

**August, 2010**

**Appendix on *Mariology***

**Goal 16: HOLY MARY VIRGIN AND MOTHER**

Provide a basic understanding on what Holy Mother Church teaches regarding the Holy Virgin Mary and the popular religiosity.

Explanation of the symbol: the mother figure who embraces Jesus' disciples as her sons, reminds us that she was a gift of Christ on the Cross, "(son there is your mother)", and the faceless reminds us that as an example of Mary, the disciple can be a part of God's family if he does the will of the Father as Jesus has asked.

**I. OBJECTIVES:**

1. Define the dogmas of faith of the Most Holy Virgin Mary
2. Clarify and identify the difference between: cult, popular religiosity, devotion.
3. Identify Mary of Guadalupe as Patroness or Empress of the Americas and the Immaculate Conception as Patroness of the Diocese of Tyler and of all the United States.
4. Affirm the real Marian devotion

**Focus Discussion**

Who was the first person who talked to you about the Blessed Mother?

What do you know about the Blessed Mother?

Do you know how to pray the rosary? Who taught you?

Has your image of Mary changed over the years?

**CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH REFERENCES (HANDOUT)**

**MARIAN DOGMAS**

- I. The Immaculate Conception
- II. Mother of God (Theotokos) – the Annunciation
- III. Perpetual Virginity
- IV. Assumption

**MARIAN DEVOTIONALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE – UNDERSTANDING THE DOGMAS**

**Introduction**

In love the Most Holy Trinity created the world and entrusted it to the care of humanity. When Adam and Eve sinned they distanced themselves from God and there seemed no way in which humanity could ever return creation back to God. The Trinity in love chose to bring about redemption through the Incarnation. From the time Adam and Eve left the Garden until the angel appeared to Mary, Humanity was prepared for the coming of the Messiah by the law and the prophets. In addition to the experiences recounted in the Old Testament, there was also a

preparation for the Incarnation that went unseen and unspoken: This unseen and unspoken preparation was Mary the woman who would agree to be the mother of the Lord.

### **Immaculate Conception**

In God's plan for redeeming humanity the eternal Word would become flesh and dwell amongst us. In considering the Incarnation, it seems fitting that Jesus would take upon himself human nature free of sin. The problem is that every descendant of Adam and Eve has been born with a human nature that is infected by sin. In preparation for the coming Incarnation, Mary was preserved from the effect of sin at the moment of her conception. This grace of being free of sin was bestowed on Mary in anticipation of the redemption that would be brought by Jesus Christ. Mary is therefore the first of the redeemed. The Immaculate Conception of Mary is therefore very closely connected to the mystery of Jesus Christ the Word made flesh.

Not only was Mary freed from sin at the first moment of her life, throughout her life she chose to love God in all her thoughts, words, and deeds. Mary chose to avoid sin everyday of her life and to live in God's life and love which is grace. In this she was unlike Eve who while being created without sin did choose to sin and distanced herself from God's love. It is for this reason the Angel Gabriel in greeting Mary refers to her as "full of grace". Mary's cooperation with God's grace gives witness to us that sin is not natural for the human person.

Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States of America and also of the Diocese of Tyler. The Cathedral which is the visible sign of the unity of our local Church is dedicated as the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Prayer reverence:

The opening prayer for this feast, December 8:

"Father, you prepared the Virgin Mary to be the worthy mother of you Son. You let her share beforehand in the salvation Christ would bring by his death, and kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception...."

### **Annunciation (Mother of God)**

At the time of the Annunciation, when the angel greeted Mary, Mary was asked if she would cooperate with God's plan for the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. Mary agrees with her Magnificat, proclaiming her joy in God and that her life shown forth with the Glory of God her Savior. Jesus was conceived of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, without an earthly father. In this way the Eternal Word takes upon himself the human nature free of sin and at the same time is truly the Son of God. Mary's virginity before the birth of Jesus demonstrates clearly that Jesus is truly the Son of God and the Son of Man. Both Mary and Joseph, her spouse, were committed as parents to the care and raising of Jesus. Christians from the earliest times have honored Mary as not only a virgin before the birth of Jesus, but throughout her life. The pain of child birth is an effect of sin in our world, Mary free from sin would have brought forth the baby Jesus in a natural way, but without the pain we associate with child birth. Mary remained a virgin throughout her life.

