The Tradition of the Franciscan Crown

The Franciscan rosary finds its origin in the 15th century with the story of a young man named James who had a great devotion to the Virgin Mary. Wanting to offer her something beautiful, he developed a prayerful habit: every day, he would gather fresh flowers, weave them into delicate crowns, and place them on the head of a statue of Mary.

James later entered the Franciscan Order, but soon found that the rhythm of this religious life left him little time to continue his floral offerings. Unable to maintain the practice that had meant so much to him, he was heartbroken and even considered leaving his religious community to return to his unique way of praying.

But in his distress, Mary appeared to him, encouraging him to remain where God had placed him, and offering him a new way to pray with her. Instead of weaving crowns of flowers, she invited him to weave a crown of prayers: the Rosary of the Seven Joys.

Through this new devotion, James, and all who would later join him, were welcomed to share in the spiritual gifts that flow from contemplating the joy of Mary.

Structure of the Franciscan Rosary

Each decade of the Franciscan Crown is dedicated to one of the Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary, inviting us to contemplate the mysteries of Christ through her life.

The Seven Joys of Mary:

First Joy: The Annunciation
The Angel Gabriel announces Mary will be the Mother of God

Second Joy: The Visitation
Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth and is known as blessed among women

Third Joy: The Nativity
Jesus is born to Mary in Bethlehem

Fourth Joy: The Adoration of the Magi
The Magi come bearing gifts for Jesus

Fifth Joy: The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
Mary and Joseph find Jesus teaching in the Temple after three days

Sixth Joy: Meeting Jesus after the Resurrection
Jesus rises from the dead and appears to His disciples

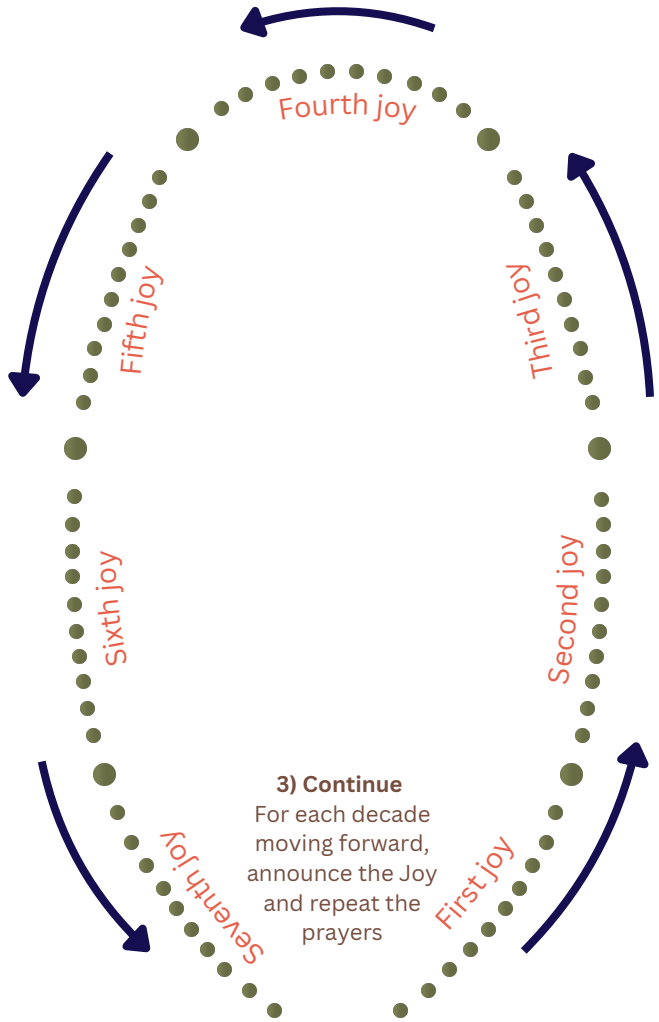
Seventh Joy: The Assumption and Coronation
Mary is taken to Heaven and crowned Queen

Prayers of the Franciscan Crown

Our Father:
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
Amen

Hail Mary:
Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen

Glory Be:
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen



How to Pray the Franciscan Crown Rosary

Make the Sign of the Cross while holding the crucifix of your rosary.

Announce the First Joy "The First Joy of Mary: The Annunciation"
Pray the Our Father
Pray ten Hail Marys

Repeat for the remaining six Joys

After completing the seven decades, pray two more Hail Marys. This will mean that in total, you will have prayed 72 Hail Marys, representing each year of Mary's life on earth.

Conclude with Prayers for the Intentions of the Holy Father, praying one of each:
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be

Praying the Franciscan Crown



Jubilee Year of St. Francis of Assisi

The Franciscan Crown is a seven-decade rosary unique to the Franciscan tradition. This year, parishes across the Archdiocese of Liverpool are coming together to pray this devotion in celebration of the Jubilee of St Francis.