

Review Article

The Five Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary – A Review Based on the Biblical Backgrounds

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Abstract - This paper is about Catholic beliefs on the Rosary prayers. As often misunderstood, the Rosary prayers are not mere repetitions of reciting words. Rather, the mystery of the Rosary begins with Jesus and circles back to Jesus. There are twenty mysteries in the Rosary prayers, which are arranged into four-mystery groups: the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries. In this paper, our specific discussion is on the biblical background review of the five luminous mysteries of the Rosary prayers.

Keywords - Baptism, Last Supper, Luminous, Mystery, Proclamation of the Kingdom, Rosary, Transfiguration, Wedding at Cana.

1. Introduction

The Rosary prayers are arranged into four series of mysteries and ordered in the following sequence (J-L-S-G): the Joyful (J), Luminous or Light (L), Sorrowful (S), and Glorious (G), according to the Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae [1–2]. Each of the four series mentioned above contains five mysteries that make up the Rosary of twenty mysteries (i.e., significant events or moments in the life of Jesus and Mary). Typically, each such arrangement (series) of the Rosary takes about 20 min/per day to pray [3].

In this paper, our specific discussion is on the Rosary prayers' five luminous mysteries (i.e., mysteries of light). We note there are different prayer characteristics, such as Benedictine, Carmelite¹, Dominican, Franciscan, Ignatian, Marian [4], etc. Saint Pope John Paul II (JP2), at the end of his life, left us a beautiful document called: The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Paragraph 1 of the document stated, “The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. With the Rosary, the Christian people sit at the school of Mary and are led to the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love” [1–2]. The Luminous Mystery was added by JP2 because there was a missing link.

We arrange the sections as follows. In Section 2, we discuss the five luminous mysteries both textually and visually, using the Biblical background as textual evidence and paintings or pictures as visual illustration. Finally, in Section 3, we conclude the discussion.

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2. The Five Luminous Mysteries

There are five luminous mysteries in the Rosary prayers. They are as follows. First, the Baptism. Second, the Wedding in Cana. Third, the Proclamation of the Kingdom. Forth, the Transfiguration. Fifth and final, the Last Supper. When praying over the decades, we also meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary, which are deeply rooted in the Bible [5–7] and Christian Tradition. We can gain valuable lessons from the lives of Jesus and Mary through these mysteries of the Rosary.

Traditionally Catholics reflect on specific mysteries each day of the week – in particular, the luminous mysteries are traditionally recited and meditated on every Thursday.

2.1. The Baptism

As an exciting visit over 150 times to the actual site of Jesus's Baptism, Ray [8] studied and unpacked the incredibly rich Old Testament (OT) background behind the first luminous mystery of the Rosary prayer, “The Baptism.” Ray [8] explained the details to make the site come alive through the OT background behind such the first mystery, the meaning attached to it, and the deeply spiritual mystery of Christ and the Trinity revealed at that location, at the northern tip of the Dead Sea and on the Jordanian side of the river.

The end of the Dead Sea is the warm place of the Lord's Baptism. The Lord's Baptism mystery, recorded in the New Testament (NT), is not something we can understand on our own without God making it known or revealing it to us. The beginning of Jesus' Earthly Ministry is at the age of about 30 when He came down to the Jordan River to be baptized by



John the Baptist – it’s called the Epiphany. The Epiphany and Easter were two great feasts. The Epiphany is about the Baptism of John, while Easter is about the Resurrection of Jesus. Three great events were involved in the Epiphany: first, the Wisemen when Jesus was revealed to the Gentiles (not only Jewish Bible); second, the Baptism that He revealed to the people of Israel; and third, the miracle of Cana in John Chapter 2 when He revealed to His Disciples who He was. The Baptism of Lord Jesus is in all 4 gospels. But John wrote it differently, as a foundational way of preparing the Lord. John emphasized the Baptism as ‘The Marker,’ as he wrote ‘Behold the Lamb of God. John said he himself did not know Him, but for this ‘purpose,’ he came to baptize people [he knew his purpose], so that might be revealed to Israel – and certainly, He does. Hence, each mystery is located in different pilgrimage areas where it took place so that people can pray at each location and have a good memory. There is an image from ‘The Biblical Archaeology Society’ [9] shown in Figure 1, which is the map of the Sea of Galilee (the blue line from North to South); and ‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’, where John was baptizing, and as the Baptism Place of Lord Jesus, right at the Northern tip of the Dead Sea. Jerusalem is the Israel site today. Next, Jericho is Jordan's site today.

lowest site on the face of the earth because the place where Jesus was baptized, the Jordan River, was the lowest site of the face of the earth [1250 feet below the sea level; while Jerusalem is about 3-thousand feet above the sea level]. People do not realize the proximity of the distance. Imagine when you are going down, your ears start to pop.

