

Review Article

A Review of the Five Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary Based on the Biblical Backgrounds

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Received: 03 January 2023

Revised: 05 February 2023

Accepted: 17 February 2023

Published: 28 February 2023

Abstract - This manuscript is about Catholic beliefs on Rosary prayers. Often times, the Rosary prayers are incorrectly interpreted as mere repetitions of prayer chants. Instead, the mystery of the Rosary begins with Jesus and circles back to Jesus. The twenty mysteries in the Rosary prayers are organized into the four-mystery category: the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries. Particularly, our discussion in this manuscript is on the biblical background review of the five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary prayers.

Keywords - Agony in the Garden, Crowning with Thorns, Death of Jesus, Jesus Carries the Cross, Mystery, Rosary, Scourging at the Pillar, Sorrowful.

1. Introduction

There are four-mystery categories in the Rosary prayers. These categories are organized 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 category contains five mysteries which make up the Rosary of twenty mysteries. These mysteries are significant highlights of moments in the life of Jesus and Mary. In practice, meditatively praying each category of the Rosary prayers takes about 20 min/per day [3].

In this manuscript, our particular discussion is on the five sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary prayers. Note that there are different prayer characteristics, such as Benedictine, Carmelite, Dominican, Franciscan, Ignatian, Marian [4], etc. Saint Pope John Paul II (JP2), at the end of his life, wrote 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 sections in this manuscript are managed as follows. In Section 2, we dive into the five sorrowful mysteries both textually and visually, using the bible-based background as textual evidence and paintings/pictures as visual illustrations. Section 3 is the discussion, and Section 4 is the conclusion.

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2. The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

There are five sorrowful mysteries in the Rosary prayers. They are as follows. First, ‘The Agony in the Garden’. Second, ‘The Scourging at the Pillar’. Third, ‘The Crowning with Thorns’. Forth, ‘Jesus Carries the Cross’. Fifth and final, ‘The Death of Jesus’. In addition to praying over the decades, one also meditates on the mysteries of the Rosary, which are deeply rooted in the Bible [5–7] and Christian Sacred Tradition. We can discover valuable lessons from Jesus and Mary’s lives through these Rosary mysteries.

Traditionally Catholics reflect on specific mysteries each day of the week – in specific, the sorrowful mysteries are traditionally recited and meditated every Tuesday and Friday.

2.1. The Agony in the Garden

The ‘Agony in the Garden’ is the gospel mystery from Jesus to Christ. Cadavini [8], a theology professor at the University of Notre Dame, unpacked the first sorrowful mystery of the Rosary prayers as follows. The ‘Agony in the Garden’ is at the head of the ‘Sorrowful Mysteries’ and stands for them all in a way. Christ’s whole life is a mystery, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 514) [9] tells us because it is the truly human life of the second person of the Holy Trinity. In the Sorrowful Mysteries, we contemplate as a whole the awesome mystery that “He who was crucified in the flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ, is true God, Lord of Glory, and one of the Holy Trinity” (Second Council of Constantinople, 553). In Agony in the Garden, we see how one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, the Son, bends down out of love, taking to himself all of our experiences of desolation, fear of death, betrayal, and even (seeming) abandonment by God when he refuses to hear our prayers as



we think we would like them heard. In making our desolation His [Jesus] desolation, Jesus transfigures even these moments of abandonment and fear into moments of communion with His love.

The CCC 514 [9] told us that each Christ moment of whole life is a mystery, and the ‘Agony in the Garden’ is one mystery. The ‘Agony in the Garden’ is specifically depicted in the two gospels (Mark 14:32–50; John 18:1–12). These two accounts of the agony, betrayal, and arrest of Jesus illustrate the different images of Jesus in the gospels of Mark and Luke. Specifically, the former (Gospel of Mark) recorded ‘Jesus Prays in Gethsemane’, and the latter (the Gospel of Luke) reported ‘The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus’. Consistently detailed in the three Books of the Gospels (Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–50; Luke 22:39–46) [5–7], Jesus went to Gethsemane and told Peter, James, and John to remain there with Him to ‘watch and pray because the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak’.

To recap, the Gospel of Mark wrote: ‘The One [Jesus] of the Holy Trinity’ become ‘Flesh’; who is completely [humble himself to become human in the form of a helpless baby] and utterly dependent of nourishment on Mary – That is what ‘Hail Mary’ prayer reminds us with all the human dependency and humility. Additionally, the Gospel of Mark wrote about the suffering of Jesus in the story – That is the position us, the sorrow of our life, praying for a miracle, all of us have done it. Jesus prayed for a miracle in desolation, for ‘His Chalice’ to pass. However, Jesus did not get it in a way. He was asking it, and we are in good company; Jesus is Lord of Glory; Jesus has fed the five thousand people; Jesus raised the dead; Jesus has done all the miracles recorded in the Bible.

