

Θεοτόκος  
(Theotokos)  
“God’s bearer”



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Religion Class

# Old Testament Prophecies about Mary

- “I will put enmities between you and the woman, and your seed and her seed: she shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for her heel.”

Genesis 3:15



# Old Testament Prophecies about Mary

- “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





# The New Testament

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."

But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

Luke 1:26-30





# Did you know?

- The phrase "full of grace" is translated from the Greek word "**kecharitomene.**" This is a unique title given to Mary, and suggests a perfection of grace from a past event. Mary is not just "highly favored." She has been perfected in grace by God. "Full of grace" is only used to describe one other person - Jesus Christ in John 1:14.



# New Testament

And Mary said: "My  
soul proclaims the  
greatness of the  
Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God  
my savior.

For he has looked upon  
his handmaid's  
lowliness; behold,  
from now on will **all  
ages call me blessed.**

Luke 1:46-48



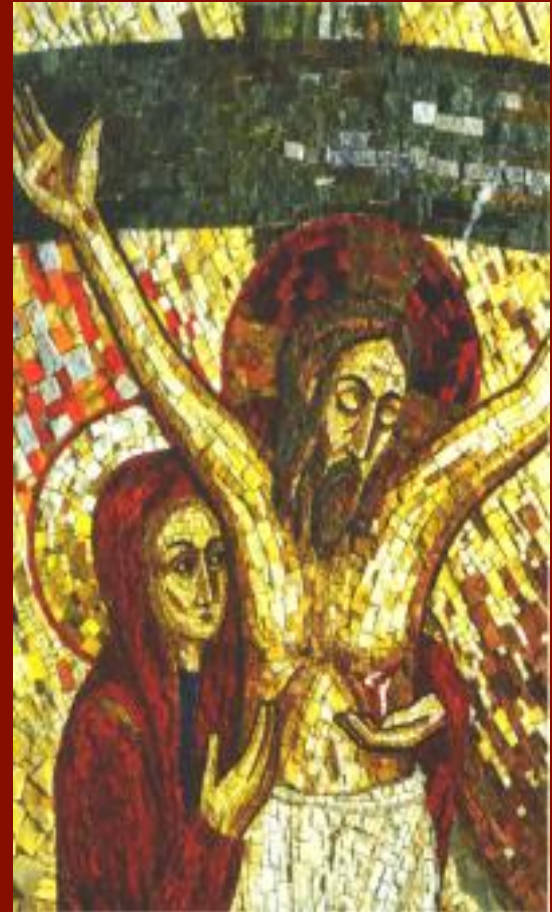
# New Testament

## Mary our Mother in the order of Grace

“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.

Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.”

John 19:26-27





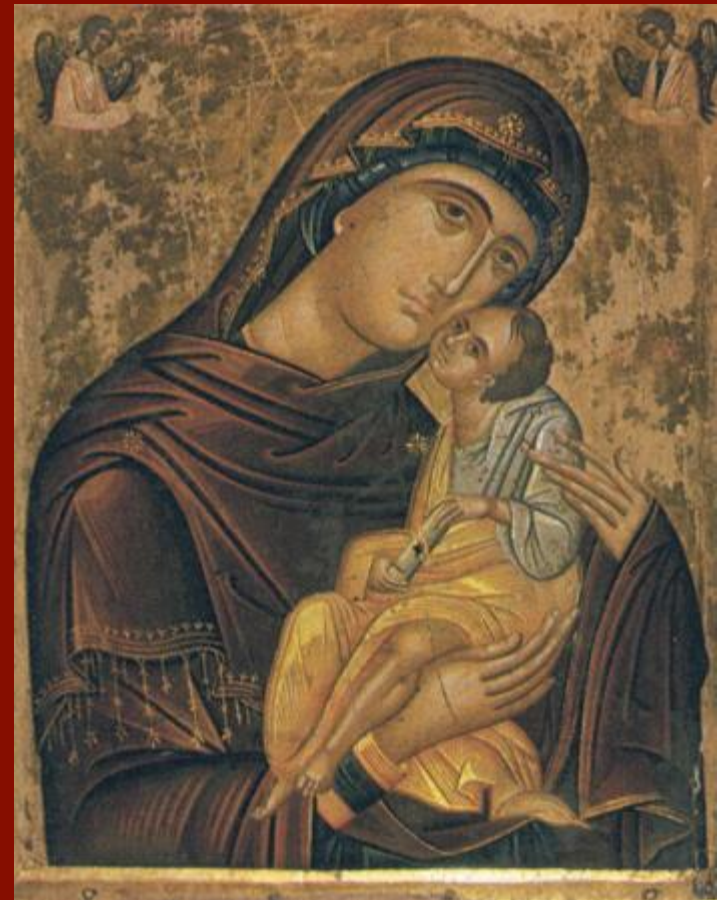
# Did you Know?