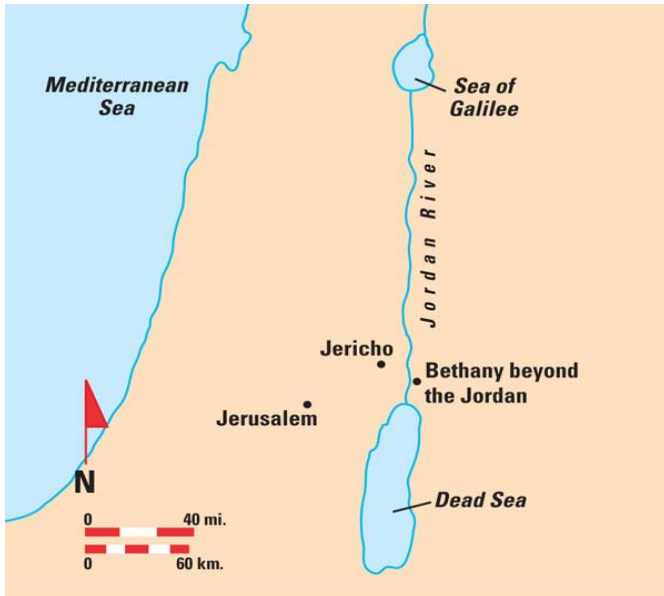


Fig. 1 The map of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, and the location of “Bethany beyond the Jordan” on the east bank of the Jordan River, as the Baptismal Place of Jesus

Three big biblical events happened at ‘Bethany beyond the Jordan’ point (Fig. 1-2). First, where Joshua and his children cross over; second, where Elijah was taken up to Heaven; and third, where Jesus was baptized. These three big biblical events occurred at ‘Bethany beyond the Jordan.’ Hence, when you were in Jerusalem when you said ‘Bethany beyond Jordan,’ you go down from Jerusalem, and it’s about 20-mile to go down from Jerusalem to the Jordan River; the



Fig. 2 ‘Bethany beyond Jordan’ where Jesus was baptized

These areas have a lot of welfare and war zones between Jordan and Israel when they are fighting. In the late 1996s, there was a peace treaty. Mohammad Wahid knows the Bible, histories, and diaries he collected of them. Then he identified the place where Jesus was baptized. There are 14 churches that the Early Christians built. Why would the Early Christians build those 14 churches there, while often, when the river goes up, the churches got wiped away and rebuilt them? Because they knew Jesus was baptized there. Figure 2 (left panel) is a picture of Ray [8] standing in the Jordan River. You will sink about 3-feet of mud, as Ray [8] experienced. But in that picture, Ray [8] was standing on a wooden plate as they were filming Elijah and Elisha; otherwise, he would be sinking up to his knees into the mud. That is a very muddy place/river for Baptism. On the other side of the Jordan River is a place for Baptism where Jesus was baptized. All the pointers (historical, archeological, biblical) pointed towards this one place (the church in the upper left corner of the middle panel of Figure 2) because it will be wiped down by flood or earthquake, knocked-down due to wars. Still, they always rebuilt it because there were beautiful steps that came down that was like a Tributary where waters will fill in [at the bottom of the picture, above], which is a small pool [see right panel of Figure 2] and there would not be any mud. John baptized Jesus in that little pool area. The Early Christians maintained the steps. That was the map.

For several reasons, John took Baptism on the spot there, very carefully. First, because John knows that will portray where the New Joshua (Jesus) took place and will bring humanity to the other side [aka Heaven]. Second, it was where Joshua was across the river on the other side. In a way, Jesus [savior in Greek] was the New Joshua [savior in Hebrew]. Jesus took us to the other side: Heaven, while Joshua took Israelites from the other side to Jerusalem. Both names mean savior. Third, significant spot because this is a good crossroad; everybody comes to Jerusalem, especially from the North, from Galilea, and across the road to Jerusalem; everybody who is travelling will get into that area. Fourth, it has a good biblical historical spot/area and will also maximize John’s message: all soldiers, pharisees,

tax collectors, and travelers all coming up to the Northern spot of the Dead Sea. Like Elijah, John is knowledgeable and full of Holy Spirit (HS). Fifth, there is a hill marked by the prophet St. Elijah in Figure 3, which is called the “Hill of St Elijah” because it is where “The taken of Elijah to Heaven with a flaming chariot” occurred; and where Elisha got the double-portion of Elijah’s spirit and Elisha hit the ground and said where the Jordan River is and then the ground split, and there appear Jordan River and he crossed it.



