

# *The Secret of the Lantern*

*A choose-your-path adventure for Catholic kids*

*By Brandy M. Miller*

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# **CAUTION:**

## **Read at your own risk!**

There are powerful secrets hidden in this book. Many people do not know these secrets, and some that do know don't want ***you*** to know them. These secrets will change your life if you let them. I know they have changed mine.

Although this book is a mostly fictional story, it is all based on truth. You do have a guardian angel who looks out for you, is always with you ready to help you at any time, and who can bring you messages if you are ready to listen. You do have a very special light that you and only you can bring to this world. It's up to you whether you will let that light shine and bring good

things to a world that needs it, or whether you will allow others to steal that light from you.

Letting your light shine can be dangerous. Some people won't like what you're doing. They may make fun of you or try to stop you. You may have to let go of things you think are important. People you thought were your friends may not want to be friends anymore.

If you choose to accept your mission and step up to be the hero you were meant to be, I won't promise you that it will be easy, but I do promise you that it will be worth it. When you let go of what you think matters, you'll find out that it makes room for things you really need. The people who don't want to be friends anymore will make room for friends that will stay with you in good times and bad.

Of course, you don't have to do this very important work all by yourself. You can call on your guardian angel for help at any time. His name may not be Eli; you'll have to ask him to tell you his name, but he loves you dearly and wants to help you. He's been with you since the moment you first entered this world, but he has to have your permission (or the permission of someone who loves you) to help you out. Be sure to ask him for help at the start of each new day. He loves to help, and if you get to know him well enough you just might be allowed to see him!

At the back of this book, I have also given you instructions on where to find and how to use one of the most powerful forces for good ever created. It's called the Rosary, and it will help protect you, your family,

and the people you care about most. It will also provide you the courage, knowledge, and wisdom you'll need to carry out your mission.

Every help needed on the journey is available to you in the Rosary. If you combine the rosary with help from your guardian angel, even death won't be able to stop you from achieving great things. You'll need lots of courage if you choose to accept your mission.

Will you be the hero the world needs you to be and risk it all to save others? If you choose to accept, continue reading!

## *Table of Contents*

The Annunciation.....	17
You Accept .....	24
You Refuse.....	26
The Visitation.....	27
Obey the Priest.....	31
Take Matters into Your Own Hands	31
The Nativity .....	33
Show Them Your Lantern .....	36
Tell Them to Go Away .....	39
The Presentation.....	40
Continue Sharing .....	43
Hide the Lantern .....	44

The Finding in the Temple.....	45
Go to Confession.....	48
Stay Home.....	50
The Baptism in the River Jordan .....	51
Attend the Party .....	53
Stay Home.....	55
The Wedding Feast at Cana .....	57
Celebrate their Wedding .....	58
Steal the Heart.....	59
The Preaching of the Good News & the Call to Repentance .....	60
Yes .....	61
No.....	63



The Transfiguration .....	64
Stop Carrying It.....	66
Carry It for Others.....	67
The Institution of the Eucharist.....	68
Start Your Own Church .....	70
Stay with the Church.....	72
The Agony in the Garden.....	74
Refuse to Stop .....	76
Surrender the Lantern .....	77
The Scourging at the Pillar .....	78
Make the Statement.....	80
Hold Firm.....	82
The Crowning with Thorns.....	84

Save Your Reputation .....	85
Stay Strong.....	86
The Carrying of the Cross.....	87
Give the Lantern .....	88
Stand for God.....	89
The Crucifixion.....	90
The Resurrection.....	92
The Ascension.....	94
The Descent of the Holy Spirit .....	97
The Assumption.....	100
The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother as Queen of Heaven and Earth .....	102
Prayer to Your Guardian Angel .....	105

Scripture on Guardian Angels.....	105
What is the Rosary .....	106
How to Pray the Rosary .....	111
The Prayers .....	111
The Mysteries.....	111
The Prayers of the Rosary .....	113
The Sign of the Cross.....	113
Why We Pray That.....	113
The Apostle's Creed .....	114
Why We Pray That.....	115
The Our Father .....	115
Why We Pray That.....	116
Hail Mary .....	116

Why We Pray That..... 116

Glory Be to the Father..... 119

Why We Pray That..... 120

Oh, My Jesus..... 120

Why We Pray That..... 120

Hail, Holy Queen ..... 121

Why We Pray That..... 122

Scriptures and Meditations for the Mysteries of  
the Rosary ..... 125

The Joyful Mysteries..... 125

The Annunciation..... 125

The Visitation..... 126

The Nativity ..... 127

The Presentation.....	128
The Finding in the Temple.....	129
The Luminous Mysteries .....	131
The Baptism in the River Jordan	131
The Wedding Feast at Cana .....	132
The Preaching of the Good News and the Call to Repentance .....	133
The Transfiguration .....	134
The Institution of the Eucharist.	135
The Sorrowful Mysteries .....	138
The Agony in the Garden.....	138
The Scourging at the Pillar .....	139
The Crowning with Thorns.....	140

The Carrying of the Cross.....	141
The Crucifixion.....	142
The Glorious Mysteries.....	143
The Resurrection.....	143
The Ascension.....	144
The Descent of the Holy Spirit .	144
The Assumption of the Virgin Mary to Heaven .....	145
The Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth.....	148
Your Mission .....	149
The 15 Promises Mary Makes to Those Who Pray the Rosary .....	151
About This Book.....	155

About the Author .....	157
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## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my 2013-2014 5<sup>th</sup> grade Catechism class: Angel, Derek E., Derek S., Eva, Jazmine, Jose, Kaiden, Katrina, Luke, Monse, Parker, Sean, and Summer, who provided the inspiration for this book; to Dr. Elizabeth Barnes, my 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher who taught me to love my Blessed Mother and to pray the rosary; to St. Luis Marie Grignon de Montfort whose book, True Devotion to Mary, enflamed the fires of the Holy Spirit in my heart; to my mother whose many years of praying the rosary for me while I went astray made sure I could find my way back to the faith when I was ready; and to my nieces, Bre and Ali. I hope you may find this book a treasure for years to come.



# **The Annunciation**

*Luke 1:26-38*

You are working on your homework at home after school one afternoon when you notice that everything is suddenly much brighter. You turn to look for the source. You see a man standing in your room. Although you don't know him, he seems strangely familiar to you. You know you should feel alarmed, frightened even, but a feeling of peace washes over you instead.

“I'm Eli,” he tells you. “I have come from God to ask you to serve Him in a special way.”

“How can I serve Him? I'm just a kid!” you tell him.

Brandy M. Miller

“God knows how old you are,” he says, smiling, “but He needs your help.” He pulls a lantern out of his backpack. “He needs you to carry this lantern and share it with the world.”

“Me?” you ask, astonished. “Why me? I’m nobody special. Are you sure you’ve got the right house?”

Eli explains, “You are very special, just like this lantern. God made you just for this mission. You’re the only one in the whole world that can carry this particular lantern. It won’t shine for anyone but you.”

“It’s doesn’t look special to me,” you tell him skeptically. The metal top and bottom portions

## *Secret of the Lantern*

of the lantern are rusty and encrusted with dirt. The glass is smudged with smoke and finger prints.

“Here, take it in your hands and you’ll see what makes it special,” he says.

As soon as the lantern touches your hands it begins to give off a soft, warm light that grows stronger by the minute. What happens next takes your breath away. Three snarling, monstrous creatures begin to scuttle outside the range of the light, backing further and further away the stronger the light grows. An angel arrives, and then many more, surrounding and guarding you until you can no longer even see the creatures although you can hear them.

Brandy M. Miller

“Eli, what’s happening?” you ask in awe, looking around at the battalion of angels now tightly packed into your room.

Eli smiles. “Your lantern allows you to see the supernatural things in this world. The demons you see have been there all along, tempting you to do wrong. They cannot stand the light and are forced to flee from it.

“The lantern, when it is activated, is a beacon to the other angels, calling them to your side. Anyone who is in the room with you or who is touched by your light will be able to see these things, too,” he tells you. “The lantern will allow you and those with you to defend yourselves against the demonic by calling down armies of angels. You

## *Secret of the Lantern*

have only to ask for their help, and they will protect you from harm.”

“That is so cool! I can’t wait to share it with my friends!” you exclaim eagerly.

