



Mary
Our Mother + Queen

Heart of Mary Women's Fellowship



heartofmarywf.com

About This Study

We hope that you'll dive in, grow in the Lord, and share with others what beauty God reveals to you through it. If you are doing this study independently, know that we at HOM are here for you & that you also have a LARGE community of women through our website and social media that are participating too! You are truly never alone!

If you are completing this study in a group setting - we are excited that you have found a local community to grow with, on top of our online sisterhood. Please use this study journal for your reference, resource, and more during your meetings and the personal time leading up to it.

Looking for a group? Please visit www.heartofmarywf.com/groups to find a meet up near you.

Are you already in one but not listed on our website? Looking to start one? Please contact us for more information about our "HOM Ambassador" program. We have team members available specifically to help you grow a local group and lead other women through community, prayer, and devotion. Their support is available at all times. We also want to help you grow! We will advertise your group on our website & social media! And we have free resources for you as well. Please email us at heartofmarywf@aol.com

Note: All written content has been reviewed by a Catholic spiritual director to cross check that all statements are align with the teachings and tenants of the Roman Catholic Church.

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Scripture: 2 Thes. 2:15, Heb 11:5, 1 Marc 2:58, Rev 6:9, Rev 12:1

Rejoice, dear sisters! Today is the Feast of the Assumption of Mary into heaven. This means that she was taken up to heaven body and soul. Today we will introduce this study on Mary our Mother, but given that it happens to fall on the Feast of the Assumption, it's only fitting we focus on this treasured doctrine of the Church. Later on in this study we'll discuss many aspects of Mary: her virginal birth, her Queenship of heaven and earth, and we'll touch on a couple of the Vatican-approved apparitions, and more!

Today's feast is often a tough doctrine to understand: if heaven is for our souls, how is Mary's corporeal (bodily) self also in heaven? The Church has always taught that Mary's body was assumed into heaven. While there isn't a direct scriptural connection to this belief, Saint Paul teaches in his second letter to the Thessalonians to hold fast to oral (not just written) tradition. Apostolic tradition, then, teaches us that Mary was assumed into heaven.

The almost universally accepted teaching is that Mary did not die. Pope Pius XII in *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950) defined that Mary, "...after the completion of her Earthly life was assumed body and soul into the Glory of Heaven." Adam and Eve were punished for their sin by death, but given that Mary was created immaculately, that is, without any stain of sin, it's possible to draw the conclusion that she wouldn't have needed to die or have been punished by death.

While there is little historical or scriptural proof that Mary's body was assumed, there are certain truths which back up this doctrine. It is known that from very early on, the bones and relics of saints were kept by the early Christians. Cities clamored over who would get to be the final resting place for this saint or that one, and often built churches devoted to their particular saint. Relics were heavily guarded

and highly prized. No city, however, claims to have the bones or remains of Mary. Why, if relics were so intrinsically valued from early on, would there be no lauded resting place for Mary’s remains?

Mary wasn’t the first to be assumed body and soul into heaven: Enoch and Elijah were both assumed into heaven. Why wouldn’t God do the same for His Blessed Mother, who was free from sin and the ultimate Ark of the New Covenant? The honor that was given to the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the manna from heaven, the tablets of the Ten Commandments, and the staff of Aaron, was unchallenged and unmatched. Due to the great value of the contents, it was made of incorruptible wood. Mary, then, is considered the “incorruptible,” the Ark of the New Covenant: Jesus Christ.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us (966): “Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into Heavenly Glory and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things...” While there is no basis in Scripture for this tradition, it is still one that we, as Catholics, hold near and dear to our hearts.

In the last book of the New Testament, Revelation, we glean information about Mary’s assumption. In Rev: 6:9, we see only the souls of the martyrs in heaven. In Rev 12:1, we see Mary clothed with the sun, both body and soul.

Mary is so special because of her involvement with salvation history. There are some circumstances and aspects of her birth, life, and death that are hard for our little mortal brains to fully understand. During this study on our Mother Mary, however, we’ll walk through these mysteries and hopefully understand them a little better or at least be able to accept them with faith.

- Mandi

Reflection: What part of our Church’s teachings on Mary is hardest for you to understand? Is it the virginal birth? Or the assumption?

Reflection: When was the last time you prayed to Mary, specifically to Mary, for guidance or help?

Act: Ponder the mysteries surrounding Mary, and make time to say a prayer to her on our journey of learning about her.



Scripture: Lk 1:26-38, Is 7:14

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is one surrounded by a LOT of confusion. It's a completely unique and singularly significant mystery of the Church. While some believe it was Christ who was conceived on the Feast, truly it is the conception of Mary by her parents (ya'll know how that works—if you don't, ask your mamma). Mary was conceived without original sin, and with an amount of sanctifying graces we cannot even fathom. Mary was truly pure, in every sense of the word. The Angel's greeting to her at the Annunciation indicates to us that she was in a state of being full of grace. She'd certainly need to be in such a state in order to carry and bear the ultimate new covenant: Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mary's blameless state was predicted in Isaiah 7:14, "Maid shall be with child, and shall bear a son, that shall be called Emmanuel." This predicts Mary's state of virginity and grace. There is a simple and direct analogy used to explain how Mary can be truly human and still truly sinless: pretend there is a deep pit and a guy falls in. Another guy comes along and saves the first guy from the pit by pulling him out. A lady walks by and is about to fall in, but the second guy stops her from falling into the pit in the first place. She's also saved from the pit, by being prevented from falling into it in the first place! In the same way, Mary was saved from original sin from the very beginning through the grace of God the Father.

