

MARY

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US Catholic Catechism for Adults Ch 12

Catholicism, Fr. Robert Barron, Word on Fire.

See <https://adventreflections.com> for daily Advent reflections from Bishop Barron.

Catholic Speak

Annunciation - the announcement of the Incarnation by the angel Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26–38). The church festival commemorating this, held on March 25.

fiat - declaration of “let it be done.”

incarnation - the embodiment of God the Son in human flesh as Jesus Christ.

labyrinth - intricate pathway

apse - a large semicircular recess in a church, usually with arched or domed roof, usually containing the altar.

transept - either of the two parts forming the arms of the cross shape.

nave - the central part of a church building, intended to accommodate most of the congregation.

dormition - to fall asleep.

dogma - divinely revealed truth proclaimed by the Church.

ANNUNCIATION

Luke 1: 26-38 NT 100

Invitation to relationship...grace.

God wants us to fall in love with him; surrender.

Notre Dame - Our Lady

Mary is the bridge between the Old and New Testaments. She is the metaphor of Israel at its best. Mary is the example of covenant relationship with God. She is the model disciple.

MARY MOTHER OF GOD

John 19: 25-27 (NT 172) “...When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.””

Ephesus, Turkey

Council of Ephesus 431 - Continued discussion about the nature and person of Jesus. If Jesus is only a special human, then he is not divine. Mary would be the bearer of Christ (Christotokos). If Jesus is God the Son, then she is Theotokos, the bearer of God. The Council declared Mary to be Mother of God, as Jesus is God the Son.

Mary always directs others to Christ. She is as a moon that shines from a light coming from a greater source.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Declared as Church dogma in 1854, the belief that Mary was free of all sin, even original sin, from her very conception. She was saved by Christ, who, as God the Son, is eternal and outside of time. (John 1:1-5 NT 144). The feast or celebration of this is known to go back at least to the seventh century.

A young peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, of Lourdes, France, experienced an encounter with The Lady (Mary) in 1858. The lady who appeared to her identified herself as the Immaculate Conception.

ASSUMPTION

This Church dogma was defined in 1950 that at the end of her life, Mary was taken body and soul into the realm of God. As a sinless human, this action was compared to Mary falling asleep (dormition).

MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

As an ongoing presence, Mary fulfills a role of drawing people to Christ.

Mary appeared in December 1531 in Mexico, to peasant Juan Diego and asked him to go to the local bishop and request that a church be built on the site of her appearance. The bishop asked for a sign. Juan Diego returned to the site, and directed by Mary, collected roses in his cloak, or tilma, and then returned to the bishop. When Juan Diego unfolded his tilma, the roses fell out, and an image of Mary remained on the cloak. (See US Catechism for Adults, p.141-143) Within ten years, nine million Mexican people converted to belief in Christ.

Judge the spiritual action by its fruit or consequences.

Luke 1: 46-55 (NT 100) Magnificat

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant...”

May is the month dedicated to Mary as it is a time of growth in everything.

CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

1. The Catholic Church does not worship Mary. (See C-2 in Catholic Answer Bible) Great honor is given to Mary as she was full of grace from the moment of conception, and her life is the model of discipleship in drawing people to Christ. In what ways do you honor people you admire greatly?

2. The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was perpetually a virgin; that she never had any children other than Jesus. Author Gus Lloyd (*A Minute in the Church*, p. 30) proposes this question: “...if Jesus had brothers, then why would he have given his mother to the Apostle John at the foot of the cross, as we see in John 19: 26-27? (NT 172) In the ancient Hebrew culture, if a son died who was caring for his mother because the father in the family had already died, the care of the mother was passed along to the next male sibling. Why would Jesus, a devout Jew, ignore these family ties and give his mother to a non-family member? The answer, of course, is that He had no blood brothers.”

This teaching is not scriptural, but a matter of faith in Church teaching. As we read in *Dei Verbum* §10 (p. iii NCAB) “...sacred tradition, sacred Scripture, and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God’s most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.”

3. What is important about Mary in your beliefs about Jesus?

Note in *Give Us This Day*, readings about
Immaculate Conception p. 93
Our Lady of Guadalupe p. 128