Eli’s expression grows solemn. “I warn you, young one, this lantern is not a toy. God wants you to share it with others, but you need to understand that not everyone will like it. In the light of the lantern, the true nature of a soul will be revealed to all who are touched by its light. Many will find that frightening or deeply disturbing,” he cautions you. “Carrying this lantern can be very dangerous. Some will try to steal it and sell it for money, fame, or power. Some will try to steal it so they can destroy it. Once they figure out that it can only be used by

Brandy M. Miller

you, some of them may try to kidnap you so they can make you use it for their purposes. Others may even try to kill you so that no one can have the light,” he warns you.

“But I’m just a kid. Why would anyone want to hurt me?” you ask.

“They know that even though you are young, you are capable of great things. They fear what you might do, and that is why they will try to stop you. You must be on guard at all times and be prepared to defend the lantern with your very life, if necessary. Will you accept this mission?” he asks.

“I’m not sure I’m ready for that kind of thing,” you tell him. “I don’t think I can do it. I don’t think I’m strong enough.”

## *Secret of the Lantern*

Eli nods his head in understanding. “God knows He is asking a lot of you, but I promise you that He will give you everything you need to accomplish this mission. He will be with you every step of the way, and so will I. Will you accept this mission for Him?” he asks.

## **You Accept**

Your hands shake and your throat is dry as you say, “I accept.”

Eli’s eyes relax in relief as he hands over the lantern to you. He places his hands on your head and says, “Lord, look kindly on your servant, being sent forth as a messenger of salvation and peace, marked with the sign of the cross. Guide your servant’s steps with your mighty arm and with the power of your grace for strength in spirit so that this one may not falter through weariness. Allow your servant’s voice to echo with Christ’s voice so that all who hear this one may be drawn to obey the Gospel. Fill this one’s heart with the Holy Spirit so that, becoming all things to all people, your servant



## *Secret of the Lantern*

may lead many people to you, the Father of all, to sing your praises in your Holy Church. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

As Eli finishes his words of blessing, you feel a calm peace descend upon you and a certainty that you have done the right thing. Continue on to The Visitation.

## **You refuse**

Eli's eyes sadden as he reclaims the lantern and places it back in his pack. The moment he walks out the door, he vanishes from sight and you are left wondering if it was all a dream. The End.

# The Visitation

*Luke 1:39-56*

You can't wait to show this to your parents.

It's hard for you to believe you've been asked to carry out such a big mission. As soon as they get home, you rush to greet them. You tell them how the angel came to you to deliver it along with your mission from God. You also explain the warning the angel gave you about the nature of the lantern and exactly what its powers are.

Your parents are skeptical at first, but as you pick the lantern up and it begins to give its soft glow, your mother yelps as the demons which surrounded you begin to flee. Your father's brow is furrowed as he reaches out a hand to touch a bleeding wound that has suddenly appeared over your

Brandy M. Miller

mother's heart. A similar wound appears on your father, and you are reminded of the argument they had last night. You wonder if the two are related.

As the light grows brighter, the angels begin to arrive. Even more amazing to your eyes, though, is that the wounds you saw so clearly visible on your parents have begun to shrink and heal. Your confidence in the powers of the lantern grows.

Your mom says, "We need to show this to our parish priest!"

The next day, she calls to schedule an appointment, and the three of you visit the priest together. He welcomes you in to his office with a warm smile and listens intently as you tell your

## *Secret of the Lantern*

story of the angel's visitation. When you have finished, the priest asks you to show the lantern to him.

You are curious to see what the light of the lantern will reveal about this man. You take the lantern out of your backpack and hold it high. To your astonishment, the elderly priest looks very young and astonishingly beautiful in its light. He seems to radiate his own light, just as the angel did.

After he sees the angels, he asks you to hand over the light to him. The minute that his hands touch it, the light goes out, just as Eli said that it would. He gives it back to you and the light returns.

“This does indeed seem to be a miracle,” the priest tells you. “However, the Church is very careful with miracles because Satan has been known to

Brandy M. Miller

come disguised as an angel of light. We will need to allow time to do a full investigation before we share this light with anyone.

“I know that it seems hard-hearted, but Scripture warns us that we are not to trust every spirit that comes to us, but are to test them to be sure of their truth before we pass them on and lead others astray by mistake,” he explains gently. “I will need your family to keep silent about the lantern. Do not show it to or share it with anyone else until the Church has time to assess things.”

You feel very disappointed with how the meeting went. Do you obey the priest and follow his orders or do you decide to take matters into your own hands?

## **Obey the Priest**

You reluctantly put the lantern by your bed post, turning the matter over to God. Every day when you get home from school, you take it out and hold it just to remind yourself that it's real. Your mom assures you that God will come through for you, even if it takes a while. Continue on to The Nativity.

## **Take Matters into Your Own Hands**

You ignore the priest. What does he know?

You show the lantern to your friends. The press gets wind of it, and the Church speaks out against people coming to see your lamp because of the dangers of it being a hoax. As a result, fewer people come to receive the blessings the lantern has to offer. Continue on to The Nativity.



# The Nativity

*Luke 2:1-20*

Your family is sitting down for dinner one evening when the phone rings. It is the Bishop. He wants you and your parents to bring your lantern to him. You will have to travel a long way to get there, but your parents make the necessary arrangements and schedule a date. You are hoping that this means you will finally get to share your light with others.

You arrive in the city and head to the Bishop's office. You spend all day telling your story to various psychiatrists and to the Bishop's administrators while the lantern is investigated by a team of scientists from the local university. Letters from your parish priest are reviewed, along with testimonies from other people who know you and

your parents. The Bishop dismisses you without making a final decision but tells you that he sees nothing contrary to the faith. He also tells you that you may now share your story with others and show them the lantern. He says that there will be more investigation needed before the Church is willing to approve it as a definitive miracle.

It is growing late when your family leaves the offices of the Bishop. After a frantic search for a place to stay, they find that there is no room anywhere in town. There are several conventions, and the hotels and motels are all full! After trying every place in town, your parents head to a restaurant for some food. The three of you are feeling discouraged. A gentleman overhears you and tells your

## *Secret of the Lantern*

parents about a local shelter called The Manger that has room for the night. Grateful, although reluctant, you accept the offer.

The shelter is run down, and there are a lot of people there who look sad and dirty. Some of them smell funny, and you think it's possible they haven't bathed in a while. A voice inside you urges you to pull the lantern out for comfort. Another voice whispers to you that these might be the very kind of people Eli warned you about, and perhaps hiding the lantern would be the safest thing to do.

Do you hide the lantern or do you cling to it?

## **Hide the Lantern**

You spend a cold, lonely, miserable night at the shelter fearful of the people around you. The next morning, you get up and leave for home, glad you are able to leave this city and these awful people. The light of the lantern remains hidden, and it no longer shines as brightly as it used to. Continue on to The Presentation.

## **Cling to the Lantern**

You reach for the lantern, seeking comfort and protection in this strange place. You are amazed to see that in the light of the lantern, some of those who had seemed so ugly to you moments before are astonishingly beautiful in the lantern's light. You realize that you are seeing the real nature of their souls, and you find yourself ashamed at having judged them so harshly.

Many of them gather closer toward you, drawn to the light and its protection. A few are in tears as they beg to hear the story of how you came to possess the lantern. They join with you in a prayer of thanksgiving, and you realize that not all

## Brandy M. Miller

angels are supernatural. Some of them live here, in this shelter.

The people in the shelter, and even the workers, are amazed by your story. You can tell that you have brought great joy into their lives by bringing the lantern here. Many of them have their faith in God restored by the things they have seen and the stories you and your parents have shared about your faith. You know that it was God's hand that brought you here, and you are grateful.

You leave the city the next morning having made some incredible new friends. You're truly glad there was no room for you anywhere else. You might never have met them otherwise. Word of

## *Secret of the Lantern*

your lantern and the miracle it contains begins to spread. Go on to The Presentation.

# The Presentation

*Luke 2:21-40*

Three years have gone by since you visited the Bishop, and you are starting to wonder if the Church has forgotten about the lantern. You continue to quietly share it with all who ask. Many tell you that their faith in God has been restored because of it.

Your parents receive a phone call from an assistant to the Pope who is being sent to your parish to investigate the miraculous claims about the lantern. Your parents prepare a room, and your parish priest is very excited. People at your church begin talking, and several of the children in your catechism class begin to ask you whether you really did receive a lantern from God.



