

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

First Sorrowful Mystery: The agony in the Garden. He said to them, 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.' And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.'

Jesus understands the sadness and distress of mental illness. Lord, wake us up so we become aware and can accompany those around us facing anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, trauma, substance use disorders, and other forms of mental illness. When we experience these illnesses, we often feel alone.

Lord, give strength and courage to those of us who suffer, and compassion to those who provide care and support.

Second Sorrowful Mystery: The scourging at the pillar. "Pilate released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified."

Beaten. Struck repeatedly. The truth is studies document that people with serious mental illness are much more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators of it. O God, show us the way to less violence in our homes and communities; help us understand that depression, drug addiction or delusions can lead to bleeding, bruises, or physical harm.

Lord, grant us strength in times of suffering so that we may be united with you in your redemptive suffering.

Third Sorrowful Mystery: The crowning with thorns. "Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Mental illness can seem like a crown of thorns encircling our mind and emotions. Those of us who live with mental illness must at times endure the cruel and unnecessary burdens of stigma, discrimination and even mockery.

Lord, help us realize that the way we talk about people and their mental illness affects the people themselves and how we treat the illness. Help us remember that no matter how others may misunderstand mental illness, you understand our struggles and see us as your beautiful creations.

Fourth Sorrowful Mystery: The carrying of the cross. "And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross."

Sometimes, when things get too hard to handle, those of us with mental illness may need outside assistance. Lord, send us compassionate mental health ministers, caregivers and clinicians who will accompany us on this journey of recovery.

Lord, give us the grace and humility to accept the helping hands of others and to offer our own when they are needed.

Fifth Sorrowful Mystery: The crucifixion. "And Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' ... Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit!'

Our beloved Lord, as He was nailed to the wood of the Cross, forgave His tormentors. Sometimes, our own selves may even seem to be our worst enemies.

Lord, give us the grace to forgive those who have hurt us, including ourselves. Give us the faith to place all our suffering, joys and hopes in your hands.



Association of
Catholic Mental
Health Ministers

Rosary Meditations for People with Mental Illness

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

First Joyful Mystery: The Annunciation. *The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.*

At times, dear Mother, our mental health challenges can make us feel powerless and frightened. But the power of the Holy Spirit is always there to come upon us and be a cloud of protection over us.

In my times of weakness, may the life and the love of the Christ child grow within me. Dear Lady, may I always respond as you did, and say yes to God and know that I do not need to be afraid because the Lord is with me.

Second Joyful Mystery: The Visitation. *Mary hurried off to a town in the hill-country...and greeted Elizabeth.*

Bless the mental health professionals and especially our family and friends and all those who care about us. Bless their cheerful and reassuring words. We all need their words of encouragement to put a new heart into us.

Dear Mother, when you visited your cousin Elizabeth long ago, you caused her heart to leap with joy. Thank you for those who love me and care for me and bring joy into my life. Thank you for the inner peace and happiness you bring to me.

The Third Joyful Mystery: The Nativity. *Mary gave birth to her first-born son.*

In this mystery we think especially of children who have a mental illness. So often mental illness arrives when we are young. We pray for the youth who suffer and cry out for relief not knowing what it is all about. We think of their parents who seek to bring understanding, healing, and comfort to their children.

O little Child of Bethlehem, let the light of your loveliness shine into our frail lives.

The Fourth Joyful Mystery: The Presentation in the Temple. *They took the child to Jerusalem to present him there.*

At times, mental illness can isolate us. When other people seem distant, we can present ourselves just as we are before the face of God. That's what Presentation is about. The Lord who made us and knows us through and through is always at hand, waiting and watching for us and attentive to our needs.

Here I am, dear Lord. I present myself, with all my strengths and weaknesses, before you. I offer my life to you. My heart is in your hands. If it is your will, help me to use my recovery to lead others to your healing presence.

The Fifth Joyful Mystery: The Finding in the Temple. *They found him listening to the teachers and asking them questions.*

Lord, send into my life compassionate mental health ministers and caregivers who will accompany and support me. Send mental health care professionals who will guide me with knowledge and wisdom.

Grant peace to our minds and hope to our hearts, and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.



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THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

First Mystery of Light: The Baptism in the Jordan. A voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Mental Illness can whisper in our mind that we are worthless, no good and not loved by anyone, even by God.

