

CD1

- 1 Opening Prayer
- 2 Intro Joyful Mysteries
- 3 Annunciation
- 4 Visitation
- 5 Birth of Jesus
- 6 Presentation
- 7 Finding of the child Jesus
- 8 Conclusion

- 9 Schubert Ave Maria

- 10 Intro Luminous Mysteries
- 11 Baptism
- 12 Wedding at Cana
- 13 Call to Conversion
- 14 Transfiguration
- 15 Eucharist
- 16 Conclusion

- 17 O Thou who at the Eucharist didst pray
- 18 Just as I am, without one plea

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CD 2

- 1 Intro Sorrowful Mysteries
- 2 Gethsemane
- 3 Scourging
- 4 Crowning with thorns
- 5 Carrying the cross
- 6 Crucifixion
- 7 Conclusion

- 8 Caccini Ave Maria

- 9 Intro Glorious Mysteries
- 10 Resurrection
- 11 Ascension
- 12 Descent of the Holy Spirit
- 13 Assumption of Mary
- 14 Coronation of Mary
- 15 Conclusion

- 16 Widor, Toccata (Thomas Wilson)

- 17 Litany

For more information about this Rosary Group and this CD please go to www.rosarygroup.co.uk

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WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL ROSARY GROUP A PARISH ROSARY

ALL TWENTY MYSTERIES, LITANY, MUSICAL EXTRAS
LED BY ANNA JOHNSTONE

WELCOME

Welcome to Westminster Cathedral Rosary Group. We wanted to create a recorded Rosary experience that you can dip into from time to time; an experience that brings you as close as possible to the living Rosary group at Westminster Cathedral that meets 5 times a week. It is our hope that through this recording you will feel that you are part of this prayer group. We pray for the intentions of those who join with us in this way but we also warmly invite you to join with us 'live' for our recitations. If you are visiting London or Westminster Cathedral for the day, do come to pray with us, and please feel encouraged to come and say hello to the leaders. You will be most welcome.

If you would like to come and join us regularly, or occasionally, we meet after the 5:30 pm Mass, Tuesday to Friday and after the 10:30 am Mass on Saturday, in the Lady Chapel. Please note that we are dependent on other events in the Cathedral diary and from time to time, due to a special extended Mass, or other circumstances, we are unable to meet, or we may pray in an alternative chapel.

We extend a particularly warm welcome to the sick and the housebound. You have been foremost in our minds and hearts as we put this recording together. We are praying for your intentions. We hope that

you will find the strength, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to unite your sufferings to the sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so that by your faith and love, you yourselves may be vessels of grace and healing for our world.

We extend also a special welcome to those who are not Catholic, or who are not Christian. We welcome you without any qualification. There are no barriers or hoops to jump through for you to become a full member of this group. We also welcome, in a special way, anyone who feels alienated or hurt in their life of faith. We are praying for your healing. If you desire to join in with this group, however cautiously, occasionally, anonymously or fully, we welcome you.

United with the Saints and the Angels

The intentions of this prayer group are now carried every year on pilgrimage to Lourdes. Our intentions were also present in St Peters Square during the Funeral Mass of Pope John Paul II, and were finally left in the basket next to his tomb. Our intentions were also carried to the tomb of Saint Pio. We believe that Our Lady, Pope John Paul II and St Pio watch over and pray for all those in this prayer group in a special way.

Claire's spirit is the very essence of what we hope for of this prayer group. Claire's spirit is also the essence of our hopes for the way this recording might touch the lives of the sick and the housebound. Let us be encouraged by Claire. I am sure that we have her prayers.

Claire wrote these words during a trip to Krakow, Poland, during August 2008.

"This week has given me the strength to continue my life as one of Jesus' disciples.

It has helped me to discover the strength of prayer. Being away from my family, friends and work has brought me closer to Jesus and to people from different countries who all share in the faith of Jesus' love for the world.

I feel stronger and more able to live my life in a way that whatever situation I am in, I will be comforted by the fact that Jesus is there with me, looking over me and guiding me. I believe that everything that happens to me in my life, happens for a reason. Sometimes that reason is clear to me but sometimes only Jesus knows.

It has been an inspiration to have spent time with people who have shown so much kindness and respect for each other and I will keep you all in my prayers. Thank you."