- **Martin Luther** the father of the Reformation considered Mary the mother of all believers.  
In the words of Luther:
- It is the consolation and the superabundant goodness of God, that man is able to exult in such a treasure. Mary is his true Mother .. (Sermon, Christmas, 1522)
- Mary is the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of all of us even though it was Christ alone who reposed on her knees . . . If he is ours, we ought to be in his situation; there where he is, we ought also to be and all that he has ought to be ours, and his mother is also our mother. (Sermon, Christmas, 1529).



# Mary's role in the history of salvation

- Mary has an important role in the history of salvation.
- Her **Yes** to God (fiat) inaugurates humanity's radical openness to God's plan of redemption.
- \*The Annunciation reveals the fullness of time, the fulfillment of God's promises and preparations.
- **\*CCC #484; Gal 4:4; Col 2:9; Lk 1:34-35**



# Mary's Predestination

- In Mary's life there is an **eschatological anticipation** of the fullness of redemption promised to all humanity.
- Mary, the new Eve, is from the moment of her conception preserved from all stain of original sin.  
(Pius IX Ineffabilis Deus, 1854).
- She is according to Eastern Tradition the **Panagia**, the All-Holy. In her, and through the merits of her Son, God begins a new creation, the eschatology of all things new." Revelation 21:5





# Luther on Mary's Immaculate Conception

- She is full of grace, proclaimed to be entirely without sin—something exceedingly great. For God's grace fills her with everything good and makes her devoid of all evil.

*(Personal {"Little"} Prayer Book, 1522).*



The dormition of the Theotokos

# St. Irenaeus on Mary the New Eve

- “Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.”

“The knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by Mary’s obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith.”



# Mary is the Theotokos God's bearer

- CCC#495

Mary's is acclaimed by  
Elizabeth even before  
The birth of Jesus, as  
**Mother of my Lord.**

Luke 1:43





# Mary is the Theotokos God's Bearer or Mother of God

- The Gospels recognized Mary as the **mother** of Jesus.  
Jn 2:1; 19:25; Mt 13:55.
- CCC# 495  
“The One whom she conceived as man by the Holy Spirit, who truly became her Son according to the flesh, was none other than the Father's eternal Son, the second person of the Holy Trinity. \* Hence the Church confesses that Mary is truly the “Mother of God” (Theo-tokos).

\* **Council of Ephesus** (431): DS 251



# Did you know?

Theodoret (393-457 AD) an influential author, theologian and early Christian bishop from Cyrrhus, Syria wrote in 436 that calling the Virgin Mary *Theotokos* is an Apostolic tradition.



# Did you know?

- The following reformers all believe in Mary's perpetual Virginity: Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, John Wesley
- "A new lie about me is being circulated. I am supposed to have preached and written that Mary, the mother of God, was not a virgin either before or after the birth of Christ, but that she conceived Christ through Joseph and had more children after that. - Martin Luther,  
"That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew", in *Luther's Works*, vol. 45, ed. Walther I. Brand, 1962, Muhlenberg Press, p. 199.
- Helvidius displayed excessive ignorance in concluding that Mary must have had many sons, because Christ's 'brothers' are sometimes mentioned.  
{*Harmony of Matthew, Mark & Luke*, sec. 39 (Geneva, 1562), vol. 2 / From *Calvin's Commentaries*, tr. William Pringle, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949, p.215; on Matthew 13:55}



# Early Christianity and Mary

One of the oldest catacombs contains a drawing of the Madonna and Child dating back to the second century, and the oldest known request to Mary, the "Sub Tuum Praesidium", dates back to at least 300 AD!

We fly to your patronage, O holy  
Theotokos;  
despise not our petition in our  
necessities,  
but deliver us always from all dangers,  
O ever-glorious and blessed Virgin.



