

# Topic: Marian Teachings & Titles

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IHM

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

# Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

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.





“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.”

–CCC #487

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- **Mary as Miriam of Nazareth, the “Mother of Jesus”**
    - Affirms the humanity of Jesus
  - **Mary as “Mother of God” (Theotokos or “God-bearer” in Greek)**
    - Affirms the divinity of Jesus; celebrated Jan. 1st



## Mary as “First Disciple,” “Model of Faith,” & “Mother of the Church”

- Underscores Mary’s role in being the first to believe and follow Jesus; she shows us what it means to follow Jesus through discipleship (trusting, believing, experiencing joy and even suffering) (cf. Jn 19:26-27; Lk 1:38; Acts 1:13-14; Jn 2:1-12)
- Like the wedding at Cana, Mary always points to her Son, telling us to “Do whatever he tells you.” (Jn 2:5)





# The Immaculate Conception

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- Because she was chosen by God the Father to give birth to the sinless Son of God (Jesus), through the power of the Holy Spirit, this doctrine of the Church proclaims that Mary was conceived without original sin and remained free from all personal sin throughout her life.
- This doctrine, by proclaiming Mary's purity, attempts to preserve the purity of Jesus (while still recognizing that Mary is redeemed by her Son—not of her own merits).
- Celebrated December 8th. (Thus Sept. 8th would be the celebration of Mary's birth)
- Mary's parents: St. Anne & Joachim

# The Annunciation



- When the angel Gabriel “announces” and appears to Mary to tell her that she has been chosen and will conceive and carry God’s Son to birth through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through her saying “yes,” she is the first to accept and say “yes” to Jesus. (Luke 1:26-39)
- This affirms our gift of free will, and God’s desire to offer grace and redemption.
- Celebrated on March 25th





# The Visitation

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- When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, when both are experiencing miraculous pregnancies. (Elizabeth was very old, yet God blessed she and Zechariah with a child—John the Baptist; Jesus’s cousin.) - -Lk 1:39-56
- Affirms our need for community, evangelization, and service.
- Celebrated May 31st
- The Magnificat/Canticle of Mary:
  - Mary’s prayer/song of praise to God who has done such wonderful deeds in her life. (Lk 1:46-55)
  - Affirms God’s concern for the poor & lowly.

# Mary as Perpetual/Ever Virgin

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- The Church's doctrine that not only was Mary a virgin when she conceived Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit, but remained a virgin for the rest of her life.
- This doctrine helps to preserve the divine origins of Jesus. (If Mary never had sexual intercourse in her entire life, then there is no natural way that Jesus could have been born; it must have been through divine intervention.)
- Scripture mentions "brothers & sisters" of Jesus, but these could be close relatives (often used similar language at the time) or step siblings from a previous marriage of Joseph's (there was a tradition in the East that Joseph was a widower before marrying Mary).



# The Assumption

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- The belief that at the end of her life, God brought her whole being, body and soul, into Heaven.
- In the East, it is called the Dormition of Mary, meaning her “falling asleep.” (Whether she died, or was taken directly to Heaven is not defined.)
- This doctrine affirms a belief in the resurrection of the dead for all of us, and our ultimate destiny with God.
- Celebrated on August 15th



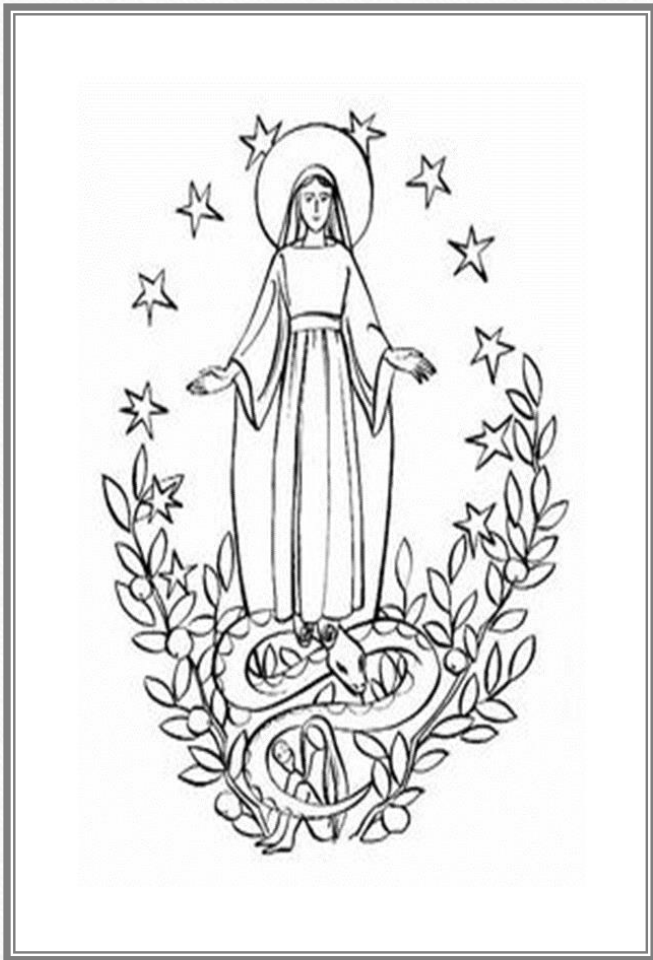
# Mary as Queen of Heaven

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- By giving Mary the title of “Queen Mother,” we are affirming Jesus’s role as King of Heaven.
- Celebrated May 1st
- Hail Holy Queen:
- Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Amen.





