

Learning All About Mary

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *Learning All About Mary* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

Our Lord loved and honored his mother, and as Catholics, we follow his example. We love and honor Mary because she is the Mother of God, who brought our Savior into the world and lovingly raised him. We love and honor Mary as our mother, given to us by Jesus himself from the cross: "Behold, your mother" (John 19:27). The Church teaches that Mary was conceived without original sin; that she was a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus; that she was assumed, body and soul, into heaven at the end of her life; and that she is our special advocate before her Son Jesus in heaven.

Teaching children about Mary is rewarding for many reasons. First, Mary helps them gain new understandings of Jesus and the Good News of the Gospels. Devotion to his mother also pleases Jesus. Finally, helping children look to Mary as a model for following Jesus reminds us of our ultimate destiny: enjoying perfect peace and happiness with Jesus and his mother in heaven.

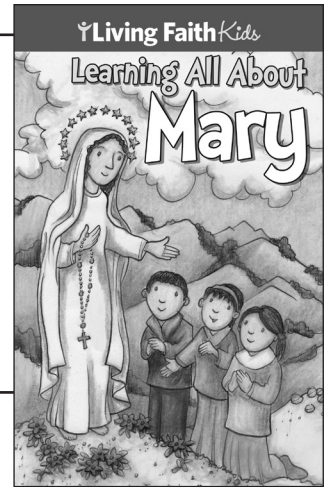
Opening Prayer

Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

Loving God, thank you for giving us Mary, our beautiful mother who shows us the way to you and your Son Jesus. Help us love and serve you always, just as Mary did. Amen.

Teaching Steps

Page(s)	
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Say, <i>We will be learning about our Mother Mary, and the many ways she helps us love and follow her Son Jesus.</i> • Discuss the art. Ask the children if they know what is happening in the image. Explain that Mary appeared to three children in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 with a very important message. Ask, <i>What do you think it was?</i> Explain that we will learn more inside the booklet.
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the children to read the header with you: <i>Hail Mary.</i> Ask, <i>Have you ever heard these words? Where are they from?</i> (The Hail Mary prayer) • Read the first paragraph. Ask, <i>Why do you think we honor Mary?</i> (Accept and affirm all answers.) Say, <i>Let's find out more by reading about Mary.</i> • Continue reading the page: Ask, <i>When we honor Mary, who do we give honor to?</i> (God, who created Mary) • Apply knowledge. After reading the box on page 3, invite the children to write a short note to Mary, based on what they know about her. • Stickers. Have the children turn to the sticker insert and find the corresponding sticker to place on the page. If needed, offer help to complete the activity on page 3.



Hail Mary

You've probably heard these words a lot. Maybe you say this prayer. But have you ever wondered why we say it? What about all the songs, statues and feast days dedicated to Mary? Who do we honor Mary so much?

First, think about this: People who do great and heroic things have schools, streets and even cities named after them. Some heroes even have holidays in their honor. Great people can inspire us to do great things too. It's a little like that with Church heroes. Except that when we honor the people who love and follow Jesus, we're not glorifying them, we're giving God the glory. Now, can you think of any saint who loved and followed Jesus more than his own mom?

Who could be more loving, kind and good than the person God himself chose to be the mother of his son?

No one else but Mary.

When we give Mary the honor that's due to her, we give glory to God who created her. And imagine how happy that makes Jesus! We have so many great ways to honor our Blessed Mother Mary. Want to know more? Keep reading! You can place stickers or do fun activities on each page as you go!

Do you see the picture of Mary on the cover? Turn to page 10 to read the story of Our Lady of Fatima!

As you correct the dots to create the picture of a person who loves you very much, think about what you might say to her and what she is saying to you.

We never give more honor to Jesus than when we honor his mother.
—St. Louis Marie de Montfort