We presented the Lord of Glory who has truly become vulnerable, having bent down just to pray just like we do; Jesus declares as the Father’s will. Jesus found His three most trusted friends, yet they could not stay awake. The isolation that Jesus must have felt; and that one of them will betray Him; Jesus is speaking of a landscape of abandonment and betrayal, a moment of death because Jesus has experienced the worst moment of our lives: abandonment, betrayal, and the moment of death. Jesus has suffered with us and lived a human life, though sinless, but Jesus has no contempt for us, who are sinners. That means everything is different; we have seen Jesus bent down in our desolations, and even in moments of desolation, we find Jesus. Jesus is with us; all the moments were transfigured. Meaning we do not need to sugar-coat our desolations; and that Jesus showed us that such abandonment and betrayal; a moment of death, does not have the last words; but love has the last words. The answer to eternal life is Jesus because [His perfect] love conquers all, including death.

2.2. The Scourging at the Pillar

Kelly [10] pinpoints that scourging is here to stay, even for a long time! It is ours. We can be closely involved as victims and among those who lash out. Jesus Christ calls us to follow him precisely in his scourging. By his wounds, we are healed. The ‘Scourging at the Pillar’ mystery is not contemplation at a distance. Christ coaches us for close-up participation, transforming us, just as Jesus Christ trained his disciples two millennia ago.

In Galilee, Jesus trains his disciples for ‘His [Christ] Passion’; Jesus couches us also to share in your passion. Kelly [10] took the Magdala, Holy Land picture in Figure 1. Behind is Mount Hermon with a snow cloud, and at the foot is the source of the Jordan River. The opposite side is viewing Mount Tabor passing by Tiberius. These two mountains are where Jesus began training his disciples after ‘The Transfigurations’ (the fourth Luminous mystery) [11–13] and his messy path of suffering. Such sufferings will test the disciples’ faith and to view life from a new horizon.



Fig. 1 The map of Magdala, Holy Land

The scourging of Christ before his crucifixion is mentioned matter-of-factly in three of the gospels (Matthew 27:26; Mark 15:15; John 19:1-3), although it is not described in any detail. However, these brief references to the scourging do not take away from the fact that it was a terrible punishment that would have left Christ in a critical condition. The Gospel is very simple in the mystery of the ‘Scourging at the Pillar’ (John 19:1-3). The Evangelist Matthew records: “[They will] deliver Him [Jesus Christ] to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified...” (Matthew 20:19). At that time, Pilate and Herod has not scourged. However, in the last 10-15 min, Jesus has already been beaten, lashed, struck, and assaulted by other human beings, before and after. The CCC 572 [14] stated that the [Catholic] Church remains faithful to the interpretation of ‘all the Scriptures’ that Jesus gave both before and after his ‘Passover’: “Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” Jesus sufferings took their historical, concrete form from the fact that he was “rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes” (Mark 8:31), who handed “him to the Gentiles to be mocked, scourged, and crucified” (Matthew 20:19).

Hebrew 12 speaks about the ‘Passion of Christ’; Son of Nazarene; Son of David; Son of God. How much discipline ‘The Son’ has. The whole ‘Passion of Christ’ we need to really involve in the ‘Passion of Christ’ and the scourging itself. So that we will not get weary, Pontius Pilate investigated Jesus (Luke 23). Pilate found this Man [Jesus] was not guilty of anything; no capital crimes had been committed by Jesus. Therefore, Pilate said he had to flag Jesus and release him because Jesus had not been guilty of anything. Notice that ‘Flagging’ is another level of justice.

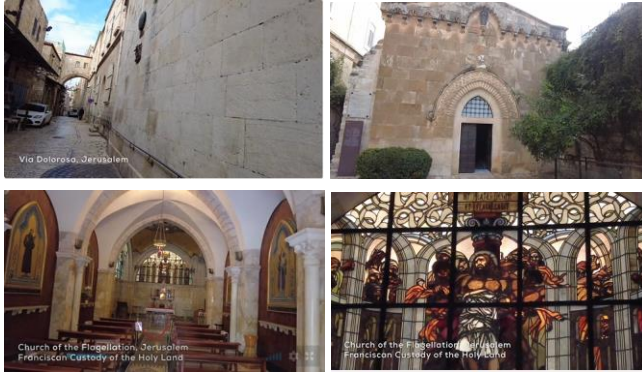


Fig. 2 Via Dolorosa [Top Left]; Outside [Top Right] and Insight [Bottom Left] of The Church of Flagellation, Jerusalem, Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land where Jesus is scourged; Mosaic Illustration of the ‘Scourging’ [Bottom Right]

There are strong images to help us remember the ‘Scourging’, as shown in Figure 2, beginning at ‘Via Dolorosa’ [Top Left Panel], and the outside [Top Right panel] and inside [Bottom Left panel] of the Church where Pilate had Jesus scourged, at the Church of Flagellation, Jerusalem, Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land. Additionally, inside the church, there is a strong picture to illustrate ‘The Scourging’ [Bottom Right panel]. Now we walk “Via Dolorosa” towards the “Calvary”. What happened at ‘The Scourging’?