Fig. 3 Hill of St. Elijah

John the Baptist knew it, who is the picture of Elijah, that’s where the Place of the Lord because at the end of the Book of Malachi, it is written: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the day of an awesome day of the Lord!” Pharisees were there, and John knew Elijah was wearing hairy camel robes and wear a leather belt on his waist. There are only two men in the Bible that wear camel-hairy type of robes and leather belts on their waists: only two, and they are Elijah and John the Baptist. And the pharisees knew John the Baptist standing on the same spot that Elijah was taken up to Heaven; hence those pharisees looked at John the Baptist and looked up to Heaven, back and forth, asking, are you the Elijah that will come again? And Jesus confirmed he was. Both the angels said to Zachariah your son will come, not in reincarnation of Elijah, but in the spirit and power in the prophetic authority of Elijah, come down from Galilea to this great crossroad where Elijah went up and where Joshua crossed it. At that very place, John the Baptist, who was the New Elijah, where Jesus came in, and John very carefully chose that spot to baptize Jesus. John eats grasshoppers and wild honey – clean and cozy food for the Jews to eat, as written in Leviticus 11:22 that they could eat anything that hops, like grasshoppers, crickets, and locusts.

People asked another question whether Jesus got dunked, emersed completely into the water, or just got sprinkled or poured. We did not know how Jesus was baptized, but the Early Church taught it is equally valid where there was not much-running water nearby, especially in the dessert area. The Early Church taught that running water is always the best because it showed us that Baptism is

a sign of us dying in Christ in the old life, raised up [from water] into a new living creature with Christ. In Ezekiel 36:25 – the new covenant, God said I would sprinkle clean water upon you, and you should be cleaned from your uncleanness and all your idols, and you will obey My Words. In other words, you do not have to be emersed completely in the water but only sprinkled is fine. It is the ‘Dedicate,’ which is the teaching from the first century. It was part of the liturgical instructions of the Early Christians in the late first century or early second century that if there is no running water, then still water is fine, and if there is no still water, then sprinkled water is fine, as well. Those are effective as long as they are in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the HS. It was written, “All of Jerusalem” [pharisee, travelers, etc.] came to see Him.

Jesus never sins, but He did the Baptism to 1) fulfill all of the Law and the Scripture; 2) relate to us what we should do; 3) by stepping into the water, He sanctifies the water; not water sanctify Him so that 4) water can be used to sanctify us, 5) to also pre-figure His Crucifixion. It is why He said to Nicodemus [unless a person born of water and spirit...the other day I went down to Jordan River, Dove/HS came down, and then you become a new creature of God] of Revelation/Epiphany to the Trinity (the Dove as third person HS, the father said this is My Beloved Son, and Jesus), giving us a better revelation of who He is. It is like children brought by their parent’s faith are baptized, and Jesus gave us the example and explained what it meant to be born again [to Nicodemus]. Remember that the gospel John began with water and ended with water too. In the end, Jesus’s (pierced side) body was the coming of the water: Water of Cleansing.

For Jewish Washing [at the Cana Wedding; John 2:1-12], there were six water jars, and they were inferior because the number 6 symbolized imperfection; it was only for the Jews and not for the outsiders. However, when you look at the Gospel of John, in the beginning, there is water; in the middle story, Jesus was in the water; at the end of the Gospel of John, there is water coming out of Jesus’s Body, and Jesus was the seventh jar, the symbol of perfection/God. Not just washing away the outside (pots and pans) but also inside of us (Gentiles), the water of Baptism brings us into the Church or the Body of Christ. Nicodemus, not only the beginning of Christ’s Early Ministry but to be reborn in Christ. In John 4, we found out Nicodemus was also being baptized. Therefore, this Northern corner of the Dead Sea is where Jesus’ ministry started His First Luminous Mystery: The Baptism of the Lord.

2.2. The Wedding at Cana

In the second luminous mystery of the Rosary prayer, Roza [10] pointed out the following: 1) how the OT prophets are the key to understanding Jesus’ mysterious reply to Mary: Woman, what is this to you and me? My hour has not yet come”; 2) the meaning of Jesus’s hour; 3) why Jesus chose

the miracle at Cana as his very first miracle; 4) how and why John alludes to the seven days of creation in Genesis in the wedding at Cana; 5) the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary as intercessor.

