



Agostino di Duccio

National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection

Madonna and Child

Our Quest for Happiness
the story of divine love

HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION, BOOK

4

for the senior year

Toward the eternal commencement

Right Rev. Msgr. Clarence E. Elwell, Ph.D.

The late Most Rev. James T. O'Dowd, Ph.D., S.T.D.

Right Rev. Msgr. Anthony N. Fuerst, S.T.D.

Frank J. Sheed

Right Rev. Msgr. John J. Voight, M.A., Ed.D.

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Acknowledgments

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NIHIL OBSTAT: Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. Gerald Kealy, P.A., *Censor Deputatus*

IMPRIMATUR: ✠ Samuel Cardinal Stritch, *Archiepiscopus Chicagiensis*

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Contributors to the series

- Sister Frances Raphael Beaufait, I.H.M., B.A., Monroe, Michigan
Rev. E. W. Carlen, S.M., Ph.D., Dayton, Ohio
Sister Mary William Curry, O.S.U., A.B., Cleveland, Ohio
Sister Regina Clare DeClaire, S.C., M.A., Mt. St. Joseph, Ohio
Sister Irma Donahue, C.S.J., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio
Sister Mary Kieran Dowd, H.H.M., M.A., Villa Maria, Pennsylvania
Sister Mary St. Therese Dunn, S.N.D., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio
Brother John Emling, S.M., Ph.D., Santa Cruz, California
Sister Mary Agera Gerke, S.N.D., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio
Rev. John M. Hayes, S.T.D., Chicago, Illinois
Sister Mary Pauline Karp, C.S.J., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio
Sister Mary Florice Keavney, S.N.D., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio
Sister Mary Celeste Kocab, O.S.F., A.B., Joliet, Illinois
Sister Mary Ambrose Maggini, C.S.J., M.S., Cleveland, Ohio
Sister St. Ann Murphy, C.S.J., M.A., B.L.S., Cleveland, Ohio
Brother Leo Murray, S.M., M.A., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Sister Mary Emil Penet, I.H.M., B.A., Monroe, Michigan
Sister Mary Roberta Toomey, O.S.U., M.A., Cleveland, Ohio

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Our quest for happiness

A WORD TO THE SENIORS

Here we are, seniors at last, looking ahead to June, to commencement, and to life! Let us stand for a moment on a mountain top, as it were, peering into the distances of the hopeful future, toward that "eternal commencement," at which the fullness of life really begins. Four roads lead there, to the Gate of Death that opens into eternal peace or, God forbid, eternal woe. We must begin to think about the road we will travel.

But before we do, let us glance back over the way we have come, as we have learned and tried to live the lessons of "Our Quest for Happiness."

As freshmen we studied the love of God the Father, as shown in the creation of man and in his re-creation in Baptism. As sophomores we deepened our knowledge of the divine love for us which led God the Son to become man and to redeem us. In our junior year we uncovered some of the mysteries of the love of God the Holy Spirit for us, particularly in His workings in the Mystical Body which is the Church.

Now our studies are bringing us to a crossroads in our lives. They offer us four choices, all leading eventually to the same great entrance of eternity, inside which there are two roads, but no choice, to those who have passed through the door of death.

The glorious unity of our holy Catholic religion

The mind of the intelligent, observant student will have noted a wondrous plan in all this, a plan outlined in the charts reproduced on the endsheets of the previous volumes. Have you studied them? Has your teacher ever stopped to discuss them? If not, you will find them again on pages 13, 14, and 15.

From them you can learn that our holy religion is like a beautiful diamond with its many gleaming facets reflecting the Light which is God. Each facet in a diamond is different, yet they all form a single, glorious whole. In our religion, likewise, although there is the most amazing multiplicity of doctrine and practice, of counsel and precept, all are so closely interrelated, so intimately interconnected, that if just one of these were to be disturbed or changed, the full beauty would no longer be there.

Our religion is one logical whole. Everything fits. Nothing is out of place. Nothing is superfluous. Have you noticed during the three previous years that we have taken the basic doctrines of our holy religion in the sequence in which they are found in the Apostles' Creed, which is mainly the sequence found in the Bible and in the Liturgical Year? We have taken the sacraments from Baptism to Matrimony in succession, one or more each year, and each of them has had a natural and logical connection with the doctrines we have studied. We have taken the commandments, too, one or more at a time, and have studied them in their usual sequence. And we have found that they, too, seem to fit into the sequence of doctrine and sacraments as if God had planned it that way. So it is with everything in our religion, although we cannot always detect the relationship ourselves.

Truly there is a marvelous unity in the work of God. Studying it gives a person who appreciates order and logic a deep mental satisfaction and a slight foretaste of that thrilling joy each of us shall experience when the soul at last sees God. On that happy day your whole being will be delighted at the beauty and perfection of it all, and will say: Truly, God is great. Who is like Him? Then you will have everything you need to make you happy forever and ever, for

you will have found Someone utterly good and infinitely perfect. Your greatest happiness will be to be allowed to know Him and love Him and to be loved by Him for all eternity.

If you are like that, delighting in straight thinking, and if you like to see how an intricate pattern fits together, then you will enjoy examining again the chart showing division of subject matter for high-school religion, on pages 14 and 15, and also the chart on page 13 which shows how we have woven these topics together for our four years.

Theme running through the four years

Surely you remember the central theme that already has been presented in each of the three previous years, each time in a slightly different way. Let us repeat it again: Man was created to give glory to God. This is why man exists. But man finds within himself an insatiable yearning for happiness. How do these two purposes unite—glory to God and happiness for self? Quite easily, for he who, like Christ, pours out his entire self in an absolutely unselfish way in the task of increasing the glory of God, will find incomparable happiness.

God is Love. True love means giving, not receiving. They who give, as God gives, they who imitate the outpouring of the creative love of God the Father, the wholly unselfish redemptive love of God the Incarnate Son, and the sanctifying love of God the Holy Ghost—those who know how the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity beatify Themselves as well as us by the infinite love They bestow on one another—they who know these things *and act on them* will find that Love. The possession of that Love will bring to its fruition our quest for happiness.

Objectives for the four years

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| Our chief objective throughout these years has been, and will be again this year, to help us habitually to love God. | to Love |
| Our second objective has been to form those habits of mind and will and body, which | through Hope |

will make us surer, steadier, and firmer in our confidence in God and in His promises.

Our third objective is to know our religion and Faith by believing all that God has revealed, so that we may live our faith, spread God's love, and bring happiness to ourselves and to others.

Outline of subject matter for the senior year

This year we shall study the material listed in the fourth column of the chart on page 13, which includes the following topics:

1. Articles 7, 11, and 12 of the Apostles' Creed.
2. The Blessed Virgin.
3. The angels and saints.
4. Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and vocation.
5. The seventh, eighth, and tenth commandments and the sixth precept of the Church.
6. The Epistles and the Apocalypse.
7. The encyclicals on marriage, education, and reconstructing the social order.
8. Apologetics.
9. Correlated points in Scripture, Church history, and the liturgy.
10. The saints, prayers, errors, objections, and so forth, related to this subject matter.
11. The virtues, practices, habits, attitudes, and so forth, which should be developed or the vices which should be overcome in connection with this material or with the present or future needs of the students.

Central theme for this senior year

Mary is my Mother. I must go to her for courage, for guidance, for all grace. She will lead me to the right choice. She will help me give glory to God. She will show me how to find happiness.

Ad Jesum per Mariam!

