

MARY and the SAINTS

RCIA

Opening Prayer

- ▶ “Hail Mary...”
- ▶ *Wait! Why do you Catholics worship Mary? And that Mary Prayer isn't anywhere in the Bible!*
- ▶ Well, let's take a look at this and understand it before we pray...

Where is the Hail Mary in the Bible?

The Hail Mary has 2 parts:

1. Greeting (Who Mary is & how we address her)
2. Petition (Asking for her motherly, spiritual help)

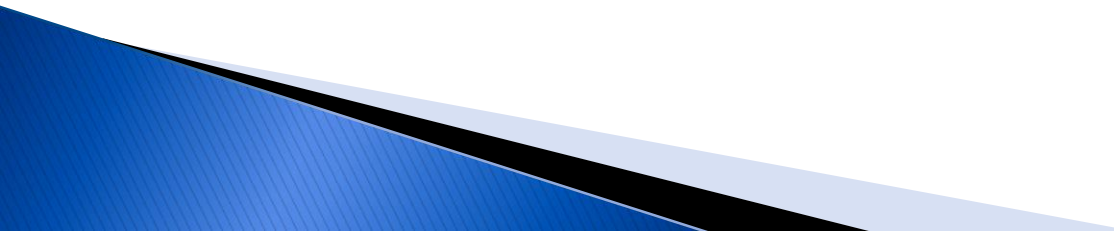
Both are rooted in New Testament Scriptures

Prayer Text	Biblical Source & Quote		Explanation
Hail Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee.	Luke 1:28	"And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."	The angel Gabriel greets Mary with "Hail!" a title usually reserved for royalty. Then Gabriel calls her "favored one" and confirms God's presence, His life of Grace and Love, within her. Our greeting echoes the greeting of God's own angel.
Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus.	Luke 1:42	"Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said 'Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.'"	Elizabeth's words are inspired by God Himself, in the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity - the Holy Spirit. Therefore we can say that this greeting of admiration & blessing is pleasing to God & an appropriate way to address Mary. The fruit of Mary's womb is her child, Jesus, which Elizabeth alludes to by calling her "mother" in the next verse.
Holy Mary, Mother of God	Luke 1:43	"How does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"	This continued, Spirit-filled acclamation from Elizabeth shows us that Mary is the mother not just of the human Jesus, but the Jesus who is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity. Elizabeth, & we, therefore rightly call Mary "holy," & the "Mother of God."
Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.	James 5:16	"Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful."	There's no denying that we are all sinners, in need of constant prayer and healing, especially as we approach death & Final Judgement. James tells the Christians to pray for one another, as they are all members of the mystical Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12). James goes on to say that the prayers of a righteous person have great power. And who is the most righteous person who walked the earth (besides Jesus the God-man)? The one whom angels and men address as "favored" & "blessed". The one who carried the Son of God in her womb. If we believe that those in Heaven truly have eternal life, then whom better to pray on our behalf before the throne of God than His own holy, blessed Mother?

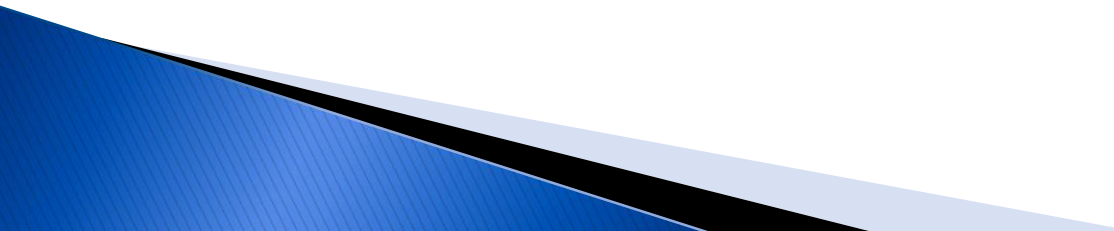
The Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst 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.



