

CHAPLET OF THE HOLY GHOST

This Chaplet of the Holy Ghost was composed in 1892 by a Capuchin missionary of the English Province in order to give the faithful an easy means of honouring God the Holy Spirit. It was approved by Pope Leo XIII in 1902. It is intended to be in regard to the Holy Ghost what the Dominican Rosary is to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Hence it includes five sets of beads, just as a Rosary chaplet does.

Like the Holy Rosary, the Chaplet of the Holy Spirit consists of a circlet and a pendant. The pendant is terminated by a medal depicting the Holy Spirit as a dove on its obverse side. A figure of the Holy Family is embossed on its reverse side: Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Three red beads connect this medal to a centrepiece; and the centrepiece joins the pendant to a circlet. These three beads stand for the Blessed Trinity. The centrepiece depicts a bust of the Blessed Virgin Mary on its obverse side and figures the Sacred Heart of Jesus on its other side.

On the pendant, one prays along a straight line. It is like a straight road which leads the pilgrim suppliant to a gate at the centrepiece. This gate connects the pendant to a circlet of beads. The circle symbolises the perfection of God because it has no distinctive beginning or end point, and the direction never changes, just as God never changes. The beads are red, which is the principal colour of God the Holy Spirit, as it is the colour of the fire of love: tongues of fire were seen to descend on the apostles at Pentecost. In addition, red is the colour of blood, suggesting sacrifice, and all love is a willingness to sacrifice for others. The Holy Ghost is divine love: He is the love the Father and the Son have for Each Other.

The circlet includes five sets of seven beads each. There are five mysteries of the Holy Ghost and this number always suggests the Five Sacred Wounds of Christ. These (circular) Wounds are another symbol of God's perfect love for us. Before and after each of these sets of beads is a set of two beads (the number *two* always suggesting the two natures of Christ). Hence there are forty-seven beads on the circlet and three on the pendant, for a total of fifty beads. These figure the fifty days which elapsed from the time of the Resurrection to the descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lady and the apostles. The seven beads in each set of beads enumerate the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit as well as the seven virtues inspired by Him and the seven Sundays from Easter to Pentecost; and they also point to the seven Sacraments, through which the Holy Ghost operates. The six sets of two beads each yield twelve beads, suggesting the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost as enumerated in Sacred Scripture. They also represent the twelve apostles, through whom the Holy Ghost governed the Church and evangelised the world. There are also twelve sets of beads on the chaplet (whether of five beads, two beads or three beads). So this chaplet is extremely rich in numerological symbolism.

Each Mystery of the Holy Spirit is also prayed over nine beads (two plus seven). This suggests the first novena in the Christian Faith, for the apostles prayed in the upper room at the Cenacle for nine consecutive days after the Ascension of our Lord into Heaven. At the end of that novena, the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost.

HOW TO PRAY THIS CHAPLET

On the terminal medal, say

∿. Incline unto mine aid, O God.

℟. O Lord, make haste to help me.

On the first bead of the pendant, bless yourself with the ***Signum Crucis***. [However, one might prefer to substitute the *Glory* for this.]

On the second bead, make an **Act of Contrition**.

On the third bead, pray *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*:

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful. And enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

[On the centrepiece, say the closing Collect for this hymn:
O God, Who hath taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that, by gift of the same Spirit, we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.]

For each Mystery, the ***Pater*** is recited on the first bead of two; and an ***Ave*** is prayed on the second. On each of the next seven beads, pray a **Glory**. A good method is to say aloud the Meditation and then say silently the Practice. Then pray the *Pater* and *Ave* while reviewing the Meditation; and pray the seven Glories while reviewing the Practice.

At the end of the Mysteries, there are two remaining beads. Before moving onto these, say the **Apostles' Creed**. Now say a **Pater** on the first of these beads, an **Ave** on the second one and a **Glory** on the centrepiece. These are prayed for the Catholic intentions of the Holy Father. Thus endeth the Chaplet.

Trimmings: one might pray on the three beads of the pendant three more Glorys to honour the Blessed Trinity and end on the medal with the hymn *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* or the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE FIRST MYSTERY:

By the Holy Ghost is Jesus conceived of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Meditation:

“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore, also, the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (St. Luke 1. 35).

Practice:

Diligently implore the aid of the Divine Spirit, and Mary's intercession, to imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ, Who is the Model of virtues, so that you may be made conformable to the image of the Son of God.

One *Pater*, one *Ave*, seven *Glorys*.

THE SECOND MYSTERY:

The Spirit of the Lord rested upon Jesus.

Meditation:

“Jesus, being baptised, forthwith came out of the water: and lo!, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him” (St. Matthew 3. 16).

Practice:

Hold in the highest esteem the priceless gift of sanctifying grace, infused into your soul by the Holy Ghost in Baptism. Keep the promises to which you then pledged yourself. Increase, by constant practice, the virtues of faith, hope and charity. Ever live as becometh children of God and members of God's true Church, so as to obtain hereafter the inheritance of Heaven.

One *Pater*, one *Ave*, seven *Glorys*.

THE THIRD MYSTERY:

By the Spirit is Jesus led into the desert.

Meditation:

“Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the desert for the space of forty days; and was tempted by the devil” (St. Luke 4. 1-2).

Practice:

Be ever grateful for the sevenfold gift of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon you in Confirmation: for the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and fortitude, of knowledge and piety, and of the fear of the Lord. Faithfully yield to His divine guidance so that, in all the trials and temptations of life, you may act manfully, as becometh a perfect Christian, and valiant soldier of Jesus Christ.

One *Pater*, one *Ave*, seven *Glorys*.

THE FOURTH MYSTERY:

The Holy Ghost in the Church.

Meditation:

“Suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak . . . the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2. 2, 4, 11).

Practice:

Thank God for having made you a child of His Church, which is ever animated and directed by the Divine Spirit, sent into this world for that purpose on the day of Pentecost. Hear and obey the Holy See, the infallible agent of the Holy Ghost, and the Church, the pillar and ground of truth. Uphold her doctrines, seek her interests, defend her rights.

One *Pater*, one *Ave*, seven *Glorys*.

THE FIFTH MYSTERY:

The Holy Ghost in the soul of the just man.

Meditation:

“Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you?” (I Corinthians 6. 19).

“Extinguish not the Spirit” (I Thessalonians 5. 19).

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4. 30).

Practice:

Be ever mindful of the Holy Ghost, Who is within you, and carefully cultivate purity of soul and body. Faithfully obey His divine inspirations, so that you may bring forth the twelve fruits of the Spirit: Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Benignity, Goodness, Longanimity, Mildness, Faith, Modesty, Continency, Chastity.

One *Pater*, one *Ave*, seven **Glorys**.

Pray the **Apostles' Creed** after the last Glory.

Pray for the Pope's Catholic intentions one *Pater*, one *Ave* and one **Glory**

on the last two beads of the circlet and on the centrepiece.

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