12. *Our quest for happiness*

Our Quest for Happiness: units and sequence for the four years of high school religion

	FRESHMAN YEAR <i>Our Goal and Our Guides</i> The story of the creative love of God the Father	SOPHOMORE YEAR <i>Through Christ Our Lord</i> The story of the redeeming love of Christ, the Incarnate Son	JUNIOR YEAR <i>The Ark and the Dove</i> The story of the sanctifying love of God the Holy Ghost, and the Church	SENIOR YEAR <i>Toward the Eternal Commencement</i> The story of the beatifying love of our Triune God
<i>Unit</i> 1	Our guides to our goal Desire for happiness, guides to it; reason and faith; Scriptures and the Church 6 weeks	The Promised One appears Protoevangelium, prophecies, Incarnation, Nativity, and early life 5 weeks	The Dove The Holy Ghost and His mission 5 weeks	"Our life, our sweetness, and our hope" The Blessed Virgin, her life, etc. 5 weeks
<i>Unit</i> 2	Our illustrated guidebook The liturgical year as a dramatic summary of faith and morals 6 weeks	The Redeemer: His message and credentials Public life of Christ to Passion (exclusive) 9 weeks	The Ark The Church—second, third, fifth precepts 8 weeks	A senior looks into the future The last things and Extreme Unction 4 weeks
<i>Unit</i> 3	Our Source and our Goal God, His nature, perfections; the Trinity 5 weeks	"God so loved the world" The Passion, Redemption; grace 8 weeks	The Dove guides the Ark through the ages Synopsis of Church history 12 weeks	The great choice Choice of state in life, Holy Orders and Matrimony 10 weeks
<i>Unit</i> 4	Love, pride, and the promise Creation, the Fall, and the protoevangelium 7 weeks	"From the rising of the sun" Sacrifice of the Mass, third commandment, first precept 5 weeks	The plank after shipwreck Forgiveness of sins, Penance 6 weeks	Building a better world Seventh, eighth, and tenth commandments 9 weeks
<i>Unit</i> 5	Divine aids in our quest Sacraments—Baptism in particular as the remedy for the Fall; Confirmation 6 weeks	The gift of divine love The Eucharist as a sacrament, fourth precept 5 weeks	Temples of the Holy Ghost Fifth, sixth, and ninth commandments 5 weeks	Justifying our faith Synopsis of apologetics 8 weeks
<i>Unit</i> 6	Rules for a successful quest Basic principles of morality and duties to God (first three commandments) 6 weeks	In His footsteps Principles of morality, fourth commandment 4 weeks		

Division of subject matter for the four years of high school religion and correlation of various parts

Our Quest for Happiness is the story of Divine Love as revealed in:

	FRESHMAN YEAR The redeeming love of <i>Christ the Incarnate Son</i>	JUNIOR YEAR The sanctifying love of <i>God the Holy Ghost</i> and the Church	SENIOR YEAR The beatifying love of <i>Our Triune God</i>
A. INSTRUCTIONAL MATTER (knowledge, intellect)			
1. Doctrines (what <i>faith</i> asks and helps us to believe)	Creed (Article 1): God—His existence; nature, attributes; Trinity; Creation, Fall, Original Sin; nature of man, purpose of man's existence	Creed (Articles 8-10): (1) Holy Ghost; (2) grace; (3) the Church—nature, attributes; marks, growth, powers; communion of saints; (4) forgiveness of sins; indulgences	Creed (Articles 7, 11-12): last things, resurrection of the body, life eternal; Blessed Virgin, angels, saints
2. Sacraments (first sources of hope of grace and salvation)	Sacraments in general, Baptism (Original Sin), Confirmation	Holy Eucharist —doctrinal, moral, liturgical, and practical side	Extreme Unction (with last things); Holy Orders , Matrimony
3. Morals (what <i>love</i> of God leads and helps us to do)	Basic moral principles; first, second, and third commandments	Principles of morality, third and fourth commandments	Fifth, sixth, and ninth commandments; capital sins—sin
a. Decalogue	First and fourth precepts	Second, third, fifth precepts and other laws of the Church	Sixth precept
b. Precepts	Mass and Missal, Benedictus, Magnificat, etc.	Penitential seasons: Advent, Lent, Rogation and Ember days	Blessed Virgin—life, hymns, poems; Holy Orders; Matrimony; Extreme Unction
4. Prayer (other main source of hope of grace and salvation)	Nature and kind of prayers; the Liturgical Year—nature, plan, purpose; Baptism	Act of Hope, spiritual communion, Pater, Ave, Angelus, meditation, etc.	Rosary, Angelus, De Profundis, etc.
a. Public (the liturgy)	Act of Faith, morning and evening prayers, four creeds, Divine Praises, Collects, etc.	Life of Christ from the Gospels (with doctrine and fourth commandment)	Epistles, Apocalypse (paris), life of Blessed Virgin
b. Private	Introduction, the Old Testament (read in connection with subject matter)	Correlated with other material	Correlated with other material
5. Scripture	Perinent points correlated with subject matter	Saints of Missal and Blessed Sacrament, B.V.M., John the Baptist	Blessed Virgin, saints in all states of life, founders of orders
6. Church history	B.V.M. (faith); St. Thomas, martyrs (witnesses of faith), great missionaries	Gnostics, Arians, Luther, modern errors	Apologetics proper; Nestorians; modern errors on morals and marriage; encyclicals on education, marriage, labor
7. Lives of the saints	Atheism, materialism, evolution, rationalism, modern difficulties and objections and their answers		
8. Apologetics (modern errors and objections)			

B. FORMAL MATTER (character, will)

	To develop intellectual habits	To develop habits of will irascible and concupiscible passions	To develop all habits
3. Habit formation			
a. Virtues (1) Theological	Faith—nature and practice	Faith Hope Charity	Faith Hope Charity
(2) Cardinal	Prudence Justice Fortitude Temperance	Prudence Justice Fortitude Temperance	Prudence Justice Fortitude Temperance
(3) Others	Humility; zeal; purity; tact; studiousness; piety; courage, thoughtfulness, etc.	Obedience, religion, piety, nobility, patience, simplicity, purity, courtesy, politeness, gratitude, etc.	Truthfulness, detachment, helpfulness, liberality, friendliness, graciousness, kindness, good manners
(4) Gifts of Holy Ghost	Understanding, knowledge, counsel	Fear of Lord, piety	Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, piety
(5) Beatitudes	First and second: poor in spirit, meek	Fourth and fifth: hunger for justice, merciful	Third and eighth: mourn, and suffer persecution
(6) Fruits of Holy Ghost	Faith, patience, long-suffering	Benignity, goodness, mildness	Joy, peace
(7) Evangelical counsels	Obedience		Poverty
b. Works of mercy (1) Corporal	1. Feed hungry 2. Give drink to thirsty	3. Clothe naked 4. Ransom captives	6. Visit sick 7. Bury dead
(2) Spiritual	2. Instruct ignorant 3. Counsel doubtful	5. Bear wrongs patiently 6. Forgive injuries	4. Comfort sorrowful 7. Pray for living and dead
c. Vices (1) Capital sins	Pride	Sloth	Covetousness, lust, envy
(2) Others	Profanity, selfishness, etc.; self-indulgence	Disobedience, missing Mass, etc.	Religious indifference, dishonesty, back-biting
d. Christian practices Sacramentals	Daily Mass and Communion, prayer, thinking with Church, Sign of Cross, holy water, grace at meals, pictures in the home, etc.	Daily Mass and Communion, having Mass offered, vision, Forty Hours, benediction, first Friday, etc.	Daily Mass and Communion, habits for life (control of the senses), self-denial, Christian burial, scapulars, May and October devotions, Poor Souls, St. Joseph, etc.
e. Ascetical theology	Purgative way: avoidance of sin from incipient love based on faith and fear	Illuminative way: practice of virtues, based on growing hope and love.	Union achieved: the goal, eternal union in glory
f. Catholic action	Spreading the Faith; pictures in home, etc.; study	Catholic citizen, personal sanctification, prayer	Catholic home, Holy Name, Knights, St. Vincent de Paul, N.C.W.C., etc.; Catholic action

Objectives for the senior year

1. To take a calm, clear look into the future; to begin planning our lives; to acquire the knowledge and to form the habits and attitudes needed for a holy, happy, useful life on earth and for an eternity of happiness and of glory to God in heaven.
2. To learn to know and love the Blessed Virgin.
3. To cultivate the virtue of justice as a foundation of a better world.