The second luminous mystery is found in the Gospel of John 2:1-12. Jesus had his first miracle in Galilee, His public ministry, and His Disciples believed in Him. That is a special moment in Jesus' life. What was in Jesus' heart at that moment? It reveals something about Jesus when it is written, "God has manifested His Glory in this way" (John 2:11). A lot of Catholics goes to this Cana place of the Holy Land (Figure 4) because Jesus blessed marriage and elevated it to a Sacrament, not only a Natural Union between a man and a woman, but also how the 'Sacred Union' between God and the married couple at a 'Sacramental Reality of a Marriage.'

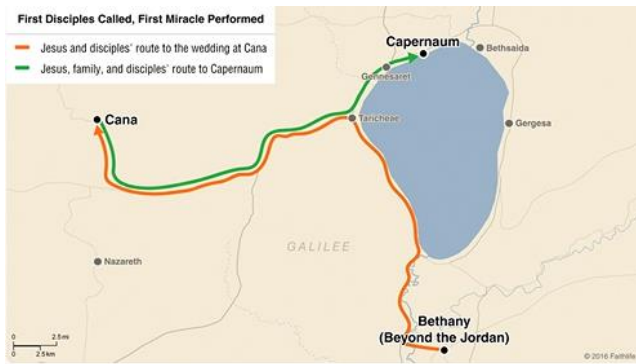


Fig. 4 The Cana place of Holy Land

Let's begin with John 2:1-2, "On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples." John laid out the mystery very carefully in Figure 5, as follows.



Fig. 5 The Seven Days of the Week

Notice how John laid down his texts, "The next day..." on each of those verses in Figure 5. In chapter 2, verse 1, Jesus died on Friday as the first (current day) and was raised on the third day. If we count the third day this way, the Third

day in Cana is the Seventh day of the week. Why John presented the 'Entire Seven Days of the Week'? In John 1, he said: in the beginning...from the perspective of "All Eternity." There is also Genesis, when God told the story of a 'New Creation,' with the story of 'a week' when God created. Jesus' ministry is cultivating the 'Death and Resurrection.' Hence, this is very important that he eluded this as a sign of a 'New Creation,' too. John 2:3-5 said, "When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come'. His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'" It is a very strange dialog. It seems almost like a rebuke, but Jesus' action told us something else that turned into a miracle. What does 'the hour' mean? It refers to Jesus' 'Death and Resurrection.' For example, John 7:30 is about arresting Jesus; however, they could not arrest Him because 'His hour' has not come; on the Last Supper: Jesus knew that 'His hour' would come. Throughout the Gospel of John, water, wine, marriage, and food, were in a supernatural sense. Those two aspects will help us understand what Jesus said. He was thinking of the 'Hour of His Death & Resurrection' at the Cana Wedding. For instance, to the woman at the well, Jesus said water as a spiritual way; Nicodemus reborn as a spiritual revert; Jesus said food as a supernatural way while his disciples talked about natural food. The parallel 'wine' verse in the OT (Isaiah 25:6-9) also referred to the mountain: "On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich foods and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure choice wine. On this mountain, he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples; the web is woven over all the nations. He will destroy death forever. [...] It will be said that day, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.'" Hence, Isaiah said that in the 'Mount of Jerusalem,' God will offer people the best choice of 'wine,' and he will destroy death; this is exactly what Jesus offered Himself on the Cross.

There are two parallel OT verses about 'marriage.' First, Isaiah 62: 4-5, 8-9 speaks to Israelites, "No more shall you be called 'Forsaken,' nor your land called 'Desolate,' but you shall be called 'My Delight is in Her', and your land 'Espoused'; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be espoused. For as a young man marries a virgin, your builder shall marry you, and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so shall your God rejoice in you". Hence, God promised the Israelites that God would marry them, just as a bridegroom marries his bride. Second, Hosea 2:16-19 said, "Therefore, I will allure her now; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak persuasively to her. Then I will give her the vineyards she had and the valley of Achor as a door of hope. There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as on the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. On that day, oracle of the LORD, you shall call me, 'My husband,' and you shall never again call me, 'My Baal.'" Hence, we see in the prophecy at the 'Mount of the Lord', at

‘His Hour,’ and God will marry his people and God will give his best ‘wine.’ Next, what was in Jesus’ mind when He talked about ‘His Hour’ [at His Cross] at the Cana Wedding? He immediately thinks of [the supernatural] what God is inviting Him to do at calvary and offer His Life, marry His people, and spiritually drink His Blood at the Eucharist, to redeem His people. Moreover, Mary, as the New Eve where Eve, was referred to as the woman at the creation. Mary also represents the believers [His Disciples] because of her faith; even though she didn’t understand fully, she responded in faith: ‘Do whatever He said.’

