

HAIL MARY PRAYER: MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

Objective

The children will know the source and meaning of the Hail Mary prayer.

Catechist Notes

The Second Vatican Council's document on the church gave Mary the new title "Mother of the Church." We, her children, honor her and ask her help, assured of an answer. The Hail Mary prayer, the most familiar prayer to Mary, probably originated in the eleventh century. It combines the angel Gabriel's greeting to Mary (with Mary's name inserted) and Elizabeth's greeting. The name "Jesus" was probably inserted in 1262. The ending petition added by the church first appeared in print in 1495. The Hail Mary as we know it today became official in 1568. No doubt your children already know this prayer by heart. This lesson will help them better understand it. Encourage the children who don't know the prayer to use Activity Sheet 6 to memorize it.

Materials

- TEN LARGE FLASHCARDS WITH PHRASES OF THE HAIL MARY: HAIL MARY/ FULL OF GRACE/ THE LORD IS WITH YOU/ BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN/ AND BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB/ JESUS/ HOLY MARY/MOTHER OF GOD/ PRAY FOR US SINNERS/ NOW AND AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH
- RECORDED VERSION OF THE HAIL MARY OR AVE MARIA, SUCH AS "HAIL MARY: GENTLE WOMAN" BY CAREY LANDRY
- CASSETTE OR CD PLAYER
- PENS OR PENCILS
- CRAYONS OR FELT-TIPPED PENS
- COPIES OF ACTIVITY SHEET 6

Activity

- 1 Tell the children that the Hail Mary is the chief prayer to Mary. Then check their familiarity with it. Ask :

- How many know the Hail Mary by heart?
- When did you learn it? Who taught it to you?
- When do you pray it?

- 2 Give flashcards with phrases of the Hail Mary to ten children. Call them to the front of the room and tell them to arrange themselves in order so that the prayer can be read. Then offer the prayer with all the children.
- 3 Separate the first three cards and ask where these words came from (the angel Gabriel). Separate the next two cards and ask where these words came from (Elizabeth). Tell the children that the church added the rest of the prayer because we want Mary, our mother, to pray for us.
- 4 Distribute Activity Sheet 6. Direct the children to match each underlined word in the Hail Mary with its meaning in the box. Correct their answers. **Answers:** G, B, D, E, H, K, F, J, A, I, C.
- 5 Encourage the children to pray the Hail Mary every day. Say, for example: "Mary is the mother of the whole church and your mother too. Try to pray the Hail Mary each night before you go to bed. That way, you will think of our mother Mary, honor her, and ask her help every day."
- 6 Play a recorded version of the Hail Mary.

Prayer

*Mary, you are the greatest woman that ever lived.
Pray for me, your child, that I may be holy like you.*

The Hail Mary Prayer

Below each underlined word or phrase, write the letter of its meaning found in the box. Then draw pretty things around the prayer, such as flowers and butterflies.

Hail Mary,
full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb,
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now
and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

A ask God for something

B divine (God's) life

C end of life when we most need prayer

D almighty God

E favored by God

F pure and loving like God

G hello

H your baby

I those who disobey God

J woman who gave birth to the Savior

K the Savior