Arrangement of subject matter in units

The subject matter for this senior year has been arranged in the following five units:

	<i>Suggested time</i>
<i>unit</i> 1 "Our life, our sweetness, and our hope" (Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother)	5 weeks
<i>unit</i> 2 A senior looks into the future (The four last things; Extreme Unction)	4 weeks
<i>unit</i> 3 The great choice (Vocation, Holy Orders, Matrimony)	10 weeks
<i>unit</i> 4 Building a better world (Seventh, eighth, and tenth commandments)	9 weeks
<i>unit</i> 5 The reasonableness of our Faith (Apologetics)	8 weeks
	Total 36 weeks

Virtues for the year

This year, in imitation of our Blessed Mother, we shall attempt to practice all virtues as perfectly as possible, placing an accent on love of God and on justice.

Review of introduction (pp. 9-16)

1. What did we learn in the freshman year?
 2. What did we learn in the sophomore year?
 3. What was uncovered for us in the junior year?
 4. What must we begin to think about in this fourth year?
 5. Is the Catholic religion a jumble of unrelated teachings or a unified and co-ordinated whole? Prove your answer.
- 16 *Our quest for happiness*

6. What is the central theme for the four years of our course? Explain it.
7. What are our three chief objectives for the four years? Explain each.
8. What are the main topics that we shall study this year? The five units?
9. What is our central theme for this year?
10. What are our chief objectives this senior year?
11. What virtues are we to choose for practice?
12. Where can I locate information about American Catholics? The lives of the saints? Catholic pamphlets?
13. Are there any catalogues of Catholic novels? Is there an American Catholic almanac? A guide to Catholic literature?
14. Name some Catholic magazines.
15. Name some Catholic newspapers.

Where to locate major subdivisions of subject matter in this series

Creed	Sacraments		Commandments			
	<i>year</i>	<i>unit</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>unit</i>		
Article 1	9	3	Baptism	9 5	First, second, third	9 6
Articles 2-7	10	1, 2, 3	Confirmation	9 5	Fourth	10 5
Articles 8-10	11	1, 2	Eucharist	10 4, 5	Fifth, sixth, ninth	10 6
Articles 7, 11, 12	12	2	Penance	11 4	Seventh, eighth, tenth	11 5
			Extreme Unction	12 2		12 4
			Holy Orders	12 3		
			Matrimony	12 3		

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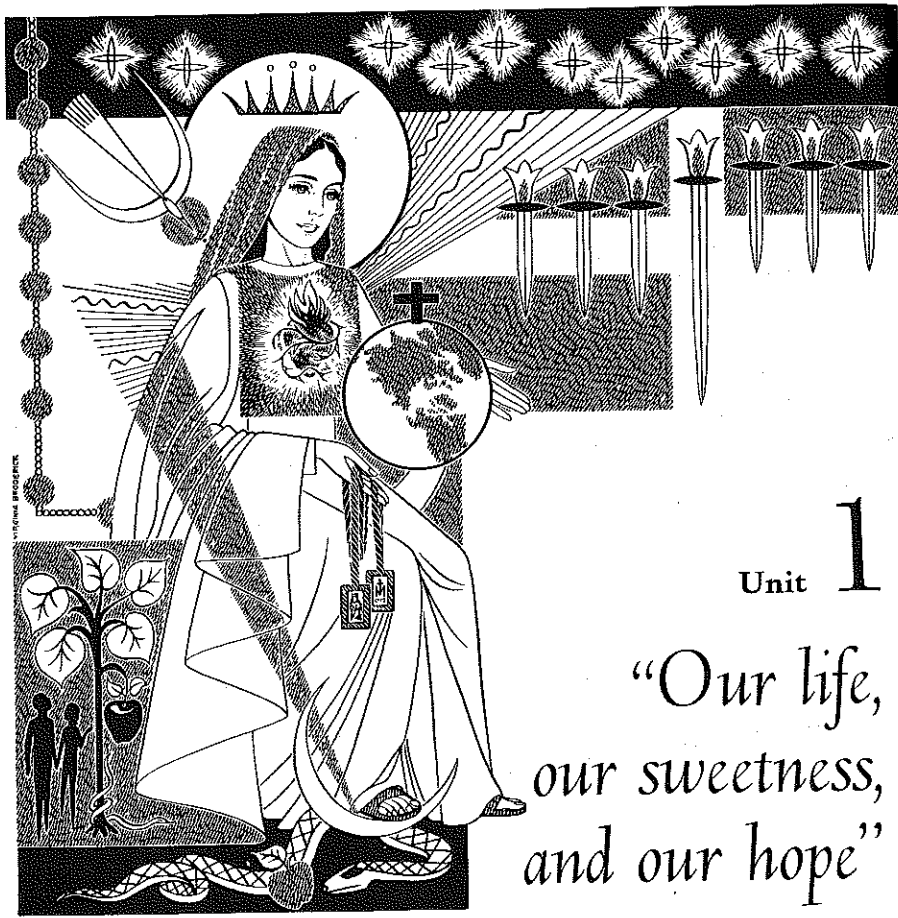
Magazines

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>America</i> | <i>Jubilee</i> |
| <i>Catholic Digest</i> | <i>Messenger of the Sacred Heart</i> |
| <i>Catholic Mind</i> | <i>Mission</i> |
| <i>Catholic World</i> | <i>Our Sunday Visitor</i> |
| <i>Cisca News</i> | <i>The Pope Speaks</i> |
| <i>Extension</i> | <i>Saint Anthony Messenger</i> |
| <i>Hi-Time</i> | <i>Sign</i> |
| <i>Information</i> | <i>Today</i> |

Periodicals for particular units are listed with other materials for that unit.

Newspapers

Your diocesan newspaper. For complete listing of Catholic newspapers published in the United States, see *The National Catholic Almanac*.



Unit 1

“Our life,
our sweetness,
and our hope”

Mary, Virgin Mother of God and our Mother

INTRODUCTION

The road to eternal life is difficult and beset with dangers. When we stray from the true path, bitterness and discouragement are our lot. But God in His goodness and love, of which we have seen so many examples these past years, has given us special help and grace. He has made us children of the most holy, the most glorious, and the most powerful creature that ever has or ever will come forth

from His hand. He has given us Mary as our Mother, to be “our life, our sweetness, and our hope.” In this unit we shall learn many things about her that we did not know before. May they lead us to love her, and to love and imitate her Son as she did.

What do you already know about the Blessed Virgin?

You should be able to answer the following questions in a half-hour written pretest.

1. What facts of the Blessed Virgin Mary's life can you recount?
2. How many feasts of our Blessed Mother can you name?
3. What privileges did God confer on Mary? Why?
4. What is Mary's place in the scheme of redemption?
5. What virtues did our Blessed Lady practice?
6. Name some ways in which art has glorified her name.
7. What devotions to Mary do you know or practice?
 - a. Public devotions
 - b. Private devotions

Some of the objectives of this unit

1. To become better acquainted with our Blessed Mother, her glory, her privileges, her importance to us.
2. To learn about her feasts and to celebrate them in a fitting manner.
3. To make habitual the regular practice of several devotions to the Blessed Virgin and thus to promote personal holiness.
4. To foster great confidence in and a tender love for Christ's Mother.

Suggested assignments and activities

After deciding whether any of the following or similar assignments will help us learn or apply the material in this unit, we can begin with Section 1 on page 27. The Related Reading may also be of assistance.