## *Secret of the Lantern*

You tell them your story, but some of them still don't believe you. You bring your lantern to class the next time, and show them. Most of them believe, but a few say it is a trick and that it's not real, in spite of what they've seen. You worry that perhaps the Church will feel the same way.

The papal envoy arrives. After a month of investigation, he declares that it truly is a miracle. You are invited to bring the lantern to the Vatican so that the Pope and the Cardinals of the Church can see it for themselves. Your parents book a flight and the three of you make your way to Rome. You are invited to visit with the Pope himself, and he commends you for the work you have been doing for God.

Brandy M. Miller

You aren't expecting what happens next. The local press sends a team to investigate your "miracle lantern," and people all over the world begin to hear about it.

Suddenly, you are overwhelmed with people who come to your home hoping to get a glimpse of the lantern. The phone rings night and day, and you can't go anywhere that people don't recognize you as "that kid with the lantern." The attention is overwhelming. Do you continue sharing your lantern with others, or do you hide it away and refuse to talk about it anymore?

## **Continue sharing**

The attention is hard to bear, but you know that all of it is part of getting the message about this lantern out to the world. You know that every time the phone rings, or a reporter seeks you out, or someone shows up on your doorstep, you are doing exactly what God wants you to do. It isn't easy at first, but eventually you realize that all of this hardship has helped you to grow stronger in your faith and closer to God. Continue on to The Finding in the Temple.

## **Hide the Lantern**

Unable to take the attention anymore, you hide the lantern and refuse to talk about it. Over the next couple of months, the attention slowly fades away as people forget about your lantern. One day, you take it out and you notice that the light no longer shines even when it is in your hands. The End.

# **The Finding in the Temple**

*Luke 2:41-52*

“Mom, have you seen my light?” you ask as you head to the kitchen for breakfast one morning. You have become accustomed to carrying it everywhere with you. It rests by your bedside table at night. It is never out of your sight, but this morning when you awoke you could not find it anywhere. You fear that someone might have taken it.

“No, sweetheart, I haven’t. I’ll be happy to help you look, though,” she tells you.

The two of you search the house from top to bottom, but the lantern is nowhere to be found. You are nearly in a panic when your mother suggests that you should pray to God and ask Him for help in

Brandy M. Miller

finding it. You pray, but nothing seems to happen. Your mom agrees to take you back to church to look for it, but it isn't in the office and no one has seen it. You return home empty-handed and in tears.

You are so disappointed with yourself. How could you lose it? How could you be so irresponsible? You kick yourself a thousand times over. You pray and you pray and you pray, but the lantern does not come back. You wonder if maybe this is a punishment for a sin you committed, if maybe you've done something wrong and God doesn't want you to have the light anymore.

You begin to get upset with God, wondering what He was thinking in trusting you with something so important. Doesn't He know you're just a

*Secret of the Lantern*

kid? Doesn't He understand that you weren't ready for this? You feel miserable, and by Saturday morning you feel sick to your stomach. Your mom suggests that you go to confession, but you don't feel like it. Do you go, or do you stay home?

## **Go to Confession**

You spend time examining your conscience.

You know that you need to apologize to God for getting angry with Him and for blaming Him for what happened. You don't feel like going, but you make yourself do it anyway.

You tell the priest about having lost the lantern, and how you got angry with God because you were disappointed with yourself for losing it. The priest assures you that it isn't because of your sins that God took the light from you, it's because God needed to borrow it back from you for a little while. He tells you that if you'll just have faith and keep coming back to church, you'll find it eventually. He



## *Secret of the Lantern*

then absolves you of your sins and speaks the words of forgiveness you've been needing to hear.

As you get out of the confessional, you feel a weight lifted off your shoulders and the reassuring presence of the Holy Spirit. Your faith in God's love for you is restored, and your hope of finding the lantern renewed. You slip into the pew to pray through your penances, and discover the lantern tucked under the bench!

You don't know how it got here, but you're so happy to see it. It looks different, polished, and its glow is brighter than ever before. Continue on to The Baptism in the River Jordan.

## **Stay Home**

You don't feel like you've done anything wrong, and you shouldn't have to apologize. Besides, going to confession isn't going to help get the lantern back. By the next morning, you don't feel like going to church either and you tell your mom that you're too sick to go. As time goes on, you begin to drift away from Jesus and forget about the lantern. Occasionally, you meet people who remember your lantern and they ask to see it. You deny that you ever had it. Eventually, you forget that it was ever real. The End.

# **The Baptism in the River Jordan**

*Matthew 3:13-17*

It's been five years since the angel first visited you. Carrying the lantern has proven a heavy burden, and has taken its toll on your family. You can't go anywhere without people recognizing you. People treat you differently and expect more out of you than they do other kids. When you get in trouble, it becomes public news. There are no small mistakes in your life – everything is big. You are getting tired of it all. You just want to live a normal life and be like other people.

One day, you get an invitation to a party with other kids in your class. There's just one rule:

Brandy M. Miller

the lantern has to stay home. No parents are going to be there.

Going to the party would mean that you have to lie to your parents. They would never let you go to a party when parents aren't home. You know that some of the kids also plan to bring alcohol and there are rumors that drugs might be there, too. Do you go and leave the lantern behind or do you say no and stay home?

## **Attend the Party**

You go to the party, leaving your light behind. You were right about the drugs and alcohol. Turns out, it wasn't as much fun as you thought it would be. The cops show up and you're arrested along with everyone else. You end up having to call home and beg your parents to bail you out of jail. The next day, your mug shot is on the front page of all the newspapers and you spend the next three months being the talk of all the gossip magazines.

Worse yet, people begin making fun of the lantern and calling you a phony. They start spreading rumors that you made all of it up just so you could get attention. Your attempt to fit in only

Brandy M. Miller

makes you stand out even more, and loses the respect of some of the people you care about most. Continue on to The Wedding Feast at Cana.

## **Stay Home**

Leaving the lantern behind and lying to your parents just isn't something you can do. Besides, you don't want to be around people who are doing things that are illegal. You don't want to go to jail, or have to call your parents in the middle of the night.

It's not worth the trouble. If drinking and doing drugs, telling lies, and leaving your mission behind are what make a person "normal," maybe being abnormal isn't so bad after all. You stay home, invite your best friend over, and order pizza.

The two of you stay up late watching movies and talking. When you get to school that following Monday, you're glad you made the decision you

Brandy M. Miller

did. Several of the kids who went to that party got arrested, and some of them are now spending the rest of their school year in juvenile detention. Continue on to The Wedding Feast at Cana.



# **The Wedding Feast at Cana**

*John 2:1-11*

You have been carrying the light for over ten years now, and are grown. You and your best friend fall in love with the same person. Unfortunately, your best friend gets to them first and proposes. The person you love accepts the proposal.

Your heart is broken, and although you want to feel happy for your best friend, you have trouble thinking about anything except how miserable you feel over the loss of the one you loved. Do you celebrate their wedding, or do you try to steal the heart of the person you love away from your best friend?

## **Celebrate their Wedding**

The wedding is lovely, and though it hurts to watch the person you love in the arms of your best friend, you are genuinely happy that the two of them are happy.

To your surprise, you meet someone at the wedding that you know is a much better fit for you than the person your best friend married. You leave the wedding grateful that you were saved from marrying the wrong person. The person that you meet at your best friend's wedding becomes your life partner, helping you to spread your light throughout the whole world. Continue to the Preaching of the Good News and the Call to Repentance.

## **Steal the Heart**

You try to steal the heart of the person you love away from your best friend. Your best friend finds out what you are trying to do, the two of you get into a fight, and you never speak again. Moreover, the person that you really cared about no longer respects you or wants to have anything to do with you. People think you are a liar and a cheat, and the press runs with the story. The light that you were supposed to share with others flickers, fades, and dies out. The End.

# **The Preaching of the Good News & the Call to Repentance**

*Matthew 4:17*

A man comes to your door in the middle of the night. “The small town of Lazarus, Missouri, lost its power and a terrible winter storm is headed their way. If you take your lantern and leave now, your light can save them. I know it’s dangerous, but you are the only one who can help them now. Will you come with me?” he asks.