Objectives

- ▶ Let's talk about Mary: her role in Jesus's life, our lives, and in the Church
 - ▶ Marian Devotions, Feast Days and Apparitions
 - ▶ What is a Saint? Who? How? Why?
 - ▶ Discuss "the Communion of Saints"
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MARY – as Jesus’s Mother

- ▶ *The Annunciation* (Luke 1:26–38)
 - Angel Gabriel approaches Mary
 - “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you.”
 - “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bare a son, and you shall name him Jesus.”
 - Mary is puzzled and troubled and asks “How?” since she has had no relations with a man...
 - Gabriel explains:
 - “The Holy Spirit will come upon you”
 - “The Power of the Most High will overshadow you
 - “The child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God
 - “Nothing will be impossible for God”

MARY – as Jesus’s Mother

- ▶ What happens next?
- ▶ Mary “says YES!”
 - “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”
- ▶ God’s plan for Mary began long before Gabriel spoke to her...
 - *Immaculate Conception*: from the moment of her own conception within her mother, St. Anne, Mary was free from Original Sin
 - Remained pure from sin throughout her life
 - Remained a virgin in conceiving and bearing her Son
 - “...born of the Virgin Mary...” (Creed)

MARY – as Jesus’s Mother

- ▶ Jesus has two natures: He is **fully God** and **fully man**
 - Mary was chosen as the human mother to his human form
 - Mother of our Redeemer and Savior
- ▶ She gave birth to Jesus – *Christmas!*
- ▶ She (and Joseph) raised Him, nourished Him, taught Him and LOVED Him
- ▶ They abided by Jewish Law
- ▶ They watched as He “grew in wisdom and in stature” (Luke 2:52)

MARY – as Jesus’s Mother

- ▶ They presented him to God in the Temple
 - Simeon’s Prophecy
 - “Behold this child is set for the fall and rise of many in Israel; for a sign which shall be contradicted; your own soul a sword shall pierce that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.” (Luke 2:34–35)
- ▶ They lost him for three days
 - Found Him in the Temple. “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s House?” (Luke 2:49)
- ▶ “Mary stored up all these things in her heart.” (Luke 2:51)
 - Did Mary know what would happen to Jesus?
 - Did she understand? Even if so, could she be prepared for his suffering? For her own suffering?

MARY – as our Mother

- ▶ Is there **anyone** who could understand pain, suffering and loss more than **Mary**?
 - Beautiful model of total submission to the will of God
 - Model as a witness to suffering
 - Model for holiness
 - Model of our pilgrimage of faith
- ▶ We do **not** *adore* or *worship* Mary...
 - Adoration and worship reserved for God, Jesus and Holy Spirit
- ▶ We **Honor her and we VENERATE** (revere, respect) her example and prayerfully request her **intercession**
 - “To Jesus, through Mary”

MARY – as Mother of the CHURCH

- ▶ She occupies a unique place in Salvation History as having brought into the world the Son of God – she is the Mother of the Word Incarnate
- ▶ *Theotokos* – “God-bearer” – Mother of the Lord
- ▶ “The NEW Eve” – mother of the living (CCC551)
- ▶ Wedding Feast at Cana (John 2:1–11)
 - No accident that Mary was there (mentioned first)
 - Significant that miracle occurred in response to the request of the Mother of the Lord... *“They have no wine.”*
 - She interceded with her Son and Savior, Jesus Christ.
 - *“Do whatever He tells you.”*
 - Mary’s advice to the servers – and to all who now seek to follow her Son, Jesus Christ
 - The key to the meaning of life...
 - [THE MARRIAGE FEAST AT CANA \(catholictradition.org\)](http://catholictradition.org)

MARY – as Mother of the CHURCH

- ▶ Pope (St.) John Paul II says, “From Mary we learn to surrender to God’s will in all things. From Mary we learn to trust even when all hope seems gone. From Mary we learn to love Christ, her Son, and the Son of God. For Mary is not only the Mother of God, she is the Mother of the Church as well.” (Oct. 6, 1979)
- ▶ St. Theresa of Calcutta prayed to emulate Mary’s devotion to Christ:
 - “Mary, Mother of Jesus, give me your heart so beautiful, so pure, so immaculate, so full of love and humility that I may be able to receive Jesus in the Bread of Life, love Him as You loved Him, and serve Him as You served Him...”

MARIAN DEVOTIONS

- ▶ Special ways to consistently praise, honor, and love Mary:
 - Praying the Rosary
 - Wearing a Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
 - Wearing a Miraculous Medal
 - Praying the ‘Seven Sorrows’
 - Praying the ‘Memorare’
 - Praying the ‘Magnificat’ (Lk 1:46–55)
 - Participating in the Five First Saturdays Devotion
 - Joining the Legion of Mary
 - Planting a Mary Garden



