

The first mystery of the Preparation

**Mary consents to be  
the Mother of the Christ**

God has a universal will for all of us that is contained in the Ten Commandments, the Great Commandment of Love, and the moral teaching of the Church.

God also has a *special* will for each one of us. For Mary, God's special will was that she should be the Mother of the Messiah. Her acceptance is the model for every Christian. We need her help to say “yes” to God’s unique plan for each of us.

*We pray for the grace to accept God's special will for us.*

Our Father

1. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth;

Hail Mary

2. To a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

Hail Mary

3. And the angel said to her: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.”

Hail Mary

4. When she heard him, she was troubled at his word, and wondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Hail Mary

5. And the angel said to her: “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

Hail Mary

6. “Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

Hail Mary

7. “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and his kingdom shall have no end.”

Hail Mary

8. Mary replied to the angel, “How can this be since I know not man?”

Hail Mary

9. The angel said to her: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”

Hail Mary

10. And Mary said: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to your word.”

Hail Mary

Glory be

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*Reference:* Luke 1:26-38

The second mystery of the Preparation

**Mary goes to help her cousin Elizabeth**

Mary has just been given the greatest honor of the human race—the Motherhood of the Messiah, the Motherhood of the God-Man, Jesus. At the same time she is told that her cousin Elizabeth is with child.

Mary does not expect to be waited upon because of the honor God has given her. Instead, she promptly leaves home—with Jesus—to help her older cousin.

It is noteworthy that in this first example of Christian service, help is extended to a member of Mary's own family. How peaceful will be the Christian family inspired by this spirit of being helpful to others.

*We pray for the grace to bring Christ to others by serving their needs.*

Our Father

1. “Behold, your cousin Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age;

Hail Mary

2. “She who was called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible with God.”

Hail Mary

3. Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country to a town of Judah, and she entered the house of Zachary and greeted Elizabeth.

Hail Mary

4. When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb.

Hail Mary

5. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and cried out with a loud voice—

Hail Mary

6. Saying: “Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Hail Mary

7. “And how have I deserved that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

Hail Mary

8. “The moment I heard your greeting, the babe in my womb leaped for joy.

Hail Mary

9. “Blessed is she who believed that the things promised her by the Lord would be fulfilled.”

Hail Mary

10. And Mary said: “My soul shows forth the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

Hail Mary

Glory be

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*Reference: Luke 1:36-47*

## The third mystery of the Preparation

### Jesus is born in Bethlehem

The angels announced the birth of the Savior as “good news of great joy.” In taking on our human nature, God the Son poured himself out for us, and from this we learn that joy comes from the giving of self.

Another message of the angels is that joy comes from personal acceptance of Jesus as our Savior. The proud can never experience this joy, for they refuse to admit their need for salvation; or they pursue a futile quest for joy in pleasures and possessions.

*We give thanks that the Son of God came to save us.*

Our Father

1. [While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem for the census,] the time came for her delivery.

Hail Mary

2. And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes.

Hail Mary

3. She laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hail Mary

4. There were shepherds in the same region, living in the fields and keeping watch over their flocks at night.

Hail Mary

5. And behold, an angel of the Lord came to them, and the glory of God shone round about them, and they were very much afraid.

Hail Mary

6. The angel said to them: “Do not be afraid for I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be to all the people.

Hail Mary

7. “Today in the town of David there has been born to you a Savior who is Christ the Lord;

Hail Mary

8. “And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.”

Hail Mary

9. Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God,

Hail Mary

10. And saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.”

Hail Mary

Glory be

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*Reference: Luke 2:1-14*

## The fourth mystery of the Preparation

### **The Holy Family fulfills the law**

It is common to be tempted to think that we are above the law. Almost anything suffices for this temptation—a bit of excellence in athletics, the arts, or education; personal achievement, political office, or honors. These can feed the germ of false pride that can lead us to think we are above God's laws instead of giving humble thanks for whatever gifts we have received.

Joseph and Mary knew that they were very special, unique in the history of mankind. Yet they did not think they were above the law.

*We pray for an increase in religious obedience.*

Our Father

1. When the time came for her purification according to the Law of Moses, they took Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.

Hail Mary

2. There was in Jerusalem a just and devout man named Simeon, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

Hail Mary

3. When the parents of the child Jesus brought Him into the temple, Simeon took Him into his arms and blessed God—

Hail Mary

4. Saying: “Now you are letting your servant go in peace, O Lord, according to your word, because my eyes have seen your salvation.”

Hail Mary

5. And he said to Mary: “Behold, this child is destined to be a sign which is rejected ...and your own soul a sword shall pierce.”

Hail Mary

6. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem for the Passover as was the custom.

Hail Mary

7. After the feast was over and they were returning, the boy Jesus remained in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.

Hail Mary

8. After three days, they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.

Hail Mary

9. And He said to them: “Why did you look for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?”

Hail Mary

10. And He went down with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them, and his mother kept all these things in her heart.

Hail Mary

Glory be

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*Reference: Luke 2:22-52*

## The fifth mystery of the Preparation

### John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus

The last event in the divine preparation for the public ministry of Jesus was the preaching of John the Baptist. He was led by the Holy Spirit to preach the call to repentance, to a real change of heart and behavior—as Jesus would also do. He also witnessed to the permanence of marriage and the evil of adultery, and for this he paid the price of martyrdom.

St. John the Baptist is the first adult martyr of the New Testament. He is the only person in the Bible to die specifically for his witness to the marriage bond.

*We pray for the gifts of repentance and respect for true marriage.*

Our Father

1. John the Baptist was in the wilderness of Judea, preaching: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Hail Mary

2. The people went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

Hail Mary

3. Then he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism.

Hail Mary

4. He said to them: “Brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

Hail Mary

5. “If you are repentant, bring forth the right kind of fruit.”

Hail Mary

6. [Later], Herod seized John and bound him in prison because Herod had married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.

Hail Mary

7. John had told Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.”

Hail Mary

8. Herodias wanted to kill John, but she could not because Herod feared John, knowing he was a just and holy man.

Hail Mary

9. But Herod said to the daughter of Herodias after her dance: “Ask me for whatever you want, and I will grant it.”

Hail Mary

10. She asked her mother, “What shall I ask for?” and she said, “The head of John the Baptist.”

Hail Mary

Glory be

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*References: Matthew 3:1-12; Mark 6:14-29*