

**THE FRANCISCAN CROWN ROSARY FOR SECULAR FRANCISCANS**  
**A SIMPLE MEDITATION ON THE SEVEN JOYS**

**1. The Annunciation – Call**

Mary was called to a special vocation. Mary's "yes" filled her with joy as the Holy Spirit came upon her. May we be thankful for our call to the Franciscan Order, and may our "yes" be lived out every day of our lives. May we trust that the Spirit will fill us, lead us and guide us as we journey. Like Mary, we aren't sure what lies ahead; we could be a little afraid or feel unworthy. Trusting in God, let us go forward in confidence - God has called us and his grace will help us bring to completion, with joy, what he has asked us to do. Let our souls magnify the Lord! He has looked upon us in our lowliness and forever we are blessed! We are joyful in your service, Lord! Help us to be faithful.

**2. The Visitation –Fraternity**

Mary went in haste to her cousin Elizabeth for friendship, love, affirmation, and encouragement. I am sure they prayed together. We cannot live the Franciscan life alone. We need our brothers and sisters. We need to connect with them for friendship, love, affirmation and encouragement. The fraternity is a privileged place for us. Fraternity is a gift which we should treasure. Let us meditate on how those bonds of fraternity strengthen us in our walk. Mary and Elizabeth, pray for us! Like Mary, let us make the effort to be with our sisters and brothers. Let us pray for our fraternities, and for unity throughout the world.

**3. The Birth of Christ – Holiness**

The glory and joy of the Incarnation is that God became one like us – loving us so much that he poured himself out to draw us into his divinity. In Jesus Christ all creation is made holy. As Franciscans we rejoice in all created things. We walk in a world made holy by the constant presence of God. Everything around us is gift, so every day is Christmas.

As Jesus became poor for us, let us become poor – blessed poverty! All that we need has been given to us: our richest gift is "God with us". In Him is all our contentment. Francis says that we give birth to Christ as we bring Christ to the world. We cannot do this unless we are open to His presence in our own hearts. Jesus is the Word Made Flesh. Let us hold him close as we live out our call. Let us be "mothers" and give birth to Christ in the world – each and every day. Let us live our call to holiness.

**4. Adoration of the Magi – Prayer**

As the wise men came before the Infant King lying in a manger let us come before Him in adoration. Let us lay our gifts before Him. Give Him your Gold – all the things that you hold on to, much too tightly. Give your Frankincense – offerings of prayer and praise. Give your Myrrh – your weaknesses, your failings, your surrender as you die to self. ("Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies...") We bring all this to the Lord and like the Magi we recognize all that Jesus is for us. Come let us adore him! As Franciscans let us never fail to take the time to pray - for prayer and contemplation is the heart and soul of all we are and do. The Magi took the time and journeyed far to adore Him. Help us to take time, to set time apart, to come before Him in prayer, adoration and thanksgiving.

**5. Finding of the Child Jesus – Identity**

Jesus was not lost – he was doing the work of our Father. We, too, must find and follow our true self as we give our all to God, in obedience to the Father’s will. In our true identity - in our call to live the Franciscan life - we find joy. This is who we are! We are Franciscans. Lord, help us to be true to who we are called to be, and to act on our call in every circumstance. Help us to be courageous in sharing your Word.

**6. Meeting Christ after the Resurrection – Joy**

Mary had gone to the tomb that morning in sadness and disbelief. Can you imagine the joy she felt in her heart when she heard Jesus’ voice saying her name? He lives! Her heart leapt for joy! She fell at his feet saying his name over and over. Jesus has conquered death! This is a cause for great joy!

Jesus lives and is present with us right now. Through the Holy Spirit His presence and energy fills us. Open our eyes and ears, Lord, so we may see you and hear you call our name. Your presence fills our hearts with joy, just as Mary’s heart was filled that Easter morning. Joy is a sure sign of the Holy Spirit and a very Franciscan virtue. May we be filled with perfect Franciscan joy, especially when things are most difficult for us. Let us share the joy of the resurrection, crying out with our lives that Jesus is risen! He lives!

**7. The Assumption and Coronation – Union with God and Glory**

Mary has been taken up to heaven, fully reunited with her Son and her God, and crowned in glory. This too is our destiny and our ultimate goal – that we might be fully united with Christ and crowned in glory in heaven. Let us seek, like Francis, to unite our minds, hearts and souls to Christ. Let that union fill us with hope in this life and glory in the next. Yes, our journey in this life will someday end as we are embraced by Sister Death. Yet, this death is a birth into a new life – a life of unity with the Most Holy Trinity.

May Mary, our Mother and the Advocate of our Order, be with us at the hour of our death. Let us mediate on how dying will lead us to glory! Let every step we take be a step towards that goal. Let us confidently hold on to hope and commit to living each day closely united to Christ as we journey to that glory!

**Call**

**Fraternity**

**Holiness**

**Prayer**

**Identity**

**Joy**

**Glory**