1. Use some poems on the Blessed Virgin for choral speaking or individual recitation. For example, those found in Thomas Walsh's *Catholic Anthology*.
2. Write a symposium or a radio script on the Blessed Virgin, using hymns, poems, and so forth, telling her virtues and showing her influence for good in the history of the world.
3. Learn to sing one or more of the Latin hymns or canticles to the Blessed Mother:

“Magnificat”
“Alma Redemptoris”

“Salve Regina”
“O Sanctissima”

- "Ave Regina Coelorum" "Stabat Mater"
"Regina Coeli" "Ave Maris Stella"
4. Have individuals or groups collect and decorate the room with the pictures of:
 - a) famous Madonnas
 - b) Marian cathedrals
 - c) symbols of our Lady
 - d) shrines and pilgrimages
 5. Have groups or individuals learn to sing the various famous "Ave Maria's" (Palestrina, Schubert, Bach-Gounod, and so forth).
 6. Learn and sing the better-known English hymns to Mary.
 7. Have representatives of different language groups sing famous hymns to Mary in their own language or in English translations.
 8. Arrange to have a special celebration of the feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin (September 8), of the most Holy Name of Mary (September 12), of the Divine Maternity (October 11), and the Immaculate Conception (December 8). Plan also to observe all the feasts of our Blessed Lady.
 9. Report on the life and work of famous painters of Madonnas: Giotto, Murillo, Raphael, Fra Angelico, and so forth.
 10. List the shrines or places of pilgrimage to the Blessed Virgin, and learn the story of at least three of them.
 11. Make a class report on the story of La Salette, Bernadette and Lourdes, Fatima, Guadalupe, or any other famous Marian shrine.
 12. On the feasts or vigils of feasts of the Blessed Virgin, read the Proper of the Mass for the feast.
 13. Report on the history of the Miraculous Medal, the Seven Dolors, the scapular, the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, the Legion of Mary, the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, or the rosary.
 14. Translate a hymn to Mary from Latin or any other language.
 15. List paintings of Madonnas, hymns, or poems to the Blessed Virgin, in the order of your preference, giving the reasons for your selections.
 16. Write a theme on:
 - a) Mary as a Girl
 - b) Mary in the Temple
 - c) Mary at the Annunciation
 - d) The Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph
 - e) Mary in Her Home at Nazareth
 - f) Mary's Influence on Art or Literature
 - g) Mary, My Model
 - h) All Grace through Mary
 - i) The Purity (or any other virtue) of Mary
 - j) Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
 - k) Mary's Privileges
 - l) My Duties to Mary, My Mother
 - m) Mary, Model Wife

22 "Our life, our sweetness, and our hope"

17. Paraphrase or write about the Magnificat or the Hail Mary.
18. Have a box in the room for the students' questions or problems, and each Friday, or as needed, spend fifteen minutes discussing and answering them.
19. Make a book report about the Blessed Virgin.
20. To learn the contributions of Mary to America read some book like Daniel Sargent's *Our Land and Our Lady* or the article "Mary and Columbus" in *St. Anthony Messenger*, October, 1942.
21. Report on: indulgences on the rosary; indulgenced prayers and practices in honor of Mary in *The Raccolta*; Mary and our country (cf. Sargent, *Our Land and Our Lady*).
22. Make a card index or give an illustrated lecture on the books, pamphlets, and pictures of the Blessed Virgin in your library.
23. If you can think of any other good assignment for this unit on which you would like to work, submit your ideas to the teacher for approval.

Review of introduction (pp. 20-23)

1. Is it easy to save one's soul?
2. Has God given us Mary as a special helper in learning how to imitate her Son as she did?
3. Give an outline of our Lady's life.
4. What are some of our objectives in studying this unit? Can you think of other worthwhile objectives in studying about the Blessed Virgin?
5. Which assignments did you feel most attracted to?

Related reading

Blessed Virgin Mary

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- Pius XI, Pope. *Ad Caeli Reginam: On the Queenship of Mary*. Washington, D.C.: N.C.W.C., 1954.
- . *Fulgens Corona: On the Marian Year and the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception*. Washington, D. C.: N.C.W.C., 1953.
- . *Munificentissimus Deus: The Definition . . . of the Dogma That Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, Was Assumed Body and Soul into the Glory of Heaven*. Washington, D. C.: N.C.W.C., 1950.
- Raymond, Frater, O.C.S.O. *God, a Woman, and the Way*. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1955.
- Resch, Peter A., S.M. *Our Blessed Mother: Outline of Mariology*. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1939.
- Rumble, Leslie, MSC., and Carty, Charles M. *Radio Replies*. St. Paul, Minn.: Radio Replies Press.

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- BOOKS: Aradi, Zsolt. *Shrines to Our Lady around the World*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1954.
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Marian devotions

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Unit 1 : Section 1

The life of the Blessed Virgin Mary

A. The early life of Mary

1. Her parents
2. The Immaculate Conception—Mary's first privilege
 - a. The Church proclaims the doctrine
 - b. Mary proclaims the doctrine
 - c. The Immaculate Conception in Christian art
3. The birth of the Blessed Virgin
4. Mary is presented to God
5. Mary makes a vow of virginity
6. The Blessed Virgin is espoused to and marries St. Joseph

B. Mary in the Gospels

1. The Annunciation and Incarnation
2. The Visitation and the Nativity
3. The hidden life of Mary in Nazareth
4. Christ lost in the Temple
5. The Blessed Virgin in the public life of our Lord
6. Mary during the Passion
7. Mary after the Resurrection
8. The Assumption
9. Application

"And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."
Apoc. 12, 1.

The life of the Blessed Virgin Mary was one of utter humility, of seraphic charity, and of absolutely selfless service of God. As a result, it was a life of supreme virtue and unparalleled happiness. It set an example of how we should lose our own desires in the supreme ambition to glorify God. Mary's life showed us how we must strive to imitate the virtues of Jesus Christ if we wish to attain the

goal of our quest: "the eternal commencement," with Jesus and Mary. Study this life well, then; study it prayerfully, so that you may be attracted by its beauty, and learn its secrets.

A THE EARLY LIFE OF MARY

In the gospels there is nothing concerning the early life of our Blessed Mother. What we know is based on traditions that have come down to us from the past.

1 Her parents

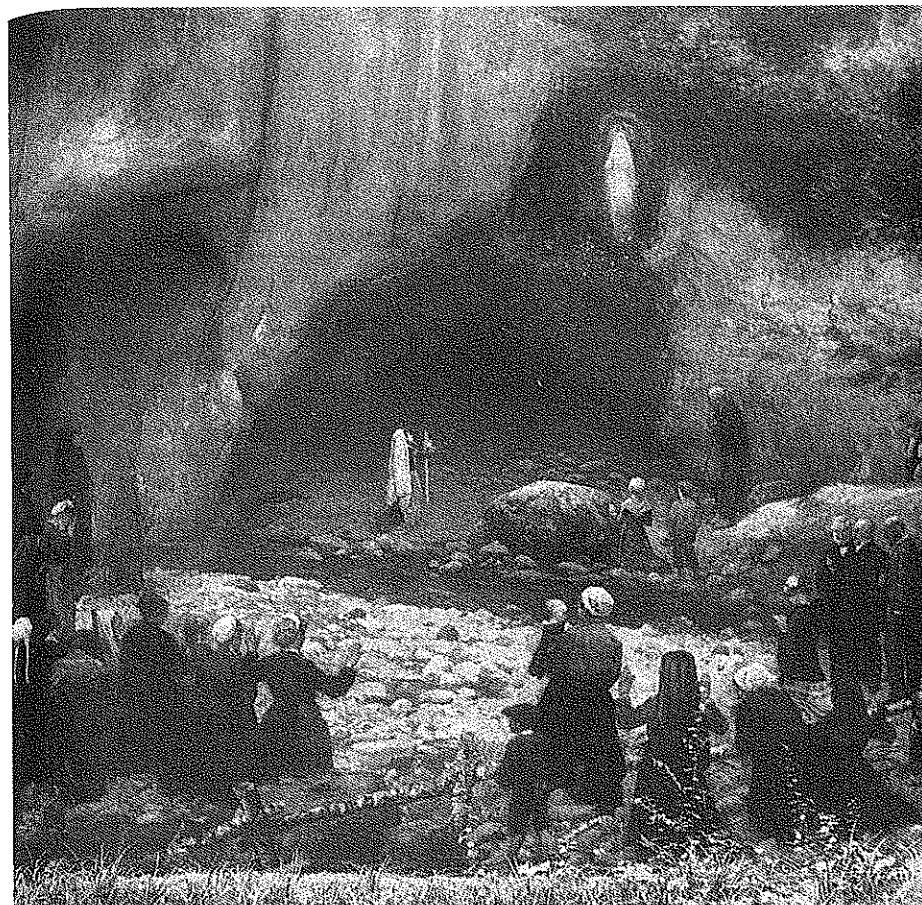
According to tradition, the parents of Mary were St. Joachim and the good St. Anne. We cannot be wrong in surmising that they were both persons of deep sanctity, for God would hardly have let the lives of the parents of the Mother of His Divine Son cast any shadow of opprobrium on her or on Him. You might look up the stories about them in various sources, for example, in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

The Church celebrates the feast of St. Joachim on the day after the feast of the Assumption, that is, on August 16; while the feast of St. Anne is on July 26.

