

Mary, Mother of God

Introduction

What we believe about Mary always points to what we believe about Jesus

So, we hope for a personal relationship with Mary like we do with Jesus

Recognize: Story of Mary doesn't start with the Annunciation

- To understand why Mary is so important, must look at her in context of the whole story of Salvation. We must go back to the Garden!
- Adam and Eve – walked in easy friendship with God, in Grace, in perfect union. With the Fall, that perfect union was destroyed.
- But God didn't turn his back on us – the whole story of Salvation is God's plan to restore us to right relationship with Him

Typology: hints, forerunners of Who and what was to come – Jesus, His Mother, The Church, the Sacraments.

- St. Augustine: The New Testament is hidden in the Old, and the Old is revealed in the New (typology). AND that the prefigurement is never greater than the NT, New Covenant fulfillment
 - Examples of types:
 - Mana prefigured the Eucharist
 - Red Sea/Cross Jordan/Flood prefigured Baptism
 - Passover prefigured the Pascal Mystery (Passion/death/resurrection)
 - Moses, Jonah, Joseph, David prefigured Jesus, the Messiah

Scripture reveals that **Jesus is the new Adam** who undid the disobedience of the first Adam

- 1 Corinthians 15: 21-22 “For as by a man came death by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.
- Romans 5:19: “For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous”

Since Jesus is the new Adam, who is the new Eve? Mary!

- Eve heard the voice of God and chose to disobey. Through Eve's disobedience, sin and death entered the world.
- Mary received the word of God and through her Fiat, her total assent and obedience to God's will, our Salvation was born!

A deeper look at how that is revealed in the OT

- The first man and woman *together* brought the Fall, Mary cooperates with Jesus in His mission to undo the effects of sin.
- Eve (woman) was with Adam at the Fall, Mary is with Jesus at the Crucifixion which is the undoing of the Fall
- Protoevangelium – Genesis 3:15: “I will put enmity between you and **the woman**, and between your seed and her seed’. He shall bruise your head, while you bruise his heel”
- Eve referred to as “Woman” until she sins, after which she is called Eve
- Gen 3:20. The man gave his wife the name “Eve,” because she was the mother of all the living.
- At the start of His ministry, and again at from the Cross, **Jesus refers to Mary as “Woman”**. He reveals to us her role as the New Eve.

At Cana: Role as our intercessor.

At the Cross: Our Mother

Jesus did not come only to save us FROM sin – the fullness of Salvation is for us to live in Grace with Him for eternity – to restore perfect union with Him – in the New Creation

Mary points us to Jesus and this **New Creation**. In Jesus and His Mother, we are witnessing a foretaste of what is to be in Heaven.

-Rev 21:1-5 “The I saw a **new** heaven and a **new earth**. The former heaven and former earth had passed away and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, and a new Jerusalem...Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race...He will wipe every tear from their eyes and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away....Behold, I make all things new”

Dogmas formally define Doctrines (teachings of truth on faith and morals) which have long been held by the Church and are elevated as Divinely Revealed by God.

- Changing so as to remain the same”, always preserving what came before.
- Dogmas which may not have been formally defined until later, have been the understanding of the Church from the very beginning – see Early Church fathers.

Disciplines are applications of the truth which can change, whereas the truth cannot

- Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist = TRUTH unchangeable
- Discipline: In reverence and understanding of this miracle, we fast before communion is a Discipline which applies to that Truth. Change: originally fasted for 12 hours, changed to only one hour to encourage more frequent reception.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Council of Ephesus (431)

Mary was invited to become the Mother of God (Luke 1:26)

God’s incremental plan of salvation uses the faith and obedient response of his creatures.

- Mary is the Mother of the Second Person of the Trinity – integrated Person of Christ.
 - Jesus’s divinity is eternal with the Father.
 - At a specific moment in time, Jesus took to his Person, a human nature. (The Incarnation)
 - *Hypostatic union*—two natures that cannot be separated.
- Elizabeth recognizes this at the Visitation: “How is it that the Mother of my Lord has come to me?”
- Because we are baptized into the Body of Christ, Mary is our Mother! Jesus gives us His Blessed Mother as his last act before dying on the Cross!

John 19:26: When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

(defined 1853 Pope Pius IX)

Mary conceived without Original Sin, and remained sinless

Mary's sinlessness points to the New Creation where there will be no sin

She wasn't under dominion of sin of the Old Covenant

Gabriel announces that Mary is "full of grace" (Luke 1:28).

Mary is the living sign of what we are created toward. Her will is perfectly aligned with God (Luke 1:38 Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.")

CCC #722 The Holy Spirit prepared Mary by his grace. It was fitting that the mother of him in whom "the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" should herself be "full of grace." She was, by sheer grace, conceived without sin as the most humble of creatures, the most capable of welcoming the inexpressible gift of the Almighty. . . ."

Just like all of us, Mary, too, needed a Savior, but she was saved in an extraordinary way.

- Luke 1:46-47 (Magnificat) My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God, my savior!
- Mary was preserved from sin by an anticipation of the merits of her Son, receiving the grace of His redemptive Act on the Cross, at the moment of her conception.
- You can save a drowning person by throwing a life preserver, or prevent drowning by building a fence around the pool.

Prefiguration is never greater than the fulfillment. If Mary were born in a state of sin, or committed a sin, she would not be greater than Eve who together with Adam were created without sin, and still fully human.

