

“And a great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars...” -Rev. 12:1

## ***A Uniquely Catholic Devotion***

Christians of the Catholic faith are unique among other Christian bodies for their singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Though the Greek Orthodox and the Russian Orthodox also venerate her, only the Catholic Church has taught definitively on such topics as her Immaculate Conception, her Assumption and her Perpetual Virginity.

Mary is very important in Christianity because God chose her for a crucial role in the plan to save humanity from the effects of Original Sin.

Official Christian teaching about Mary's role and privileges always relates to Christ who is the source of all truth, sanctity and piety. The Catechism states:

**CCC 487** What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ.

Mary's role belongs to the total Christian revelation or Public Revelation which means the four Marian dogmas are not optional or extra beliefs for us to accept or reject. They are at the core of Christianity.

**CCC 964** Mary's role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. "This union of the mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to his death"; (LG 57)

## ***Mary's Role in God's Plan of Salvation***

- Mary was eternally predestined by God to be the mother of the Savior.
  - **CCC 488** ... from all eternity God chose for the mother of his Son a daughter of Israel, a young Jewish woman of Nazareth in Galilee, "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary" (Lk 1:26-27)
- Mary was the human being through whom God would enter into human history!
- Mary's role was prophetically foreshadowed in Gen 3:15: *I (God) will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers (Mary); he (Jesus) will crush your head, and you will strike at his heel.*"
- The Prophet Isaiah spoke "The virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son and shall name him Immanuel (meaning God is with us). (Is. 7:14)
- Matthew 1:22-23 presents Jesus' birth as the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy.  
<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:  
<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."

## ***Mary's Response to God***

Luke 1 26-38 The Annunciation

Verse 38 "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say."

Christians honor Mary because of her great faith and obedience to God.

Luke 11:28 Jesus says, "Blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it."

Mary responded to God in the words of the *Magnificat* (Lk 1:46-55).

Mary is mentioned at important points in Jesus' life. The infancy narratives, the finding in the Temple, intercessor at Cana, the Road to Calvary, and in Upper room with Apostles at Pentecost.

## ***Mary a Fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy***

**CCC 511** The Virgin Mary "cooperated through free faith and obedience in human salvation" (LG 56). She uttered her yes "in the name of all human nature" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III, 30, 1). By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living.

St Irenaeus 2<sup>nd</sup> Century "The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. What the virgin Eve had bound in unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosed through faith."

Also See Ark of the Covenant Parallels Handout

## ***Mary is Our Mother***

For centuries Christians have understood the beloved disciple John as being symbolic of all Jesus' faithful followers. So when Jesus gave Mary to all of us, the faithful disciples of Jesus, symbolized by the "beloved disciple", to be her sons and daughters. Mary is our "Mother in faith" or "in the order of grace".

## ***Four Marian Dogmas (Revealed Truths about Mary)***

**Mary's Immaculate Conception CCC 508** From among the descendants of Eve, God chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of his Son. "Full of grace", Mary is "the most excellent fruit of redemption" (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.

**Mary as Mother of God CCC 509** Mary is truly "Mother of God" since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

**Mary as Ever-Virgin CCC 510** Mary "remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin" (St. Augustine, *Serm.* 186, 1: PL 38, 999): with her whole being she is "the handmaid of the Lord" (Lk 1:38).

**Mary's Assumption into Heaven CCC 974** The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body.

It is important to note that never has any city or Church in Christendom claimed to be the final resting place of her bones.

## ***Common Marian Devotions***

The Rosary, the Angelus, the oft-abandoned practice of May Crowning, enrollment in the Brown Scapular, the Memorare, the Miraculous Medal, the Litany of Loreto and the Total

Consecration of St. Louis de Montfort, The Five First Saturdays Devotion, Seven Sorrows of Mary.

## ***Marian Apparitions***

A Marian apparition is an event in which the Virgin Mary is supposed to have supernaturally appeared to one or more persons. In evaluating apparitions and their messages, we must remember that they are private revelation and not on par with the public teaching of the Church. Wherever Mary appears she promotes the Gospel message of her Son Jesus Christ! The Church declares genuine those apparitions which are in perfect harmony with Revealed Truth and that produce the fruits of the Kingdom such as conversions, reversions, the deepening of the spiritual/sacramental life, an increase in the practice of the faith, etc.

Guadalupe, Mexico (1531) Our Lady of Guadalupe

La Vang, Vietnam (1798)

Paris, France (1830)

La Sallete, France (1846)

Lourdes, France (1858)

Champion, Wisconsin (1859) only approved Apparition site in the United States.