John 2:6-12 said: “Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, ‘Fill the jars with water.’ And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, ‘Now draw some out and take it to the feast steward.’ So, they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, ‘Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.’ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.”

Now we know this is Jesus’ ‘First Sign of Pre-Figuration’ that points forward what He will do at the Cross from God’s prophecy that God will marry His people and give ‘wine.’ These six jars are used to wash hands, feet, utensils, etc. He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it. Jesus took the rituals of the purifications, and He fulfilled the purpose. The amount of water (over 120 gallons) revealed His abundance and grace. The grace that Jesus gave us is superabundant, even at our darkest moments. This second luminous mystery pointed to the mystery of His own ‘Death and Resurrection.’ Mary brings her issues, even the practical ones, to Jesus: being a disciple of the Lord, being the ‘Intercessor,’ bring a difficulty of a practical one at the Cana Wedding, and she does the same for us now.

2.3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom

The third luminous mystery is about Jesus’ announcement of the greatest good news ever heard in history and the response he calls for, repentance and faith. Healy [11] unpacks the meaning of Jesus’ message and looks at how several figures in the gospels responded to it. Praying this mystery is a call to make our life-changing decision to follow Jesus as his disciple, no matter the cost.

The third luminous mystery is basically a call to repentance. The Gospel of Mark gave a very brief summary of what Jesus preached: Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of God and saying the ‘Time is Fulfilled’ and the ‘Kingdom of God’ is at hand; repent and believe in the

gospel. The “Time is Fulfilled” means: the moment has arrived that God is bringing to accomplish everything He promised. This is what the patriarch and prophets prophesized. The ‘Kingdom of God means this: kingdom means King’s domain. So, the kingdom is where the King truly reigns. Jesus taught us to pray: ‘Thy Kingdom come.’ When Jesus actually reigns over our life, family time, and work. There is also another kingdom which is the kingdom of Satan. In Genesis, it is written that God created the Garden of Eden in the beginning. He gave them dominion over everything, bringing all creations to their ultimate destiny: the Glory of God. The ‘Enemy’ gains control over the parents of our lives.

G. K. Chesterton [12] said that the doctrine of original sin denied by some people is actually the easiest doctrine to prove; look at the headlines; look at what’s happening in the world, and you see that there is something more than human ill will at work; there is the ‘Enemy’ who seek to steal, deceive, kills and destroy. Catechism said by our first parents’ sin; the Devil has acquired a certain dominion over men; even though men remain free, original sin entails captivity under the power of him who then has the power over death; that is the Devil. Therefore, Jesus comes on the scene; as the ‘True King’ to recapture the territory that the ‘Enemy’ has conquered. Jesus’ mission is to free those who were captives under the dominion of sins. Hence, that’s what He announces for the human’s right responses: ‘Repent and Believe.’ The word ‘repent’ in the NT literally means change your mind. Hence, go beyond your mind because something entirely new is in place: the ‘Kingdom of God’ is here. Do a 180-degree turn. Radically re-orient your life.

Believe means to entrust your life totally to Jesus; to stay everything on the fact that this Gospel He proclaimed is true. You stake everything [even your life itself] at the gospel. The only way to be saved is to enter the ‘Kingdom’; the only way to enter the ‘Kingdom’ is to ‘Repent and Believe.’ There can be weed tangled up [the dominion of darkness]; one thing is clear: there is no third kingdom, and there is nothing ‘in-between.’ From then point, His ministry is teaching, announcing, preaching, forgiving sins, and healing sickness from demonic oppressions of evil spirits. Jesus demonstrates this through healing and forgiveness. Jesus calls; which ones did you identify?

For example, the fishermen Simon and Andrew were catching fish. They left everything and followed Jesus, who was a carpenter and a rabbi. Why? ‘Jesus was passing along the shore’ – analogue to God passes through Moses on Mount Horeb. When Jesus called these fishermen, He was calling them with His divine authority; hence, there is something in their hearts that will follow His spiritual teaching. Jesus was more than that as He said, “Follow Me.” He asked for unconditional, absolute faithfulness from that day on, every day of their lives, to surrender everything.

From the day we said ‘YES’ to Jesus, everything of our own, past, future, and present belongs to Him. Are there parts of my life that were not of Jesus? Partial Obedience is a delusion. Half-baked Christianity is no Christianity at all. Be complete and radical as Jesus’s disciples.

