and the original 15 Mysteries of the Rosary are from windows by Charles J. Connick at St. Augustin Catholic Church in Des Moines, Iowa. The photographs were taken by Tom Knapp; AI-generated illustrations of the five Luminous Mysteries are by Tami Palladino.