Mary has been called the "Mother of God" as a testimony to the reality of the Incarnation. Jesus is true God and true man, but he is only one person – the Eternal Son of God. Mary is a creature,

created by God. Mary in no way creates God. Yet, God chose to become her son. As [Cyril of Alexandria](#) around the year 400 wrote, "I am amazed that there are some who are entirely in doubt as to whether the holy Virgin should be called *Theotokos* or not. For if our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how is the holy Virgin who gave [Him] birth, not [*Theotokos*]?" (Epistle 1, to the monks of Egypt; [PG 77:13B](#)). Thus the significance of *Theotokos* lies more in what it says about Jesus than any declaration about Mary.

Prayer reference:

“Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.”

Eucharistic prayer II and III “...with Mary, the virgin Mother of God;...”

### **Perpetual Virginity**

“The deepening of faith in the virginal mother hood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virgin even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man.” CCC 499 In so many prayers we say “Blessed Mary, ever-virgin.” Since the time of Christ Christians have held to the perpetual virginity of Mary. That is that Mary was a virgin before Jesus was born and after Jesus was born, and in fact that the birth of Jesus did not violate her virginity. Since the time of the Protestant Reformation (in the 1500s) there has been some groups of Christians that have held to Mary having other children so Jesus had blood brothers and sisters.

Jesus came to establish the family of God by grace. All of humanity is equally close to Jesus. By Baptism we are made brothers and sisters of Jesus, but Jesus had no biological brothers or sisters. In the Gospel he makes clear it is not the relationship of blood that is important but the relationship of faith and love put into action. (add citation\*\*) Amongst the disciples of Jesus, Mary stands preminent. She preserved herself throughout her life focused on God and pondered the great mystery of her son and Savior in her heart. She is model of evangelizer in her always pointing toward her son, the Son of God.

The fact that Mary had no children other than Jesus is also demonstrated at Calvary when shortly before he dies, Jesus who has been responsible to care for his widowed mother lovingly entrusts her to the care of John who is standing near her at the foot of the cross. If Jesus had other siblings they would have properly taken responsibility for Mary as their mother. (\*\* Gospel, and See CCC 500)

Some examples in prayers:

In the “I confess to Almighty God...” “I ask the Blessed Mary, ever-virgin, all the angels and saints...”

Eucharistic Prayer I: “...we honor Mary, the ever-virgin mother go Jesus Christ our Lord and God.” Which during the octave of Christmas is expanded “...we celebrate that day (night) when Mary without loss of her virginity gave the world its savior. We honor Mary, the ever-virgin mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and God.” [note the new translation of the Sacramentary may change this wording. So these quotes may have to be modified.]

## **Assumption**

Since the sin of Adam and Eve it has been the fate of humans to suffer death whereby the soul is separated from the body and the dead body lies decaying until the resurrection on the last day. At the end of her earthly life, God spared Mary this pain of death where the soul gives up the body. Since Mary remained throughout her life in close relationship with God and never sinned, she was properly spared the trauma of death. By God's grace, when her earthly life came to an end, Mary peacefully passed from this world and was taken up into Heaven body and soul. The Eastern Church celebrates her “dormition”, when her life ended and she seemed dead, prior to her being taken up into Heaven. Her Assumption makes her the first born of the dead and anticipates the day when the souls of all the just will be reunited with their body at the resurrection on the last day.

Prayer reference:

Mass of the Assumption, during the day:

Opening Prayer: “All-powerful and ever-living God, you raised the sinless Virgin Mary, mother of your son, body and soul to the glory of heaven. May we see heaven as our final goal and come to share her glory.”

## **MARIAN DEVOTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH:**

### **APPARITIONS**

There are only three Marian apparitions recognized and approved by Holy Mother Church universally. A point should be made here that other apparitions exist with approval by local bishops that have not received universal approval by the Church. (for example: Our Lady of Knock, the Virgin of Mount Carmel, the Virgin of Chiquinquirá, the Virgin of Cobre, etc). There are also ‘alleged apparitions’ not approved by the Church, like Medjugorje. And there are a few “alleged apparitions” that are specifically denied by the Church, like Bayside.

The three approved by the Church universal are:

- 1. Our Lady of Guadalupe** in the year 1531 to an Indian named Juan Diego. We celebrate this apparition every year on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of December. The message of Our Lady led to an end of the human sacrifices by the Aztecs. In recent times Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe has become broadly respected as patroness of the efforts to stop abortion. Mary, under this title has been declared Patroness and Empress of the Americas.
- 2. Our Lady of Lourdes** in the year 1858 to a young humble girl named Bernadette Soubirous. We celebrate this event every year on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February.
- 3. Our Lady of Fatima** in the year 1917 to three shepherders, Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta. We celebrate this apparition every year on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May.