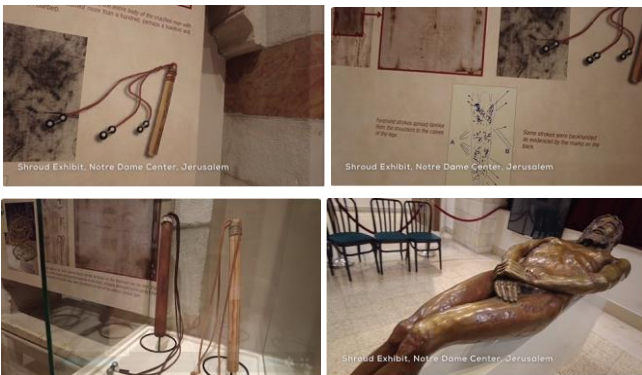


Fig. 3 Shroud Exhibit [Top Left and Right; Bottom Left panel]; A Sculpture Representation of Jesus’ 117 wounds with 39 blows [Bottom Right panel]

In Figure 3, there is the Roman Whip (Whipping Instrument). These are 117 wounds which gave us 39 blows

depicted in the [Bottom Right picture] Figure 3. These wounds came from scourging alone (not to mention all of Jesus’ total 5480 wounds from the fallen, the crowning of thorns, the piercing, etc. Jesus revealed his 5480 wounds to Saint Bridget of Sweden. However, such a topic is beyond the scope of this manuscript). The 2004 movie ‘The Passion of the Christ’ directed and screen played by the actor Mel Gibson depicts such a scene [15]. Who is involved in the flogging of Jesus [The Flagellation of Christ]? Soldiers were paid to do so; the sergeants who supervised the soldiers; the judge who condemned Jesus without cause; haters who charged faulty charges; interested enemies, those who washed their hands. Finally, us; we strike, we wound, we attack Jesus Christ. Before the flogging and after the flogging, Jesus is facing the scourging with Pilate. This shows the price tag of Jesus saying, “Come and Follow Me.” In Matthew chapter 10, the passage stated they scourge him at the synagogue; yet, Jesus did not tell the disciples when calling them to ‘follow Him’, but let them discover the mystery of faith. An equivalent passage written in Mark chapter 13 recorded that Jesus would be beaten at the synagogue.

The Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 5:1-12) recorded that Jesus said in the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, “Blessed are those who have persecuted because of Me [Jesus] for their rewards will be great in Heaven, for they treated prophets and disciples the same way” (Matthew 5:10-12). How many are scourged, persecuted, mocked, and flogged in prison because of Jesus? Look at the life of St. John of the Cross; St. Joseph was sold into slavery, and at the age of 19, Joseph discovered Jesus, as he received his identity in Christ and did not get bitter (Genesis 50:20) but trusted that Christ meant it for good.

The Meditation of the Decade of “Scourging Mystery” brings us to healing and closer to Christ. The pondering of Christ’s mystery through his mother (who pondered all these mysteries in her heart) is part of the mystery of the great transformation (Luke 2:19). How can we be blessed when being scourged, persecuted, mocked, tortured? by words, by actions, unintentional whipping, lash here and there, between neighbours, friends, parents, co-workers, etc. How does that change us? We are going to be transformed, through baptism, to be reborn in Christ. How is Christ’s action in the sufferings? Contemplation of the mystery of Christ’s suffering through His eyes and His mother’s lenses; being close to Mary; every lash that Jesus received, Mary reflected in her heart. She kept all the mysteries of Christ in her heart (Luke 2:19). For all the entire sufferings, Jesus was silent, meek, and humble. We are to invite Jesus and ask Him for His Grace; to be strengthened by His Power; to forgive somebody when someone scourges us; just like Mary’s heart pierced by the swords. Ask His grace to ponder in our hearts; for the pathway of reconciliation; to be more tender, more merciful, hence bringing to His glory at eternity forever.

2.3. *The Crowning with Thorns*

Have you ever considered the connection between the ‘Crowning of Thorns’ to Christ, the heavenly bridegroom wedding Himself to the church? We can discover a deeply intimate meditation for the next time when praying the mystery of the ‘Crowning with Thorns’. Giambone [16] mentioned that this ‘Third Sorrowful Mystery’ appeared in three of the four gospels (Matthew 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2, 19:5). This ‘Third Sorrowful Mystery’ is the most sorrowful mystery. In the Old Testament (OT), Jesus Christ is referred to as ‘A Man of Suffering’ (Isaiah 53:3) as prophesized by the Prophet Isaiah, “He was despised and rejected by humankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.” The concentrated power of this moment of the torment of the entire passion contemplated of the incarnate words.

There are several associated verses in the OT. First, regarding the association of King Solomon’s crowning by his mother [with flowers, garment, at the wedding] (Songs of Songs 3:11), Christ is being wed to his bride [his church] painfully. Second is a wedding song (Psalm 45), the psalm of the king being married. Third, the Prophet Isaiah begin with an antiphon that he grew up like a young plant as radiant of the beauty of children of men. However, repulsive and has no beauty, as depicted in Isaiah 52:2 above the antiphon. In regard to ‘The Suffering and Glory of the Servant’ (Isaiah 52:13-15), the price paid by [Jesus] the Redeemer for our salvation was not silver or gold, or corruptible things, but his own precious blood.