## Mary as the “New Eve”

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- Just as St. Paul describes Jesus as the “New Adam,” Mary can be seen as the New Eve, being obedient to God (instead of disobedient), and becoming the mother of Christians, bringing God’s grace (as opposed to original sin) to the world.
- See also Revelation 12:1-17
  - Woman clothed in the sun, with crown of 12 stars and moon at her feet; gives birth to a son; pursued by serpent/dragon.
- This title affirms the redemption that Jesus brings humanity, and the ultimate victory of good over evil.



## Mary as Our Lady/Mother of Sorrows

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- Mater Dolorosa in Latin; celebrated September 15th
- As mother to Jesus, she suffers through witnessing and partaking in his sufferings. (Luke 2:35--“and you yourself a sword will pierce”)
- This title affirms Jesus’s sufferings, and hence his humanity.



# Mary as Our Lady of Guadalupe

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- Affirms the Incarnation and God's preferential concern for the poor, as Mary appeared to Juan Diego (a poor Mexican) in the appearance of a native Indian girl.
- Celebrated Dec. 12th

## Mary as the “Seat of Wisdom”

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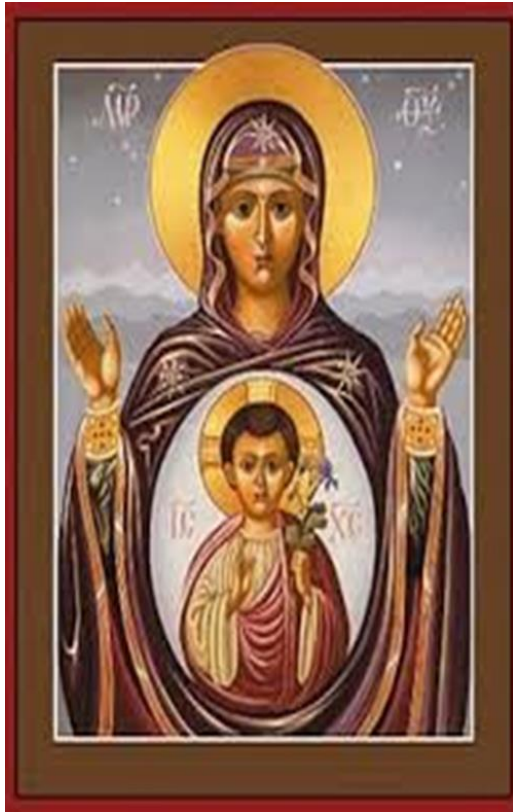


- Throughout the Old Testament, Wisdom (Sophia in Greek) is often personified as a woman.
- Recognition of Mary as Jesus’s mother and first teacher. (Recognition of the home as the “Domestic Church.”)
- This title affirms that Jesus is God’s Word made flesh, the very Wisdom of God.



# Mary as Intercessor

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- Catholics pray with Mary and the saints, asking them, as we would one another on earth, to pray to God with and for us.
- We offer Mary and the saints devotion/veneration, or respect; not adoration or worship which is reserved for God alone.
- Because Mary is “Mother of the Church,” she is our mother too, and we ask her to pray with and for us.
- Litanies=prayers consisting of a series of invocations & responses.
- Novenas=public or private devotions that extend for a period of nine days.
- Marian prayers & devotions:
  - <http://campus.udayton.edu/mary/marprayer.html>

# Mary, Queen of the Rosary

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- October 7th=Feast of the Most Holy Rosary
- The Rosary=a form of Marian devotion (popularized by the Dominicans), praying with Mary, as we reflect on the life of Jesus through his birth (Joyous Mysteries), life (Luminous Mysteries—St. Pope John Paul 2), Passion & Death (Sorrowful Mysteries), and Resurrection & Ascension (Glorious Mysteries)
- The “Hail Mary” comes from the greetings of Gabriel (Lk 1:30 “Hail favored one [full of grace], the Lord is with you.”)& Elizabeth (Lk 1:42 “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb”)
- “O God, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation. Grant, we beseech Thee, that while meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through Christ our Lord. Amen.”
- Affirms Jesus as the ultimate revelation and true mediator of salvation, as we learn from his birth, life, Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension.



# Discussion Questions

- Please share:
  - What struck you from today's Mass readings?
  - What role has Mary played in your faith and/or prayer life?
  - How has Mary been a model of discipleship for you?
  - Mary always points to her Son, Jesus. How might she be a help for you during this RCIA process? (Scriptural model, prayer partner, other?)
  - What questions did this topic and readings raise in your heart or mind?

# Closing Prayer: Mary's 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.

From this day all generations will call me blessed;  
The Almighty has done great things for me,  
And holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him  
In every generation.  
He has shown the strength of his arm,  
He has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
And has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,  
And the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel  
For he has remembered his promise of mercy,  
The promise he made to our fathers,  
To Abraham and his children for ever.

Amen.