

Lesson 1: Who is Mary?

Please click twice to watch the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiM5R5A3oco>

Mary has a very special place in our Church because she is the Mother of God and our mother, based on what Jesus told St. John the Apostle in his last moments on the Cross: “Behold your mother.”

Mary is a lot like us, with one big difference: she was conceived without the original sin we all inherited from Adam and Eve. This is called the Immaculate Conception— which is especially important for us in the United States because Mary is our nation’s patroness under this title.

Mary is so close to Jesus that she can help us as an intercessor between us and God. Mary also is a model for us as Jesus’ first disciple, or follower. She points the way to God for all those who do not understand or believe in Him. She has done that from the day the Angel Gabriel came to tell her, “The Lord is with you.” She did what God asked of her: to bear the Son of God and to live her whole life in support of her Son, even up to his death on the Cross.

She goes by many names: the Blessed Mother, Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, Madonna, Star of the Sea and many more.

How and why do we honor Mary?

The veneration or honor of Mary by the Catholic Church is sometimes confused by others as "worship," but Catholics worship God alone.

We honor Our Lady as the greatest of all saints who showed her exceptional faith in saying "yes" to becoming the Mother of God.

We pray to her and ask her to intercede or help us.

Throughout the year we celebrate various feast days that recall special events, saints, or teachings concerning God. Mary is honored on many of these days. May is the *Month of Mary* and October is the *Month of the Rosary*.

The *May Crowning* is a celebration to honor the Queenship of Mary.

HONORING MARY

CELEBRATING MARY'S LIFE ALL YEAR

JANUARY ★ 1

Mary, Mother of God
We thank God on this feast day for sending Jesus into the world through His mother, Mary.



MARCH 25

Annunciation of the Lord

We remember how the Angel Gabriel announced to Mary that God had chosen her to be Jesus' mother.

MAY 31

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Mary visits Elizabeth (St. John the Baptist's mother), the first to see Mary as the Mother of God.

AUGUST ★ 15

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

When Mary died, we believe she was assumed - body and soul - into Heaven.



AUGUST 22

The Queenship of Mary

We celebrate Mary as the Queen of Heaven, crowned with this title after her Assumption.



SEPTEMBER 8

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
We celebrate the gift of Mary's birth on this day.

DECEMBER ★ 8

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

We remember how Mary was conceived without original sin, preparing her to bear the Son of God.

DECEMBER 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

We celebrate Mary's appearance to St. Juan Diego in Mexico.



WWW.CATHOLICEXTENSION.ORG

So... what do these symbols have to do with Mary?



This image appears on the Miraculous Medal, which was created after the Marian apparition (appearance) to St. Catherine Labouré in 1830. During evening meditations, Mary appeared to St. Catherine and showed her a vision of the medal. She told her that if she created the medals that "all who wear them will receive great graces." The 'M' symbolizes Mary at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion of Jesus.



This symbol represents the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Although this depiction only shows one, traditionally it was pierced with seven swords representing the Seven Sorrows of her life. Roses are known as the "queen of flowers" and symbolize Mary as the Queen of Heaven. Roses also depict hidden suffering in their thorny stems and are a connection to Jesus' crown of thorns.



The lily represents Mary's purity as the Virgin Mother of God. This symbol has been used as a symbol of purity in depictions of Mary and other saints for centuries.

Throughout history, people have planted gardens to honor Mary with plants and flowers that help reflect on her life and holiness.

MARY GARDEN

How to use your green thumb to honor Our Lady

Flowers such as the rose, lily, and violet have long been symbolic flowers for Mary. However, since the Middle Ages many flowers and plants have been named for Jesus' mother.

Below are some of these plants and their religious names.

Lily  The Angel Gabriel held a lily in his hands when he came to tell Mary that she was chosen to be the mother of the Savior. Lilies are often depicted in art as a symbol of purity and grace.	Rose  The rose symbolizes Mary as the Queen of Heaven.	Violet  The violet is a symbol of modesty and simplicity. Mary shows this humble acceptance in her words to the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation: "Let it be done unto me according to Your will."
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Daisy Mary's flower
Daffodil Mary's star
Marigold Mary's Gold
Parsley Our Lady's Lace
Strawberry Fruitful Virgin


Our Lady's Tears
Lily of the Valley

Tulip Mary's Prayer  Symbolizes Mary's spiritual openness	 CATHOLIC EXTENSION	Symbolizes Mary's joy in the Holy Trinity Pansy Our Lady's Delight 
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

www.CatholicExtension.org