Knock, Ireland (1879)

Fatima, Portugal (1917)

Zeitoun, Egypt (1968-1971)

Akita, Japan (1973)

## ***What Catholics believe about Mary? Recap***

- Catholics do not worship Mary. We pray to her as an intercessor similar to how we would ask someone to pray for us.
- Mary is the Mother of God. Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus and remained a virgin throughout her life.
- Mary was Immaculately Conceived
- Mary's Body and soul was Assumed into Heaven.
- Catholics are not required to pray to Mary, but many people consider her an advocate for them to bring them closer to God Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Marian devotion is fitting to worship of her son as they are distinctly connected.
- The Rosary is not a prayer to Mary, but a prayer reflecting on Jesus' Life bringing us closer to the Word of God.

**Ave Maria or 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.

**Annunciation Prayer**

O Alone of all women, Mother and virgin, Mother most blessed, Virgin most pure, we salute you, we honor you as best we can with our humble offerings. May your Son grant us that imitating your most holy manners, we also, by the Grace of the Holy Ghost may deserve to conceive the Lord Jesus spiritually in our inmost soul, and once conceived, never to lose Him. (1511 A.D.)

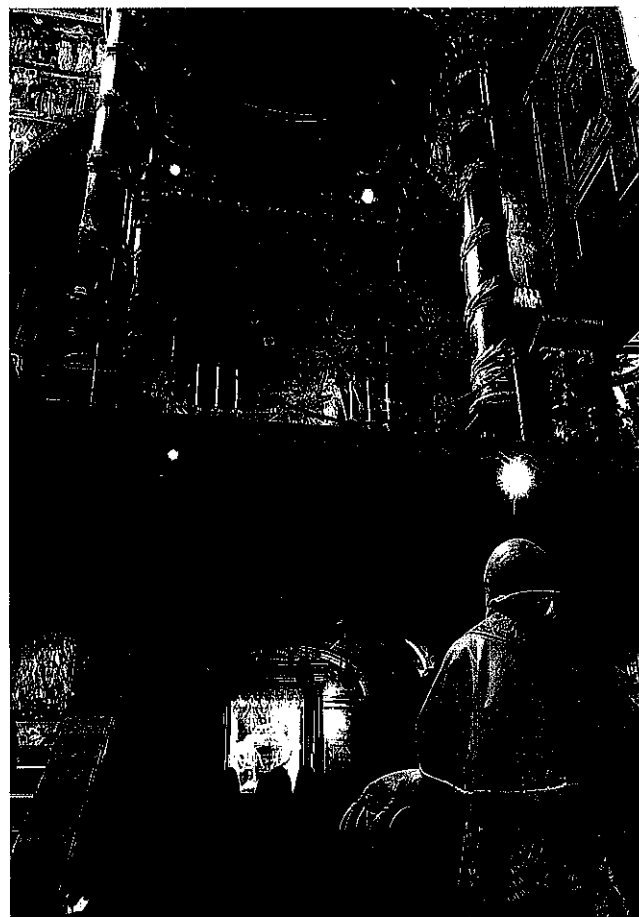
**The Angelus**

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.  
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.  
Hail Mary ...  
Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
R. Be it done unto me according to Thy Word.  
Hail Mary ...  
And the Word was made Flesh. [Bow]  
R. And dwelt among us.  
Hail Mary...  
Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray...  
Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an Angel, may, by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of the Resurrection through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Memorare**

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



# Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

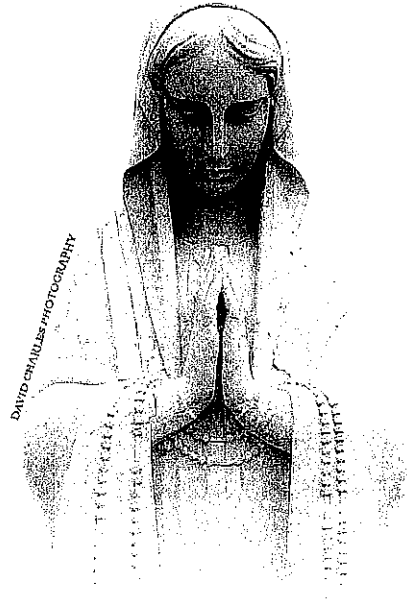
**Leader:** Lord, have mercy on us.  
**All:** Christ, have mercy on us.  
**Leader:** Lord, have mercy on us.

**Leader:**  
Christ hear us.  
God the Father of Heaven...  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world...  
God the Holy Spirit...  
Holy Trinity, one God...