## Yes

There is an eerie darkness that surrounds the town of Lazarus. You have never seen such a deep black in your entire life, and you feel a cold chill crawl down your spine when you step out of the car. You grab the lantern, and as the light begins to gleam, you see a large number of demons fleeing before you. You feel a comforting warmth as the angels begin to gather around you. The man guides you toward the center of town and you stand, calling to the people to come to you for help.

Some of them do not understand how the light works and don't believe it can help them. However, a good many of the townspeople believe you and allow you to share your light with them.

## Brandy M. Miller

You lead those who will listen to safety just in the nick of time as the first blizzard begins to blow in to the town. The whole town is covered in 20 feet of snow by morning, and those who are with you are the only ones to survive. The angels who are summoned by your light bring food and water to the people as everyone waits for the snows to thaw.

The grateful townspeople thank you for your courage in saving them, and word of the miraculous events in town spreads to the media. Even more people begin to believe in the light and to seek it out for themselves. Many people who had lost their faith in God begin to believe again. Continue on to The Transfiguration.

**No**

You decide that your mission to spread the light doesn't require you to put your own life in danger. Besides, you reason, how can you spread the message if you die? You sit home, and the whole town is lost in the winter storms that come. The lantern that was yours to guard and protect disappears that same night and does not return. The End.

# **The Transfiguration**

*Matthew 17:1-8*

During Mass one day, you go up as usual to receive communion. Immediately after you consume the host, you gasp in amazement as you see the whole Church filled with angels and saints. You hear the incredibly beautiful sounds of their songs of God's praises rising toward the heavens.

Your mother told you when you were little that during the Mass, angels and saints are gathered around the church, celebrating it with you. When you got the lantern, you learned that it was true. What is surprising about this vision isn't that it's happening, it's that you aren't holding the lantern!



## *Secret of the Lantern*

As you get out of Mass, you discover that you no longer need the lantern's light to see the supernatural things of this world. The people around you look different, too. Many of the people you used to think were disfigured and ugly seem to be beautiful and whole, while those you once thought pretty and strong seem withered and disfigured.

You realize that something has changed. The lantern has become so much a part of you that you have absorbed its properties. Do you stop carrying the lantern now that you no longer need it, or do you continue to carry the lantern?

## **Stop Carrying It**

You tell yourself that carrying that lantern was just a nuisance anyway, and now that you no longer need it, it's better left at home. After all, taking it out in public gives it a greater chance of being broken, lost, or stolen. Within a few weeks of leaving the lantern at home and abandoning your mission to share it with others, you notice that your vision has returned to normal.

You no longer see the saints and angels during Mass. Desperate to restore your abilities, you pick up the lantern again. However, its light will not come on and nothing you do changes that. Your mission has failed. The End.

## **Carry It for Others**

You may be able to see the supernatural without the lantern's light, but you know that no one else can. The mission God asked you to complete so long ago was to carry its light to others, and that's exactly what you intend to do. You want other people to be able to see the things you see so easily now, and to believe in a God who loves them and wants them to be near to Him.

You know that carrying the lantern may mean risking your life and the things that you love, but it's worth the risk to bring so much happiness and joy into people's lives. Continue on to The Institution of the Eucharist.

# **The Institution of the Eucharist**

*Mark 14: 22-24*

A group of people have begun to follow you everywhere you go. They do everything that you do, and seem intent on listening to every word you say. At first, you liked this situation because it made you feel important, but lately you've been wondering if they aren't beginning to think more highly of you than you deserve.

One of them approaches you one day and says, "Why don't you start your own church? Surely you are holy enough that you don't need all of this!" What do you say? Do you agree with the

## *Secret of the Lantern*

man and break off from the Church to start your  
own or do you stay with the Church?

## **Start Your Own Church**

The man is right, you think to yourself. “I don’t need to follow the rules of the Church. I can lead people just as well as anyone can, and I’m probably a better Christian than they are anyway. After all, God entrusted ME with the lantern.”

You break off from the Church, and many thousands follow your example, abandoning their faith in the Eucharist to follow you. To your dismay, your newfound ability to see the supernatural fades with every passing day and the light of the lantern that attracted your followers darkens and then stops working altogether.

Your newfound followers do not stick around for long once you can no longer perform

*Secret of the Lantern*

miracles for them. Your mission has failed. The  
End.

## **Stay with the Church**

You know that you aren't any holier than they are, and you tell them so. "Look, you don't understand. God didn't give me this lantern because of how holy I was or how perfect I was. He gave it to me because I was available and He knew that I would do what He wanted me to do. That's it. I can't leave the Church, and especially not the Eucharist."

"The Eucharist is what gives me the courage I need to go out there every day and carry this lantern even when I feel sad or discouraged. I can't abandon it. I need that nourishment for my soul the same way that I need nourishment for my body. This is not what Jesus would want. He also



## *Secret of the Lantern*

wouldn't want me to tear apart the Church, or tear other people away from the Eucharist," you finish.

Some of them listen, and their faith in the Church is renewed because of your words. Some of them abandon you, seeking someone who will lead them the way they want to be led. You realize that those who encouraged you to abandon the Church were looking for an excuse to do it, and you are glad that you did not provide them that excuse or set a bad example for those who were having doubts about their faith by giving up on it. Being a leader is a big responsibility, and you are glad you did the right thing. Continue on to The Agony in the Garden.

# **The Agony in the Garden**

*Matthew 26:36-46*

You have faithfully carried your lantern for years now, and many thousands have come to faith in Christ because of the work you have done. There have been those who didn't like your work, and even some who asked you to leave their towns and stop sharing it. One day, a group of people who are unhappy with the work you are doing come and offer to pay you money if you will stop showing people the lantern. You refuse, and they leave.

However, a few weeks later you are kidnapped in the middle of the night by this same group and taken to a strange place. They threaten to hurt you and your family unless you stop showing people the lantern. Do you refuse their demand to

## *Secret of the Lantern*

stop showing the lantern, or do you surrender the lantern?

## **Refuse to Stop**

You face their threats with great courage, knowing that you are surrounded by the angels, as you reply, “My life and the lives of those I love belong to God. If He wants to allow you to take it or them from me, who am I to tell Him that He is wrong? Hurting me and my family won’t make the truth about who God is go away, though. God will use what you do to spread His message even further than it could go without you.”

As you are taken to your cell, the leader of the group tells you, “We’ll make sure those messages are buried with you.” Continue on to The Scourging at the Pillar.

## **Surrender the Lantern**

The men take the lantern and you disappear without a trace. The lantern is destroyed, and they discredit the miracles that were performed by it. The work that you were doing dies with you, and people's faith in God grows even weaker in the years following your disappearance. The End.

# **The Scourging at the Pillar**

*Matthew 27:27-30*

As you sit in the prison cell, waiting for whatever will come next, you spend your time speaking with the angels and praying for those who have taken you captive. You have no idea what time it is or how long you have been here. No one speaks to you, and your meager meals are served through a slot in the door.

One day, you are surprised to see three men appear at your cell door. They open the door and pull you out, taking you to a room where they chain you up and torture you for hours. They want you to make a statement in public denouncing the lantern and telling people it was all a hoax. They promise to

*Secret of the Lantern*

let you go if you'll do this for them. Do you make  
the statement or do you hold firm to your mission?

## **Make the Statement**

You curse the men, calling them terrible names, but agree to make the statement. They put you back in your cell and order you to memorize a script of things you are to say to the press. A few days later, they clean you up and put makeup on you to cover the bruises.

Then they take you into a room where a large number of television and newspaper reporters have gathered to ask questions. You make your rehearsed speech and then answer their questions using the script you memorized. When the press have gone, they take you to your home and tell you to give them the lantern.



## *Secret of the Lantern*

You hand over the lantern and watch as it is destroyed. You disappear without a trace, and the work you were doing for God is destroyed along with you. The End.

## **Hold Firm**

You know that the lantern is real and it has changed lives for the better. You refuse to undo all of that good work by repeating the lies they want you to say. You refuse their offer, saying, “I know that the lantern is real, and I know that it comes from God. You know it, too, or you would not be doing this now.”

Even though you are forced to endure some of the worst pain of your life, you decide to choose to forgive these men for their wicked ways. You tell them that Jesus loves them and that you forgive them. They are astonished to hear your words, and begin to feel bad about the things they are doing.

## *Secret of the Lantern*

Although their hearts are not changed that day, they find themselves unable to forget what you have done. Eventually, they decide to learn more about Christ because of you. Continue on to The Crowning with Thorns.

# **The Crowning with Thorns**

*Matthew 27:31-33*

Unable to get the lantern from you by torture or threats, the group pays witnesses to tell horrible lies about you. These “witnesses” accuse you of things you haven’t done in front of the television cameras and newspapers. Millions of people believe their lies, and even though you know the truth, your reputation is destroyed. Even your closest friends turn against you.

The men tell you that if you will agree to hand over the lantern to them, they will restore your reputation. They will even give you a position of power if you will just join them. Do you give them the lantern or do you stay strong?

## **Save Your Reputation**

You can't take the hatred that even some of your closest friends and family are showing you based on the lies that have been told about you. You hate that people are so eager to believe the worst about you. You wish you had never been given the lantern.

Hoping to restore your reputation and win back your friends and family, you hand it over. Soon afterward, you disappear. The papers report that you fled to escape your tarnished reputation. The truth disappears with you. The End.

## **Stay Strong**

You cling to the truth, knowing that even if no one else believes the truth, God knows. The angels comfort you and sing to you in your prison cell, reminding you that this time of sorrow will not last forever. Continue on to The Carrying of the Cross.

# **The Carrying of the Cross**

*Matthew 27:31-33*

They put you on trial and convict you of many crimes you did not commit and then schedule you to be executed. Your family and friends have abandoned you. You have lost everything you own. Even your life is about to be taken from you because you carried the lantern for God and was faithful to what He asked of you.

Late one evening, a man comes to promise you that if you will just give them the lantern they will restore all that you have lost and give you your life back. Do you give him the lantern or stand for God?

## **Give the Lantern**

Sick of the lantern and all the trouble it has brought you, you hand it over. It is destroyed, and you are never seen again. The criminals get away with their wicked behavior, and the work you were doing on God's behalf is undone. Your mission is over. The End.



## **Stand for God**

Your execution is scheduled for the next morning. Reporters and members of the press gather around to record the event, including your final words, “My hope is in the Lord, who made heaven and earth. If He is with me, who can stand against me?” you say to the men. “If the Lord does not wish to restore my life, it is only because He has better things in mind for me. He loves me, and I am not afraid to die for him.” Continue on to The Crucifixion.

# The Crucifixion

*Matthew 27:33-35*

You are executed for crimes you did not commit, but the lantern survives. As you draw your final breath, the lantern you protected throughout your life lights up without anyone touching it. Your friends and family discover it while preparing your body for burial. While during your life its light could only be unlocked when you touched it, it now gleams brighter than daylight, for all to see without evidence of any source to power it.

The men who put you to death hear about the lantern. They come to try and destroy it. They try to move the lantern from its spot, but it is too heavy. They try to break it, but the lantern remains undisturbed. They try to extinguish it, but the light

*Secret of the Lantern*

only grows brighter. Your friends and family are ashamed of their doubts about you, and scientists who come to test it proclaim it as supernatural.

News about the lantern spreads far and wide. The men you forgave come to see the lantern and are fully converted. They tell the true story of what happened, the falsehoods told to convict you, and your innocence in it all.

Your name is cleared, your reputation restored, and you are recognized as a hero. Many thousands who would not otherwise have heard of you come to know about you. The world grows closer to Christ because you trusted in God, and the Catholic Church proclaims you a saint. Continue on to The Resurrection.

# The Resurrection

*2 Timothy 2:11*

You awaken from what seems to have been a deep sleep. Eli stands at the foot of a set of stairs leading upward, beckoning toward you. You reach for his hand and he leads you along a path to the stairway. As you go up each step of this stairway, you are greeted by a man or a woman dressed in white and holding a lantern that gleams brightly.

Some of these people are loved ones you thought were gone forever. You greet them with tears of joy and hug one another. You have never felt so happy, so loved, and so excited at the same time. Some of these people you do not know, but Eli introduces you. These are people who have been praying for you all along. They are saints who died

long before you were born. You are filled with gratitude for their efforts to help you with your work.

As you reach the top of the stairs, you are greeted by a man and a woman standing side-by-side. The woman, Eli tells you, is Mary. She is Jesus' mother. She has been coordinating the saints in their efforts to serve you on your mission. The man is Jesus himself. As you greet them both, they hug you and lead you forward to the gates of Heaven. Continue on to The Ascension.

# The Ascension

*John 14:1-3*

As you enter Heaven, things are far more beautiful than you ever imagined. Everyone here is happy and excited about the chance to meet you. The angels you have met through the light of the lantern gather around you, eager to show you the home that Jesus has been building for you.

You notice that the houses closest to the gates are not very large at all and seem little more than shacks. You ask Eli about that. “Every time you underwent a trial for His sake and suffered without giving up on Him, you created a brick for us to use in the construction,” Eli explains. “It’s amazing what a lifetime of suffering and sacrifice can build,” he tells you as he leads you along the

streets of heaven. “Some people waited until their last moments to give their lives to Jesus, so we didn’t have much to use to build them a house. Still, these people are maybe even happier than you are to be here. They know how much mercy God has shown them, and they’re glad they get to spend their eternity here.”

When he finally arrives in front of your home, you can scarcely believe your eyes. It’s a veritable palace!

“You gave everything over for Jesus, and willingly suffered so much for His sake, that we were able to build all of this for you,” Eli tells you proudly. “On Earth, you often lived in poverty. Here, you’ll never go without.”

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The tour of your new home leaves you breathless. It's everything you ever dreamed of having in a home, and then some. There are lush gardens and beautiful fountains filled with the sweetest waters you've ever tasted. You can't imagine things getting any better than this. You want to stay here forever, but Eli tugs on your sleeve as you finish the tour and tells you, "Come on, there are a few things left to do." Continue on to The Descent of the Holy Spirit.



# **The Descent of the Holy Spirit**

*Acts 2:1-4, John 8:12, John 1:5*

Eli leads you through more streets until at last you wind up in the center of the place. There is a palace here that dwarfs your own. Its walls are made of the purest gold and its walkways are crafted of the finest faceted gems. You can only imagine who might live in this kind of place, and what kind of suffering they must have undergone to have constructed so many bricks of such great value. As you stop to admire its splendor, a dove made of pure and radiant light lands on your head.

Though the dove never opens its beak to speak, you hear its voice in your head saying, “Welcome, little Light. We have been waiting for you.”

Suddenly, you are overwhelmed with a feeling of joy that is unlike anything you have ever felt in your life. Tears spring from your eyes. The dove takes flight and heads into the palace doors, hovering only a moment to be sure that you are following it. Inside this palace you find more angels guarding a throne room. They part to let you through. In the center of the room is a giant throne crafted of the most brilliant gems you have ever seen. To its right is another throne, and just behind that throne is a third. Twelve men stand in a semi-circle around the thrones.

The dove flies in and lands with one claw on the back of the giant throne and another on the back of the second throne. At its appearance, angels

## *Secret of the Lantern*

sound their trumpets and all those standing bow down. The angel nearest the throne proclaims, “Behold the Light of the World!” The rest of the angels in the room reply, “The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

As the King of Kings and his Queen Mother make their way to the thrones, you find yourself bowing down before Him. You feel a great excitement inside and know that something truly special is about to happen, and you wonder what it is.

Continue on to The Assumption.

# **The Assumption**

*Revelation 12:1*

As you stand there in the throne room, you notice that there is something special about the way that Jesus and Mary look, something that makes them different from the others in the room. You turn to Eli and ask him about it.

“Mary’s reward for her faithful service to God during her life on Earth, and her present from her son at the time she was to die, was that her body was not allowed to decay. Mary’s body and soul are kept together, just as the soul and body of Jesus were reunited on the day of His resurrection. One day, when the final judgment day comes, your body will be reunited with your soul, just as hers is now. Of course, you won’t get your regular body. It will

be a better body than the one you had on Earth,” he assures you.

As Jesus ascends to his throne and Mary to the one directly behind it, a loud thundering rumble is heard. Light brighter than the sun gleams from the doorway and fills the room. You see the face of God, and are filled with awe and wonder. *It’s nothing like the pictures*, you think to yourself. A hush falls over the room, and it is clear that everyone is waiting for something to happen. You want to ask Eli, but as you turn to look at him, he gives a quiet shake of his head. Continue on to The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

# **The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother as Queen of Heaven and Earth**

*James 1:12, 2 Timothy 2:12*

You watch as Father and Son turn toward Mary. A crown of jewels unlike any on earth is fashioned from the air around them. They bring this crown before Mary and place it on her head. The whole palace erupts in applause as she is honored by her Son and Creator as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

You ask Eli in bewilderment, “How can she be the Queen of Jesus? Is she in charge of him? Wouldn’t that make her the boss of God?”

