A Contemporary Praying of the Rosary
Reflecting Upon the Mysteries of Discipleship

Dedicated to Joan Haas

OPENING

As we arrive and gather, we sing the following refrain/mantra, “The Prayer of St. James”
to center ourselves in prayer. If not sung, the leader leads everyone to recite the refrain twice through.

All    Faith in itself without action,
is no faith at all.

After all have arrived and the refrain concludes, the leader begins.

Leader    With the cross of our rosary in hand,
let us begin our prayer
in the name of the Father [forehead],
and of the Son [left shoulder],
and of the Holy Spirit [right shoulder].

All    Amen.
Leader  As we continue to hold the cross, let us listen and reflect upon the wisdom of St. James:

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.  (James 2: 14, 17)

Then we once again, sing (or recite twice through) the mantra refrain of the “Prayer of St. James”

All  Faith in itself without action, is no faith at all.

At the conclusion of the singing, and while holding the first bead of our rosary – the one closest to the cross – we pray the Lord’s Prayer.

Leader  Let us now pray the prayer that Christ himself gave to us.

All  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.

Next, hold each of the three beads in the next series one at a time, and pray the “Hail Mary” for each bead.

Leader  Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All  Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Holding the chain or know that comes after the series of the three “Hail Mary” beads, we either recite in dialogue with the leader, or sing twice the refrain of the “God’s Cause” prayer that comes from Blessed Theresa of Gerhardinger.

Leader  God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

All  God’s cause is our cause.

THE MYSTERIES OF DISCIPLESHIP

Now we pray the five decades of the rosary, the “Mysteries of Discipleship.”
The First Mystery of Discipleship:
To Serve the Poor

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that is promised to those who love God? (James 2: 5)

Pause, then for each of the ten beads in the decade, recite the Hail Mary.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Then the leader reads one or both of the following short reflections

From Oscar Romero:

The guarantee of one’s prayer is not in saying a lot of words. The guarantee of one’s petition is very easy to know: How do I treat the poor? Because that is where God is.

AND/OR:

From Peter Maurin:

The poor are the ambassadors of God, for they give us an opportunity to do good.

A short time for meditation is observed. Then the “God’s Cause” prayer is either recited in dialogue with the leader, or sung twice through with the entire refrain.

God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

God’s cause is our cause.

(pause)

The Second Mystery of Discipleship:
To Serve those who Experience Discrimination and Hatred

Those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty,
and persevere,
being not hearers who forget
but doers who act —
they will be blest in their doing. (James 1: 25)

Pause, then for each of the ten beads in the decade, recite the Hail Mary.

Leader

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All

Holy Mary, mother of God,
pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Then the leader reads one or both of the following short reflections

Leader

From Martin Luther King, Jr:

Our only hope today lies in our ability
to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out
into a sometimes hostile world
declaring eternal hostility to poverty,
racism, and militarism.

AND/OR:

From Harvey Milk:

I have tasted freedom.
I will not give up that which I have tasted.

A short time for meditation is observed. Then the “God’s Cause” prayer is either recited in dialogue with the leader,
or sung twice through with the entire refrain.

Leader

God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

All

God’s cause is our cause.

(pause)

Leader

The Third Mystery of Discipleship:
To Serve the Cause of Peace

Pause

Where do the wars and where do the conflicts
among you come from?
It is not from your passions that make war
within your members?
You covet but do not possess.
You kill and envy but you cannot obtain; 
you fight and wage war... 
Do not speak evil of one another, 
brothers and sisters. (James 4: 1-2a; 11)

Pause, then for each of the ten beads in the decade, recite the Hail Mary.

**Leader**

Hail Mary, full of grace, 
the Lord is with thee. 
Blessed art thou among women, 
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

**All**

Holy Mary, mother of God, 
pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Then the leader reads one or both of the following short reflections

**Leader**

From Dorothy Day:

We must choose sides, 
not between nations, 
but between the world’s way and Christ’s way. 
The world hates; God loves.

**AND/OR:**

From Henri Nouwen:

Did I offer peace today? 
Did I bring a smile to someone’s face? 
Did I say words of healing? 
Did I let go of my anger and resentment? 
Did I forgive? 
Did I love? 
These are the important questions.

A short time for meditation is observed. Then the “God’s Cause” prayer is either recited in dialogue with the leader, 
or sung twice through with the entire refrain.

**Leader**

God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

**All**

God’s cause is our cause.

