The Role of Mary
in the Life of the Church

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I. Our Starting Point: Baptism

- washes away original sin
- unites us with crucified and risen Christ
- new creation
- share in Christ’s holiness
- share in Christ’s divine Sonship
- membership in Body of Christ (Church)
- Priest, Prophet and King
- new relationship with Trinity in Christ
II. Mary, Our Spiritual Mother

- United to Christ, Who calls Mary *Mother*
- Mary: Mother in order of grace
- Spiritual Mother of all the Baptized
- Mother of communion of saints (Mother of Church (Jn 19, 25-27))
- Mother of humanity

Mary is *the perfect icon of the motherhood of the Church* (Pope John Paul II, RVM, 15)
II. Mary, Our Spiritual Mother (cont’d)

- Therefore, we honour Mary as Mother of Jesus, our spiritual Mother, Mother of the Church, Mother of all humanity.

- We honour Mary Liturgically, under many different titles, with many different prayers.

- We confidently ask her privileged intercession with her Divine and human Son, to obtain what we need.
III. Mary as Member of the Church

- Member of Church – redeemed by Christ
- Redeemed – by Son’s passion, death, resurrection
- Preserved from All Sin – by merits of Son’s passion, death, resurrection
  - Immaculate Conception
- Assumption – first among faithful to share in resurrection of the body
III. Mary as Member of the Church (cont’d)

- Second Vatican Council: Chapter 8 of *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (rather than separate document)

- Mary is
  - *one of us*,
  - a member of the Church,
  - redeemed by Christ
III. Mary as Member of the Church (cont’d)

Father, you prepared the Virgin Mary to be the worthy mother of your Son. You let her share beforehand in the salvation Christ would bring by his death, and kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception. Help us by her prayers to live in your presence without sin.

Opening Prayer, Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Dec 8th)
IV. Mary as Teacher

- For Jesus
- For the Early Church
  - At foot of Cross
  - After Ascension & Pentecost
- Teaching the Church Down Through Ages
V. Mary in the Domestic Church

Reflection Exercise:

Who is Mary for you and your family (past or present)?

Share a story with a neighbour, and come up with a word or phrase which describes who Mary has been/is for your family…
VI. Mary in the Bible

- Note: Everything in Bible (even Mary) points to Christ
- Mary as New Eve:
  - Consequences of Eve’s “Yes” to Satan are undone by Mary’s “Yes” to God.
  - Leads to coming of new Adam (Jesus) into world
    His death and Resurrection defeat the power of sin and death
- We through Baptism (into Christ’s death and resurrection) are a new creation.
VI. Mary in the Bible (cont’d)

- Sarah: Mother of Isaac
- Hannah: Mother of Prophet Samuel
- Elizabeth: Mother of John the Baptist
- "When the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law to ransom those under the Law, so that we might receive adoption" (see Galatians 4:4-5)
VI. Mary in the Bible (cont’d)

- **Mary as Ark of the Covenant**
  - Ark bears divine Presence with Hebrews in tent in desert
  - Mary bears Divine Presence of Son (OL Guadalupe)
  - Revelation 11,19 – Chap 12

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VII. Mary’s Roles

- Mary as Model of Discipleship
  - Faith, Hope, Love
  - Docile to Spirit: “Here am I, the servant of the Lord. Let it be with me according to your word.” (Lk 1, 38)
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Model of Discipleship (cont’d)
  - Accepts and ponders (*treasures*) mystery of Son in her heart.

