

# The Blessed Virgin Mary: Doctrine and Devotion/Session 3

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## COURSE OUTLINE: DEVOTION

*The Church rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion.... The liturgical feast dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an “epitome of the whole Gospel” expresses this devotion to the Virgin Mary (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 971).*

Principal Guide for the Course: Faith + Doctrine = True Devotion of Mary

### I. OPENING PRAYER/ MAGNIFICAT: The Canticle of Mary (Luke 1: 46:55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior  
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name.

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

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty.

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

### II. Magnificat /Canticle of Mary (Luke 1: 46-55)

- i. Mary's Song of Praise: Latin for “magnifies”/adoration of the Lord
- ii. Liturgy of the Hours- prayed daily at Vespers
- iii. Connected to Marian Feasts
- iv. Rooted in Scripture
  - New Testament: Mary’s joyous response to her cousin Elizabeth’s greeting (Luke
  - Old Testament phrases: take on new meanings; psalm structure/related to the Song of Hannah
- v. Structure (4 Strophes)
  - Part I—Mary’s self-understanding of herself with God (relationship)
    - + Lord (focus on the greatness of the Lord)
      - Yahweh: merciful and gracious
    - + Humility ~Savior: God’s Mercy and Mighty One (Salvation/liberation)

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- Part II & III—What has God done/connects to Beatitudes
- Part III- History/tradition of her people/Promise to Abraham and his descendants

## DISCUSSION

- How is the Magnificat a prayer of praise and humility?
- How do you know the Lord/Yahweh as merciful and gracious in your life?

### III. Rosary

#### i. Brief History

- Beads
  - + Ancient peoples/religion [not specifically Catholic]
  - + Tangible, concrete counter to be still/focus
- Linked to 150 psalms of Old Testament
- Built on Scripture
  - + Hail Mary
    - o Part I- Scripture based (Luke)
    - o Part II- Intercessory prayer from Church Tradition
  - + Mysteries/Life of Christ (exceptions: Assumption and Crowning of Mary )

#### ii. John Paul II

- October 2002- Apostolic Letter, *On the Most Holy Rosary (Rosarium Viginis Mariae)*
- Introduction on Rosary
  - + Christocentric prayer which is Marian in character
  - + the Christian people sit at the **school of Mary**
  - + path of contemplation/ “contemplates the beauty of the face of Christ”
  - + an experience of the depths of Christ’s love
- Four Fold Understanding of the Rosary (John Paul II)
  - + We remember Christ with Mary
  - + We learn Christ from Mary
  - + We pray to Christ with Mary
  - + We proclaim Christ with Mary
- Hail Mary and Mysteries are a compendium of Scripture
- Luminous Mysteries (Public Life of Christ) are introduced by John Paul II
- Genuine “training in holiness”
  - + Sunday & Wednesday: Glorious Mysteries
  - + Monday & Saturday: Joyful Mysteries
  - + Tuesday & Friday: Sorrowful Mysteries
  - + Thursday: Luminous Mysteries
- Prayer for Peace
- Prayer for the Family

## BREAK AND DISCUSSION

- Discuss how the rosary is a “compendium of the Gospel.”
- At Fatima, the Blessed Mother asked the children to pray the rosary. As teachers and catechists, why is important to teach and encourage students to pray the rosary?

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## IV. Our Lady of Guadalupe: December 12

### i. Theological Considerations:

- “As her image was imprinted on Juan Diego’s tilma, so Mary becomes imprinted in the deepest recesses of the hearts of all who come to her. Under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mary is the patroness of the Americas.”
- John Paul II: Shaped his pontificate
  - + Mary, Mother of the Americas
    - Star of the New Evangelization (Gospel)
    - Mother of a new civilization of love

### ii. The Story (16<sup>th</sup> century)

- Spaniards destroy sense of identity/culture/heritage
- Impose Christianity/sense of collective depression
- 1531- Mary appears to Juan Diego as Mother of the true God

### iii. The Tilma- great symbolism (dressed and looks like an indigenous pregnant woman; in front of sun (God); colors, flowers, stars/constellation, black band. [Angels and moon may have been added later.]

### iv. The Meaning and the Message

“Know, know for sure, my dearest, littlest, and youngest son, that I am the perfect and ever Virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the God of truth through Whom everything lives, the Lord of all things near us, the Lord of heaven and earth. I want very much to have a little house built here for me, in which I will show Him, I will exalt Him and make Him manifest. I will give Him to the people in all my personal love, in my compassion, in my help, in my protection: because I am truly your merciful Mother, yours and all the people who live united in this land and of all the other people of different ancestries, my lovers, who love me, those who seek me, those who trust in me. Here I will hear their weeping, their complaints and heal all their sorrows, hardships and sufferings.”

- Three parts of her message
  - + Mary asks (sanctuary: not just for veneration but social function)
  - + Mary promises: four maternal overtures
    - To be a mother (love and compassion)
    - To show herself as a merciful mother
    - To hear weeping
    - To heal sorrows/remedy their suffering
  - + Mary affirms: she is the Mother of the true God/all peoples
- Instructs Juan Diego
  - + to show her to all of local inhabitants and peoples of the world
  - + to make her conditions known (to love her, to pray and seek her)
- Mary replaces the “goddesses” of the former way through invitation to the way of her Son
- Mary links love and life to the true God

### DISCUSSION:

How does the message of Mary from this 16<sup>th</sup> Century apparition challenge us to live as Christians today?