There is a 19th-century painter, Elías García Martínez [17], who tries to depict horrifying Christ beaten, broken, disfigured face with His Crown shown to people. This also reflects what St. Francis of Assisi depicted of a leprosy person [18–19] who was indeed Jesus. In seeing the loved-one face disfigured, this is the mystery of the Holy Face; the engagement of a ‘Person of Jesus’, we look him in the eyes; it is disfigured, yet we penetrate beyond that the beauty which is deceptive [with moral corruption]; yet there is radiant presence, through the re-configured senses, the Incarnate Lord; something to perceive deeper in the Cross; the beauty of the love of Christ in the Cross.

The Cross is the most sorrowful mystery yet most glorious. As we contemplate them, the cycle of mysteries is all treasure of wisdom. The treasures of Christ’s Passions are hidden in the Cross; the wounds of Jesus on the Cross are the same identity as the Resurrected Christ. Hence, the ‘Crowning with Thorns’ mystery is near ‘The Cross’. The mystery of His Kingdom of God is not from this world. He has done all things well, as He is the King from Heaven, but rejected by the world. The Cross is the emblem of suffering and pain. The motto of His Kingdom with the connection of His Glory; beatitudes, in a sense, is Eternal Glory. The Cross

is the honour of taking the ‘Last Place’, being rejected of all, and becoming the ‘First Born of Resurrection’. So, tying this mystery with the beatitudes, the “last becomes the first”. The ‘Head of Jesus’ is the ‘Head of His Mystical Body’, as the ‘Son of God’, bearing all our sins of our minds, our bodies. The wound on the head links the head and heart to the ‘Sacred Heart’ of the Lord Jesus. Hence, we have beautiful devotion to the ‘Head of the Mystical Body’, for example, expressed through J.S. Bach’s Chorales [20]: Why do you see the bleeding? Why do you continue to sin? His Unjust Death; Jesus was silent before Pilate.

2.4. *Jesus Carries the Cross*

The ‘Fourth Sorrowful Mystery’ encapsulates beautifully the details from devotion (the Stations of the Cross) and from revelation (the gospel accounts of Jesus being handed over to death) by which our faith contemplates with love the heart of Jesus, who invites each of us to take his yoke upon ourselves and learn from him, meek and humble of heart (Matthew 11:29). We shall examine and reflect upon what we know and believe about this mystery of the Holy Rosary based on the Scriptures, the Sacred Tradition, and the geography of Jerusalem in Jesus’ time, all the while acknowledging and embracing the necessity, for growth in true discipleship, of taking up our own, personal crosses in order to follow him (Matthew 16:24).

Samson [21] specified that the ‘Carrying of the Cross’ is referenced, without much detail, in all the canonical Gospels: Matthew 27:31–33, Mark 15:20–22, Luke 23:26–32 and John 19:16–18. Luke’s account is the longest story of ‘Jesus Carries the Cross’ [22–23]. As Samson [21] unpacked this ‘Fourth Sorrowful Mystery’, he started with the following prayer:

“Dear Jesus, you invite us as you invite your disciples; and if anyone wishes to come after you and to follow you, they must deny themselves and pick up their cross daily and follow you. And you encourage us in your own sufferings, telling us there is room in your ‘Sacred Heart’. ‘Take my yoke upon you and learn from me’, you said, ‘for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest’. Please give us rest in our hearts and souls and especially those who suffer; calm them with your presence and your power. In your name, we pray. Amen.”

The Matthew Gospel (in Matthew 5), in regard to this mystery, has to do with Simon of Cyrene; Simon is compelled to take Jesus’ Cross. In reference to Roman practice (since Rome dominated the land of Canaan, Israel), they reserved their rights to have one of their soldiers to take compel a local Hebrew to carry some burdens for them; which was totally disarming to love your neighbour; but contrary to that, “If anybody presses/compel you into service for one mile; go two miles (Matthew 5:41).” Hence, Simon took it as a chance to carry ‘The Cross’ with Jesus. Simon’s

sons, Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), witnessed everything that happened; hence, they also got the grace to become Jesus' devout disciples (Roman 16:13). When recorded all this in the Scriptures, Mark took eyewitness accounts such as Peter (Mark 16:7-8). Recall that as the Prophet Isaiah said (Isaiah 6), there is a specific time (Isaiah 6:11) when God enter your/family life; the time when the judgement of God and how His Mercy meets us.