Another example is Zacchaeus, a chief tax collector, feared by people because he was corrupted. People hated him. He would have been looked down upon by pious people. The words spread that Jesus had just healed a blind man, and something spiritual attraction of Jesus attracted Zacchaeus. How many people have an interior battle like Zacchaeus? He won the interior battle; he wanted to see this Holy Man [Jesus], climbed the tree, and didn’t care what others thought of him. Hence, Jesus said, “Zacchaeus, I come down. I want to eat dinner with you tonight.” Jesus knows him by name; people start to murmur what a sinner this guy is; he made an external declaration that his repentance is real. Jesus said today; salvation has come to his house.

Another instance is a Samaritan woman at the well. She had trouble in her life: she came at noon and avoided others; she has not been living a moral life; yet Jesus came with such humility and asked her to give him a drink. He begins to speak to her about the ‘Living Water.’ Go call your husband; a painful subject. Jesus just exposed so much woundedness and sins in her heart; probably, she is seeking identity and comfort with her previous broken six men. Jesus brought her hurts so that He could heal her. After healing, she became a witness and evangelist. Those were three biblical stories that Jesus personally called and converted to conversion. Will I allow Jesus to be the King of my life? Will I follow Him at any cost in my life? Will I trust Him? Make a radical decision to make Him a King to you today; give yourself in to be His Disciple. Any destruction or attachment that blocks your devotion to Jesus, ask Him to remove it.

2.4. The Transfiguration

The Transfiguration of Jesus points toward a transfiguration of his people. As we gaze upon the glorious, transfigured King, the church is being glorified, transfigured, and likened unto Christ, the King. As St. Paul [13] says, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Corinthians 3:18). Heaven's help is not given so that we might sidestep suffering. Rather, divine strength is poured out to empower us to take up the Cross, like our Lord. ‘*Per Crucem ad Lucem!*’ Through the Cross to the Light!

Dalton [14] unpacks the fourth luminous mystery of the Holy Rosary as follows. A glimpse of his [Jesus] Glory shining on his humanity. It points to the divination of his church. The liturgy said for the ‘Feast of Transfiguration’ [15], written on the three gospel books (Mark 9:2–13;

Matthew 17:1–13; Luke 9:28–36), is celebrated on every sixth of August:

“Christ revealed his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses and filled with the greatest splendour that bodily form which he shares with all humanity, that the scandal of the Cross might be removed from the hearts of his disciples and that he might show how in the Body of the whole Church is to be fulfilled what so wonderfully shone forth first in its Head.”

Notice that it overflows from His reality to the church. Hence, we need to re-live the mystery. There are two important points. First, let us move from the biblical background painted by Rafael [16] in 1520 (see Figure 6). Second, we also want to move from our heads to our hearts. It can help a picture in our mind contemplate.



Fig. 6 The Transfiguration, upper scene of Rafael's painting in 1520 (left); both upper and lower scenes of Rafael's painting (right)

In reading Mark 9:2, we do not just read that but read what comes before and after the text,

“And he said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power. [The Transfiguration]. And after six days, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain alone. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, and no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.’”

The evangelist's mind has a clear sign to carry them in the following passage. The title of Jesus is ‘Christ’ [Mark 8:29] and the ‘Son of God’ [Peter said ‘You are the Christ’]. Who is Jesus? We cannot spell ‘Christ’ without the ‘Cross’ – ‘*Per crucem ad lucem,*’ which means ‘*Through the Cross, to the Light.*’ Ready of ourselves [in mind and heart] to re-live the ‘Life of Christ.’ Christ is not to dodge the Cross. The ‘Mount of Transfiguration’ is the mount of preparation for the ‘Suffering or Calvary.’ Jesus is talking about His ‘Exodus: His Death and Resurrection’. Now, back to Mark 9:1. As we read more, after 6 days, the transfigured King [Jesus] provides a foretaste (a little glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven). Peter, James, and John grasp something of the ‘Divine Presence’; Jesus was metamorphosized (transfigured): ‘intensely white, no one can bleach them.’

Parallel to Moses at Mount Sinai with the 'burning bush'; and Elijah (King 19) – soft breeze upon this mountain. All verses indicate to listen to Jesus as Jesus is the 'Word.'

