

CALL ME MOM

Mary, Mother of God LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

495
963-975

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1: 26-55
Luke 2:33-35
John 2:1-12
John 19:25-27

KEY CONCEPTS

- To understand the fullness of Mary's role in salvation and in the Church, we must always look to Christ
- Mary is given to us by Jesus as a gift. She is our Mother.
- Mary is the first disciple, a perfect witness of faith.

GOAL

The goal of the Life Night is to help the teens see Mary as a living witness of humility and faith. They will also understand Mary's role in the Church and how she can be our spiritual mother.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

Mary, the Mother of God, is our mother. She is a gift to all and a perfect witness of discipleship and faith. This Life Night will help the teens understand Mary's role in our faith and in their lives. The Life Night begins with a competition to match the Core Member to their nicknames. The teaching for the night will focus on Mary as Mother of God and a perfect witness of faith. After, the teens will gather in small groups to learn about a few of Mary's titles and discuss question on how she can be a mother to everyone. The night will end with a time of prayer by using the Litany of Mary.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This week we are getting to know our Mom — Mary, Mother of God. The night looks at how Mary is a gift to us from Jesus and how we have the honor to call her mother. Spend a few minutes this week discussing Mary with your teen. If possible, pray a rosary as a family. Here are a few possible questions:

1. What does a mother do?
2. How is Mary your mother?
3. What can we as a family do to invite Mary into our home and hearts?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this night should be simple and elegant, like in an art gallery. Place five or six pictures of Mary around the room. Each picture should represent different titles of Mary (for example — Mother of God, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Perpetual Help). Print and frame each picture large enough for the teens to see. Between the pictures, place roses and candles to add to the elegance of the space. In the front of the room, have a cross with a blue cloth draped around the middle.

MEDIA SUGGESTIONS

Song: "Mother's Song" by Kelly Pease (*Kelly Pease*)
Life Teen Video: "Saintly Minute: Mary, As Theotokos" (Life Teen Video Support 10)
Life Teen Video: "Marian Image Loop" (Life Teen Video Support 2)
Life Teen Video: "Mom's Rules & Reflections of Mary" (Best of I.V.)

NOTES

GATHER 15 Minutes

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (5 min)

The youth minister will welcome all the teens to the Life Night and introduce any teens at Life Night for the first time.

THE NICKNAME GAME (10 min)

Before the Life Night, create a poster board for each Core Member. On the poster board write a nickname that the Core Member had as a child (or still has). For the game, have all the Core Members stand along the front of the room. Each should be holding one of the poster boards (but not their own). Have one teen from each class volunteer to play the game. As each competes, the other contestants will wait outside the room. Each will be given 30 seconds to rearrange the poster boards so that the Core Member is holding their nickname. Once 30 seconds is up, the correct answers will be revealed. The contestant who has the most correct "matches" wins.

PROCLAIM 15 Minutes

"CALL ME MOM" TEACHING (10 min)

This teaching highlights the role of Mary in the Incarnation.

The teaching can be found on pages 34-36.

MOM'S WITNESS (5 min)

After the teaching for this night, invite a mom of one of the teens to give a witness about her experience of being a mother, the role of a mother and the power of a mother's love.

BREAK 30 Minutes

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (30 min)

Begin the small group time by talking about a few of the more popular Marian titles. Below are a few titles that can be used during this night. Choose one of these or another one appropriate to the culture of the parish and teens. After the brief discussion, spend time answering the small group questions.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

On December 9, 1531, an Indian named Juan Diego was on his way to Mass when he heard the sound of beautiful music and a voice calling him. A woman appeared to him and asked him where he was going. She told Juan Diego that she was Mary. She instructed Juan to go to the bishop and tell him to build a chapel in the valley in her honor. The bishop did not believe Juan's story. He requested a sign that the woman was indeed Mary. Two days later, December 11, Juan was on his way to take care of his dying uncle when Mary appeared to him once again. She instructed Juan to go to the top of the hill and gather roses, which normally didn't bloom in the winter. She arranged them on his tilma and told Juan to go to the bishop. When Juan arrived, he unfolded his tilma and upon it was the image of Mary exactly how she appeared to Juan Diego. The bishop was convinced of her request and built a chapel in Mary's honor by Christmas.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of the unborn and the Americas. We honor her feast day on December 12.