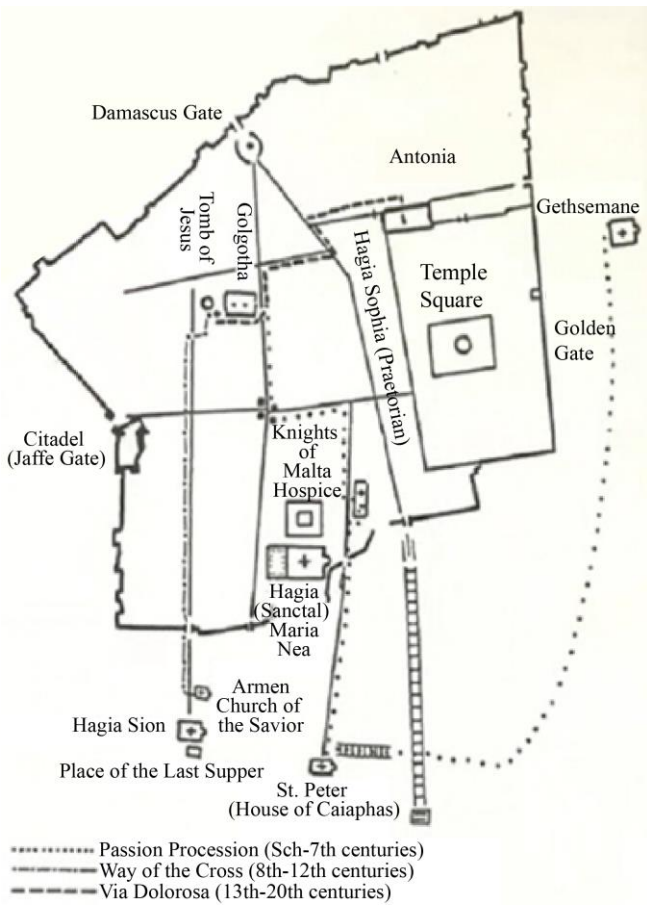
John's account is the shortest. Jesus, at the end of 'His Passion', when everything has been fulfilled, He laid His life down for us; totally in control; totally and actively carry on His Cross, rather than running away from it. Pilate found three times that Jesus is innocent. Pilate tried to find a way out of his fear of cowardness and sent Jesus to Herod. In this mystery of faith, holiness (holy virtue) is invited.

significant? Luke accounted for this because of Isaac, Son of Abraham. Isaac is the type of Christ; Isaac was bound and prepared for sacrifice; Isaac took up the wood by himself and walked toward the mountain. Jesus also took up the wood/cross by himself, followed by the two criminals. Luke records such an important account because Jesus is the ultimate Isaac-type fulfilment of the OT in the New Testament (NT). Jesus was not the sacrifice offered by Abraham (i.e., by others), but Jesus took it upon himself willingly. Like Isaac, willingly; Jesus is an Isaac perfect typology, willingly/obediently. At the 'Eight Station of the Cross' [22-23], the women that Jesus met along 'The Way to the Cross'. Luke shows that the Gospel's message is universal emphatic for 'Christ's Salvation Message' for both men and women. Luke uses the 'women' for a message of 'Hope'. Jesus paused/stopped and acknowledged these women [22] to 'stay with Me, and persevere to the end', especially when it is very painful and suffering. Jesus is showing us the faith of these women and that we still have time to repent; that it is never too late to ask forgiveness of our sins; take time during lent to take confessions; ask for sacramental grace, fortitude, to pick up our cross daily and to follow him; not just asking for forgiveness.

2.5. The Death of Jesus

Holmes [24] dived into this 'Fifth Sorrowful Mystery' as follows. The death of Christ is both fulfilment of all Scripture and the central event in the history of the cosmos. That same death forms the centre of our worship, the source and summit of the Christian life. This talk will unpack the biblical background, the cosmic implications, and the personal relevance of Christ's death for Christians today.

Luke's Gospel told us that Jesus' Death must happen to fulfil what the law, prophets, and scriptures recorded. In summary, "The Messiah had to die this way and rise again." The whole story of salvation is to look at what is happening in the 'Passion of Christ' and how it relates to us. In the OT Book of Genesis, God created everything to reflect his glory; and at the centrepiece of his creation, he put the man in the garden to be the king and priest, the one who brings back to God as an active worship, when everything was turned back to God. The rock, plants, and animals cannot consciously worship and bring back to God, but only man can actively bring back the worship of Him. However, the man listened to Satan's lies/suggestions. Therefore, he broke the relationship with God with disastrous results in connection to God (paternity) if he is not connected with God. After the fall of humankind into sin, everything spirals down; men become spiral down into a circle of idolatry and violence, culminating in God's judgement that he was sorry to make the world and to unmake it; water covers everything over (Noah's ark era), wash the blood (all the living beings) from the land; when the water parted, there is Noah and his family left; God made a covenant with Noah that he will never again



Blus. 80. The development of the Via Dolorosa.

Fig. 4 Pilgrimage Passion Roadmap of "Jesus Carrying the Cross" – The Development of the "Via Dolorosa"

Fig. 4 shows a map for the pilgrimage passion roadmap of "Jesus Carrying the Cross". There are three possible pathways in that map to help understand what Jesus was undertaking and undergoing. In the Luke gospel, Jesus alone took up the Cross; the two criminals followed. Why is that

solve the problem of creation broken priest by destroying the world by water. However, it raised the question, what will God do? Since the priest/men are still broken, something fundamentally wrong is still inside the heart of men. Next, there is an incident of Sam and Ham seeing their father drunk and naked—another incident of the Tower of Babel. The problem of the ‘Cosmic Brokenness’ of priests/humankind is still there; the priest/men are still disconnected from God.

At this point, the story turns to Abraham. In some way, Abraham is the response to God’s story of the broken priest/man, the problem of the curse of humankind. God made promises to Abraham. The land corresponds to the ‘Garden of Eden’, which was lost; descendent, this corresponds, in a way, to the promise of no death; through his descendants, all the nations will last and be blessed [a covenant between Abraham and God]. In a way [Blessing of Nations], that means such a death curse is undone/stopped.