In Figure 6, Rafael's canvas, the 'Transfiguration,' is easily divided the canvas into two scenes. The upper portion is the 'Transfiguration'; our eyes are focused on the upper scene; the bottom is all kind of darkness; zigging and zagging without finding a place to rest; a woman pointing to a boy possessed by the demon, one eye looks up to Jesus, one eye looks at the boy. Color of Christ cloth, the array of blue. Usually blue on the bottom; red on top. The divinity of Christ is depicted in the color of the sky, blue, while the Humanity of Christ is depicted in the color of blood, red. The central point: Jesus is the 'centre of the painting'; Jesus is the 'Centre of the Gospel.' The end of the gospel: Jesus will rise to the cloud.

Jesus pointed out in Matthew 26:64 that "*From now on, you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.*" We are not there at 'Transfiguration,' but he gave us anticipation of what is coming. There is much to unpack from the evangelist [Matthew]. What Jesus said: we are not going to camp at the top of the mountain but will be walking down to the very bottom of the mountain. The father presented to Jesus, his demon-possessed boy; Jesus said everything is possible if you believe; the father said help me with the unbelief; the Apostles asked him, later on, why can't they cast on these demons; then Jesus gave the authority and power; Jesus lament: 'O faithless generations, how long must I bear you?' Look at how Rafael depicts the woman; she is intricate; looking at the left but pointing to the right to the boy; the color of her cloth is red and blue but not in the typical order; Jesus assumed human nature; she was divinized; who is this woman? Rafael says she is the church, which needs healing and power to cast out the demons. She [the church] anticipates Jesus in faith to come down; what filled the empty canvas on top, to fill the bottom of the canvas. Definition from Hebrew 11:2 about faith, 'Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.' The message is to not only pray the Rosary but also carry the power, grace, and love of the luminous presence of Jesus into our daily lives when demons are trying to destroy us. What do we do? Ask God to help us with the unbelief.

The lower scene of Figure 6 (second panel) shows this is an altarpiece, and realizing Jesus is the 'Eucharistic King' in the 'Eucharistic Host.' He will raise to fill the space between the 'Upper and Lower Depictions of the Reality in the Painting.' And the church should be kneeling in front of the 'Eucharistic King' and recognizing His glorious presence because He is on the heavenly throne and also reigning there [Heaven] and here [earth]. The key verse as St. Paul said (2 Cor 3:18), "All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured into the same image from

glory to glory." Hence, did you catch that? It was not just Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, and John but all of us; because we gazed, we are being changed (transformed) and glorified and divinized. Hence, 'we are by grace, what he is by nature'. We need to carry into our contemplation that there is a surging power from Heaven that wants to move through human flesh to reproduce the 'Live of Christ.'

2.5. *The Last Supper*

Feingold's [17] explanation of the fifth luminous mystery focuses on the three reasons Jesus instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper. As the sacrament of Christ's charity and spousal love, it makes the Bridegroom [Jesus] present to us in the church on every altar and in every tabernacle; it makes His atoning sacrifice present on the altar and enables His Bride [the church] to join in the offering of it, and it contains His total self-gift to us in Holy Communion.

The biblical reference for this fifth luminous mystery of the Holy Rosary is written in John chapter 13. John introduces the Last Supper (John 13). It is a mystery of love; Jesus loved them to the end. Jesus loves us to the end by instituting the eucharist. There are seven sacraments, and there are seven primary virtues. Some of the medieval scholastic theologians made the connections between the 7 sacraments and 7 virtues; and the 3 cardinal virtues to the 3 theological virtues. When they talk about the 'Sacrament of Eucharist' [Queen of the Sacramental System], they associate/connect it with the "Virtue of Charity" [Queen of the Virtue], precisely the 'Supernatural Love.' That gave us the entry of the eucharistic sacrament. Precisely, to enable us to love Jesus back; love as a total self-give. Marriage at the human level is the best image of what love looks like in the fullest aspect of 'totality.' The best of seeing it as a nuptial or spousal gift of the 'Divine Bridegroom' who has become man for the sake of 'His Bride' [church]. John the Baptist precisely referred to Jesus as the 'Bridegroom.' Jesus gave Himself as a self-gift to 'His Bride' [church] by instituting the Eucharist to be the mystery of His love.