## **POPULAR RELIGIOSITY**

By religion of the people, popular religiosity or popular piety, we understand it to be deep joint beliefs sealed by God, of the basic attitudes they manifest that are derived from those convictions and expressions.

The Rosary has a unique place in the universality of this devotional practice. The meditation upon the Mysteries of our redemption helps us to ponder in our hearts the Mystery of Christ as Mary pondered the Word in her heart. Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries to the traditional Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious Mysteries.

From days of old, popular piety has been a part of the development of the faith of human beings. Some examples are:

- 1. Processions:** David transports the Arc of the Covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:11-19)
- 2. Pilgrimages:** Jesus went up to Jerusalem with his parents, that would go every year to the paschal feast. (Luke 2:41-43).
- 3. Ceremonies:** During his public life, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem to participate in some feasts like the Jewish feast of Booths (John 7:1-15) and the Paschal feast (Mark 14:12-16).
- 4. Prayers:** These might be recited or sung. The Magnificat, Jesus often went off to pray, (\*\* need citations)
- 5. Chaplets:** The Rosary, or the Franciscan Crown (7 decades on the Joys of Mary), Divine Mercy Chaplet, the New Evangelization Chaplet.

## **INTEGRATION OF THE GOALS**

THIS APPENDIX TO THE 15 GOALS IS ADDED TO CONSCIOUSLY CALL EACH OF US TO REFLECT UPON MARY THE FIRST DISCIPLE. VATICAN II POINTS TO MARY AS MOTHER AND EXEMPLAR FOR US AS CHRISTIANS AND FOR THE CHURCH. SHE DEMONSTRATES IN A POWERFUL WAY EACH OF THE GOALS:

**TRINITY:** SHE HAS THE MOST PROFOUND RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. INDEED SHE COOPERATES WITH THE TRINITY IN AGREEING TO BE THE MOTHER OF THE WORD IN THE INCARNATION.

**RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD:** THROUGHOUT HER LIFE MARY STAYED CLOSE TO GOD AND CHOSE NEVER TO SIN. SHE PONDERED JESUS AND HIS WORDS IN HER HEART.

**CHURCH:** MARY WAS GATHERED WITH THE APOSTLES AND THE BELIEVERS IN THE UPPER ROOM ON PENTECOST WHEN AT THE END OF THE EUCHARIST CELEBRATION THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME UPON THEM AND THE APOSTLES WENT OUT IN WITNESS TO THE TRUTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

**FAITH:** MARY'S FAITH WAS DEMONSTRATED AT THE INCARNATION AND AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

**SCRIPTURE:** MARY'S MAGNIFICAT DEMONSTRATES HER KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

CREATION: MARY RECOGNIZES THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MATERIAL WORLD TO GOD AND AS THE NEW EVE COOPERATES WITH GOD'S GRACE.

SACRAMENTS: MARY PARTICIPATED IN THE EUCHARIST FOLLOWING THE RESURRECTION OF HER SON.

COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS: MARY WAS AN IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. BELIEVERS TURNED TO HER AS THEIR MOTHER IN FAITH.

HUMAN DIGNITY: MARY RECOGNIZED HER OWN SACRED DIGNITY AND PRESERVED IT FREE FROM SIN. SHE ALSO RESPECTED THE DIGNITY OF OTHERS.

MORAL CONSCIENCE: MARY UNDERSTOOD WELL THAT RIGHT LIVING WAS NOT ABOUT SIMPLY OBSERVING SOME EXTERNAL RULES, BUT OF HAVING A HEART THAT WAS CLOSE TO GOD AND LIVING ONES LIFE IN A WAY THAT MAGNIFIES THE GLORY OF GOD.

DISCIPLESHP: MARY IS THE FIRST DISCIPLE AND A GREAT WITNESS TO EVANGELIZATION.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS: MARY RELATES TO EACH HUMAN PERSON WITH THE LOVE OF JESUS

SOCIAL JUSTICE: TREATING PEOPLE WITH RESPECT AND WITH A MATERNAL CARE FOR ALL, BUT PARTICULARLY FOR THE POOR AND THE NEEDY.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE: MARY PUTS HER LOVE OF GOD INTO SERVICE. FIRST WHILE SHE LIVED IN THIS WORLD, LIKE AT CANA, AND THEN FROM HEAVEN IN HER MATERNAL INTERCESSION.

PRAYER: MARY'S PRAYER IN JOINING HER HEART WITH THE SACRED HEART OF HER SON AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS. HER LIVING IN THE RELATIONSHIP OF GRACE WITH THE TRINITY.