8 Holy Days of Obligation

- ▶ **Mary, Mother of God** (always celebrated **January 1**, but if this occurs on a Saturday or a Monday there is no obligation to go to Mass)
- ▶ **Epiphany** (January 6, but has been permanently translated to the **first Sunday after January 1**)
- ▶ **Ascension** (this is celebrated on different days depending on which ecclesiastical province you live in; a few provinces celebrate it on the traditional date, which is the **Thursday of the sixth week of Easter**, but most provinces in the U.S. have transferred it to the **seventh Sunday of Easter**.)
- ▶ **The Body and Blood of Christ** (this has been permanently translated to the **second Sunday after Pentecost**)
- ▶ **Assumption of Mary** (always celebrated **August 15**, but if this occurs on a Saturday or a Monday there is no obligation to go to Mass)
- ▶ **All Saints** (always celebrated **November 1**, but if this occurs on a Saturday or a Monday there is no obligation to go to Mass)
- ▶ **Immaculate Conception of Mary** (always celebrated **December 8**)
- ▶ **Christmas** (always celebrated **December 25**)

MARIAN FEAST DAYS

January 1	—	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God **
January 8	—	Our Lady of Prompt Succor
February 2	—	*Presentation of the Lord
February 11	—	Our Lady of Lourdes
March 25	—	*Annunciation
May 13	—	Our Lady of Fatima
May 31	—	*Visitation
June 27	—	Our Mother of Perpetual Help
July 16	—	Our Lady of Mount Carmel
August 15	—	*Assumption **
August 22	—	Queenship of Mary
September 8	—	Birth of Mary
September 12	—	The Most Holy Name of Mary
September 15	—	Our Lady of Sorrows
October 7	—	Our Lady of the Rosary
November 21	—	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 8	—	Immaculate Conception **
December 12	—	Our Lady of Guadalupe

APPARITIONS of MARY

- ▶ Appearances of the Blessed Virgin Mary, coming down from heaven to earth.
- ▶ Often paired with some type of message Our Lady wants to communicate
 - from one short appearance to several over the course of years.
- ▶ Always at least one witness to an apparition
- ▶ Not uncommon for the witness to later become a Saint or holy figure within the Church.

APPARITIONS of MARY

Some of the most well-known of the 26(?) documented Apparitions:

- ▶ *Our Lady of Guadalupe* to St. Juan Diego in Mexico, 1531 (appeared 5 times)
- ▶ *Our Lady of Fatima* to 3 children, Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco in Portugal, 1917 (appeared 6 times)
- ▶ *Our Lady of Lourdes* to St. Bernadette in France, 1858 (appeared 18 times)



SAINTS

- ▶ *The “Church is held to be unfailingly holy” because “Christ loves the Church as His Bride” and “endowed Her with the Gift of the Holy Spirit...”*
- ▶ *“The Church, then, is ‘the holy People of God,’ and her members are called ‘Saints.’”*
(CCC 823)
- ▶ *“The Church on earth is endowed with a sanctity that is real though imperfect...”*
- ▶ *In her members, perfect holiness is something yet to be acquired” – together we are called to be holy (CCC 825)*

SAINTS

- ▶ We are called to live holy lives, called into communion with Him and through Him, with one another for the sake of the world
- ▶ Special place of honor for those Christians who “lived a life of heroic virtues”
 - Theological virtues of faith, hope and charity
 - Cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude
- ▶ Faithful who practiced these virtues and lived in fidelity to God’s grace, reflecting the radiance of Christ – *canonized* and called into a special place of honor within the *communion of saints*.
(CCC 828)

STEPS to SAINTHOOD

▶ STAGE 1 – EXAMINING THE LIFE OF THE CANDIDATE

◦ Phase I: Diocesan Level

- 5 years must pass from his/her death
- Bishop (petitioner) forms tribunal and begins investigation into life of heroic virtue or martyrdom; witnesses called, documents written

◦ Phase II: Congregation for the Causes of Saints

- Diocesan documentation sent to Rome
- A summary of evidence to “prove” heroic, virtuous life or martyrdom is prepared
- Examined by 9 theologians; if majority approve, passed on to Congregation of cardinals and bishops
- If approved, sent to the Pope
- Pope approves and authorizes the Congregation to draft a decree declaring the candidate *Venerable* (if virtuous life) or *Blessed* (if martyred)

STEPS to SAINTHOOD

▶ STAGE II – BEATIFICATION

- For the beatification of a Venerable (virtuous life), a miracle attributed to his intercession, verified after his death, is necessary
 - Must be proven through appropriate canonical investigation
 - If proven, the Venerable is given the title of *Blessed*
- For the beatification of a Blessed (martyr), no miracle is required; therefore the title Blessed is given at time of Papal approval.