We owe much to these two saints, Joachim and Anne. They gave us *Mary*, the joy and pride of our race, the human being who, after her Divine Son, will occupy the highest place in heaven. They gave us *Mary*, who brought to the world the Redeemer it sorely needed and anxiously sought. Their training undoubtedly was reflected both in *Mary* and in *Christ*. Many Catholics show their thanks by doing something special in their honor on their feast days.

2 The Immaculate Conception—Mary's first privilege

Ever since the sin of Adam, every human being has been conceived with his soul in the state of original sin, that is, deprived of sanctifying grace and the friendship of God. In the case of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, however, because she was to be the Mother of God and in anticipation of the merits of her Son, at the moment of its infusion into her body, her soul was preserved free from original sin. This *Immaculate Conception* took place at the first moment of



Three Lions, Inc.

"I am the Immaculate Conception"

This is the grotto of Lourdes as it appeared in 1858 during the seventeenth apparition of the Blessed Mother to Bernadette. Here Mary herself proclaimed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception which had been solemnly defined four years earlier.

Mary's life beneath the heart of her mother, St. Anne. It is the first and one of the greatest privileges of the Blessed Virgin.

As a result of the Immaculate Conception, *Mary* was saved from ever being under the domination of Satan. She was filled with grace from the very first moment of her existence on earth. St. John the Baptist was given the privilege of being cleansed from original sin

before he was born, but the Blessed Virgin Mary never had original sin touch her soul. In the first moment of her life, her soul was preserved immaculate.

2a **The Church proclaims the doctrine.** Sufficient proof for a Catholic, that the Blessed Virgin was preserved from original sin at the first moment of her conception, is the official, infallible definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX, on December 8, 1854.

"The Blessed Virgin Mary was, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted to her by Almighty God, through the merits of Christ Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, preserved from all stain of original sin."

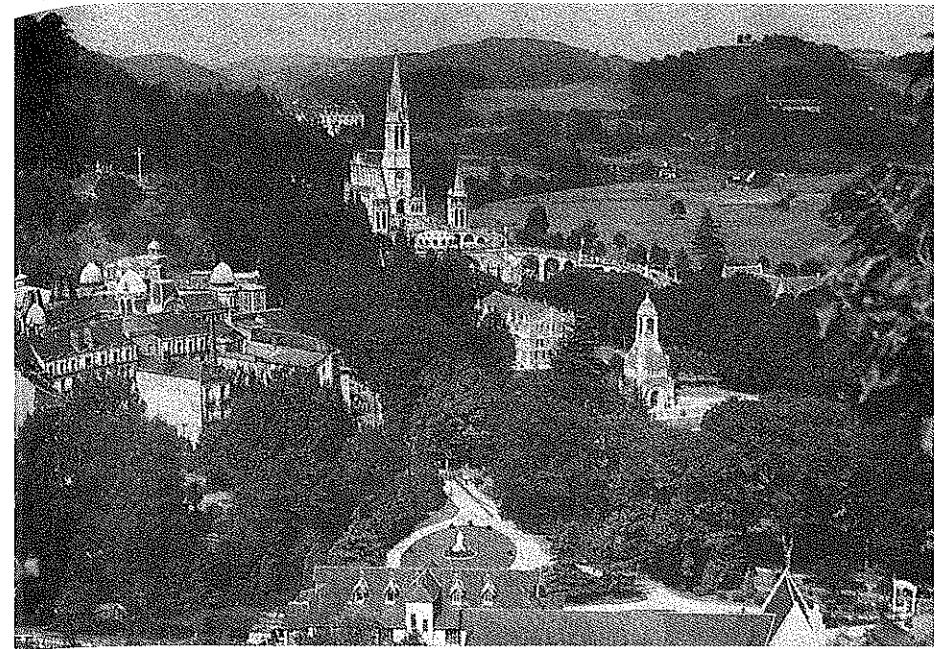
Of course, the Church had always taught and revered the doctrine. At various times some theologians may have given arguments against it; but in the proclamation of the doctrine Pope Pius IX showed from both Holy Scripture and tradition that it had always been the teaching and belief of the Church. The Franciscans and the Spaniards had a special love for this doctrine. An old Spanish salutation upon meeting a person was to say, *Ave Maria purissima* ("Hail to Mary most pure"), to which the person would answer, *Sin peccado concipida* ("Conceived without sin").

2b **Mary proclaims the doctrine.** In 1858, four years after the solemn proclamation of the doctrine, our Blessed Mother herself announced it to the world from a small mountain village in southern France, within sight of the Spanish border. The little town was Lourdes.

It was here that our Blessed Lady appeared repeatedly to little Bernadette Soubirous, later St. Bernadette, and during one apparition said: "I am the Immaculate Conception."

2c **The Immaculate Conception in Christian art.** In Christian art the Immaculate Conception usually shows Mary as a beautiful, modest young girl, "clothed with the sun, and the moon . . . under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." *Apoc.* 12, 1. Her robe is spotless white, her mantle blue, and at her feet there often is an apple, while under her foot is the crushed head of the serpent, in fulfillment of the first promise of a redeemer made to Adam:

30 "Our life, our sweetness, and our hope"



Three Lions, Inc.

Millions throng the way of Bernadette

Lourdes, since 1858, has been the most famous point of pilgrimage in Europe. The origin of the town is uncertain, but it is thought that it was founded by the ancient Romans and called Laourda. The Castle of Lourdes (from which this picture was taken) witnessed countless battles between the French and the English during the Middle Ages and, later, between the Catholic and Protestant forces during the religious wars in France. Lourdes has more than 10,000 residents, but during the summer months the population grows sometimes to 300,000. As many as three million pilgrims come here throughout the year. In the center background, above, is the great basilica erected to mark the site of the apparitions.

"He shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for His heel."
Gen. 3, 15.

Murillo, the famous Spanish painter, painted the Immaculate Conception at least twenty-five different times, each in a slightly different way. The most famous of these many pictures is in the Louvre Gallery in Paris. It is one of the most glorious pictures in the world.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception, one of the ten holydays of obligation in the Universal Church, is celebrated on December 8.

The life of the Blessed Virgin Mary 31

Americans have a special reason for making it a day of great joy, because our Blessed Lady, under the title of "The Immaculate Conception," has been chosen the *Patroness of the United States*. What are some of the things you might do to celebrate this feast?

3 The birth of the Blessed Virgin

Nine months after the Immaculate Conception, when the time had elapsed which God in His wisdom established should pass between conception and birth, Mary was born, probably in Jerusalem. The Church accordingly has placed this feast of the *Nativity of the Blessed Virgin* on September 8.

Four days later, on September 12, occurs the feast of the *Most Holy Name of Mary*. According to the custom of the Jews, the ceremony of giving a child its name usually took place on the eighth day after birth. St. Jerome tells us that, under the inspiration of God, St. Joachim and St. Anne gave her the name Mary.