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is a Byzantine-style icon dated to the 13th century. The icon is painted on wood and portrays Mary, Mother of God, the Infant Jesus, and the archangels Michael and Gabriel. The icon is said to have

been created on the island of Crete (near Greece). When the island was invaded in the 15th century, the holy picture was taken by a refugee to Rome. The refugee requested that the picture be hung in a church for public veneration. The icon hung in St. Mathew's church nearly 300 years. When Rome was invaded in 1812, St. Matthew's was destroyed and the painting mysteriously disappeared. Fifty years later after a few providential events, the icon was found hidden away in the attic of an oratory. Pope Pius IX, who prayed in front of the image as a little boy, ordered that the icon be housed in the new church built over the ruins of St. Matthew. It can be seen there today.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help can be a powerful intercessor for us in our time of great need. One of the most popular prayers to Our Lady of Perpetual Help is the Memorare:

Remember, most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your aid, or sought your intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly to you, a Virgin of Virgins, my Mother. To you I come; before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but, in your mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

(Adapted from http://www.domestic-church.com/mariandevotions/page_37_Our_Lady_Perpetual_Help_June_27.html)

OUR LADY OF SORROWS

The devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows focuses on the suffering of Mary during the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. Traditionally, this suffering was not limited to the Passion and death event; rather, it comprised "the seven dolors" or "seven sorrows" of Mary, which were foretold by the priest Simeon who proclaimed to Mary, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:34-35). The seven sorrows of Mary are the prophecy of Simeon, the flight into Egypt, the losing of Jesus in the temple, Mary meets Jesus carrying the Cross, the Crucifixion, Mary receives the dead body of her Son and the burial of her Son. The feast was inserted into the Roman calendar in 1814, and Pope Pius X fixed the permanent date of September 15 for the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary (now simply called the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows).

(Adapted from <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/religion/re0364.html>)

Small Group Questions:

- Why do you think many non-Catholics struggle with Mary's role in our faith?
- What does your relationship with Mary look like? An acquaintance? A friend? A mother? Do you want to have a deeper devotion to her?
- If Mary were to appear to you tonight, what would go through your mind? What would you say to her? What would she say to you?
- How is Mary your Lady? If you had to call her "Your Lady of something," what would that be?

SEND 25 Minutes

RECAP OF LIFE NIGHT (5 min)

The youth minister should gather everyone back together. Set a tone of prayer by lowering the lights and having soft music playing in the background. Bring all the Marian images to the front of the room and place them on the sides of the cross with the candles. The youth minister should recap the night by reminding the teens that Mary is a gift to us all from Jesus. (Read John 19:25-27). She is our Mother. Some of us have good relationships with our earthly moms, but many do not. Where do you need a mom in your life? How can Mary be a mom to you? What area of your life do you need a mother's sweet and gentle love? She desires to know your heart and to lead you into a closer relationship with Jesus. Invite Mary into your heart.

LITANY OF MARY (10 min)

Before the Life Night, ask two teens to help with the Litany of Mary. Have one teen read the petition and one read the response. Pass out or project the Litany of Mary so that everyone can participate in prayer. The youth minister should challenge the teens to open their hearts and ask Mary to be their Mother.

The Litany of Mary can be found on page 37.

DECADE OF THE ROSARY (10 min)

Close the night by having the group pray together a decade of the rosary. If possible, project the words of the prayers on a screen. The youth minister should quickly introduce the rosary as a means to contemplate Jesus through the eyes of Mary. Have one teen lead the decade.

GOING DEEPER

- On the parish website or Facebook page, post the images of Mary from the Life Night and prayers for each so that the teens can pray throughout the week.
- Invite the group to finish the rosary during the coming week.

ADAPTING THIS LIFE NIGHT

- For larger youth groups, have all the teens participate in the Gather game by having them write down which nickname goes with which Core Member. Announce the correct answers after 1 minute and award prizes to the teens with the most correct answers.
- For smaller youth groups, before the Litany of Mary, ask the teens to speak out loud their petitions or prayers to know Mary better. These prayers can be prayed for as specific intentions during the litany.

CALL ME MOM TEACHING

John 1:3

The second Person of the Holy Trinity, God the Son, existed even before the creation of the world. St. John tells us that the second Person of the Trinity was the only son of God, begotten, not made; one in being with the father and that, "all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." The second Person of the Trinity is Jesus Christ.

