

MARY: MOTHER OF JESUS, MOTHER OF GOD
“Everything you ever wanted to know about Mary
but always felt embarrassed to ask.”
Spring 2012

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Bob Schihl
Phone: 757-499-4994, x315 (Leave a brief message and your phone number and I will return the call in a reasonable amount of time.)
E-mail : BobS@stgregorysva.org I receive these e-mails directly and I will respond ASAP.

It would be good for prospective students to read this syllabus and have an understanding of their commitment to the class. Questions or concerns need to be addressed to the instructor.

Class Description

There are probably no more frequently asked questions, more skeptical attitude towards, more critical and disbelieving remarks, and no more ignorance even among our own faithful than the topic of Mary and the dogmas we hold regarding her. There are probably no more wrong beliefs and devotional excesses in the practice of the Church than those that focus on Mary. There are also superstitions, extreme and unreasonable teachings, excessive devotions, etc. It is dogmas about Mary that also create a most formidable barrier to other Christians towards the Church and conversion. What does the Church teach about Mary? This class will cover all but only what the Church teaches and approves about Mary.

This class will answer these questions and many more. You are free to ask questions that come to your mind.

Rationale/Class Overview

Week One

Mary in Scripture: in prophesy, in fulfillment
Mary in Time: from her conception to her death
The Family Relationship of Mary and Joseph

Week Two

Mary's Motherhood
The Heresy of Nestorius (d. 451): Denial of the humanity of Christ; denial of the true motherhood of Mary
Mary is truly the Mother of God (*de fide*)
in Scripture,
in Tradition
Mary's fullness of Grace and Dignity
Definition of grace
Adam and Eve before the Fall
Mary's plenitude of Grace
Limits of Mary's fullness of grace

Week Three

The Privileges of the Mother of God
Mary's Immaculate Conception--Conceived without stain of original sin (*de fide*)
in Scripture
in Tradition
the development of dogma

Week Four

Mary's Perpetual Virginity
Before the Birth of Jesus (*de fide*)
During the Birth of Jesus (*de fide*)
After the Birth of Jesus (*de fide*)

Week Five

Mary's Bodily Assumption into Heaven (*de fide*)
Mary suffered a temporal death (*sententia communior*)
Mary was assumed body and soul into Heaven
The Queenship of Mary

Week Six

The Mediatorship of Mary
The Veneration of Mary

Week Seven

The Apparitions of Mary
The Messages of Mary

Week Eight

Prayer to and of Mary
The Rosary: the Authentic Rosary
The origin of the Hail Mary
The History of the Rosary
The Promises for Praying the Rosary
Litanies of Mary

Throughout the history of the Church, reverence and devotion was paid to the Mother of Jesus: "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you" (Luke 11:27) and "Blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus (Luke 1: 42)" summarizes well what was thought of Mary in the first century. Because Jesus said at His Last Supper that "when the Holy Spirit comes, He will tell you all truth" can easily mean that Jesus is sending His Own Spirit to elaborate on truths He taught. In fact, before He promised His Spirit, He told His Apostles that "there is much more I want to tell you but you cannot handle it now (John 16: 12)" The development over time of the Catholic Church's beliefs about Mary are the fulfillment of Jesus' words to give us *all* truth. The truths about Mary are truth.

At some point in all our lives, we need to ask if we know all the truth the Church teaches on any topic of faith; all the more for those truths pertaining to Mary. One should "update" what one knows, or thinks one knows about Mary. Many of the things we thought we learned about Mary were learned in our childhood. It is time for an adult understanding and renewal of Marian faith. In my lifetime of ministry to the Church, I have probably known more erroneous teaching about Mary than on any other topic of faith. Even Vatican Council II acknowledged that we must "be careful to refrain as much from all false exaggeration" about what we know and teach about Mary. And just because we heard it from priests, nuns and religion teachers--even from our parents--does not guarantee that it is true and is what the Church teaches. Religious can be influenced more by their personal devotion than by the Magisterium of the Church.

This class will tackle all and only those truths that the Church teaches about Mary. I will cover the true devotions to Mary. I will also cover her appearances and what her messages were when she appeared to people. I will also look at those devotions that many of us inherited and renew the true devotion and the authentic form of Marian devotions.

This class is broken up into eight parts. In a classroom setting I would teach about two-hours a week for eight weeks. On-line, I break the sessions into approximately thirty minutes each to be viewed when you have time. The video presentations will remain on the Edu 2.0 Internet site permanently.

Prerequisites

There is no tuition, there are no exams, no grading, no classroom attendance, no textbooks, etc., for this class. This class is provided free to those who wish to learn from it. It is supported by the generosity of the parish community of the Church of St. Gregory the Great in Virginia Beach, VA. If there is anything similar to a prerequisite, it would be that students should (1) complete the entire class and (2) in as close to the time frame of eight weeks. Without personal discipline, the class can remain incomplete for some students.