We can get three answers from the human spousal love [eros] analogy: 1) Totality of the husband's love for his bride. The same reason Jesus became man, want to take his human condition, to elevate us to His divine condition; in taking what ours, that makes it possible, so as enter into a 'spousal relationship,' and the 'Word becomes Flesh'; Jesus knows He will be crucified, resurrect, and ascent to Heaven; Divinely how to continue spousal presence (through Eucharist); we can't figure that out, but He was able to solve that problem with the Eucharist as a visible presence in the Eucharist; 2,) Marriage does not work without self-sacrifice [i.e., sacrifice personal preferences for the sake of the good of the loved one]; sacrificial love for the beloved; husband giving his life on the calvary so to wash the bride; 3) self-gift to the beloved [including those who are becoming His

disciples], by giving oneself ‘totally’ to the beloved bride. Jesus did that a) by becoming man, b) by dying on the Cross; c) by leaving his presence yet remaining in his presence to live that sacrifice [of the Mass] and enjoyed by her bride while leaving the earth and ascending to Heaven; His ‘body-blood-soul-divinity’ of Holy Communion is the solution. Therefore, we have seen a 3-fold purpose: 1) make his sacrifice living present to us, 2) real presence [18], the sacrifice of the mass 3) holy communion, by totally giving himself to us, in his ‘body-blood-soul-divinity.’ Hence, the Eucharist is called the mystery of a) Present, b) Sacrifice, and c) Communion. Without the ‘Real Presence’ [18], there cannot be sacrifice nor communion to make it possible to continue his presence within us in the Eucharist. Long in the divine plan before the ‘Word Become Flesh’ was the 3-fold mystery: of a) Present, b) Sacrifice, and c) Communion.

The ‘First Pre-Figured’ Christ is the ‘Arch of the Covenant’ where God dwells amid Israel in the ‘Arch of the Covenant.’ To help understand the specific manifestations of God’s glory, it is important to understand the frequently used term, ‘*Shekinah*’ from a Hebrew word meaning ‘the one who dwells’ or ‘that which dwells’ and was used to describe the light on the mercy-seat of the ‘Ark of the Covenant’ in the Holy of Holies, which symbolize the Divine presence (Exodus 25:8). *Shekinah* is not found in Scripture. Still, the root word ‘*shakan*’ (to dwell, to settle down, to tabernacle with, to have a habitation) and the related word ‘*mishkan*’ (tabernacle) are both associated with the presence of God (and His glory) dwelling with man. To simplify, ‘*Shekinah*’ means the ‘indwelling of God’, which is the ‘glory of Israel.’ Therefore, that was the ‘Pre-Figuring Christ’ in the Eucharist, Holy of Holy in Israel, which was a manifestation of God uniquely but not properly present yet; the Incarnation made it possible. Jesus had his bodily presence in this world for 33 years. A validly ordained Catholic priest can make the Eucharist Sacrifice. That is the glory of ‘Real Presence’ [18] under ‘Sacramental Veil.’

The ‘Secondly Pre-Figured’ Christ is that Jesus Christ was both the [same] High Priest and the Sacrifice. Jesus wanted the ‘Sacrifice of Calvary’ to be the ‘Central’ of our lives. Hence, the task of the faithful in the Mass is that after receiving Jesus in the Eucharist, we are to offer ourselves to

Him as ‘His Bride’ [church], our desire to live a Christian life that my life can be an offer to God [our ‘body-blood-soul-humanity’].

The third mystery of Mass is the fruit of the ‘mutual sacrifice’ in the Mass. The Eucharist is the ‘New Tree of Life.’ The Eucharist is the progressive configuration or nourishment to offer me back to Jesus so that in the next Mass, we can progressively become better and better – in preparing the offering, in receiving him, and asking him for remedy. Jesus loved them [the disciples] to the end by giving himself a self-giving gift (sacrifice) so that we could live from his life and become more and more configured. Jesus ‘Instituted the Eucharist’ [in the ‘Upper Room’] so that we can live his life and love while journeying (pilgrimage) from Earth to Heaven.

3. Conclusion

In this paper, we have reviewed and discussed the five luminous mysteries [19–20] in the Rosary prayers, which are traditionally recited and meditated every Thursday. To recap, the five luminous mysteries [19–20] are as follows. First is the ‘Baptism.’ Second is the ‘Wedding at Cana.’ The third is the ‘Proclamation of the Kingdom.’ Forth is the ‘Transfiguration.’ The fifth and final is the ‘Last Supper.’

When we pray and recite the decades [19–20], we also meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary. Such mysteries are deeply rooted in the Bible and Christian Tradition. By studying and meditating (CCC 2705–2708, 2723) [21–26], such biblical background and Christian Tradition, we can gain valuable lessons from the lives of Jesus (via the lenses of Mary) through these mysteries of the Rosary, which begin and ending with Jesus Christ. While the such [meditative] form of prayerful reflection is of great value, ultimately, the end goal of Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him, per CCC 2708 [21, 25].

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