Lord, help me to remember that I am loved by you and others. Through my own Baptism, you have generously poured your grace into me, making me an adopted child of the Father, a member of the body of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Second Mystery of Light: The wedding feast of Cana. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you".

Mental Illness can leave us feeling dry and empty. We can even wonder if Christ is really with us and will bring us spiritual fulfillment and joy.

Mother Mary, when I feel like my life is running short, intercede for me and ask your Son to give me the grace of hope. Strengthen me with confidence in knowing that Jesus is always able to help.

Third Mystery of Light: The proclamation of the kingdom of God. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel".

Sometimes the stigma and discrimination against mental illness can make it hard to hear Christ's words of hope. Hurtful words and attitudes can cause those of us with mental illness to needlessly suffer further.

Lord, you have called everyone to enter the Kingdom of God. In you there is no stigma or discrimination. Help me to hear your Word and know that the proclamation of the kingdom of God is meant for me and everyone.

Fourth Mystery of Light: The Transfiguration. A bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid."

Mental illness can be like a cloud that casts a shadow over us; it prevents us from seeing how those around us love us and support us and how you, Lord, want to be with us. Sometimes we can be very much afraid of our mental health challenges and illnesses.

Lord, the light of glory that you showed at the Transfiguration is also present in our lives to guide us. Help me to be a light of your joy to others with mental illness. Help us to listen to those whom you send into our lives to support us and love us, and to know that you are always present to calm all our fears.

Fifth Mystery of Light: The institution of the Eucharist. "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.'"

Sometimes we feel like we are broken because of our mental illness. During those times we wonder if anyone understands or wants to be united with us.

Lord, you were broken like me. You took all human suffering on yourself, even mental illness. In the broken bread of the Eucharist, you give us spiritual nourishment because you love us. By eating your Body and drinking your Blood in the Eucharist, we become united to you.

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

First Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection. Two men stood by them in dazzling apparel; and as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen."

Living with mental illness can sometimes feel like being closed in a tomb. It is hard to understand and frightening. In the confusion and pain some die by suicide.

Lord, increase our faith so that we can see in your resurrection how all suffering and evil is overcome. Remember all who suffer from mental illness, and also victims, often young people, of suicide. We pray for them and their families, so that they are never left alone, or discriminated against, but instead are welcomed and supported.

(If you are in crisis, call the Suicide/Crisis Lifeline at 988, or text TALK to 741741)

Second Glorious Mystery: The Ascension. When they saw him, they worshipped, but they doubted. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "...behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Anxiety, depression, psychosis, addiction, mania and the other symptoms of mental illness can lead us to doubt and to wonder if Jesus is really with us and loves us.

Lord, help us remember what you said to your disciples you are still saying to us: "I am with you always, until the end of the age." Your promise gives us great hope, knowing that you are with us in our current struggles and that you will be with us always. You lead us to resurrection and wholeness.

Third Glorious Mystery: Descent of the Holy Spirit. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

Stigma, fear, and discrimination against those who live with a mental illness are still present in the Church. Unfortunately, those of us who live with mental illness do not always feel welcome or supported in the Church.

Lord, Pentecost is known as the birthday of your Church. Help mental health ministry grow in your Church. Give the Church the wisdom to recognize that those of us living with a mental illness have much to offer the Church because living with mental illness gives one unique insight into humility, compassion, friendship, and love.

Fourth Glorious Mystery: The Assumption. Henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me.

The parents and loved ones who support those of us with a mental illness need strength, wisdom, and loving hearts. At times it can be a struggle to know what to do, what to say or where to turn for help.

Mother Mary, you know the concerns and worries of a parent. We pray that through devotion to you, the souls of the parents and loved ones of people living with a mental illness will be refreshed. Please intercede on their behalf, so that they will find the support and knowledge they need to care for their loved ones.

Fifth Glorious Mystery: The Coronation. A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

Those of us who live with mental illness strive to see a future where we live in recovery and mental wellness; where we receive the spiritual and mental health care we need to live triumphantly and joyfully.

Mary our Mother in Heaven, give us hope for a brighter future. We pray that we always will be joined to your heart, and therefore to the Heart of Jesus.