# Early Christianity and Mary

- Blessed Virgin, immaculate and pure you are the sinless Mother of your Son, the mighty Lord of the universe. You are holy and inviolate, the hope of the hopeless and sinful; we sing your praises. We praise you as full of every grace, for you bore the God-Man. We all venerate you; we invoke you and implore your aid...Holy and immaculate Virgin...be our intercessor and advocate at the hour of death and judgment...you are holy in the sight of God, to Whom be honor and glory, majesty, and power forever.

(373 AD, St. Ephem of Edessa)



# Mary and Early Christianity

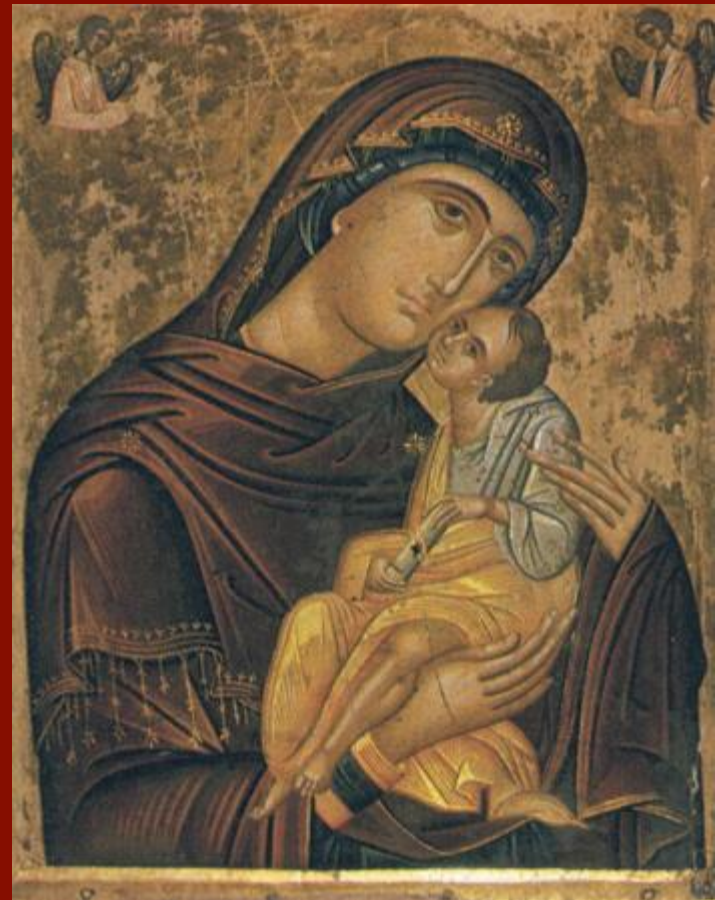
- “It becomes you to be mindful of us, as you stand near Him Who granted you all graces, for you are the Mother of God and our Queen. Help us for the sake of the King, the Lord God Master Who was born of you. For this reason you are called 'full of Grace'...”  
(373 St. Athanasius)





# Early Christianity and Mary

- Blessed Virgin Mary, who can worthily repay you with praise and thanksgiving for having rescued a fallen world by your generous consent? ...accept then such poor thanks as we have to offer, unequal though they be to your merits. Receive our gratitude and obtain by your prayers the pardon of our sins. Take our prayers into the sanctuary of heaven and enable them to bring about our peace with God...Holy Mary, help the miserable, strengthen the discouraged, comfort the sorrowful, pray for your people, plead for the clergy, intercede for all women consecrated to God. May all who venerate you, feel now your help and protection. ...Make it your continual care to pray for the people of God, for you were blessed by God and were made worthy to bear the Redeemer of the world, who lives and reigns for ever.  
(St Augustine in 430 A.D. )



# The Memorae

**Remember, O gracious  
Virgin Mary, that never was  
it known that anyone who  
fled to thy protection, implored thy  
help or sought thy intercession was  
left unaided.**

**Inspired by this confidence,  
I fly to thee,  
O Virgin of Virgins and  
my Mother; to thee I  
come, before thee I kneel,  
sinful and sorrowful;  
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,  
despise not my petitions, but  
in thy mercy, hear and answer me.  
Amen.**

# The End



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