We hide behind "we are only human" but Mary is our model showing us what it is to be human fully aligned with God's will. Jesus didn't just come to save us from hell, but to make all things new!

PERPETUAL VIRGINITY

Declared at Council of Constantinople (553)

CCC 510 Mary "remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin" (St. Augustine, *Serm.* 186, 1: PL 38, 999): with her whole being she is "the handmaid of the Lord" (*Lk* 1:38).

Virgin Birth is well-accepted among all Christians:

Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Emmanuel"

Mary's virginity– not one attribute among many – central...it is who she is. Not just biologically, but spiritually and interiorly.

- CCC 506 Mary is a virgin because her virginity is *the sign of her faith* "unadulterated by any doubt", and of her undivided gift of herself to God's will.¹⁶⁸ (Lumen Gentium).
- It is her faith that enables her to become the mother of the Savior: "Mary is more blessed because she embraces faith in Christ than because she conceives the flesh of Christ." (Saint Augustine 398ad)
- **Mary's perpetual virginity points to the New Creation** - No marriage in heaven.
 - Luke 20:34 Jesus said to them, "The children of this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.
 - In heaven the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will surpass the good of earthly marriage Jesus is the Bridegroom, the Church is His bride!
- **Mary was wholly consecrated to God**, and her physical virginity is a perpetual sign of that consecration. A vow of virginity as seen in the OT Numbers 30:6-8
 - Annunciation: "How can this be since I know not man?" This question does not make sense if she was intending to live a typical marriage. She needed clarification not merely because she HAD NOT YET consummated her marriage, but because it was never intended.

- **Mary is the Ark of the New Covenant. “Spotless Vessel”**
 - Ark of Old Covenant: The Law (Commandments), The Manna (bread from heaven), and the Rod of Aaron (the high priest);
 - Ark of the New Covenant: Mary carried within her Jesus who is the Living Word (the law), the Bread of Life from Heaven, and the Eternal High Priest.
- Marys womb was sanctified by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit – to be a dwelling of the Living God.
 - The order of grace must always have primacy over the order of nature.
 - The OT Ark was Holy because the presence of God was in it. Only the high priest could touch the Ark.
 - David: How can the ark of the Lord come to me (2Sam6:9) Eliz: how does this happen to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:39-45)

Common misconceptions

Regarding Jesus' "brothers and sisters"

- Remember that the NT was written in Greek, as was the Septuagint which was the OT scriptures in use at the time of Jesus and the Early Church), and it is important to pay attention to the Greek words used
 - Adelfhos – can mean biological sibling but also means cousin or relative - must be read in context.
 - Syngeneus = Cousin/relative
- Mark 6:3-4, 15:40, 47 and 16:1, speaks of Mary, mother of James and of Joses and Salome. And in John 19:25, Mary is identified as the wife of Clopas. His mother is pointedly mentioned.
- At the foot of the Cross, Jesus gives his mother to John, the Beloved disciple – **This would have been unheard of had Mary had other biological sons!**

The "Other Mary"

There were many women there, looking on from a distance,* who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and **Mary the mother of James and Joseph**, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

Matthew 27:55-56

Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.

But Mary Magdalene and the **other Mary** remained sitting there, facing the tomb.

Matthew 27:59-61

There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene,
Mary the mother of the younger **James and of Joses**, and Salome.

Mark 15:40

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of **Joses** watched where he was laid.

Mark 15:47

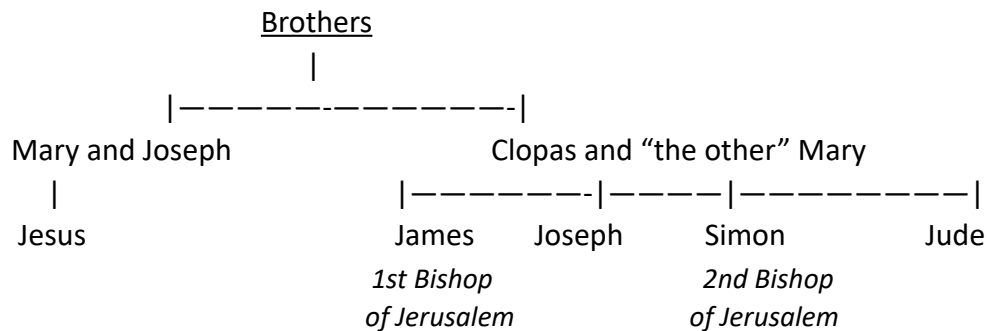
When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of **James**, and Salome

bought spices so that they might go and anoint him.

Mark 16:1

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, **Mary the wife of Clopas**, and Mary of Magdala.

John 19:25



Regarding Matthew 1:25

He (Joseph) had no relations with her **until** she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

“Until” does not necessarily imply that a thing will happen in the future!

Matthew 28:20 Jesus commissions disciples saying: “And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

2 Samuel 6:23. Saul’s daughter Michal was childless until the day she died.

THE ASSUMPTION

(Pius XII 1950)

Mary was assumed body and soul into Heaven “at the end of her earthly life”.

CCC 974 The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body.

Participation in her Son's resurrection;

Shows God's immense and tender love for His Mother that He would not allow her body to deteriorate.

The Church does not declare whether Mary died prior to the Assumption – Faithful Catholics can differ upon this point

- More common in the West to believe that she died, in solidarity with her Son who died.
- In the East, they traditionally hold to her “falling asleep” – Dormition