



Explore Marian Doctrine

Family Handout

There are important teachings about Mary that the Church has formally defined or declared. Consider learning and discussing one each week at Sunday dinner.

1. Mary is the Mother of God.

- Mary is the Mother of God because she gave birth to Jesus who is God. She is also the Mother of God because she had faith in God and freely said yes to participate in God's wonderful plan of salvation.
- In the fifth century, the leaders of the Church affirmed this important mystery of our faith (Council of Ephesus, 431) and declared it a dogma (Council of Chalcedon, 451).

2. Mary is ever virgin.

- Mary conceived of and gave birth to Jesus as a virgin. She remained a virgin for the rest of her life.
- Since its earliest formulations of faith, the Church has held this belief about Mary's perpetual virginity. In 649 the Council of the Lateran affirmed this belief as an important part of the Church's teaching about Mary. Later councils reaffirmed it.

3. Mary was free from original sin from the moment of her conception and throughout her life.

- We call this unique grace that God gave to Mary the Immaculate Conception.
- This teaching is in accord with the Church's faith and was proclaimed a dogma by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854. This feast continues to be celebrated in the Church on this day.

4. Mary was assumed into heaven.

- When Mary's life on earth was completed, she was fully drawn into the life of God.
- Pope Pius XII proclaimed Mary's Assumption a dogma in 1950. We celebrate Mary's Assumption in the fourth glorious mystery of the Rosary.