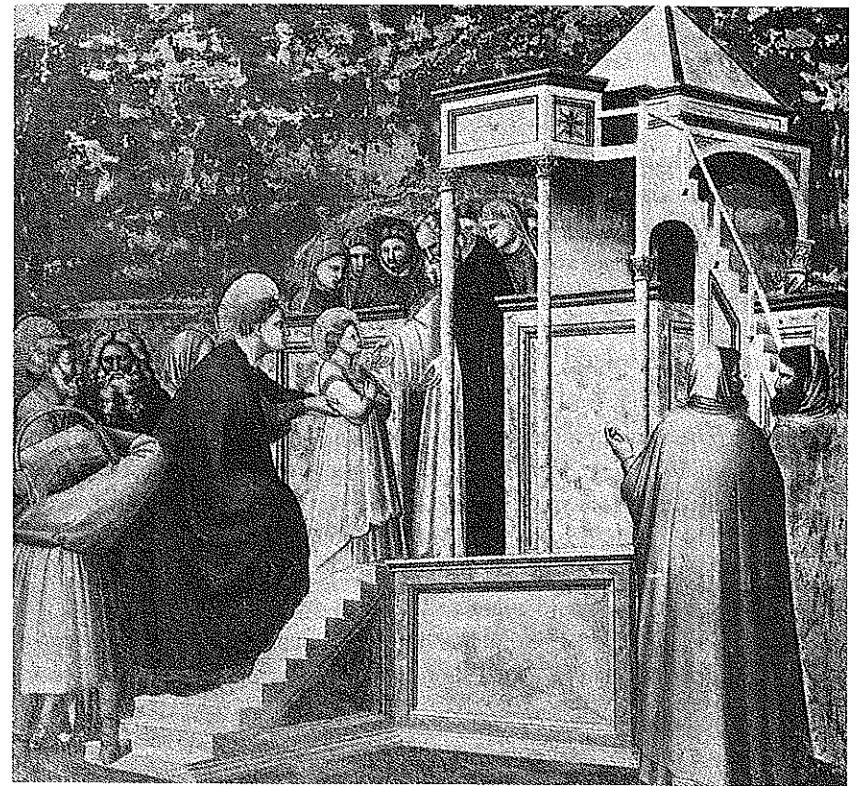
4 Mary is presented to God

A tradition founded on a story in one of the apocryphal accounts says that when Mary was three years old she was presented in the Temple, and that she lived there for some time. There are scholars who doubt that Mary, or Jewish girls in general, actually lived at the Temple, but at any rate, her parents presented our Lady to God, and the Church celebrates the feast of the *Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary* on November 21.

THE CEREMONY OF PRESENTATION

The ceremony of Presentation took place in the Temple, in the Women's Gallery. It began with the offering of a sacrifice. The priests and levites were dressed in the costume worn only by the priests of the Temple: a round turban or mitre made of very thick linen cloth, a long white tunic somewhat like an alb, and a cincture of blue. They gathered in the inner enclosure to receive the sacrificial animal from the hands of Joachim.

One of the priests took the lamb presented by Joachim, said a short invocation, and killed it. Then, catching the blood in a brass vase, he sprinkled the blood around the Temple. A portion of the lamb, wrapped in fat, covered with incense, and sprinkled with salt, was next placed on a golden dish. Then the priest, barefooted, ascended the platform in front of the brazen altar and placed the offering on the logs that fed the fire.



Giotto

Philip Gendreau, N. Y.

Presentation of Mary in the Temple

This is one of a series of paintings of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is located in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, Italy. The continuously damp climate prevalent in Padua plus the age of the mural (executed in 1300) may well account for the deterioration noticeable in the painting, especially in the background.

The rest of the victim, except the breast and the right shoulder, which belonged to the priest, was given to Joachim, to be used at the usual banquet for relatives and friends who had gathered for the celebration.

A trumpet was sounded, and the priest went to the Court of the Women. St. Anne, veiled, followed by St. Joachim, and carrying Mary in her arms, approached the priest, and said: "I come to offer you the gift which God gave me." The priest accepted the gift in the name of God and,

extending his hands over the assembly, prayed. A canticle of thanksgiving accompanied by harps of the priests terminated the Presentation of the Virgin. (Cf. *Lev.* 12, 5-8.)

5 Mary makes a vow of virginity

Some time during her life, probably while she was very young, Mary made a vow to remain a virgin. We know that she had firmly resolved to keep this vow all during her life, because when the angel appeared to her, although she was already espoused to St. Joseph at the time, she reminded the angel that she had made the vow.

6 The Blessed Virgin is espoused to and marries St. Joseph

The arrangements for the espousal and marriage of Mary and St. Joseph were probably made in the usual manner of the time, the manner customary in most of the world until modern times.

There was no courtship, Mary's husband being selected for her by her father or guardian, though probably not without her previous consent. One legend relates that there were many suitors and that each left a staff behind at her family's house, and that in the morning one staff had flowered. It was the staff of St. Joseph and, accordingly, he was chosen.

AN ESPOUSAL IN THE EAST

The espousal of Mary and Joseph was most likely celebrated with the customary simplicity of ancient times. Often the husband-to-be, in the presence of the guardians and a few witnesses, presented his intended wife with a piece of silver, saying to her, "If thou consentest to be my bride, accept this pledge." By accepting it, she became solemnly engaged. The scribes then drew up the contract.

The intended husband promised to honor his wife and to provide for her support, her food, and her clothing according to the custom of Hebrew husbands. And he settled a dowry on her. Then he signed the contract, to which the woman also added her signature. A short benediction ended this ceremony which preceded the marriage by several months.

AN ORIENTAL WEDDING

The wedding ceremony also was probably the same as that customary in the Orient. The friends of the bride came to congratulate her and to help her dress and adorn herself with jewels and a crown, and a bridal veil that covered her modestly from head to foot and concealed her face. When

she was ready, all proceeded to the house of the groom, walking under a canopy. There the groom and his friends joined the procession, waving palms and playing cymbals, flutes, and harps.

His friends sang parts of the Canticle of Canticles of Solomon, and the younger men began a beautiful, restrained religious dance like the one David danced in joy before the Ark.

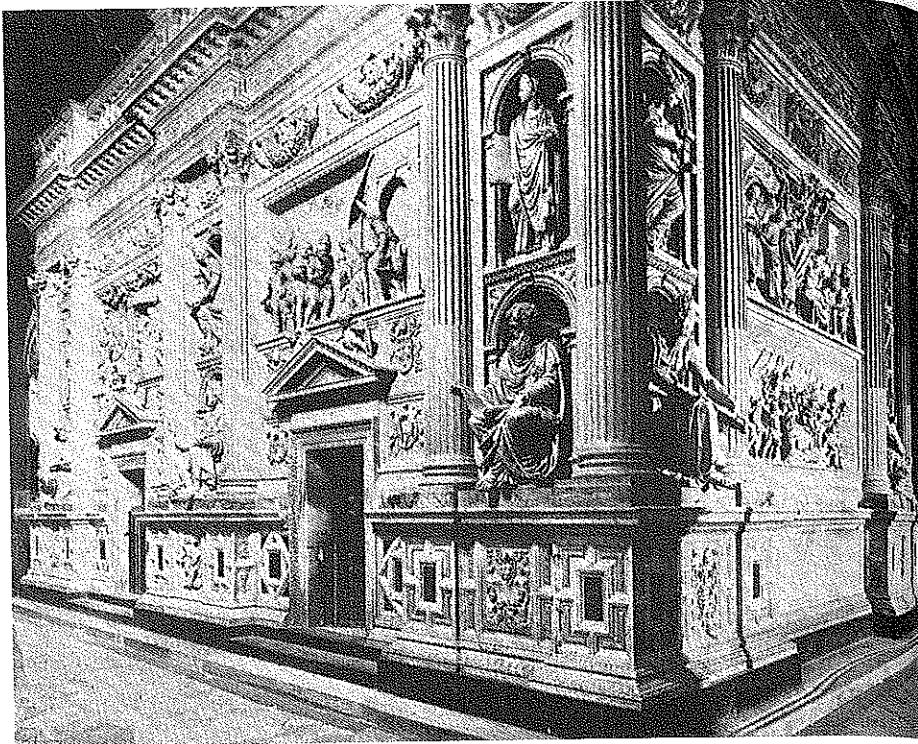
On arriving at the future home of the newlyweds, the friends of the couple sang to them. The groom placed a ring on the bride's finger. A cup of wine was poured, both drank some of it, and the groom then spilled the rest on the ground as a symbol of generosity. Wheat also was thrown, as a symbol of abundance. Then the wedding banquet took place and the ceremony was completed.