Eli shakes his head and explains, “Mary is absolutely nothing without God, and she knows

that. She is Queen of Heaven and Earth only because she is the mother of Jesus, who is the King of all Creation. When we honor her as our Queen, it is a way of giving thanks to her for the service she gave to our King.”

“Mary isn’t the only one who gets a crown, either,” he continues. “She is just the first one, because she was the first one to give her life to Christ. You will get one, too, when the final Judgment day comes,” he says with a smile. “All those who are baptized into Christ Jesus become members of his body, and since He is the heir to the throne you all become heirs with Him.”

“Wow!” you remark. “I’m going to be crowned, too?!”

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“Yes. You will receive a crown of glory for your willingness to lay down your life in defense of the kingdom of heaven, just as Jesus promised,” he tells you.

The End.



## **Scripture on Guardian Angels**

See to it that you do not treat one of these little ones with contempt; I tell you, they have angels of their own in heaven, that behold the face of my heavenly Father continually. – Matthew 18:10

## **Prayer to Your Guardian Angel**

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom  
God's love commits me here

Ever this day be at my side, to light, to  
guard, to rule, and to guide. Amen.

## What Is the Rosary

The rosary is a set of prayers that Christians can use to grow in their understanding of the messages of the Gospel. Although beads are used, they are only a way of helping the person praying to keep track of where they are in their prayers. Strictly speaking, so long as you can count to 10, you can pray the rosary without them.

The rosary actually began as a way of praying the Psalms. Each bead was linked to a different Psalm. Later, it was used by people who were making amends for sins they committed to keep track of the number of Our Fathers and Hail Marys they were supposed to pray. In 1214, St. Dominic was put in charge of leading a special mission to bring

the truth to a group of people known as the Cathars who were being led astray by false teachers. Discouraged by his apparent failure to reach them, he fled to the forest to pray and fast. After three days of fasting, he fell into a coma.

While in the coma, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him. Mary asked him, “Dear Dominic, do you know which weapon the Blessed Trinity wants to use to reform the world?”

Dominic replied, “You would know better than I.”

She told him, “I want you to know that, in this kind of warfare, the battering ram has always been the Angelic Psalter (the rosary) which is the foundation stone of the New Testament. Therefore,

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if you wish to reach these hardened souls and win them over to God, preach my Psalter.”

St. Dominic did as she instructed and went out to preach the Rosary to the Cathars. He broke the 150 prayers originally contained in the paternoster (Our Father) into 3 groups, and then divided each group into 5 sets of 10 prayers. Each prayer was focused on a different period in the life of Christ, or on demonstrating the fulfillment of His promises to His disciples. The three sets of mysteries were called the Joyful, The Sorrowful, and the Glorious. As hot water melts wax, the prayers of the rosary melted the hardened hearts of the Cathars and helped them to understand Christ and to better imitate his life.

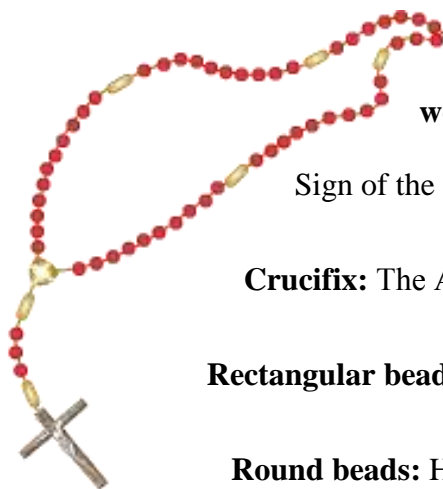
Since that time, the rosary has been at the center of many miracles. Anywhere that Christian faith is faltering, Our Lady will appear to tell people to begin praying it again. She has appeared in almost every country and on every continent, usually choosing to appear to the poor and the outcast. One of her more recent appearances was to Kibeho, Rwanda. Twelve years before the genocide that took place there, Our Lady told the seers that if people did not pick up the rosary and pray, there would be “a river of blood, people who were killing each other, abandoned corpses with no one to bury them, a tree all in flames, bodies without their heads.” Sadly, not enough people took heed and the Rwandan genocide became a reality. Our Lady has promised us again and again that if we will only

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pray the rosary, there will be peace on earth and unity amongst men. Even the most hard-hearted sinner can be saved, she has assured us, if we will only pray it daily.

# How to Pray the Rosary

## The Prayers



**Before**

**we begin: The**

**Sign of the Cross**

**Crucifix: The Apostle's Creed**

**Rectangular beads: Our Father**

**Round beads: Hail Mary**

**After each decade: Glory Be and Oh, My**

**Jesus**

**After the Rosary: Hail, Holy Queen**

## The Mysteries

**Joyful Mysteries: Monday and Saturday**

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Sorrowful Mysteries: Tuesday and Friday

Luminous Mysteries: Thursdays

Glorious Mysteries: Wednesday and Sunday



# **The Prayers of the Rosary**

## **The Sign of the Cross**

Touch the middle of your forehead as you say, “In the name of the Father,” touch the middle of your chest as you say, “and the Son,” touch your left shoulder as you say, “and the Holy,” touch your right shoulder as you finish, “Spirit. Amen.”

## **Why We Pray That**

The sign of the Cross is a way of expressing our belief in the Holy Trinity and of asking for God’s blessing on what we are about to say or do.

When we touch our forehead, we are reminding ourselves to allow God to be in charge of what we do, and to keep Him in our thoughts at all times.

When we touch our chest, we are asking God to be in our hearts and to help us love others as He does.

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When we touch our shoulders, we are asking Christ to be beside us and to walk with us as we go about our day.

## **The Apostle's Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of

sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

## **Why We Pray That**

When we pray the Apostle's Creed, we are reminding ourselves of all the things that we, as Christians, believe and are reaffirming our faith.

## **The Our Father**

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.

## **Why We Pray That**

We pray the Our Father as Christ taught us in Matthew 6:9-13. It is a reminder that in all things we are to seek God's will, not our own, and to turn to Him for help in all that we need.

## **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 sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## **Why We Pray That**

The first line of the Hail Mary is a remembrance of the moment when the Angel Gabriel greeted Mary and announced the good news that

God was going to enter the world by becoming her baby. It's a reminder of the thanks we owe God for his incredible gift of salvation.

*“Into her presence the angel came, and said, Hail, grace filled one; the Lord is with you” – Luke 1:28*

The second line of the Hail Mary contains the same words that Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, spoke when she greeted Mary. Mary wouldn't have received this blessing if she hadn't been willing to carry the unborn Christ to her cousin, and it's a reminder to us that we are called to carry Christ to others, too.

*“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” – Luke 1:42*

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The words Holy Mary remind us that we become Holy by doing God's work. The words "Mother of God" remind us that Jesus is fully God and fully man, so He can understand our needs in a way no one else can.

We then ask Mary to pray for us. If you think it's silly to bring your prayer requests to someone who is dead, consider these words from scripture,

*"He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!" – Mark 12:27*

When we become followers of Christ, we become part of Christ. Christ is not dead, He is alive, and so are all those who faithfully believe in Him but have fallen into the great sleep of death.

Moreover, Mary was Jesus's Mother. To honor her, and out of His great love for her, He took her straight up to Heaven to be with Him when her time on earth was finished because He missed her so much. So, we have confidence that she can not only hear our requests but can offer prayers on our behalf.

Therefore, knowing that Jesus would, as a loving son, take her prayers into special consideration we ask her to pray for us just as we might ask a friend or neighbor to pray for us.

### **Glory Be to the Father**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## **Why We Pray That**

The Glory Be is a simple reminder of who is really in charge of our lives. We take time to acknowledge the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and to remember that they have been running the show since before the Earth was formed, so they can handle whatever problems we may be facing.

## **Oh, My Jesus**

Oh, my Jesus, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy. Amen.

## **Why We Pray That**

This prayer was introduced during an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal in 1917. She asked that



people include this prayer as part of our efforts to save souls from being condemned to the torments and anguishes of hell.

