

## **Mary in October**

On 7th October 1571 the Battle of Lepanto was a decisive moment in the defence of Christendom against the advances of the Ottoman Empire. The unexpected victory was attributed to Mary's intercession, particularly as a result of fervent recitation of the prayers of the Rosary in many parts of Europe.

Ever since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the rosary had been a means of meditating on the great mysteries of Christian faith, but the events of October 1571 gave it fresh impetus.

### ***The Joyful Mysteries***

Annunciation

Visitation

The birth of Jesus

The presentation of Jesus

The finding of Jesus in the temple

### ***The Sorrowful Mysteries***

Agony of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Jesus is scourged

Jesus is crowned with thorns

Jesus carries his cross

The crucifixion of Jesus

### ***The Glorious Mysteries***

The resurrection of Jesus

The ascension of Jesus

The descent of the Holy Spirit

The assumption of Mary into heaven

The coronation of Mary

Wonderful reflections on these mysteries are given by the Methodist Neville Ward in his book "Five for sorrow, Ten for joy," which I warmly commend to anyone who does not know it.

More recently, to these fifteen mysteries have been added

### ***The Luminous Mysteries***

The baptism of Jesus

The wedding at Cana

The proclamation of the Kingdom of God

The transfiguration of Jesus

The Last Supper

The word rosary is often used to describe the beads used to accompany the meditations, but of course the most important thing are the prayers themselves. The rosary is a way of focusing our minds and devotion on the great wonders of what God has done for us in Christ. The principal focus of Walsingham, “England’s Nazareth”, is on the very first of the mysteries, the Annunciation of Jesus to Mary at Nazareth. All the rest follows from that.

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