Claire Michael in France


Thank you

This project would have been impossible without the faithful presence and prayers of the members of this group. A big thank you to all of you and especially to those who were present for the recording sessions. Thank you to all those who have been leaders over the last 8 years. Special thanks go to Ann Martin who has faithfully served this group since 2002, first as a member and since 2006 as leader. Thanks to all who have supported and encouraged this prayer group; the Cathedral Administrators and the Cathedral Chaplains. Thanks also to Frances Scarr. Thank you to Cathedral Security. A big thank you to Peggy Stratton without whose encouragement and generosity this project would never have been begun. And finally thank you to the family of Claire Michael; through the generosity of Claire Michael's estate this project has been completed.



A SPECIAL MESSAGE

A special message to the sick and the housebound and all Mary's 'little ones.'



Saying 'yes' to God, moment by moment as Our Lady did, may not look anything spectacular to others, nor even to yourself. Perhaps you are 'just coping' with trying circumstances? Perhaps you are struggling with illness, loneliness or bereavement? The difficult circumstances of life can come in all shapes and sizes. St Therese, whose relics visited our beautiful Cathedral just two months after the final part of this recording, was so unappreciated by some of the Sisters in her Carmel that they didn't know what they could write about her for her obituary. Also, at the time of her death, St Therese was wholly unknown to the outside world. And yet underneath her quiet and kind life, underneath her hidden heroism in the face of her physical and mental suffering, there beat a heart that was full of great love for God and her neighbour.

We are praying that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may feel encouraged and strengthened. We are praying that, like St Therese, you may unite your sufferings to the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the

good of souls; souls you may never meet in this life.

We would also like to share with you the words of Claire Michael R.I.P. who, to our surprise, lay in the midst of us in the Lady Chapel, in her coffin, when we recorded the Joyful and Luminous Mysteries and the Litany on 11 August 2009, the feast day of St Clare.

Claire Michael had died suddenly, aged 32, in London, coincidentally minutes before the closing Mass of the Westminster Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2009. Claire lived with a heart open to life and open to people of all races and faiths. She had spent time at school in Geneva and in Kuwait. Claire spoke French and had studied Arabic. After graduating in Business, she worked for DEFRA. Claire was baptised at the age of 18. In the last 4 years of her life, encouraged by her friends in Project 2030, she was passionate about her faith and made 8 pilgrimages with the group throughout Europe. Every time she travelled she brought back beautiful Rosaries and an enthusiasm for prayer. Throughout her short but full life Claire had battled bravely with various different medical conditions. By all accounts she showed great patience in her sufferings and her trust and serenity shine through in the following words.

THE ROSARY

There is so much to love about the Rosary.


The meditations of the Rosary are a wonderful way of entering into the profound mystery of God's call to us and God's relationship with us, and of understanding the life of Jesus, and the love our Saviour bears us.

The Rosary is also a wonderful way of clambering into the arms of Mary and inviting our heavenly Mother to mould us gradually. A baby at the breast, gazing into the eyes of her mother, is one image for the soul at prayer; the steady stream of Hail Marys and beads are like the nourishing touch between mother and child. The contemplation of the mysteries are like that wrapt and beautiful gaze into the eyes of love, learning not only that we are loved, but also learning from our mother how to see and understand.

The Rosary is a wonderfully inclusive prayer. There are no hoops to jump through before becoming a full member of a Rosary group. Anyone can join in. Whatever faith you are, whatever the circumstances of your life, you are welcome. It is a style of communal praying that reflects a mother's all-encompassing embrace. Our Mother Mary in heaven loves and accepts every single one of us, completely without

exception. She welcomes us all, with open arms, to pray with her.

The Rosary does not stand on ceremony. Although the Rosary can be prayed with great dignity and solemnity on our knees, it can also be prayed anywhere and in every circumstance. It can be prayed from the comfort of a sofa, over the telephone with a friend, in silence, in the depths of the night or in the middle of family life. Again, our Mother understands our varied circumstances and needs.



The Rosary is a wonderful way to intercess. Even just one Hail Mary offered, with love, for the intentions of another soul is a great gift to that soul. Never doubt the power of prayer or the gratitude of Our Lady for our efforts to pray for others.

The Rosary is wonderfully gentle and soothing. The mantric repetition of the Hail Marys draws us into a feeling of unity. Against this soothing backdrop our minds more easily lift into contemplation. It is important in group recitation that voices should listen to one another and try to blend together, as though in a choir. This beautiful river of sound can help raise our minds. (Or even send the occasional member to sleep!)



