



Friends of St. John the Caregiver

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The Caregiver Mysteries of the Rosary

1.

Mary accepts God's invitation to become the mother of his son.

Reflection

Becoming the Mother of God wasn't part of young Mary's life plan and she had every reason to be frightened and overwhelmed. Of course she was, at times. As you are, sometimes. Like Mary, you've said "yes," to God's invitation to care for one of his beloved children. One who is your mother or father. Your son or daughter. Your spouse or in-law. Your loved one ... or someone who's hard to love.

Just as Mary did, by your actions, by your love, day after you continue to say "Yes, God," despite how demanding your caregiving can be, How endless it can seem. And as he did with Mary, God remains by your side. Always.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for my care-receiver and for me. Amen.

2.

Mary helps her cousin Elizabeth

Reflection

Yes, the young Mary went to help the older Elizabeth but it was from Elizabeth that Mary learned more about pregnancy and giving birth.

Many, if not most, caregivers discover they have a lot to learn. And just as God provided for Mary, he does the same for you. And just as Mary had to be open to receiving that gift you may have to look for help from others when you need it, accept it when it's offered and use it.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for my care-receiver and me. Amen.

3.

Jesus and Mary accompany Joseph through his final days on earth

Reflection

Pious tradition says that before Jesus began his public ministry, St. Joseph had died of natural causes with Jesus and Mary by his side. No wonder Joseph is the patron saint of a happy death.

Still, that doesn't mean he didn't have increasing needs as he grew frailer.

And it doesn't mean that, as his caregivers, Mary and Jesus, didn't face challenges.

Nor that, after his death, they didn't deeply grieve.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for my care-receiver and for me. Amen.

4.

Mary Walks The Way of the Caregiver

Reflection

Just as Mary knew —and lived — the Way of the Cross, so too with “The Way of the Caregiver.” From the moment she conceived to the moment she saw her son die on the cross, Mary cared for him.

Her God-given path included traveling to Bethlehem where there was no room in the inn. Just as for you there may be no healthcare provider readily available, no bed at the hospital, rehab center, nursing home or assisted living facility for your loved one.

As it was for the Holy Family, that can be a time of hunting and hoping, praying and waiting.

For Mary and Joseph, the way was also fleeing to Egypt to save Jesus’ life, and then returning to Nazareth, and raising him there.

Your caregiving can also include traveling. Moving to be closer to your care-receiver or having them move to be closer to you. Plane rides for long-distance caregiving. Changing jobs or retiring earlier than you had planned.

As it did for Mary, your “way of the caregiver can cover many miles and life-changes.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for my care-receiver and for me. Amen.

5.

Jesus is the first to rise from the dead

Reflection

We know that despite his perfect faith in his Heavenly Father, Jesus prayed that he could be spared his passion and death.

And Mary’s “fiat” — let it be done to me according to your word — doesn’t mean the torture and execution of her son wasn’t as horrible as it would have been for any loving mother.

As awful as it is for you as you witness what *has* happened to your dear, dear loved one and consider what *may* happen.

Again — just as Mary must have taken some comfort in knowing she would see Jesus again, would be with him, healthy and whole, once more —

So it will be for you. Together spiritually in heaven but also physically on earth at the end of time when Jesus comes again.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches [988]:

“The Christian Creed — the profession of our faith in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and in God’s creative, saving, and sanctifying action — culminates in the proclamation of the resurrection of the dead on the last day and in life everlasting.”

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for my care-receiver and for me. Amen.

*Words of comfort and encouragement from St Paul to caregivers,
adapted from Hebrews 6:10):*

“God will not forget how hard you have worked,
and how you have shown your love to him by caring for others,
as you still do.”