Review questions (pp. 27-35)

1. How would you characterize the life of the Blessed Virgin?
2. What does Mary's life show us?
3. What do the Gospels tell us about Mary's early life?
4. Who were her parents? When are their feast days celebrated?
5. Why should we feel a special affection for St. Joachim and St. Anne? How can we show this love?
6. What privilege was conferred on the Blessed Virgin at the first moment of her life?
7. What is meant by the Immaculate Conception?
8. How does a Catholic know that the Immaculate Conception is a fact?
9. Has the Church always taught the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception?
10. Who have shown especial love for this doctrine?
11. Has our Blessed Mother herself ever proclaimed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception? When? Where? To whom?
12. How is the Immaculate Conception presented in art?
13. When is the feast of the Immaculate Conception? Is it a holyday of obligation?
14. Who is the heavenly patroness of the United States? Under what title?
15. When is the feast of the Nativity or Birth of the Blessed Virgin celebrated? The Holy Name of Mary? The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin?
16. Did Mary live in the Temple?
17. Describe the ceremony of Presentation.
18. Did Mary make a vow of perpetual virginity? How do we know?
19. Describe the espousal of Mary to Joseph.
20. Describe an Oriental wedding.

MARY IN THE GOSPELS

Mary's life as recorded in the Gospels is already known from the study of the life of Christ in our sophomore year. Let us go



Trans World Airlines Photo

The Holy House of Loreto

Within this richly sculptured marble structure is the humble cottage which is believed to be the original home of the Holy Family in Nazareth. See page 47 for further mention of the Holy House.

through the story briefly again, or, if you prefer more detail, refer to the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* under "Virgin" or to other sources.

1 The Annunciation and Incarnation

Mary first appears in the Gospels at the *Annunciation*. It was at the Annunciation that the Incarnation took place. At that time she conceived the Son of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, and became the Mother of God. You remember the story: Gabriel's greeting, "Hail, full of grace," and Mary's fright; the reassuring words of the Archangel and his message that Mary should give

birth to a son; Mary's ready faith and the seeming obstacle. The angel's response, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee," answering Mary's question. And Mary's consent with her wonderful humility and obedience: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word." *Luke 1, 26-38.*

Prayerful consideration of and meditation on this beautiful scene of the Annunciation and Incarnation reveal the character and virtues of Mary.

After the espousal and the annunciation, but before the wedding ceremony, St. Joseph realized that Mary had conceived a child. Not knowing the mystery of God, which Mary in her trusting humility left to God to reveal as He saw fit, but confident of the innocence and the absolute purity of Mary, St. Joseph was tempted to break the betrothal secretly, to protect her from reproach. It was then that God sent an angel to tell him of Mary's dignity.

The Visitation and the Nativity

The *Visitation* of Mary to Elizabeth took place shortly after the Incarnation. On that occasion, you may recall, Mary chanted her Magnificat. She stayed with Elizabeth three months and then returned home. Some months afterwards came the trip to Bethlehem and the birth of Christ. The circumcision, the presentation of our Lord in the Temple and the purification of Mary on the fortieth day, the adoration of the Magi, the flight to Egypt, and the return to Galilee followed in succession. Naturally Mary shared in all these events.

It is not necessary to go into detail concerning them again, although it would be valuable for you to think about them as you kneel in chapel or church. You will learn more of the life and virtues of the Blessed Virgin in that way than in any other. For instance, what thoughts went through Mary's mind, do you think, at the presentation of the Child in the temple? Or consider the prompt obedience Mary showed when Joseph announced that they must go to Egypt.



Lauren Ford

Courtesy of Liturgical Arts

The Nativity

The hidden life of Mary in Nazareth

With the assistance of God's grace, the Blessed Virgin Mary gained for herself the highest place in heaven. Not only is she above all other members of the human race in glory, but above even the highest of pure spirits, above Gabriel and Raphael and Michael, the great archangels; and above all cherubim and seraphim.

Mary merited this tremendous happiness and honor by a hidden life, the greater part of which was spent washing dishes, sweeping the house, preparing meals, washing and mending clothes, carrying water, caring for her Child and husband, and performing a hundred other humble tasks.

All these tasks, however, were performed out of love for God, with great interior recollection and intense devotion. So not only did these things not demean the Blessed Mother, but they gained for her the zenith of glory for eternity. It is not the intrinsic dignity of what we do that counts so much; it is how we do it and the intention which guides us that matters. Mary did everything for the glory of God. She did it with exquisite perfection and with never a thought of self. Her intention turned everything to gold. Or rather, should we say, her intention turned everything to God?

Christ lost in the Temple

The only break in the silence of thirty years of the hidden life was the trip to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old. You remember Mary's sorrow when she lost Jesus, and her amazement when she found Him. You will also recall St. Luke's writing that when Jesus told Mary that He must be about His Father's business, Mary and Joseph did not understand what He said to them. But Mary kept all these words in her heart. *Luke 2, 42-52.*

The Blessed Virgin in the public life of our Lord

After the death of St. Joseph, and when Mary was perhaps forty-five years old, our Lord began His public life. His first act was a miracle worked at the request of His Blessed Mother: the changing of water to wine at a wedding feast in Cana. There is much food for thought here! Mary will ask her Son to perform miracles for us

if the case calls for it, material favors as well as spiritual. Do you know anything about the cures at Lourdes or at any other shrine?

After this incident at Cana, Mary appears only once in the Gospels until we find her at the foot of the Cross on Calvary. St. Mark records one occasion when "His Mother and His brethren came . . . calling Him." *Mark* 3, 31. On that occasion Jesus told the multitudes, "Whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." *Mark* 3, 35. Mary is not mentioned by name in this scene, and we do not meet her again until Good Friday.

6 Mary during the Passion

In the Stations of the Cross, the fourth station commemorates the meeting of Christ and His sorrowful Mother on the way to Calvary, but Scripture does not mention the incident. It is from tradition that we know of it. Neither do the Gospels mention Mary at any other time during the Passion prior to the last scene on Calvary. However, Mary most certainly was in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration, as St. Luke states that our Lord's parents "were wont to go every year to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover." *Luke* 2, 41.