A CALL TO PRAYER – A CALL TO HEAVEN

At the heart of all prayer is our call to heaven. Our God, our Father in heaven, (our heavenly daddy!), is Love. He created us in love and He desires that we should have the sublime joy of being with Him in heaven for all eternity, and He desires that we may also have the joy of being reunited with all those we have loved on this earth, and that we may meet and enjoy the company of all the Saints and Angels. Our hope that all this is true rests on our faith and belief that God raised Our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. It is too much for our minds and hearts to comprehend! St Paul says that no eye has seen, no ear has heard what God has in store for those who love Him. We can think of the analogy of birth. The baby in the womb is already a part of this world, but cannot see it, taste it or touch it. The baby in the womb cannot begin to comprehend the sights, sounds and relationships of this world. There exists the same exponential difference, (combined with that same essential thread of continuity), between our life in this world and the life that we are called to in heaven.

Our journey to heaven is all about love. Jesus summed up His teaching with the command to love our Father in heaven, and our neighbour as ourself. We must look with great kindness on all those who do not share our faith, because we are never to know the deeds of love in their hearts and

lives. Or even if their deeds of love are small, they may be set against a backdrop of terrible suffering and deprivation. Jesus assured us that even the gift of a glass of water to another was appreciated by Him. When we pray a Rosary, we include, five times, the 'Fatima' prayer. It includes these words 'take all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of thy mercy.' We should try not to 'worry' about others. As St Pio would say; Pray, hope and don't worry! Sometimes, it is true, we may feel the Holy Spirit calling us to speak to others about our faith. But on the whole we will draw others with us to God by our prayers, our love and the attractiveness of our example.

Is there anything at stake beyond the issue of salvation itself? Once we have become convinced that our Father in heaven is Love and Mercy, we may get a little complacent about the challenge that spans before us; as though nothing is at stake beyond the issue of salvation itself. And yet we know that our choices and decisions have consequences here in this life; it must also be the case that our choices, day by day, have consequences also in eternity. To illustrate this perhaps we might think of our favourite Saint. We can imagine all the many times they said 'yes' to God. And we can also reflect on what their lives might have looked like if they had been in the habit of saying 'no' or if they had said a few significant 'nos.' Perhaps we see that they would still have had many blessings in their life, but

certainly we see that their life would have been less rich and full.

Perhaps we can think of it like this; with the story of Mr Yes and Mr No. Two youngsters are offered a free musical education. It is a choice that will require dedication and sacrifice. One child says yes, the other says no. Thirty years later we find them in a concert hall. Mr No is in the audience, Mr Yes is in the orchestra. A wonderful symphony is being played. Mr No is happy. He is really enjoying the music, but he is not able to hear and understand the symphony in the detail that Mr Yes is enjoying. Mr No cannot really perceive what he is missing and Mr Yes wouldn't swap places with him. All Mr Yes's hard work was completely worth it. In addition to his very rich hearing of the symphony Mr Yes also has the joy of making the music with his fellow musicians. He is exhilarated.

Mr No represents that part of us that is lukewarm about love and about God. Mr Yes is that part of us that is fervent; that part of us that longs to do God's will with all our heart, all our mind and all our strength. Mr Yes represents someone who accepts God's exciting invitation to participate with Him in the whole work of love and salvation. Every time, every moment, we say yes to God we are cooperating with God's desire to bless us ever more deeply in time and in eternity. If this 'yes' to God is the desire of our soul, however weak and backsliding we know ourselves capable of being, then the



Rosary can be an enormous help.

Why is the Rosary advised as being so beneficial to the life of our souls?

To pick up our Rosary beads is always to cast ourselves into the arms of our Heavenly Mother. Mary longs to help us. She longs for us to be open to letting her help us. We draw down on ourselves the grace of heaven with every little prayer of the Rosary.

But the meditations are also highly beneficial.

The meditations of the Rosary orientate our gaze towards the life of heaven and towards the love of God for us; a love that was prepared to die on the cross for every single one of us. We are continuously tempted to view life and the passing hours of our days from our own limited perspective. Meditating on these Mysteries turns our thoughts to heaven.

The meditations of the Rosary meet us right where we are and then lead us onwards at our own pace. The Rosary gives up its wisdom in a gradual and personal way, and to the extent that we apply ourselves to the mysteries and to the extent that we put what we are learning into action. Some may gain insights into Truth first, others may gain insights into Love. It is a gradual journey, and our Mother leads us beautifully at our own pace.

Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom; pray for us.