Mary's state of perpetual grace opened the way for her to have the Lord dwell within her womb. When she was visited by the angel, Gabriel greeted her and told her that she would conceive in her womb and have a son whom she was to name Jesus. She asked the angel how this could be, as she'd not known a man. The angel tells her that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and her son would be known as the Son of God (Luke 1:26-38). The way Luke structures this chapter and the language he uses is full of Old Testament allusions and symbols. (give an example of said symbols) Mary immediately tells the angel to let it be done according to his word, and in her acceptance of God's will (remember—she still had free will



Scripture: Gen 11:30, Gen 17:16, 2 Sam 7:12-13, Lk 1:3-22

What do Sarah, Rachel, Esther, and Abraham all have in common with Mary? While they weren't all alive at the same time, there is a remarkable symmetry between each of these Old Testament figures and Mary. There is such a beautiful symmetry between the Old Testament and the New Testament. , Aside from the prophets and Christ (think of the Israelites spending 40 years of wandering in the desert and Christ in the desert for 40 days, the twelve tribes of Israel pointing toward the twelve apostles), the most obvious example of this symmetry and foreshadowing is in how the Old Testament paves the way for and points toward our Mother Mary.

Sarah, the free wife of Abraham (as opposed to Hagar, the slave wife), was sterile. It was in Genesis chapter 17 verse 16 that the Lord told Abraham that He would bless Sarah and Abraham with a child and their descendants would be numerous. The woman whose womb had known no child, would bear a son. Mary is the wife free from sin and its subjugation. She had known no man, but would bear a son. Her son is the head of numerous descendants, the followers of Christ: His Church.

Rachel was the mother of Joseph who was sold by his brothers for 20 pieces of silver. Joseph then comes to power in Egypt, and is the savior of his family and the Egyptians. Mary is the mother of Christ, who was sold for thirty pieces of silver. By His death, He became the savior of the human race.

Esther was chosen to be queen by King Ahasuerus for her beauty. All of her people were condemned to death by the workings of an enemy. She's the only one who isn't included in the condemnation. She manages to foil the plot and save her people from death. Out of the entire human race, Mary was the only one not subject to original sin, the condemnation to spiritual death. She helps her Son in His mission of defeating sin and death, and saving her people. She continues to intercede for her people as we continue in our journey away from spiritual death.

It can also be said that Abraham foreshadows Mary: God made three promises to Abraham:

- That his children would be a great nation
- That his descendants would possess the land of Canaan
- And that in him, all the nations of the world would count themselves blessed.

In Mary’s child, Christ, all of the promises are fulfilled. Luke draws many parallels between Mary and Abraham. They have both found favor with God, both are a source of blessings for their descendants, and she is praised for her faith in the promise that through a miracle and God’s work, she would have a son who would bless the world.

The proclamations of the prophet Nathan to David parallel the angel Gabriel’s proclamations to Mary in Luke. It’s almost like the New Testament passages in Luke are echoing the Old Testament passages in 2 Samuel.

- “I will preserve the offspring of your body after you, and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me.” (2 Sam. 7:12)
- “He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.” (Luke 1:32-3)
- “I will make his royal throne secure forever.” (2 Sam. 7:13)
- “And his reign will have no end.” (Luke 1:33)

In God’s wonderful plan, He, from the very beginning of time meant for us to have a Savior and knew the manner in which our Savior would join us. He alluded to Mary in so many places of the Old Testament that it’s hard to deny that there is a magnificent plan at work and there always has been.

- *Mandi*

Reflection: Where else can you think of a parallel from the Old Testament to the New Testament?

Reflection: When you pray a Hail Mary, do you think of the Old Testament references and allusions to Mary, or only the New Testament images?

Act: Ponder the symmetry involved in the planning of mankind and salvation, and how much love our dear Lord has for us! Take a moment to be grateful.



Scripture: 1 Pet 1:6, Jn 19:26-27

In doing my research for writing this study, I have to admit: I was a little overwhelmed. There is SO MUCH to know and learn about our Mama Mary, and yet, I was having a really hard time coming up with eighteen whole study topics/days. I was having some tough struggles in my personal life, work was getting overwhelming, my classes were overwhelming me, and I had one of those instructors who just REFUSED to give full marks on any assignment. She'd take off points for the most subjective and petty things.

As a type-A control freak, I was really struggling. I had a very close family member who was facing potentially serious surgery, and on top of school and work stresses, I had forgotten one really awesome, amazing thing: our Mother Mary wants it all from us. She wants to take it off of us, and to help us carry our burdens. I went through the Heart of Mary Consecration group last August (what timing for this study, eh? Mary knows what she's doing) and for me one of the most wonderful parts about the consecration is being able to cast all worries, stresses, and scares into Mary's arms. Since my consecration, one of the things I have to remind myself is to LET IT GO (cue Elsa). Heart of Mary has a beautiful phone lock screen that has almost become etched into my phone, I've kept it so long, with a quote from 1 Peter: Be truly glad; there is wonderful joy ahead.

In discussing the wonderful peace I've been able to work towards with our Mother Mary, I hope to highly encourage you to check out consecration. Saint John Paul II describes consecration to Mary as having brought him to a turning point in his life. In fact, his consecration to Jesus through Mary was so important to him, he adopted as his papal motto, "Totus Tuus," (totally yours). It's been reported that the Pope recited the long version of the consecration prayer every day. Saint John Paul spoke so highly of the St. Louis de Montfort Consecration to Jesus through Mary, but he wasn't the only one. Pope Pius XI