As time goes by, the story becomes shift. The Israelites went down to Egypt somehow into slavery. In some way, Abraham had many descendants, but they were enslaved in Egypt. Moses brings them out of slavery in Egypt. By the Hebrew Bible, the story of ‘Exodus’ is the centre of gravity, the supreme moment when the people of Israel are brought out as people, not as scattered nations. They have the land, the ‘Promised Land’; they have descendants; God wants them [people of Israelites] somehow to mediate between nations and God. But from the beginning (in the OT), they sinned with the golden calf. As the Lord predicted, they fall into the sin of idolatry. The nation split under Solomon’s sons: North and South. The northern kingdom is terrible idolaters, while even the southern kingdom was not that bad. However, ultimately, they go on idolatry on and on until the descendants of Manasseh (son of Joseph) offer their children for sacrifice to Malac. Then, in the end, God said he had to destroy such wickedness of his people. Next, God sent them out of their land, and they no longer had a king or law. They have dispersed among nations. The people who had gained law from Moses had died. Israel is supposed to be the ‘New Adam’ who received back the blessings lost by our first forefather, Adam. Like Adam, they were expelled from the land; like Adam, as a nation, they died and were no more.

Next, some of the southern people returned to the land of Judah and then had their Temple back. There is no king nor law; in their own land, they still see themselves in their own land, as in-exile bondsmen under other nations’ rules. Hence the ‘New Adam’ falls exactly like the ‘Old Adam’. Both were created; both fell; both ended up in death; this is where Jesus picked up the story. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan three times. He responded by citing the Scriptures, taken from the same sections of Deuteronomy chapter 4-6, where Moses explained the lessons they went through in the wilderness for 40 years. Likewise, Jesus had the same lessons down in the wilderness for 40 days. We can

quote them verbatim to Satan that Jesus is ‘The faithful of Israel’. As God declared about Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:17), “You are My Beloved Son”; Jesus is Israel, but He is the ‘Faithful Israel’, obedient to God that Jesus Himself suffered and died.

In the ‘grand context of the creation’, this meant that Jesus, ‘The Faithful Israelites’, joined the unfaithful humankind situation and died as a ‘New Person’, which was the situation of ‘Messiah’ (meaning, Saviour); hence, all is in alignment with God. In this context, Israel has died as a nation; Jesus has died as a ‘Person’. As Israel reflected on the situation of Adam for all humankind, Jesus joined the situation of humanity. Jesus has taken the situation of Adam’s death into himself and died as a ‘Mankind’. He has come where the situation of humankind and gone to the situation of Israel and go to the ‘Situation of Messiah’. All line up; all are in death and exile; as Adam lost the land in Eden, so the Israelites lost their ‘Temple’ in Canaan (i.e., the ‘Promised Land’). So, Jesus lost and cried out, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

Nevertheless, Jesus has come up to this point where the cosmic and the national stories line up with ‘His Story’; so that by His Resurrection, He can carry their stories forward. There are lots of sufferings, sadness, and terrible things that happen, only some joys. Every misery in the history of the human race will either grope forward to this moment of ‘Christ’s Passion’ where it would find its fulfilment or its full embodiment; or flee from that moment and need such passion for redeeming that. Every woe, ill, and misery will ultimately point to the answer to the ‘Passion of Christ’.

It sounds that the ‘Passion of Christ’ is the ending story. What does Christ do now? Turn to the Book of Hebrews: Christ is entering into the Tabernacle not made by hands [meaning, heaven], carrying His Own Blood in order to make a sacrifice for us; Jesus lives forever to make intercessions for us. To understand the letters of Hebrews, we have to go back to the Book of Leviticus in order to understand the meaning of the word ‘sacrifice’. Killing the sacrifice victims was not necessarily the job of a priest. For example, a leper would bring his sacrifice to the door of the temple and kills it himself, and the priest would take the blood into the Holy Place, sprinkle the blood there and actually offer the sacrifice to God. Likewise, some people are not even Israelites who kill Jesus; they are not in the priestly role. The ‘Priestly Role’ is Jesus carrying His Blood into the Heavenly Sanctuary to offer it. In other words, ‘The Day of the Cross’ was only the beginning. The action of offering such [Jesus] Death continues forever in heaven [because there is no time constraint in heaven since all happens at once in existence, the past, current, and future; a state being]. That is what Jesus does all day. He offered his passion/love for us, to the Father, as an ‘Acceptable Sacrifice’. Hence, our redemption did not depend upon having the “Man-God” dead. God was not

looking for a “Divine Conover” to redeem us. He was looking at the ‘Moral Act of the Saviour’, the offering-in-love of that death. So, Jesus’ suffering is over; but the love that offers those sufferings endures. Moreover, it endures not only as ‘Active Reparations’ for our sins but as a ‘Full Sacrifice’, with every aspect of sacrifice. Jesus offers ‘His Death as Reparations’, but also, in petitions for all of our needs; Jesus offers His Death in an ‘Active Adorations’ of the Father; Jesus offers His Death as an ‘Active Thanksgiving’ to the Father.

