



ROMAN CATHOLIC
**DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON**

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This month's *Via Fidelis* activity is to "Pray the scriptural rosary." As Catholics, we know the rosary as one of the most cherished devotions of our faith, but this month I want to encourage you to pray it in a way that draws even more deeply from sacred Scripture itself.

The scriptural rosary is prayed just as the traditional rosary is, moving through the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries, decade by decade. The difference is that before each Hail Mary, a short verse of Scripture is read aloud that corresponds to the mystery being contemplated. Rather than simply naming "the Annunciation" or "the Crucifixion," we hear the Gospel account unfold, word by word, as we pray. The rosary becomes a living encounter with the Word of God.

In his 2002 apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, St. John Paul II described this devotion as a compendium of the entire Gospel. In the same letter, he introduced the Luminous Mysteries to the rosary for the very first time, explaining that during Christ's public ministry, "the mystery of Christ is most evidently a mystery of light" (19).

Praying the scriptural rosary makes this compendium come alive. Each bead becomes an invitation to sit with a particular moment in salvation history: Mary's fiat at the Annunciation, the shepherds' wonder at Bethlehem, Christ's miracle at the Cana wedding feast and his ultimate triumph over death on the cross. When we pray the scriptural rosary, we are walking alongside our Lord, and our mother, through the mysteries of our redemption.

This practice can be especially fruitful for families with young children or for those newer to the faith, since the Scripture readings ground the mysteries in the concrete words of the Gospels rather than requiring prior catechesis. I also encourage those who have prayed the rosary for many years to try this method to encounter familiar mysteries with fresh eyes and an attentive heart.

So, as you pray the scriptural rosary this October, dedicated in a special way to Mary, ask her to help you receive the Word of God with humility, faith and willingness as she did, so that we may prepare our hearts for the coming Advent season.

"No other words can ever match the efficacy of the inspired word" (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, 30).

In Christ's love,

Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS
Bishop of Charleston