Course Outcomes

After this class you should be able to:

1. Feel more competent, secure and comfortable about Marian dogmas and devotions;
2. Know that you have enough information to understand and interpret the truths about Mary;
3. Realize the life of Mary from her conception and birth, through the stages of her Son's life and teachings, His death and her time with the Apostle John and the end of her life.
4. Understand the only dogmas the Church teaches about Mary: Mother of God, Virgin and ever Virgin, Immaculate Conception and Assumption.
5. Know some of her appearances through history to people who are given a message often ignored or unknown by followers;
6. Know what an approved devotion to Mary is and what constitutes prayer and/or works that make up that devotion;
7. Understand what an authentic rosary is—the rosary Mary gave to St. Dominic and that is prayed publically by our Holy Fathers;

Class Materials

Required Materials

It would seem to me that each student have **a bible** handy so that you can look up passages if you wish. It also will seem reasonable that you have a Catholic translation of the bible. I use that *New American Bible* because it is the translation we hear at every Mass we attend. There is a "Revised Edition" now available. It does not matter which edition you have. A good study (not just for reading) bible is the *Revised Standard Version: Catholic Edition*.

Recommended Materials

Dr. Bob has his Website where he considers much of what makes up this class. You may find his Website at <http://www.catholicapologetics.org>. The site has a chapter from his eBook on *Mary* that might prove helpful.

Catechism of the Catholic Church. 484-511, 963-975, <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm>

Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary's Queenship, Edward P. Sri, Scott Hahn, 2005, ISBN 1931018243

What Every Catholic Should Know about Mary, Terrence McNally, 2009, ISBN 1441510516

The Glories of Mary, Saint Alphonsus Liguori, Liguori Publications, 1868, ISBN 0764806645

The Catholic Answer Book of Mary, Peter M. J. Stravinskias, 2000, ISBN 0879733470

Mariology: A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, and Consecrated Persons, Raymond Burke et al. 2008, ISBN 9781579183554

Pope John Paul II, "On the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Pilgrim Church". *Redemptoris Mater*. www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031987_redemptoris-mater_en.html

Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, Ludwig Ott, 1952, ISBN 0895550091

Marialis Cultus, Pope Paul VI, http://www.vatican.va/.../hf_p-vi_exh_19740202_marialis-cultus_en.html

Class Requirements and Assignments

Information and Edu 2.0 access

As you may know, "Edu 2.0" is the commercial name for the service and server that handles our classes and your registration and enrollment. We have tried to keep your steps down to a minimum as you access the site time and time again. You need not re-register with Edu 2.0 once that has occurred. You **will** have to enroll in a new class every time you wish to study with us. It is the same as when you went to high school or college. Registering in an institution was a one-time thing. But every semester, you had to enroll in new class.

Contacting the instructor

My contact numbers, both e-mail and telephone, are listed at the top of this syllabus.

Attendance and participation

There is no requirement we can make of you to assure that our work for these classes and the good working of the Website is appreciated. Time and money are invested in you and this program. We ask that once you make a commitment to a class, that you complete it. Thank you. This is the best way for you to show your appreciation.

Class Lessons (week-by-week)

I want to let you know how I create these Internet classes. You are probably aware that I have taught many classes for the past number years and for almost 28 years throughout the diocese of Richmond, VA. My customary way of teaching has been with the digital convenience is using Microsoft PowerPoint. Years ago, I used acetate overheads to present my material. PowerPoint made the presentation colorful and animated when I wanted. But, I needed to be there when an audience saw the slides. Now with another great digital creation, I am able to add my picture and voice to the PowerPoint slides as if I were live when you watch them.

I also usually created classes in a two-hour time frame (with or without a break!). To make my new presentation in two hour blocks would be unreasonable. So now I break the presentations up into shorter units. I label "Part I" the original unit (2 hours plus) and break it up into "Part Ia," "Part Ib," etc. It is also convenient for you to be able to stop my presentation (e.g., to take a phone call, answer a doorbell, etc.) and then to start it and continue. It is also very convenient for you to replay a portion of the presentation or re-view the entire presentation.

I will publish one week of PowerPoint material per week for the length of the class. That gives you a week to view the material before I publish a second part (and third, or more).

I also make available to you, the original PowerPoint slides that you can download and print. When you print PowerPoint slides, you have the opportunity to select the "slides" themselves (which prints one PowerPoint slide per printed page) or choose "handouts" and then choose how many to print on a page. I choose two frames per printed page for my classroom classes.

Policies and Resources

Academic Calendar/Registration Information

My idea is to present classes in Edu 2.0 as I taught them at St. Gregory's, one or two series each fall and spring. So this is my academic calendar. As I said above, you need to register only once with Edu 2.0; you need to enroll for every class. Classes will be announced well in advance in St. Gregory's weekly bulletin. Incidentally, the bulletin is available each week on the homepage. Scroll down to the very bottom of the opening page and click where it says "click here."

Bookstore

St. Gregory's Church has a bookstore managed by Mr. Bernard Hamilton. It is open at convenient times during the week and on Sundays. He carries most of the books I mention in my classes or may be able to order them for you. Check with him when you are looking for a book. You may contact Mr. Hamilton at (757) 497-8330, ext. 368.

Regent Library

One of the least known resources that we have as residents of Virginia Beach and environs is Regent University. The Regent University library has what is perhaps the finest collection of biblical literature and resources outside Washington, DC. And it is open to the public. Because you are not a registered student, you may not check books out, but you may use the library and its collection in convenient study carrels and comfortable reading furniture.

Technical Support

Within our own parish community, we have a very competent computer technical expert, Randy Broadwell. He is available to you for technical problems related to our Internet site, Edu 2.0, and problems accessing the site and teaching resources. He is not available to go to homes and work with personal computers. Randy may be reached at his e-mail address RandyB@stgregorysva.org.