Additionally, as the Book of Revelation implies, showing all the Saints gather around the ‘Throne with the Lamb’, looking at those who were slain, and offering Jesus’ Death to the Father is what the Saints do all day in heaven, too. They adore and make active thanksgiving, beseech, and reparations for themselves and the whole world, worshipping in union with Christ. Christ’s death was the foundation of the ‘New Priesthood’, and Jesus Christ has become the foundation of the ‘Cosmic Priesthood’ that fixes the brokenness of the cosmic priest of the story of the Book of Genesis.

That is what we do in the Holy Mass; Jesus has opened a portal for us, in the element of ‘Bread and Wine’; by changing them into ‘His Body and Blood’, we can join all the Saints in offering His Death to the Father. Now, think about what that means. The meaning of the whole world, the purpose of the whole world was created, is found in the ‘Priesthood of Christ’. The original intent of humanity is that all the world will come back to God to worship, and that will be true, either implicitly or explicitly; people are busy on the streets; every detail of their lives will find its meaning in the ‘Passion of Christ’, and that meaning will be found often, implicitly. The person may not realize that this portion of the task or that task is groping towards thanksgiving to Christ that he might not realize; when a person is sorrowful for a tragedy, he might not realize that he is groping toward the passion toward Christ’s gift of himself toward the Father, they might not realize that. However, for us believers, there is the possibility to leave that life to the ‘Fullness of Christ’, explicitly – in the Mass. We can take all the moments of our lives: the joy, the sorrow, the adoration, etc., to the ‘Fullness of the Mass’, with all our intention, not implicitly, but explicitly. While there are the haters who want Christ to die explicitly, there are also the vaguely regretful who return weeping; there are the dissolutions who really put their hearts in Christ, they flee, they fly; only a few will stay by the ‘Foot of the Cross’. Will you stay by the ‘Foot of the Cross’?

3. Discussion

As pains and sufferings [sorrowful events] are inevitable in this life on earth, we can learn from Mary to offer up her seven sorrows [25] to her Son, Jesus. Those seven swords (sorrows) that pierced Mary’s heart are reflected on these biblical backgrounds on the Rosary prayers: 1) The Prophecy

of Simeon (Luke 2:34-35); 2) The Flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-21); 3) The Loss of Child Jesus in the Temple for Three Days (Luke 2:41-50); 4) Mary meets Jesus on the Carrying of the Cross to Calvary (John 19:17); 5) The Crucifixion of Jesus (John 19:18-30); 6) Jesus’ Body Taken Down from the Cross (John 19:39-40); 7) Jesus Laid (Burial) in the Tomb (John 19:39-42). In a unique way, Mary willingly suffered alongside her Divine Son as he gave his life to save the world, and she felt the bitterness of his passion as only a mother can. There are consistently associated verses in the OT and NT verses (Lamentations 1:12; John 19:31-34), “Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow?”

To summarize the discussion, consistently Hahn [26], Sheen [27], Alar [28–29], Herson et al. [30], and Fradd [31–33], among numerous Catholic theologians, priests, bishops, and faithful unpacked the following, in regards to our suffering. Not that we ask/pray for suffering, but ask/pray to God that our ‘chalice/cup/suffering’ pass (for example, chronic illness, terminal disease, and so on), if possible. Otherwise, if not granted, our best option and the right way to respond to sufferings in life is to offer up our sorrows to Christ in atonement for our sins and the sins of our loved ones, and even the sins of the whole world. This is also consistently taught by the ‘Divine Mercy Chaplet’ prayers from the Diary of Saint Faustina [34–36]. Moreover, Archbishop Fulton Sheen [27] also pointed out that the purpose of suffering is two-fold (for expiation and reparation). No pain, no gain. No cross, no crowns.

Additionally, Hahn [26] explained that such offering-up of our sorrows to Christ is very powerful because it can release souls from purgatory (or the sanctifying fire). Sufferings crucified our pride and humbled us to fill up (or participate) what is lacking in the affliction of Christ. This is what Saint Paul said in the NT (Colossians 1:24). What is lacking in the affliction of Christ? Our participation in pain and suffering. Only our participation in suffering and pain could possibly bring us to Mystical Union with Christ. The Council of Trent identified that the single greatest mystery of the source of our salvation is such intense sufferings of Christ. Hahn [26] gestured that there is no way to unpack such a greatest complex mystery in any simple way because suffering alone is not redemptive, but you are afflicted and face desolation. What, then, is the point of suffering? Not only in Saint Paul’s writing (Colossians 1:24) but also in Saints Augustine and Thomas, which revealed that the real way that love can be proved or purged or purified or sanctified is through suffering. Suffering without love is unendurable, but love without suffering can be a warm feeling that fades away. What is it that perfect and authentic love? Suffering. What is it that turns suffering into holy sacrifice? Love. We found such an unfolding of the mystery of suffering in the Paschal Mystery. The ‘Sacrament of Love’ is what the early fathers called the Eucharist.

