

The Blessed Virgin Mary

Saturday

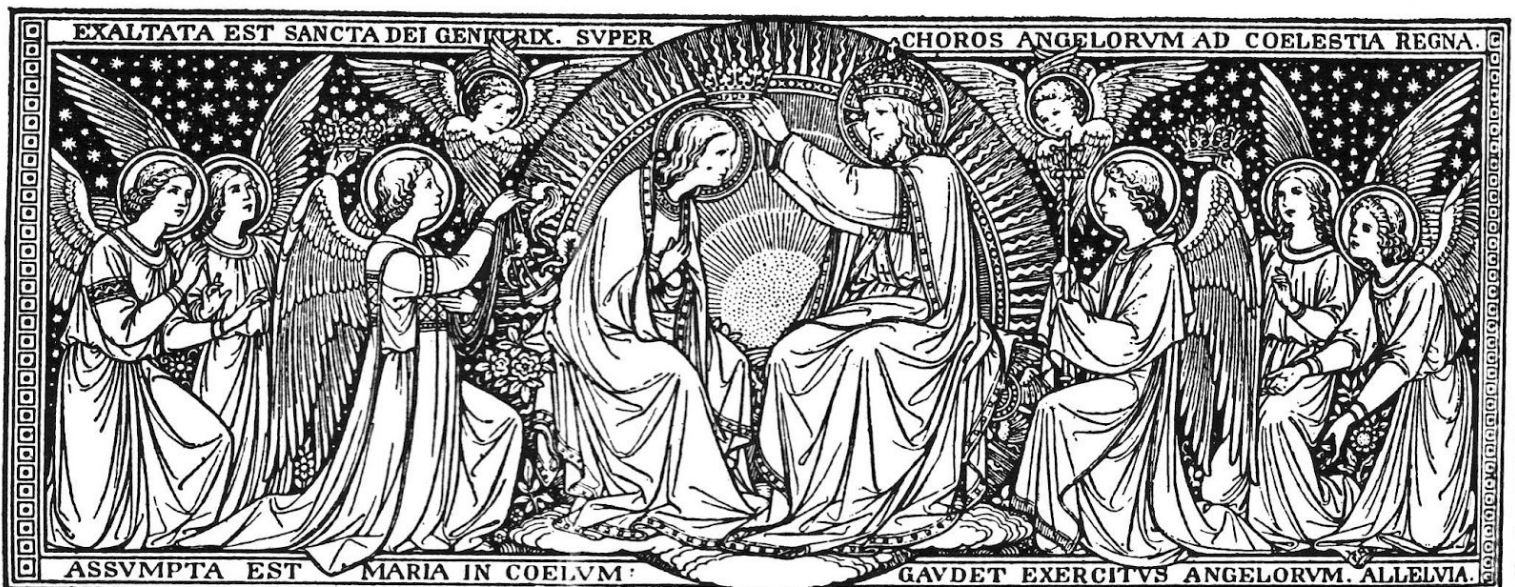
Saturdays we reserve for our Blessed Mother, the ever-Virgin Mary. What a fitting end to the week that we should devote ourselves especially to the **Theotokos**, the Mother of God! It is through Mary's willing "YES!" to the Lord that the Christ-child was born to us. We love her as the Mother of Christ and our mother. Besides our Saturday devotion to our Lady, the month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Likewise, the month of October is dedicated to the Most Holy Rosary.

Here are some basic truths about Mary:

- **Mary was Immaculately Conceived** – Mary was saved by the merits of her Divine Son, Jesus Christ, from the moment of her conception and remained sinless her entire life.
- **Mary wholly cooperated in God's plan for salvation** – by her *fiat* ("yes!"), Mary was both obedient and wholly cooperative in God's Will.
- **Mary is the Theotokos** – Mary is the "Theotokos," or the "God-bearer" i.e., the Mother of God.
- **Mary is ever-virgin** – Mary remained both sinless and a virgin her entire life.
- **Mary is the greatest of Saints** – as Mother of God, Mary is the greatest of Saints. Her prayers for us are efficacious (effective, useful).
- **Mary was Assumed into heaven** – because she remained sinless, Mary did not suffer the stain of death.

Fittingly, there are a great number of prayers, hymns, and art dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It would be too numerous to include them all here. Devotions to Mary hold special prominence for Catholics. We have many public and private prayers, hymns, and devotions, including: the Holy Rosary; the Angelus; the Regina Caeli; the Memorare; and the Stabat Mater.

“Therefore, the Lord Himself shall give you a sign.
Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
and his name shall be called Emmanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)



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WHAT DOES THE CATECHISM SAY ABOUT OUR BLESSED MOTHER?