(pause)

**Leader**

The Fourth Mystery of Discipleship: 
To Serve the Young and the Fearful

Pause
So submit yourselves to God.
Draw near to God,
and God will draw near to you ...
Be patient, therefore, sisters and brothers,
until the coming of the Lord. (James 4:7-5-7)

Pause, then for each of the ten beads in the decade, recite the Hail Mary.

Leader Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All Holy Mary, mother of God,
pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Then the leader reads one or both of the following short reflections

Leader From Therese of Avila:

Let nothing come now and frighten you.
All things must pass – God never changes.
When you have God,
nothing more is needed;
for God alone is enough.

AND/OR:

From Albert Schweitzer:

I don’t know what your destiny will be,
but one thing I know:
the only ones among you who will be really happy
are those who have sought and found how to serve.

A short time for meditation is observed. Then the “God’s Cause” prayer is either recited in dialogue with the leader, or sung twice through with the entire refrain.

Leader God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

All God’s cause is our cause.

(pause)

Leader The Fifth Mystery of Discipleship:
To Serve the Suffering and the Dying

Pause Is anyone among you suffering?
Is anyone among you sick?
They should pray...
Pray for one another,
that you may be healed. (James 5: 13, 14; 16b)

Pause, then for each of the ten beads in the decade, recite the Hail Mary.

Leader  Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

All  Holy Mary, mother of God,
pray for us now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Then the leader reads one or both of the following short reflections

Leader  From Adrienne Rich:

The problem ...
is how to live in a damaged body
in a world where pain is meant to be
gagged, uncured, ungrieved over.
The problem is to connect,
without hysteria,
the pain of anyone’s body
with the pain of the world’s body.

AND/OR:

From Helen Keller:

I thank God for my handicaps,
for through them
I have found myself, my work,
and my God,

A short time for meditation is observed. Then the “God’s Cause” prayer is either recited in dialogue with the leader, or sung twice through with the entire refrain.

Leader  God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.

All  God’s cause is our cause.

CLOSING

After we have all completed the fifth decade of the Rosary and concluded with the final “God’s Cause” prayer, we all recite or sing the Canticle of Mary (Magnificat) with the verses recited by the leader, or sung by a cantor.
Leader/Cantor,
then All

All that I am,
sings of the God who brings new life
to birth in me.
My spirit soars on the wings of my Lord.

Leader/Cantor

My soul gives glory to the Lord,
rejoicing in my saving God;
who looks upon me in my state,
and all the world will call me blest;
for God works marvels in my sight,
and holy, holy is God’s name.

All

All that I am,
sings of the God who brings new life
to birth in me.
My spirit soars on the wings of my Lord.

Leader/Cantor

God’s mercy is from age to age,
on those who follow in fear;
whose arm is power and strength
and scatters all the proud of heart,
who casts the mighty from their thrones,
and raises up the lowly ones.

All

All that I am,
sings of the God who brings new life
to birth in me.
My spirit soars on the wings of my Lord.

Leader/Cantor

God fills
the starving with good things,
the rich are left with empty hands;
protecting all the faithful ones,
remembering Israel with mercy;
the promise known to those before,
and to their children forever.

All

All that I am,
sings of the God who brings new life
to birth in me.
My spirit soars on the wings of my Lord.

Then the leader concludes reciting or chanting a short litany calling upon the intercession of the “Cloud of Witnesses.” The names of other saints and contemporary witnesses can be invoked.

Leader

Holy Mary, Mother of God:

All

Pray for us.
Leader St. James:
All Pray for us.
Leader Blessed Theresa of Gerhardinger:
All Pray for us.
Leader Oscar Romero:
All Pray for us.
Leader Peter Maurin:
All Pray for us.
Leader Martin Luther King, Jr:
All Pray for us.
Leader Harvey Milk:
All Pray for us.
Leader Dorothy Day:
All Pray for us.
Leader Henri Nouwen:
All Pray for us.
Leader St. Therese of Avila:
All Pray for us.
Leader Albert Schweitzer:
All Pray for us.
Leader Adrienne Rich:
All Pray for us.
Leader Helen Keller:
All Pray for us.
Leader  All Disciples of Christ:

All  Pray for us.

(Pause)

Leader  My friends, let us go in peace.

As the community begins to disperse, we may be invited to continue to sing the refrain of the “God’s Cause” prayer as a concluding prayer mantra.

All  God’s cause is the only concern of our hearts.
     God’s cause is our cause.