**CCC 486-487, 496
CCC 501
Luke 1:26-38
CCC 721**

The Incarnation is when the Creator of the universe voluntarily chose to become human—to take on human nature—and save mankind from their sins. In this moment, the eternal Son of God is made the earthly son of Mary. We know that Mary deserves to be the Mother of God because of the Annunciation in Luke's Gospel. The angel Gabriel testifies that Mary's grace, given to her by the Holy Spirit, has made her worthy of bearing the Son of God.

**John 3:16-17
CCC 761-762**

Mary, as mother of our Lord, is told by Gabriel that her son will be the great Emmanuel, which means "God is with us." John tells us that the Lord God sent to us His only Son, that those who love Him may have eternal life. After the fall of Adam and Eve, God promised to send a savior, someone to defeat sin and to repay the debt we owed to God for disobeying His will. Jesus is the answer to this. When the Israelites prayed for relief from their enemies and liberation from their captors, the promise was fulfilled in the person of Christ. The eternal Word of God, the very wisdom of the Lord (*Logos*, in Greek) took on human flesh and entered into history in order to preserve the beauty and original plan for creation. Mary was the instrument of God's grace by which of salvation came into the world.

**CCC 507
Lumen Gentium, 64**

Today we know of our Lord's saving work, but we still long for life with Him. For this reason, we have the Church, the Bride of Christ, His Mystical Body. Fueled by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Church unites all peoples to Christ. Mary is a model for and the Mother of the Church. "The Church indeed...by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By preaching and Baptism she brings forth sons, who are conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse." Because of this likeness to our Blessed Mother, the Church finds herself able to aspire to the perfect discipleship of our Blessed Mother. In Mary's "yes" to our Lord, she became the first *disciple* (meaning "follower") of Jesus. Through the Church, we find the preserved message of Christ. As Our Lady cared for the well being of the Word of God, so, too, does the Church act as mother to all those united in Christ by virtue of their Baptism. Mary always leads us to Christ and helps us as members of the Church to find her holy Son. This is why Mary is the model of how we ought to act as "Church."

Catholics and Mary go together. No other religion has the same reverence for the Blessed Mother as Catholics do. As Catholics, we often hear the questions: "How could she be a virgin her whole life? Why do you worship Mary? Why do you believe in the Immaculate Conception? None of it is in the Bible!"

The Bible is the Word of God in its written form, but the Bible is not the sole source of God's revelation to man. The teachings on Mary are an example of this. From the early Church, men and women had a devotion to the Blessed Mother and the dogmas associated with her were passed on and preserved by the Church.

In Luke's Gospel, Mary is approached by the Angel Gabriel and is invited to be a part of God's plan for the salvation of the world. This means that Mary gave up any plans or dreams she had for her own life to assume the great responsibility of raising the Savior of the World. She would have to help Him as a teenager to become the

man He was born to be. Her response to this invitation was, "Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word."

Mary is the model of Christian life and a perfect example of discipleship. Mary is the perfect image of the Church as well. As members of the Mystical Body of Christ, we look to Mary to be our example of humility and graciousness.

It makes sense that a woman was chosen by God to be part of the salvation of the world because both a man and a woman (Adam and Eve) were responsible for the fall of humanity. This is why Mary is sometimes called the "New Eve" (and Christ the "New Adam") because her "yes" to God corrects Adam and Eve's "yes" to the serpent's lies.

Mary was able to accomplish this because, like Eve, she was created free from sin. We know this for many reasons. First, Gabriel identifies Mary as "full of grace." To be "full of grace" means having no sin, not even Original Sin, from the moment of conception. This is called the Immaculate Conception and was defined officially by Pope Pius XII in 1845. Miraculously, during this time a 14-year-old girl in France named Bernadette claimed to be receiving visions of a beautiful lady. Her parish priest told her to ask the lady her name. Bernadette told her priest that the lady said, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Bernadette had no way of understanding what this term meant or even a way of ever finding out that the Holy Father had defined this teaching only four years prior to her vision. This serves as a miraculous affirmation of Mary's status and excellence. The Immaculate Conception and the Incarnation are the work of the Holy Spirit. Mary is the perfect work of the Holy Spirit's grace poured out.