No wonder because it was not just a meal nor ritual, but a self-giving gift of sacrifice in the Passover instituted/initiated in the 'Upper Room' (on the Holy Thursday). Before in about what to happen, Jesus declared what it meant so that it was not just words but deeds. Words and deeds come together; words explain the deeds; the deeds confirm the words. The Eucharist is the one that marries both the Words (on Holy Thursday) and the Deeds (on Good Friday). Then we can see such Jesus's sufferings were not just Roman execution but horrendous torture, humiliation, and no need to go on. However, the sufferings in Jesus' human body were not comparable to the suffering in his soul and his sacred heart, which is inestimable. We know from our suffering that a broken arm is one thing, but a broken heart is on another level. The suffering of Jesus Christ is inexhaustible because the love of Jesus originated from divinity. Such divine love is fused into Jesus' humanity, to his soul and the human body, and the human heart is what unites the body and soul. So, nobody would know the depth level of suffering in his heart even though the torture on his body just lasts a couple of hours – we are not talking about the number of hours or days but the quality of his love that causes him to enter into his suffering, more fully that what we can possibly imagine. We know from our experience that love does not diminish in its capacity to suffer but enlarges it. Love is what enables us to consent to give suffering as an expression of true self-sacrifice.

Hahn further unfolds [26] that a lot of people merely explain the Cross as justice. But justice and mercy do not oppose each other, just like male and female counterparts. As much as the injustice that we have caused him to pay for us in the Calvary, St Thomas said: "Christ is offering-up to God the Father, on our behalf, a superabundant satisfaction which goes beyond the horrendous crime and sins that men and women are committed. Christ is not only enduring the Cross that these guilty men are executing him; he is redeeming them". We cannot even try to comprehend that! However, at minimum, try to contemplate that anyway – because the Eucharist shed divine light on the human agony of Jesus in his final hours. Therefore, when we read in the Scripture, "It is finished," Jesus is not just breathing his last breath.

The Greek word (in John 19), the word used was a 'gift' – Jesus imparting himself as a gift – a spirit of love, to empower the Blessed Virgin Mary and his beloved disciple, Saint John, at the foot of the Cross, for John to become Mary's true child and for Mary to become John's true spiritual mother. In as much as we all are his beloved disciples, we do not need to be there at the foot of the Cross to enter into the Mystery of this Nuptial Love of Christ, to be fruitful, not in spite of suffering, but precisely because of suffering.

In and through suffering, God downloads love that is not merely human love that goes beyond chocolate, engagement

ring, wedding ring, photo albums, and flowers. The love that God the Father downloaded to us through suffering by Christ is the love of the 'Father-Son-and-Holy-Spirit' (the Holy Trinity). The love that transforms us, not only from being sinners into saints but from being content in the human family, into being discontent and developing into the divine family (the Holy Trinity). Can we gather that in 10-mins? No. Can we gather that in 10 lifetimes? Not even close! That is what eternity is for. Nevertheless, let us invite ourselves and others to contemplate on such mysteries.

Jesus told Thomas in the 'Upper Room' that you have seen the Father when you see me. Moreover, that is what it meant when you see Jesus on the Cross; you will see the love of the Father 'poured out' because that is what it means for God to make his divine life a 'gift of love'. That is what Jesus is doing with his humanity, with his human body and his human soul. Jesus is not only demonstrating the fulfilment of divine justice but also the marriage of divine mercy with justice. The Sacrament of Eucharist (or the Sacrament of Love) is what transforms pain into passion and suffering into sacrifice. The Roman execution became the consummation of the Eucharistic sacrifice, and the resurrection of Jesus is precisely what he merited by his passion. That is what Catholic belief of the Gospel we are to proclaim and ponder again and again. Hence, the Council of Trent was right that this is the deepest and most difficult mystery of all to comprehend or understand. However, that does not mean we are to run from it but to run for the Cross; to fall on our knees; and, like children, to take the mysteries by faith, with the purpose of growing up by faith, to mature our understanding, as sons and daughters, as brothers and sisters, into the fullness of God's family, the Catholic Church, reaching from earth to heaven. The angels and saints are not spectators just watching, but they are clouds of witnesses who cheer and pray for us, securing our grace. This is the Gospel Truth [26].

4. Conclusion

This manuscript reviewed and discussed the five sorrowful mysteries [37–38] in the Rosary prayers, which are traditionally recited and meditated every Tuesday and Friday. To recap, the five sorrowful mysteries [37–38] are as follows. First, 'The Agony in the Garden'. Second, 'The Scourging at the Pillar'. Third, 'The Crowning with Thorns'. Forth, 'Jesus Carries the Cross'. Fifth and final, 'The Death of Jesus'.

In addition to praying and reciting the decades [37–38], the mysteries of the Rosary are also meant to be meditated. Those mysteries are deeply rooted in the Bible and Sacred Christian Tradition. By studying and meditating (CCC 2705–2708, 2723) [39, 40] such biblical background and Sacred Tradition, we can obtain valuable lessons from the lives of Jesus through these mysteries of the Rosary (via the lenses of Mary), which begin and ending with Jesus Christ. While

meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary is a spiritual treasure, eventually, the end goal of any Christian prayer is to deepen the understanding of the Lord Jesus's love and union with him, per CCC 2708 [39, 40].

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank the anonymous referees for their reviews that resulted in the published version of this article. ~Soli Deo Gloria~

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