## **Hail, Holy Queen**

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

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Let us pray. O GOD, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that meditating upon these mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

### **Why we pray that**

We say “Hail, Holy Queen” not because Mary is the boss of God, but because we recognize that the mother of the king is the queen and Jesus is the King of Kings. So, she is our Holy Queen. She is the Mother of Mercy because Jesus is Mercy made flesh and blood. Because she is the mother of

## *Secret of the Lantern*

God by virtue of her motherhood of Christ, she is the mother of our life, the mother of the sweetness that we experience in life, and the hope that we have of salvation.

We cry to her for help because we know that all of her help is designed to guide us closer to Christ. We send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping because as the mother of Christ she understands all of the pains that we go through. After all, she suffered right along with Christ, and it was her innocent child who was sacrificed to save our lives. She has experienced the worst of humanity, the greatest of losses, and still managed to love – so she is an excellent example for us to follow.

Brandy M. Miller

We can say that she has the eyes of mercy because her eyes are always focused on Christ. If we want to be, as she was, a fully faithful disciple of Christ it only makes sense to seek our help from one who has walked the path in perfection before us.

# **Scriptures and Meditations for the Mysteries of the Rosary**

## **The Joyful Mysteries**

The joyful mysteries remind us of what we can expect when we set out to do God's work in life. We see that there will be challenges, but the fruit of facing those challenges is the joy that we will bring to ourselves and others by following God's will for our lives.

### ***The Annunciation***

#### *Reflection*

Along our journey, Christ will come to us in various forms asking us to serve Him in a special way. This request will rarely come when it would be easy to say yes. Quite often, it will come when

Brandy M. Miller

saying yes means making a big sacrifice or taking a giant leap of faith. Meditating on the mystery of the annunciation, we can find the courage to say, along with Mary, “Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me according to your word.”

*Scripture – Luke 1:26-38*

### ***The Visitation***

#### *Reflection*

Each of us has received special gifts and talents, and our mission is to use those gifts and talents to serve others. When we are feeling tired, or think that serving others is too hard, we can reflect on the Visitation and remember how important it is to share Christ with others. If Mary had not been willing to go, John the Baptist would not have been able

to become the man who would prepare the way for Christ.

*Scripture – Luke 1: 39-56*

### ***The Nativity***

#### *Reflection*

Serving Christ sometimes means being treated like you're nobody special, going without, and allowing God's plan to take you places you would never have gone if it were up to you. Mary and Joseph didn't want to give birth in a stable. They looked everywhere for a real room, a place with some privacy, maybe even a comfortable bed. What God gave them instead was a smelly stable, a bed of hay, and rejection by every person they knew in that town.

Brandy M. Miller

However, God did that because he wanted Jesus to grow up knowing what it was like for the very poorest of the poor so that He could understand and love them better. When you're facing rejection, being treated like you're nobody special, and going without, you can reflect on the Nativity and know that Jesus has been through it all, too. He understands.

*Scripture - Luke 2:1-20*

## ***The Presentation***

### *Reflection*

Sometimes we must wait a long time for God to fulfill His promises. It can be tempting, while waiting, to try and take matters into our own hands, but the greatest blessings come when we let



God do it His way. When we meditate on the Presentation in the Temple, we are asking for God to help us while we are waiting on Him to come through for us, and to accept the suffering that may come as part of the work we do for Him with praise and gratitude because we know that He works all things for our good and the good of those who love Him.

*Scripture – Luke 2:21-39*

### ***The Finding in the Temple***

#### *Reflection*

There will always be points along our walk of faith where we feel that we have lost sight of Christ. We may not feel his presence with us anymore. We may not feel like He's there, or that He's

Brandy M. Miller

listening. We may even feel abandoned by Him. We may find it hard to go to Mass, and we may have no desire to pray or to do any of the things that we know that we ought to do. When we feel this way, we can reflect on The Finding in the Temple to find strength and the hope to continue onward.

*Scripture – Luke 2:40-52*

## **The Luminous Mysteries**

The luminous mysteries allow us to look deeply at the sacraments of our faith through the eyes of Jesus, to see how we ought to be living these sacraments in our everyday lives.

### ***The Baptism in the River Jordan***

#### ***Reflection***

When we are baptized, we make promises to Jesus that we will live up to the gift He gave us by living our lives for him. As we meditate on the Baptism in the River Jordan, we call to mind the promises we have made to resist Satan and his empty promises, to follow Christ wherever He leads us, and to live our lives in obedience to God's will.

Brandy M. Miller

We ask for the graces we need to fulfill those promises each and every day of our lives.

*Scripture – Mark 1:5-11*

### ***The Wedding Feast at Cana***

*Reflection*

The wedding feast at Cana reminds us to invite Christ into everything we do, especially in our relationships with each other, and He will reward us by bringing us joy even when everything does not work according to our own plans. The bride and groom certainly didn't plan to run out of wine in the middle of their own wedding reception! Because they invited Christ to their wedding, though, He saw their need before they were even aware of it and was able to save the day by turning water into wine

without them even knowing what he had done. Doing it Christ's way sometimes means saying no to things we think will bring us happiness so that we can find the true happiness Christ wants us to have.

*Scripture – John 2:1-11*

***The Preaching of the Good News  
and the Call to Repentance***

*Reflection*

We are all sinners in need of salvation. The greatest love we can show another person is to try and help them to see their sins so that they can come to Jesus and be forgiven for them. When we reflect on this, we are encouraged to share the message of Christ with others. We are also reminded of how important it is to regularly examine our own

Brandy M. Miller

lives to see where we are failing to love so that we can seek Christ's forgiveness and help in doing what is right.

*Scripture – Matthew 4:17*

### ***The Transfiguration***

#### *Reflection*

If we want to truly change the world, we have to begin by allowing Christ to change us from the inside out. As we think about that moment when the disciples first saw the glorified Jesus, we can ask Jesus to change us so that our lives may clearly show His presence within us. Receiving the sacraments as often as possible helps us to become more like Christ.

*Scripture – Matthew 17:1-8*

## ***The Institution of the Eucharist***

### *Reflection*

Hidden from our eyes, the Eucharist is really and truly Christ. He loves us so much that He isn't content to just be beside us, near us, or around us. He wants not only to take residence in our hearts, but in every molecule of our being. So, He humbles himself so low as to take the form of bread and wine so that He can become our very food and drink. It is the greatest gift that God can offer us, and allows us to truly be one with Him. You've heard it said that you are what you eat. That is the absolute truth when you are consuming the Eucharist.

## Brandy M. Miller

Also, every other kind of food that you eat comes from dead things and cannot offer you eternal life. However, because the Eucharist contains the living body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ who was slain once but lives forever, it is the only food that can offer you eternal life when you eat it.

You can imagine that if you only ate once or twice a year, you might not live very long. You can also imagine that eating only once or twice a month might not do so well for keeping us healthy. Just like we need food for our bodies to keep them healthy and strong, we need food for our souls to keep it healthy and strong enough to do the toughest and most important work of loving others. We should get to Mass as often as we can so that we can



*Secret of the Lantern*

receive the Eucharist and grow stronger in our love  
of the Lord and our ability to serve one another.

*Scripture – Mark 14: 22-24*

## **The Sorrowful Mysteries**

Life as a Christian means that sometimes we have to endure a whole lot of things that hurt us deeply. People can be mean to us, they can say ugly things about us, and we may be rejected. Although we hope it never happens, we may even have to endure physical pain or death because we are faithful to Christ. Reflecting on the sorrowful mysteries gives us the strength to endure the trials and troubles that come with being Christian in a way that would make Christ proud of us.

### ***The Agony in the Garden***

#### *Reflection*

Doing God's will isn't always easy. In fact, most of the time it seems easier to go our own way.

When we're faced with a difficult choice between doing what God wants and doing what we want, we should reflect on The Agony in the Garden and ask God for the courage to say, along with Christ, "Not my will but yours be done!"

*Scripture – Matthew 26:36-46*

### ***The Scourging at the Pillar***

#### *Reflection*

Even as Jesus was being whipped for crimes He did not commit, He allowed His love for those who were hurting Him to overcome His anger at the injustice being done. He was patient with us, bearing the hurt for us rather than returning hurt for hurt. When we are hurting and feel like we are being accused unfairly, let us reflect on the Scourging

Brandy M. Miller

at the Pillar for strength in forgiving those who have hurt us and choosing love over revenge.