Naturally, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says a great deal about the Blessed Virgin Mary because she is the Mother of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

963 ...“The Virgin Mary...is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and of the redeemer...She is ‘clearly the mother of the members of Christ’...“Mary, Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church.”

964 Mary’s role in the Church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. “This union of the mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ’s virginal conception up to his death”; it is made manifest above all at the hour of his Passion:

965 After her Son’s Ascension, Mary “aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers.”...

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...”

968 Her role in relation to the Church and to all humanity goes still further. “In a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior’s work of restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace.”

971 “All generations will call me blessed”: “The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship.”...

973 By pronouncing her “fiat” at the Annunciation and giving her consent to the Incarnation, Mary was already collaborating with the whole work her Son was to accomplish. She is mother wherever he is Savior and head of the Mystical Body.

975 “We believe that the Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ.”

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WHAT IS THE MAGNIFICAT?

The Magnificat is the canticle (song) of Mary after she is greeted by Elizabeth. It is found in the Gospel of Luke 1:46-55. Mary is praising God and rejoicing because she has the privilege of giving birth to the promised Messiah (Luke 1:46–48). She glorifies God for His holy power and mercy (Luke 1:49–50). Mary is hopeful and looking forward to God saving the world through the Messiah (Luke 1:51–53). Finally, Mary exalts God because He has been faithful to His promise to Abraham (Luke 1:54-55).

ENGLISH

My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because he that is mighty, hath done great things to me; and holy is his name. And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him. He hath shewed might in his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy: As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

LATIN

Magnificat anima mea Dominum; Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo, Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen ejus, Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum. Fecit potentiam brachio suo; Dispersit superbos mente cordis sui. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles. Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes. Sucepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae, Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semeni ejus in saecula.

THE LITANY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

(THE LITANY OF LORETO)

The Litany of Loreto honors Mary, the Mother of God. It recalls Mary's unique role in salvation history as the mother of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By invoking various titles for her, we honor her and are reminded of the role she played. Many of the titles in this litany can be traced back to a Greek Hymn from around 800 AD and to the writings of the early Church fathers in the first six centuries.

Over time, many titles have been added or changed to fit with the time and needs of the people. Recently, additional titles have been added. Pope John Paul II added "Mother of the Church," and Pope Francis added "Mother of mercy," "Mother of hope," and "Comfort of migrants."

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary was likely composed between the years 1150 and 1200. It gets its name—Loreto—from the Italian shrine where it was adopted in 1558. In 1587, Pope Sixtus V approved its public use in worship. The Litany is especially used during May, the month traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is also used sometimes at Benediction and by some congregations during the Divine Office. The Litany is approved for public use and carries a *partial indulgence*.

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THE LITANY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (THE LITANY OF LORETO)

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy on us.
Christ hear us.
Christ graciously hear us.
God, the Father of heaven,
 *have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *
God the Holy Spirit, *
Holy Trinity, one God, *

Holy Mary, **Pray for us.
Holy Mother of God, **
Holy Virgin of virgins, **
Mother of Christ, **
Mother of the Church, **
Mother of Mercy, **
Mother of Divine Grace, **
Mother of Hope, **
Mother most pure, **
Mother most chaste, **
Mother inviolate, **
Mother undefiled, **
Mother most amiable, **
Mother admirable, **
Mother of good counsel, **
Mother of our Creator, **
Mother of our Savior, **
Virgin most prudent, **
Virgin most venerable, **
Virgin most renowned, **
Virgin most powerful, **
Virgin most merciful, **
Virgin most faithful, **
Mirror of justice, **
Seat of wisdom, **
Cause of our joy, **
Spiritual vessel, **
Vessel of honor, **
Singular vessel of devotion, **
Mystical rose, **
Tower of David, **
Tower of ivory, **



House of gold, **
Ark of the covenant, **
Gate of heaven, **
Morning star, **
Health of the sick, **
Refuge of sinners, **
Solace of migrants, **
Comfort of the afflicted, **
Help of Christians, **
Queen of Angels, **
Queen of Patriarchs, **
Queen of Prophets, **
Queen of Apostles, **
Queen of Martyrs, **
Queen of Confessors, **
Queen of Virgins, **
Queen of all Saints, **
Queen conceived without original sin, **
Queen assumed into Heaven, **
Queen of the most Holy Rosary, **
Queen of families, **
Queen of peace. **

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord God, that we, your servants, may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body; and by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, may be delivered from present sorrow, and obtain eternal joy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.