

CHALLENGE

Luke 1:42

ASK FOR
MARY'S HELP

Mary had a special role in God's plan. As faithful and holy mother to the whole Church, Mary sympathizes with our needs and concerns and brings them before God.

TAKE ACTION!

○ **Join a Prayer Group:** Find a group at your school or parish that prays the Rosary. Join the group at least one time in order to pray and reacquire yourself with the prayers of the Rosary.

○ **Reflect on the Meaning:** Take time to pray the Hail Mary, one phrase at a time, reflecting on the meaning of each phrase.

○ **Ask for Intercession:** Spend 1–2 minutes each night this week praying the Hail Mary. During the day, write down one or two special needs you might ask Mary's intercession for and then focus on these when you pray.



she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, ⁴²cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." ⁴³And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord† should come to me? ⁴⁴For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵Blessed are you who believed† that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.*

The Cantic of Mary.

⁴⁶*And Mary said:†

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;*

⁴⁷ my spirit rejoices in God my savior.*

⁴⁸ For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;

behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.*

⁴⁹ The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.*

⁵⁰ His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.*

⁵¹ He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.*

⁵² He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones

but lifted up the lowly.*

⁵³ The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty.*

^{1:43} Even before his birth, Jesus is identified in Luke as the Lord.

^{1:45} *Blessed are you who believed:* Luke portrays Mary as a believer whose faith stands in contrast to the disbelief of Zechariah (Lk 1:20). Mary's role as believer in the infancy narrative should be seen in connection with the explicit mention of her presence among "those who believed" after the resurrection at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:14).

^{1:46–55} Although Mary is praised for being the mother of the Lord and because of her belief, she reacts as the servant in a psalm of praise, the Magnificat. Because there is no specific connection of the cantic to the context of Mary's pregnancy and her visit to Elizabeth, the Magnificat (with the possible exception of v. 48) may have been a Jewish Christian

hymn that Luke found appropriate at this point in his story. Even if not composed by Luke, it fits in well with themes found elsewhere in Luke: joy and exultation in the Lord; the lowly being singled out for God's favor; the reversal of human fortunes; the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. The loose connection between the hymn and the context is further

^{1:41} 1:15; Gn 25:22 LXX. ^{1:42} 11:27–28; Jgs 5:24; Jdt 13:18; Dt 28:4.

^{1:45} 1:20. ^{1:46–55} 1 Sm 2:1–10. ^{1:46} Ps 35:9; Is 61:10; Heb 3:18. ^{1:47} Ti 3:4; Jude 25. ^{1:48} 11:27; 1 Sm 1:11; 2 Sm 16:12; 2 Kgs 14:26; Ps 113:7.

^{1:49} Dt 10:21; Ps 71:19; 111:9; 126:2–3. ^{1:50} Ps 89:2; 103:13, 17. ^{1:51} Ps 89:10; 118:15; Jer 32:17 (39:17 LXX). ^{1:52} 1 Sm 2:7; 2 Sm 22:28; Jb 5:11; 12:19; Ps 147:6; Sir 10:14; Jas 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5. ^{1:53} 1 Sm 2:5; Ps 107:9.