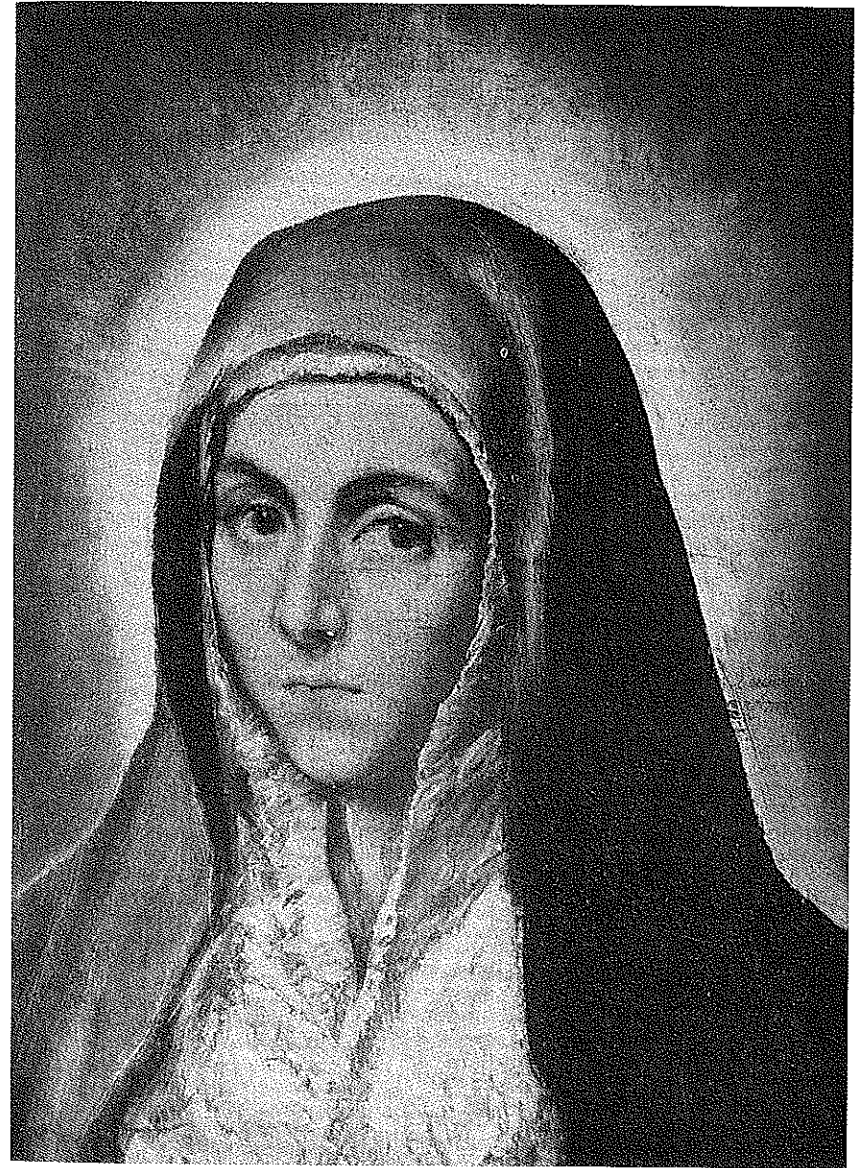
The writers of the Synoptic Gospels do not tell us that Mary was at the foot of the Cross. St. Matthew merely says that "many women were there. . . among them . . . Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee." *Matt.* 27, 55-56. St. Mark says almost the same thing. St. Luke remarks: ". . . all His acquaintances, and the women who had followed Him from Galilee, were standing at a distance looking on." *Luke* 23, 49. He does not mention Mary by name.

It is St. John who tells us: "Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus His Mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." *John* 19, 25. At the foot of the Cross Mary became the Queen of Martyrs. No one ever entered into Christ's sufferings or shared them with Him as she did.

When Jesus saw St. John and His Mother, He said to her, "Woman, behold thy son," and to St. John, "Behold, thy Mother."

Thus Mary was proclaimed the Mother of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church. By this spiritual motherhood, she is our mother

40 "Our life, our sweetness, and our hope"



El Greco

Mater Dolorosa

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also. The Gospel concludes the scene by saying that "from that hour the disciple took her into his home." *John* 19, 27. So we know that, from then on, St. John took care of our Blessed Lady.

7 Mary after the Resurrection

We next meet our Blessed Mother after the Resurrection, in the Upper Room with the Apostles and disciples (*Acts* 1, 14), making the first great Pentecost novena after the Ascension. Although we are not told directly that she was there when the Holy Ghost came, all tradition assures us that she was.

Once the Church had been established and the Mystical Body of Christ was ready to carry on the work of her Divine Son, Mary disappears from the records of the Evangelists altogether. Tradition tells us that she lived at Jerusalem or at Ephesus with St. John, and that she ended her days on earth most probably at Jerusalem. Today on Mount Sion the Benedictine Abbey of the Dormition, that is, the "falling asleep of Mary," is shown to Christian pilgrims as being near the place where our Lady fell asleep in the Lord. An early church in the Garden of Gethsemane is said to mark the place of her Assumption.

8 The Assumption

Having completed her life on earth, the immaculate Mother of God, ever-virgin, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. This is the doctrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, solemnly defined as an article of faith by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950.

Many painters have chosen the Assumption of the Virgin Mary as a subject for pictures.

The feast of the Assumption is one of the oldest in honor of our Lady. It is celebrated on August 15.

9 Application

Mary's life was one of utmost simplicity. All who hope to do great things for God, for the Church, for their country and their fellow men can learn from it. Hidden sanctity, service to others,

42 "Our life, our sweetness, and our hope"



Andrea del Castagno

Three Lions, Inc.

The Assumption

At the end of her life on earth, Mary was assumed, body and soul, into heaven.

humility, self-effacement, and the martyrdom of perfect fidelity in the performance of unsung tasks are of great value in the sight of God. By means of them Mary attained the highest place in heaven. Following the example she has given us, we can reach our own eternal goal and help others to reach theirs, too.

Review questions (pp. 35-43)

1. When does Mary first appear in the Gospels?
2. Tell the story of the Annunciation and Incarnation.

3. At what words did the Incarnation take place?
4. What virtues of Mary are apparent in this scene of the Annunciation? Explain your answer.
5. Did Mary reveal the Incarnation to St. Joseph? How did God inform him about it?
6. When did Mary visit Elizabeth? How long did she stay?
7. When did the Purification of the Blessed Virgin take place? On what date is this feast celebrated?
8. What can we learn about Mary from the way she acted during the events preceding and following the birth of our Lord?
9. How long did Mary live in the seclusion of Nazareth?
10. Describe her life there. What virtues did she practice?
11. What was Mary's reward for this hidden life of service to God?
12. Is it the intrinsic dignity of the work we do that counts with God or the manner in which we perform it and the intention we have in doing it?
13. What was Mary's intention in her actions?
14. What is the only break in the silence of the thirty years of the hidden life which is recorded in the Gospels? Relate the entire event.
15. For whom did Christ work the first miracle of His public life?
16. Was there any special significance in the fact that the first miracle was worked at a wedding? Was it perhaps because marriage in a way foreshadows the union of Christ and His Church? The union of Christ and the faithful soul? Does Mary have a part in this?
17. Do we meet Mary often in the Gospel story?
18. Follow Mary during the Passion.
19. Who tells us that Mary was at Calvary?
20. Was Mary with the Apostles during the Pentecost novena?
21. Where did Mary most likely live after the Resurrection?
22. What is the Assumption? When is the feast celebrated?
23. What should we learn from Mary's life?

The feasts of the Blessed Virgin

The accompanying list gives the seven greater feasts and many of the lesser feasts in honor of the Blessed Virgin, which are celebrated during the year. They are in the order in which they occur, starting at the beginning of the Liturgical Year.

THE FEASTS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

<i>Greater feasts</i>		<i>Lesser feasts</i>
The Immaculate Conception	December 8	Translation of the House of Loreto
	December 10	
The Purification	December 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
	January 23	
	February 2	Espousal to St. Joseph
	February 11	
The Annunciation	Friday after Passion Sunday	Our Lady of Lourdes
	March 25	Seven Sorrows
The Visitation	April 26	Our Lady of Good Counsel
	May 24	Our Lady Help of Christians
	May 31	Queenship of Mary
	June 27	Our Lady of Perpetual Help
	July 2	Our Lady of Mount Carmel
The Assumption	July 16	Humility of the Blessed Virgin
	July 17	Our Lady of the Snows
	August 5	Our Lady Refuge of Sinners
	August 13	Immaculate Heart of Mary
Birth of Mary	August 15	Holy Name of Mary
	August 22	Seven Sorrows
	September 8	Our Lady of Ransom
	September 12	Our Lady of the Rosary
	September 15	Maternity of the Blessed Virgin
	September 24	Purity of the Blessed Virgin
	October 7	
October 11		
Presentation of the Virgin	October 16	
	November 21	Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
	November 27	