We call Mary the Mother of God because that is what she is. She is Jesus' mother, and Jesus is God. This is her highest privilege, to have been entrusted with the infant Lord for His most vulnerable first moments until His death on the cross. Mother of God (*Theotokos*, in Greek) is Mary's highest title.

We pray to our Blessed Mother because she is our spiritual protector and mother to us all. We can look to her as an example and as an aid in our life. She is a human being, like us. She knows and understands everything we are going through and is waiting to help us. We have only to ask.

CATHOLICS AND MARY

There is a religious prejudice that Catholics "worship" Mary, but this is incorrect. The act of worship is something that is exclusively reserved for the Trinity. The act of worship is when you recognize something as important above all else. Mary does not fit this definition. Mary is human like we are. The difference is her privileged role as Mother of God, her "yes" to the Annunciation, her Immaculate Conception and her perfect example of discipleship. For this, we give her the honor she is due. As in every other relationship we have with people in this world, we respect and honor them as they deserve. Celebrities and athletes are lauded with awards, wealth and fame. What then is the Mother of God deserving of? Mary is not worshipped or adored. Mary and the other saints in heaven are *venerated*, which means honored.

Another misconception is that Mary has particular powers and abilities. It's true that Mary can do great things like lead us to heaven, bestow graces upon us, and so on, but we must understand where these graces are from. The Trinity is the source of all goodness and grace. Any grace or miracles involving Mary are all rooted in the Trinity. When Mary appeared to St. Bernadette or St. Juan Diego, she did not decide one day that these holy individuals deserved a visit. Mary only does the Lord's will for her. When we pray and ask Mary to help us, she doesn't send us her grace; she takes our petition and recommends our cause to the Lord in a perfect manner so that He may bestow the necessary grace in our lives. Grace is God's life in us, not Mary's life in us.

CCC 148
Luke 1:38

CCC 484-511

CCC 721-726

CCC 963-972

When we pray through Mary, we are asking her simply to pray for us. We are not asking her to perform any divine action herself. All we are doing is asking her, the Mother of God, to pray for our intentions and offer them to our Lord. Remember the Wedding at Cana? The wine for the wedding ran out early and the bride and groom were facing embarrassment. Mary realized this predicament, so she brought the troubling situation to the attention of her Son. This is the first time we hear of Mary interceding for the needs of others, and the results were miraculous.

When we pray and ask Mary to pray, she does so with the voice of a mother to her child and the voice of the perfect disciple. When someone is put on trial, they hire a lawyer to represent them to the court, to be a mouthpiece for them so that their case is heard in the best possible way. Mary perfects our intentions, so that our prayers can be brought before the Lord with her assistance. Because Mary is already in heaven, she is supremely able to understand the best way to communicate with God.

Mark 3:6
Matthew 13:55

Jesus was God's only Son, but was He Mary's only Son? We hear about Jesus' brothers and sisters in the Gospels, so why does the Catholic Church say that Mary was always a virgin?

The issue mainly comes down to the words "brother" and "sister." These words in English signify an exact relationship—that of two persons of the same generation with common parents. In Jesus' time and in the language of the Gospel, there isn't the same association. The word used for brother or sister in the Gospels could also be used to describe a cousin, household member or even close family friend. Also, it's never indicated that Mary is the mother of any of these brothers and sisters of Jesus, only that they are connected to Jesus in a familial way.

CCC 496

"The Church has always understood these passages as not referring to other children of the Virgin Mary. In fact James and Joseph, 'brothers of Jesus,' are the sons of another Mary, a disciple of Christ, who St. Matthew significantly calls 'the other Mary.' They are closer relations of Jesus, according to an Old Testament expression."

CCC 500

The teaching of the Church is that Mary was a virgin before the Incarnation and remained a virgin after the birth of Christ. This is the tradition that has always been present within the Church and can be trusted because of its authenticity.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mary, Our Mother, "Mother of divine grace," "Seat of wisdom," and "Cause of our joy;" She is always a Mother to us and intercedes on our behalf. The Savior of the world was promised to her to grant her requests, and she in turn leads us to Him, her only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary



V. Lord, have mercy on us.

R. Christ, have mercy on us.

V. Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ hear us.

R. Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, **Have mercy on us.**
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, **Have mercy on us.**

Holy Trinity, One God, **Have mercy on us.**

Holy Mary, **Pray for us.**

Holy Mother of God, **Pray for us.**

Holy Virgin of virgins, **Pray for us.**

Mother of Christ, **Pray for us.**

Mother of divine grace, **Pray for us.**

Mother most pure, **Pray for us.**

Mother most chaste, **Pray for us.**

Mother inviolate, **Pray for us.**

Mother undefiled, **Pray for us.**

Mother most amiable, **Pray for us.**

Mother most admirable, **Pray for us.**

Mother of good counsel, **Pray for us.**

Mother of our Creator, **Pray for us.**

Mother of our Savior, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most prudent, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most venerable, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most renowned, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most powerful, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most merciful, **Pray for us.**

Virgin most faithful, **Pray for us.**

Mirror of justice, **Pray for us.**

Seat of wisdom, **Pray for us.**

Cause of our joy, **Pray for us.**

Spiritual vessel, **Pray for us.**

Vessel of honor, **Pray for us.**

Singular vessel of devotion, **Pray for us.**

Mystical rose, **Pray for us.**

Tower of David, **Pray for us.**

Tower of ivory, **Pray for us.**

House of gold, **Pray for us.**

Ark of the covenant, **Pray for us.**

Gate of Heaven, **Pray for us.**

Morning star, **Pray for us.**

Health of the sick, **Pray for us.**

Refuge of sinners, **Pray for us.**

Comforter of the afflicted, **Pray for us.**

Help of Christians, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Angels, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Patriarchs, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Prophets, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Apostles, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Martyrs, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Confessors, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Virgins, **Pray for us.**

Queen of all Saints, **Pray for us.**

Queen conceived without Original Sin,

Pray for us.

Queen assumed into heaven, **Pray for us.**

Queen of the most holy rosary, **Pray for us.**

Queen of Peace, **Pray for us.**

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
the world, **Spare us, O Lord.**

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
the world, **Graciously hear us O Lord.**

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
the world, **Have mercy on us.**

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

**R. That we may be made worthy of the
promises of Christ.**

Let us pray: Grant, we beseech Thee, O
Lord God, unto us Thy servants, that we
may rejoice in continual health of mind
and body; and, by the glorious intercession
of blessed Mary ever Virgin, may be
delivered from present sadness, and enter
into the joy of Thine eternal gladness.
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

CALL ME MOM CHECKLIST

CORE PLANNING TEAM:

DATE OF LIFE NIGHT:

ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE NIGHT:

☐ Give copies of the Life Night to each of the members of the planning team. Each person should read the Scripture and Catechism references as well as review the planning guide before the brainstorming meeting.

☐ Get the planning team together for a brainstorming meeting (this should last no longer than 1 hour). The team prays and discusses where the teens are in their faith journey in relation to this topic. Then using this planning guide as a starting point, the team adapts the Life Night to meet the needs of the teens and the parish. Create a detailed outline with any changes and/or adjustments.

☐ Assign the person responsible for each part of the Life Night:

Environment _____

Introductions _____

The Nickname Game _____

Mom's Witness _____

Small Group Discussions _____

Litany of Mary _____

Decade of the Rosary _____

Notes

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO LIFE NIGHT:

☐ Turn in a detailed outline of the Life Night to the youth minister. Allow the youth minister to give feedback and make any necessary changes.

☐ Create a list of needed supplies and materials. Assign a person to be responsible for collecting and/or purchasing the materials needed.

☐ Decide the people that will be doing the following things. Make sure they have a copy of the script and/or teaching outline. Inform them of any practices and/or deadlines.

Teaching _____

Mom's Witness _____

WEEK OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

☐ Written outline of the teaching is given to the youth minister and practiced.

☐ Run a dress rehearsal of the Life Night. Youth minister gives feedback.

☐ Create environment and collect needed supplies.

☐ E-mail entire Core Team an overview of the night and small group questions.

DAY OF THE LIFE NIGHT:

☐ Set up the environment. Make sure the room is clean and presentable.

☐ If needed, set up audio and video. Test the video clips to make sure both picture and sound work.

☐ Walk the entire Core team through the Life Night. Make sure all transitions are ready and everyone knows their roles.

☐ Pray! Pray for the teens attending the Night. Pray for God's will to be done through the night. Pray over those involved.