**All:**  
Christ, graciously hear us.  
Have mercy on us.  
Have mercy on us.  
Have mercy on us.  
Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary... Pray for us.  
Mystical rose...  
Holy Mother of God...  
Holy Virgin of virgins...  
Mother of Christ...  
Mother of the Church...  
Mother of Divine grace...  
Mother most pure...  
Mother most chaste...  
Mother most undefiled...  
Mother most amiable...  
Mother most admirable...  
Mother of good counsel...  
Mother of our Savior...  
Virgin most prudent...  
Virgin most renowned...  
Virgin most powerful...  
Virgin most merciful...  
Virgin most faithful...  
Mirror of justice...  
Seat of wisdom...  
Cause of our joy...  
Spiritual vessel...

Vessel of honor...  
Tower of David...  
Tower of ivory...  
House of gold...  
Ark of the Covenant...  
Gate of Heaven...  
Morning star...  
Health of the sick...  
Refuge of sinners...  
Comforter of the afflicted...  
Help of Christians...  
Queen of angels...  
Queen of patriarchs...  
Queen of prophets...  
Queen of apostles...  
Queen of martyrs...  
Queen of confessors...  
Queen of virgins...  
Queen of all saints...  
Queen conceived without original sin...  
Queen assumed into Heaven...  
Queen of the Most Holy Rosary...  
Queen of Peace...



Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world... Spare us, O Lord.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world... Graciously hear us, O Lord.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world... Have mercy on us.  
Pray for us O Holy Mother of God... That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

**All:** Grant we beg you, O Lord God, that we your servants may enjoy lasting health of mind and body, and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, be delivered from present sorrow and enter into the joy of eternal happiness, through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## Mary Ark Of the New Covenant

Mary, the Ark As Revealed in Mary's Visit to Elizabeth

### Golden Box: Ark of the Old Covenant

The ark traveled to the house of Obed-edom in the hill country of Judea (2 Sam. 6:1-11).

Dressed as a priest, David danced and leapt in front of the ark (2 Sam. 6:14).

David asks, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (2 Sam. 6:9).

David shouts in the presence of the ark (2 Sam. 6:15).

The ark remained in the house of Obed-edom for three months (2 Sam. 6:11).

The house of Obed-edom was blessed by the presence of the ark (2 Sam. 6:11).

The ark returns to its home and ends up in Jerusalem, where God's presence and glory is revealed in the temple (2 Sam. 6:12; 1 Kgs. 8:9-11).

### Mary as the Ark Revealed by Items inside the Ark

#### Inside the Ark of the Old Covenant

The stone tablets of the law - the word of God inscribed on stone

The urn filled with manna from the wilderness - the miraculous bread come down from heaven

The rod of Aaron that budded to prove and defend the true high priest

### Mary: Ark of the New Covenant

Mary traveled to the house of Elizabeth and Zechariah in the hill country of Judea (Luke 1:39).

John the Baptist - of priestly lineage - leapt in his mother's womb at the approach of Mary (Luke 1:41).

Elizabeth asks, "Why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43).

Elizabeth "exclaimed with a loud cry" in the presence of the Mary (Luke 1:42).

Mary remained in the house of Elizabeth for three months (Luke 1:56).

The word *blessed* is used three times; surely the house was blessed by God (Luke 1:39-45).

Mary returns home and eventually ends up in Jerusalem, where she presents God incarnate in the temple (Luke 1:56; 2:21-22).

#### Inside Mary, Ark of the New Covenant

The body of Jesus Christ - the word of God in the flesh

The womb containing Jesus, the bread of life come down from heaven (John 6:41)

The actual and eternal High Priest

Definitions:

- **Apparition:** An appearance by Jesus, Mary, saints or angels to individuals or groups; The Church thoroughly investigates claimed apparitions and approves a few of them that bear the marks of being authentic.
- **Marian Theology:** Church teachings and traditions regarding Mary, the Mother of God.
- **Rosary:** A devotion in honor of Mary and a string of beads used to count the prayers.
- **Virgin Birth:** The Church dogma or belief that Jesus, the Son of God, was born of only one human parent, Mary; and that she did not lose her virginity.
- **Perpetual Virginity** Mary remained a virgin after the Jesus' birth
- **Immaculate Conception:** The Conception of Mary in the womb of her Mother, St. Ann. Mary was conceived without sin and never sinned her whole life.
- **The Assumption:** After Mary died her whole body was assumed to Heaven.
- **Ark of the Covenant:** Old Testament place where the 10 commandments were stored. Ark of the NEW Covenant is Mary.