

THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

On December 8, the Church celebrates one of the most important feasts of Our Lady, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the day when we remember and celebrate that God chose Mary to be the Mother of Jesus from the very first moment of her being, the moment of her conception. Mary was born without sin and is full of grace always.

DAYS ON WHICH WE CELEBRATE MARY DURING THE CHURCH YEAR

MATCH THE FEAST DAY WITH THE CORRECT DATE

The Feast of the Assumption

The Feast of the Annunciation

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

The Birth of the Blessed Virgin

Mary the Mother of God

Our Lady of the Rosary

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Our Lady of Lourdes

March 25

October 7

January 1

August 15

December 13

February 11

December 8

September 8

PRAYERS TO MARY

Unscramble the following to find prayers that we pray to Mary.
Choose one of the prayers and write it out in your religion copy:

het ngaleus

eth orsray

ilah

alih

army

olhy

ueneq

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

DECEMBER 12

On this feast day we celebrate Mary appearing to a man named Juan Diego on Tepyac Hill in Mexico City.



Juan Diego was on his way to Mass early one morning when Our Lady appeared to him as he was making his way down Tepyac Hill. Mary appeared like an Aztec princess and asked Juan to go to the bishop and tell him she wanted a great church built on the spot where she was standing. Juan Diego went to the bishop, who, of course, did not believe his story. He told Juan to ask the Lady for a sign the next time he saw her so that the story could be proven. Juan was unsure. He didn't know if the lady would ever appear to him again.

In the early morning on December 12th, Juan Diego was walking along the the hill. His uncle was dying and he was going to get the priest. Juan had no time to waste and did not want to meet the lady so he took another route. But Mary appeared again to Juan and told him that his uncle was better. In fact, Juan found out a little later that Our Lady had, for a moment, appeared to his uncle and that he was immediately cured. The lady asked Juan to return to the bishop. Juan remembered the bishop's request for proof and asked Mary for a sign. Mary sent Juan to the rocky area nearby and told him to gather the roses that were there.

Juan was confused. He knew there were no roses. It was winter, there was snow on the ground, and the bushes were bare. But Juan did as he was told and there, just as Mary had said were the most beautiful roses. Excited, Juan picked the roses and wrapped them in his *tilma* or cloak and rushed to show the bishop. As Juan arrived at the bishop's house he dropped the roses from the cloak and there in the *tilma* where the roses had been was a picture of the beautiful lady who had appeared to Juan. It was life-size and glowing. The bishop had received his sign and Mary would have her church. Today a great Basilca, stands where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared. Inside hangs Juan Diego's cloak with the image of Mary on it. Our Lady of Guadalupe was named patroness of Mexico and is also patroness of Latin America and the Philippines.

Prayer to our Lady of Guadalupe:

Dearest lady of Guadalupe, you appeared to Juan Diego on the hill in Mexico.

Your appearance brought healing and strenght. Teach us your ways so that we may show love and compassion to all.

Guide us in the ways of your son, Jesus so that we may know him better. Amen

There are many different images of Mary. The Aztec Princess who appeared to Juan Diego was one such image of Mary. As Christmas draws near we most often think of Mary as the Mother of Jesus.

Look at the images of Mary below:

In pairs find

- 3 differences
- 3 similarities in the images



DID YOU KNOW?

- Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531) appeared to Juan Diego wearing a gown of rose and a cloak of blue with gold stars.
- Our Lady of Lourdes (1858) appeared to Bernadette wearing a simple gown and a cloak of white with a blue sash.
- Our Lady of Fatima (1917) appeared to the children wearing a gown and cloak of white with gold trim and a crown.

DISCUSSION

What do we know about Mary?

What images/ pictures of Mary have you seen?

Can you remember any stories about Mary from the bible?

Have you ever heard of the Apparitions of Mary?

(Lourdes, Knock, Fatima....)

What prayers do we say to Mary?

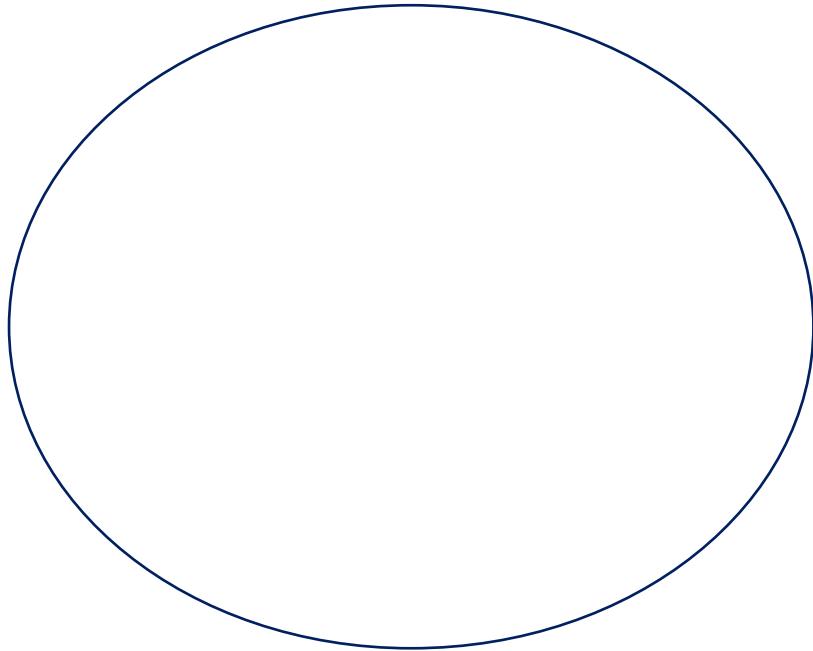
Why do you think that Mary is so important to our faith?

WHY IS MARY ALMOST ALWAYS PICTURED WEARING BLUE?

Have you noticed that whenever you see pictures, paintings, statues or icons of Mary she is almost always wearing blue.

Blue is a colour that is associated with royalty, peace and nature. When you think that we call Mary the Queen of heaven and earth it probably makes sense that she is usually depicted wearing blue.

DRAW YOUR IMAGE OF MARY



TITLES FOR MARY

We have seen that there are many different images of Our Lady. Mary is also called by many other names. She is often referred to as Mother, Our Lady or Queen. Some of the titles come from the many places where Mary has appeared. These titles remind us how important Mary is. Mary is the Mother of Jesus but she is also our Mother. When we pray to Mary we can ask for her help and through her become closer to Jesus.

THESE ARE SOME TITLES GIVEN TO MARY

Mother of God
Queen of Heaven
Our Lady of Lourdes
Our lady of Guadalupe
Our Lady of Knock
Our Lady of Fatima
Blessed Mother
Mother of the Church
Star of the sea
Madonna
Blessed Virgin
Our Lady of the Rosary
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Holy Mary
Mother of Christ

CHECK IT OUT!

Research some of the different titles for Mary. Write about where these titles come from and share them with your class.