

# A Prayer Service Honoring Mary, Mother of God and Model of Holiness

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** Loving God, you chose Mary, a young woman from a village in a tiny country, to be the mother of your Son, Jesus. She was a teenager without any significant social status. Yet you chose her to be the sacred vessel that would carry your own Son and bring him into the world for our salvation. Because of her perfect response of “yes,” you inspired the Church to give her the title *Theotokos*, which means “God bearer.” As we call the mother of your Son “God bearer” we not only honor Mary as the mother of your divine Son, but we also affirm Jesus’ humanity. We thank you for Mary’s role in salvation history and for her perfect example.

**Reader 1:** Let us now listen to the Gospel of Luke, where we will hear the story of Mary’s perfect “yes” to God.

*(Reader 1 will read Luke 1:26–38.)*

**Reader 1:** Word of God, Word of Life

**All:** Thanks be to God.

**Leader:** Because of Mary’s perfect cooperation with God’s grace, she is recognized by the Church as having a special role as a vehicle of grace for all Christians and all humanity. When the angel Gabriel conveyed God’s will to her that she become the mother of God’s Son, her response was a perfect *fiat*, a perfect “yes.” Mary responded, “May it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38). Let us pray to God, through the intercession of Mary, for the grace of generosity—in our hearts and wills, in our school, in our communities, and in our world.

**Reader 2:** Please respond: Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 2:** For all mothers throughout the world, many of whom are poor and single; that you give them the graces they need, the spiritual and material resources, to carry out their maternal responsibilities and to find God’s presence in their daily lives, we pray . . .

**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 3:** For all war-torn countries and communities in the world where women are often left alone to care for children and households: grant them grace and wisdom to seek the way of peace and justice so that families can thrive in peace, we pray . . .



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**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 2:** For all political leaders, that they might be inspired by Mary's example of generosity to place the common good above personal gain, we pray . . .

**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 3:** For all religious leaders and missionaries, especially those who work in the midst of danger: give them the steadfast love and courage that Mary exemplified from the day she accepted God's call to become *Theotokos* to the day that she stood at the foot of the cross before her dying son, we pray . . .

**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 2:** For our school community, that we may be a beacon of light and hope to the wider community around us by our dedication to scholarship, by our sportsmanship, by our respect for diversity, by our commitment to prayer, and by our generous service, we pray . . .

**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader 3:** For our own mothers and for the many women who, like Mary, have taught us, nurtured us, consoled us, and challenged us to be our best selves, we pray . . .

**All:** Lord, through the intercession of Mary, give us grace to do your will.

**Reader:** Now, I invite you to offer your own intercessions. (Pause long enough for students to formulate their prayers.)

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, we are grateful for the gift of your mother Mary in our lives, and for her powerful intercession. Give us the grace, through Mary's intercession, to do your will more perfectly each day. We now pray the Church's special prayer in honor of Mary:

**All:** (Pray the Hail Mary together.) Hail Mary, full of grace . . .

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## Reflection

Which quality of Mary that you recall from your homework reading do you admire the most? Does this quality relate to a Mark of the Church?

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Why is Mary an important feminine figure in a Church that is governed by a male hierarchy?

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Why is the description of Mary as the “New Eve” significant?

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Mary’s story has a universal appeal as a mother. Which maternal qualities do you think are most important in Mary?

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Why is Mary referred to as the “Mother of the Church,” and in which ways is she a symbol of God’s universal justice?

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Which questions about Mary would you still like to have answered?

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