*Scripture – Matthew 27:26*

### ***The Crowning with Thorns***

#### *Reflection*

Sometimes, while following Jesus, we will have to endure being made fun of by others. When we reflect on this mystery, we can ask Jesus for the courage to hold firm when we know we are doing right rather than giving in to things that may be popular but wrong.

*Scripture – Matthew 27:27-30*

## ***The Carrying of the Cross***

### *Reflection*

To follow Christ to Heaven, we must be willing to pick up and carry our own crosses. Those crosses most likely won't literally be a wooden cross, but may instead be things like poverty, loneliness, being put in prison for things we didn't do, sickness, and other difficult situations. When we are in the midst of the troubles of life, reflecting on the Carrying of the Cross can remind us that we don't have to carry those burdens alone. After all, even Jesus got help with His cross. Ask other people to pray for you, talk to friends, or reach out to Jesus for the strength you need to get through it all.

Brandy M. Miller

*Scripture – Matthew 27:31-33*

## ***The Crucifixion***

*Reflection*

Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to die for us if that's what it took to save us from the nightmare of Hell. We must ask Jesus to change our hearts so that we are willing to go that far for even our worst enemies out of love for Him.

*Scripture – Matthew 27:33-35*

## **The Glorious Mysteries**

In meditating on the glorious mysteries of the rosary, we remind ourselves that God has promised great things for those who remain faithful to Him and His commandments during their time on earth.

### ***The Resurrection***

#### *Reflection*

If we have lived our lives for Christ, and given Him everything, we can trust that after our death, He will raise us up and we will get to live with Him in Heaven as He has promised us.

Brandy M. Miller

*Scripture – 2 Timothy 2:11*

## ***The Ascension***

### *Reflection*

The choices we make in this life determine where and how we will live in the next. When we reflect on the Ascension, we remember to lift up all of our thoughts, words, and deeds to Jesus so that He can help us make them perfect.

*Scripture – John 14:1-3*

## ***The Descent of the Holy Spirit***

### *Reflection*

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will have no fear about doing whatever God asks us to do and we will know what it is God wants us to do with our lives each day. We must pray each day



that God send His Holy Spirit on us to help us open our hearts, our eyes, our ears, and our mind, to receive God's instructions for our lives so that we can faithfully perform the duties He has in mind for us. Obedience to God's will takes us on the path to Heaven, but it also fills our lives with a joy that we will never experience from anything else. *Scripture*  
— *Acts 2:1-4*

## *The Assumption of the Virgin Mary to Heaven*

### *Reflection*

God took Mary, body and soul, to Heaven as a special reward for her faithfulness to Him and her role as mother of Jesus. While we will likely not be taken up that way when we die, we can find hope in

Brandy M. Miller

Mary's assumption for the day when our glorified bodies and our perfected souls will be reunited to walk with Jesus in Heaven just as she does now.

***Special Notes about the Assumption:***

The Assumption is something that every Catholic must believe in order to be Catholic. It is a dogma, or one of the 16 things that the Church requires the faithful to accept as true in order to remain Catholic.

The teaching of the Assumption is not something that is brand new to Christianity, even though Pope Pius XII first declared it to be a dogma on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1950. In fact, the first writing about the Assumption of the Mother of God came in the 4th Century, less than 300 years after Christ's death, in

a document called “The Account of St. John the Theologian of the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God.” The Feast of the Assumption of Mary was first celebrated in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

The Assumption is very different from the Ascension. In the Ascension, Christ went up to Heaven on His own power and with no need of help. In the Assumption, Mary was taken up by Christ and His angels. She did not get there on her own power.

Brandy M. Miller

*Scripture – Revelation 12:1*

***The Crowning of Mary as Queen of  
Heaven and Earth***

*Reflection*

Through our baptism, we become a member of the body of Christ. Since Christ is the Son of God and the royal heir to the throne, we who are faithful to Jesus will one day reign with Him in Heaven. By reflecting on the Crowning of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth, we can remember that the trials we undergo here are part of earning our crown of glory.

*Scripture - James 1:12 and 2 Timothy 2:12*

## **Your Mission**

Just as you did in this story, you have a mission. You have a light to carry out into the world, and that light is Jesus Christ. While Jesus Christ is the same for everyone, your mission won't be. It will be unique to you, to your gifts, and to your talents. When you're ready to accept your mission, pray to God and ask Him to show you what He wants you to do.

There will be many challenges along the way. You will meet people who will try to discourage you from doing your mission. You will meet people who laugh at you for it, and people who think it's stupid. However, your mission is critical to God's efforts to save the world. You are the only

Brandy M. Miller

person with the exact recipe God needs to reach the people He will send you to serve.

When you are feeling discouraged, read this book and remember:

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” – John 1:5

Let your light shine, and know that no matter how dark the night, the light will always overcome it.

# **The 15 Promises Mary Makes to Those Who Pray the Rosary**

*As delivered in a vision to St. Dominic*

1. To all those who shall recite my Rosary devoutly, I promise my special protection and very great graces.

2. Those who shall persevere in the recitation of my Rosary will receive some signal grace.

3. The Rosary will be a very powerful armor against Hell; it will destroy vice, deliver from sin and dispel heresy.

4. The Rosary will make virtue and good works flourish, and will obtain for souls the most abundant Divine mercies; it will substitute in hearts

Brandy M. Miller

love of God for love of the world and elevate them to desire heavenly and eternal goods. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means!

5. Those who trust themselves to me through the Rosary will not perish.

6. Those who shall recite my Rosary piously, considering its mysteries, will not be overwhelmed by misfortune, nor die a bad death.

7. Those truly devoted to my Rosary shall not die without the consolations of the Church or without grace.

8. Those who shall recite my Rosary will find during their life and at their death, the light of



God, the fullness of His grace and will share in the merits of the blessed.

9. I will deliver very promptly from purgatory the souls devoted to my Rosary.

10. The true children of my Rosary will enjoy great glory in Heaven.

11. What you shall ask through my Rosary, you shall obtain.

12. Those who propagate my Rosary will obtain through me aid in all their necessities.

13. I have obtained from my Son that all the members of the Rosary Confraternity shall have for their intercessors in life and death the saints of Heaven.

Brandy M. Miller

14. Those who recite my Rosary faithfully  
are my beloved children, the brothers and sisters of  
Jesus Christ.

15. Devotion to my Rosary is a special sign  
of predestination.

## About This Book

This began as a short adventure story told to my 5<sup>th</sup> grade catechism students. I wanted to help them understand the power of the rosary and to get excited about praying it. The little booklet was such a hit with the kids in my class that I decided to expand it a little bit to help more kids.

I know from first-hand experience the power the rosary has to heal families and change lives. It has healed my family, changed my life, and saved my sister's life and the lives of my nieces and nephews. I would not be Catholic, and might not even be alive to write this story, if not for the rosary. It is one of the greatest weapons we have against the

Brandy M. Miller

forces of darkness and evil that threaten to overtake our world today.

There is a great temptation by many to think of the rosary as belonging exclusively to Catholics. This is simply not true. The rosary is a prayer of the Gospels, a reflection on our walk as Christians, and a help to anyone who wants to grow in their love of Christ and understanding of what it means to live authentic Christian lives. You do not have to believe me. You can test my statement for yourself. Try praying the rosary and see where it takes you. I promise you, you'll never regret the journey.

## About the Author



Brandy M. Miller was born to a Catholic mother and a Pentecostal Protestant father. She was raised with a limited

understanding of her Catholic faith and didn't encounter the rosary at all until her 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher, Dr. Elizabeth Barnes, began to teach her about Fatima, Lourdes, and the power of the Rosary.

She fell in love with the rosary and formed a rosary club at her school to pray for an end to the Gulf War that her sister was sent to fight. Although she would fall away from the church a few years later, she

## Brandy M. Miller

joined the Apostolate for Family Consecration to please her then-8-year-old son. The Apostolate focused on the rosary and helped her to understand the reasons for the Catholic faith's practices. It took 10 years and a lot of soul searching, but Brandy eventually returned home to the Church with a passion for evangelization and for the rosary.

She currently lives in Elko, Nevada where she teaches catechism classes and is an active member of the Legion of Mary, another rosary-based group, whose focus is on doing active work in the surrounding community. Her husband and she are available to give talks on the rosary to interested parishes anywhere their legs can take them.

*Secret of the Lantern*

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