STEPS to SAINTHOOD

▶ STAGE III – CANONIZATION

- Another miracle is needed for both Blessed martyrs and virtuous Blesseds, attributed to their intercession and having occurred *after their beatification*
 - With canonization, the Blessed acquires the title of ***SAINT***
 - Canonization allows for the public veneration of the Saint by the Universal Church
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- ▶ In 2017, Pope Francis introduced a third option, called “offering of life,” defined as the experience of a premature death due to the offering, or sacrificing, of one’s life out of Christian charity.
 - ▶ Steps to Sainthood can take decades, even centuries
 - ▶ Catholic Church has 10,000? American:

- **St. Elizabeth Ann Seten**, S.C., founder of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph and is considered the founder of the U.S. Catholic school system, Jan. 4.
- **St. John Neumann**, C.Ss.R, missionary and fourth bishop of Philadelphia who founded the first diocesan Catholic school system in the U.S., Jan. 5.
- **St. Marianne Cope**, O.S.F, missionary to the lepers of Molokai, Hawaii, Jan. 23.
- **St. Katharine Drexel**, S.B.S., school builder and founder of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, March 3.
- **St. Damien de Veuster of Molokai**, SS.CC., missionary to the lepers of Molokai, Hawaii, May 10.
- **St. Junipero Serra**, O.F.M., founder of the Spanish missions in California, July 1.
- **St. Kateri Tekawitha**, Native American and consecrated virgin, July 14.
- **St. Mother Theodore Guerin**, S.P., missionary and founder of the Sisters of Providence of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Oct. 3.
- **St. Issac Jogues**, S.J., Jesuit priest, missionary and one of the North American martyrs, Oct. 19.
- **St. Frances Xavier Cabrini**, M.S.C., missionary and founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Nov. 13.
- **St. Rose Philippine Duchesne**, R.S.C.J., missionary to Native Americans, Nov. 18.

COMMUNION of SAINTS

- ▶ In our Creed, “*I believe in...*” but what does it mean?
- ▶ “The communion of saints is **the Church.**”
(CCC 946)
- ▶ All the faithful **form one body with Christ as the Head...**the riches of Christ are communicated to all the members through the sacraments (CCC 947)
- ▶ “Communion of Saints” has 2 meanings:
 - Communion *in holy things* (sancta) – Eucharist
 - Communion *among holy persons* (sancti) – Christ died for all, the Church as One (CCC 948)
 - “God’s Holy Gifts for God’s Holy People”

COMMUNION of SAINTS

- ▶ The communion of saints is the **community of all those baptized into Christ**:
 - Those pilgrims on earth (the church *militant*)
 - Those who are being purified (the church *suffering*)
 - Those Blessed in Heaven (the church *triumphant*)
- ▶ These all together form **One Church** (CCC 962)
- ▶ The Communion of Saints **reflects our belief in the power of intercessory prayer**
 - To intercede to God on our behalf, as they are closest to Him

COMMUNION of SAINTS

The Communion of Saints:

- ▶ *The Church Militant* – the body of believers still living on this earth and "fighting" for their salvation.
- ▶ *The Church Triumphant* – the angels, saints, and those believers who have previously lived on this earth and are now rejoicing in their Heavenly home..
- ▶ *The Church Suffering/Penitent* – those believers who have died, but because of unsatisfied temporal punishment due because of their sin, they must spend time in the cleansing fires of Purgatory.
 - CCC 954

COMMUNION of SAINTS

▶ Eucharistic Prayer 3

“...so that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect, especially with the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, with your blessed Apostles and glorious Martyrs... and with all the Saints, on whose constant intercession in your presence we rely for unfailing help.”

Saints, our Patrons

- ▶ Patron saints are chosen as special protectors or guardians over important areas of life...occupations, illnesses, churches, countries, causes...
- ▶ The earliest records show that people and churches were named after apostles and martyrs as early as the fourth century.
 - Librarians – St. Jerome
 - Firefighters – St. Florian
 - Florida – Our Lady of La Leche (“of the milk” and good delivery), St. Augustine, 1609



MARY as QUEEN of all the SAINTS

- ▶ Saints are models of holiness and obedience
- ▶ Provided as intercessors
- ▶ Saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church's history
- ▶ The Saints remind us of our heavenly goal and destiny in God
- ▶ Whatever virtue and holiness is found in the angels and saints is far exceeded in Mary

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 to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee 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