> “When [the shepherds] saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.**” (Lk 2, 17-19)

> “And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and **His mother treasured all these things in her heart.**” (Lk 2, 51)
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Model of Discipleship (cont’d)
  - Perfect example of following Christ.
    Tells others to do the same: 
    *Do whatever He tells you* (Jn 2, 5)
  - Fulfils the Beatitudes:
    poor, mourning, meek, hunger/thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaker, persecuted
  - Follows Christ to Cross
    (faith, fortitude, solidarity)
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Model of Discipleship (cont’d)
  - Fully Cooperates With God’s Grace
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Model of Discipleship (cont’d)
  - Fully Cooperates With God’s Grace

Jesus: divinity (red) clothed with humanity (blue)  
Mary: humanity (blue) clothed with divinity (red)

Mary shows us how to live a life of grace – to be clothed with the divine life that is our inheritance as members of the Baptized.
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- **Mary as Advocate**
  - Wedding at Cana (Jn 2, 1-11)
  - Our own stories
  - Mother of the King (i.e. Queen) – privileged intercessor

- **Mary as Prophet**
  - Brings forth God’s Word into the world: “and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” (Jn 1, 14)
  - Visitation: brings Good News to Elizabeth: sanctification, comfort. (Lk 1, 39-56)
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Prophet (cont’d)
  - Guadalupe, La Salette, Lourdes, Akita, Fatima:
    - Interior conversion,
    - Confession, Eucharist
    - Prayer
    - Penance
    - Trust in God
    - Trust in Her
    - Sanctity of Life
    - Rosary
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Evangelizer
  - Our Lady of Guadalupe: *Evangelizer of the Americas*
  - Perfects Aztec culture (JP II)
VII. Mary’s Roles (cont’d)

- Mary as Teacher
  - Teacher of Jesus, Apostles
  - Our teacher on how to be a *holy nation* of…
    - Priests - offering her life, her Son to the Father,
      - uniting her suffering with Jesus’ sacrifice
    - Prophets - bringing word of God into world;
      - continues to speak on behalf of Son and His Gospel
    - Kings - defends dignity of human life wherever she appears
VIII The Rosary

- Christ-centered contemplative prayer, a *compendium of the Gospel* (JP II, RVM 18)
- Prayer of simplicity, prayer of the humble
- Point of reference, reminder of our true identity: *For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.* (Col 3,3)
  - Mysteries are mysteries of *our story* as members of Christ’s body
- Sustains us between Eucharists
VIII  The Rosary (cont’d)

- Conversation with Mary, contemplating with her, the mysteries of her Son.
- Remembering (bringing into present) with Mary God’s saving actions in history
- Most powerful intercessory prayer after the Mass (according to many saints e.g., Padre Pio)
With the Rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love.

Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer. (Pope John Paul II, Rosarium Virginis Mariae, 2002. No. 1)
IX Mary’s Eucharistic Heart:

- **Source of Christ’s Flesh**
  - In a certain sense, she is present at every Mass (JPII, RVM)

- **Perfectly united with Christ’s Self-offering to Father**

- **At communion, we are immersed in Christ, whose heart is one with his Mother’s.**
X Our Response to Mary

- **Entrustment: to Mary’s maternal care** -
  - She will always lead us to Jesus.
  - She will help us live our Baptism
  - Privileged intercession obtains mercy, protection
  - Mary knows our human life and what it means to suffer, to be poor, to be a bereaved mother and spouse; she knows humanity’s greatest joys and deepest anguish – even the darkness of separation from Christ.
Our Response to Mary (Cont’d)

**Honour:**
- As Mother of God,
- Mother of Church, our Spiritual Mother
- For her unique role in humanity’s salvation
- For her intervention in history to bring us closer to Christ (e.g., Our Lady of La Salette, Akita, Fatima, Lourdes, Guadalupe)
- For her constant, active role as Mother and Advocate
X Our Response to Mary (Cont’d)

- Thanksgiving to God:
  - For gift of Mary, her “yes”, her motherhood, that opened the door for world’s salvation in Christ.
  - For all Mary has done and continues to do to lead us and those we love to her Son.
Let us Pray…

Hail Mary, Full of Grace
   The Lord is with Thee.
Blessed art Thou among Women
And Blessed is the Fruit of Thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God
   Pray for us sinners now,
And at the hour of our death.  Amen

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.  Amen.