



WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT MARY?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

ELIZABETH SAID, "MOST BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN, AND BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB. AND HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN TO ME, THAT THE MOTHER OF MY LORD SHOULD COME TO ME? MARY SAID, "BEHOLD, I AM THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD. MAY IT BE DONE TO ME ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD."

- LUKE 1: 26-45

SAINTS & INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

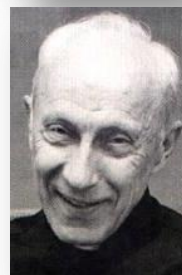
ST ANTONIO OF SAINT ANNE

St Antonio was very dedicated to Mary and consecrated himself to her protection. He was a teacher and preacher. He helped start a home for women who wanted to live a religious life.. HE started many convents dedicated to Mary.



JOHN HARDON

John Hardon worked hard throughout his life and was greatly influenced by his saintly mother who did everything she could to teach her son the faith and bring him up in the right way. John loved his mother dearly and after he death wrote about Mary his heavenly mother with great devotion and love as well.



TEAM DISCUSSION

After reading over the YOUCAT numbers on the following pages, how do you think the Youth Catechism answers the question of the week? Were there any words or ideas that you did not fully understand that you would like to understand better?

ANSWER IN YOUR OWN WORDS:



YOUCAT NUMBERS FOR THIS WEEK

#80 WHY IS MARY A VIRGIN?

God willed that Jesus Christ should have a true human mother but only God himself as his Father, because he wanted to make a new beginning that could be credited to him alone and not to earthly forces. Mary's virginity is not some outdated mythological notion but rather fundamental to the life of Jesus. He was born of a woman but had no human father. Jesus Christ is a new beginning in the world that has been instituted from on high. In the Gospel of Luke, Mary asks the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?"; the angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Lk 1:35). Although the Church from the earliest days was mocked on account of her belief in Mary's virginity, she has always believed that her virginity is real and not merely symbolic.

#81 DID MARY HAVE OTHER CHILDREN BESIDES JESUS?

No. Jesus is the only son of Mary in the physical sense. Even in the early Church, Mary's perpetual virginity was assumed, which rules out the possibility of Jesus having brothers and sisters from the same mother. In Aramaic, Jesus' mother tongue, there is only one word for sibling and cousins. When the Gospels speak about the "brothers and sisters" of Jesus (for instance, in Mk 3:31-35), they are referring to Jesus' close relatives.

#82 ISN'T IT IMPROPER TO CALL MARY THE "MOTHER" OF GOD?

No. Anyone who calls Mary the Mother of God thereby professes that her Son is God. As early Christianity was debating who Jesus was, the title Theotokos ("God-bearer") became the hallmark for the orthodox interpretation of Sacred Scripture: Mary did not give birth merely to a man who then after his birth "became" God; rather, even in her womb her child is the true Son of God. This debate is not about Mary in the first place; rather, it is again the question of whether Jesus is true man and true God at the same time.

#85 WHY IS MARY OUR MOTHER ALSO?

Mary is our mother because Christ the Lord gave her to us as a mother. "Woman, behold, your son! . . . Behold, your mother!" (Jn 19:26b-27a). The second command, which Jesus spoke from the Cross to John, has always been understood by the Church as an act of entrusting the whole Church to Mary. Thus Mary is our mother, too. We may call upon her and ask her to intercede with God.

#83 WHAT DOES THE "IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY" MEAN?

The Church believes that "the most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin" (Dogma of 1854). Belief in the Immaculate Conception has existed since the beginning of the Church. The expression is misunderstood today. It is saying that God preserved Mary from original sin from the very beginning. It says nothing about the conception of Jesus in Mary's womb. By no means is it a devaluation of sexuality in Christianity, as though a husband and wife would be "stained" if they conceived a child.





CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE



#148 CAN MARY REALLY HELP US? Yes. Since the beginning of the Church, experience has taught that Mary helps. Millions of Christians testify to it. Being the Mother of Jesus, Mary is also our Mother. Good mothers always stand up for their children. Certainly this Mother does. While still on earth she interceded with Jesus for others; for example, she protected a bride and groom in Cana from embarrassment. In the Upper Room on Pentecost she prayed in the midst of the disciples. Because her love for us never ceases, we can be sure that she will plead for us in the two most important moments of our life: “now and at the hour of our death.”

#149 MAY WE WORSHIP MARY? No. Only God can be worshipped. But we can revere Mary as the Mother of our Lord. By worship we mean the humble, unconditional acknowledgment of the absolute superiority of God over all creatures. Mary is a creature like us. In faith she is our Mother. And we should honor our parents. There is a biblical basis for this, since Mary herself says, “For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed” (Lk 1:48b). So the Church has Marian shrines and places of pilgrimage, feast days, hymns, and prayers, for instance, the rosary. It is a compendium of the Gospels.

#84 WAS MARY ONLY AN INSTRUMENT OF GOD? Mary was more than a merely passive instrument of God. The Incarnation of God took place through her active consent as well. When the angel told her that she would bear “the Son of God”, Mary replied, “Let it be to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38). The redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ thus begins with a request by God and the free consent of a human being—and a pregnancy before Mary was married to Joseph. By such an unusual path Mary became for us the “Gate of Salvation”.

#147 WHY DOES MARY HAVE SUCH A PREMINENT PLACE IN THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS? Mary is the Mother of God. She was united with Jesus on earth as no other human being was or could be—in an intimacy that does not cease in heaven. Mary is the Queen of Heaven, and in her motherhood she is quite close to us. Because she committed herself, body and soul, to a divine yet dangerous undertaking, Mary was taken up body and soul into heaven. Anyone who lives and believes as Mary did will get to heaven.

#479 WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE WAY IN WHICH MARY PRAYED? To learn from Mary how to pray means to join in her prayer: “Let it be to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38). Prayer is ultimately self-giving in response to God’s love. If we say Yes as Mary did, God has the opportunity to lead his life in our life.



#480 WHAT ARE THE WORDS OF THE "HAIL MARY"? Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

ROSARY The name of a set of prayer beads and the name of a devotional prayer that originated in the twelfth century, particularly among the Cistercian and Carthusian monks, whose lay brothers did not participate in the Liturgy of the Hours and had in the Rosary their own form of prayer (the "Marian Psalter"). Later the Rosary was promoted by other religious orders, especially by the Dominicans. The Popes have recommended this prayer again and again, and for many people it is a beloved devotion.

AVE MARIA (LATIN = HAIL, MARY): The first part of the most important and popular prayer after the Our Father is taken from the Bible. The second part, "... now and at the hour of our death", is an addition from the sixteenth century.

#481 HOW DO YOU PRAY THE ROSARY?

1. In the name of the Father. . .
 2. Apostles' Creed
 3. Our Father
 4. Three Hail Marys
 5. "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."
 6. Five decades, each with one Our Father, ten Hail Marys, and a Glory Be to the Father.
- The complete Rosary consists of Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries.

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

(MONDAY, SATURDAY)

The Annunciation
The Visitation
The Nativity
The Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple
The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

(THURSDAY)

The Baptism in the Jordan
The Wedding Feast at Cana
The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and Repentance for Sin
The Transfiguration
The Institution of the Holy Eucharist

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

(TUESDAY, FRIDAY)

The Agony in the Garden
The Scourging at the Pillar
The Crowning with Thorns
The Carrying of the Cross
The Crucifixion

THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

(WEDNESDAY, SUNDAY)

The Resurrection
The Ascension
The Descent of the Holy Spirit
The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
The Crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven