

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

MARY AND ISRAEL

**TOPICS: OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS: CALLING FOR GREATER COVENANT FIDELITY
MARY'S COVENANT FIDELITY WITH GOD, HER "FIAT"**

REFERENCES:

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
NOS. 64, 149, & 489

Sacred Scripture

IS 7:14 & 54:10;
JER 31:3-4, 31-34;
EZ 36:25-27;
HOS 2:21-22;
LK 1:26-38

CREED	LITURGY	LIFE	PRAYER
nos.	nos.	nos.	nos.
64, 72-73, 128-130, 148-49, 487-89, 507, 963-75	1079- 82, 1172, 1368, 1370	1717, 2014-16, 2030	2564, 2581- 84, 2617-19, 2622, 2673- 79, 2682

GOAL(S):

- Families will understand that God sent prophets to the Israelites to call His people back to being in relationship with Him.
- Families will reflect on Mary's covenant fidelity with God.
- Families will share about their favorite titles of Mary.

OPENING PRAYER

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

MATERIALS

Week 1

- Chairs set up in pairs for ice breaker
- Bibles
- [Annunciation Prayer Craft](#) {Easy Color & Create} (Consider using card stock to print so it can stand. It will be used for Week 2 family prayer and displayed on their home altars.)
- Crayons or pencils & scissors
- [Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#) (Litany of Loreto)
- Statue of Mary
- Candle

Week 3

- Bibles
- Bowl of M&Ms
- Music
- Altar
- Statue of Mary
- One flower per person
- large vase(s)
- Crown for Mary
- Cake, treats (birthday cake if celebrating Pentecost) with plates, napkins, & utensils (ice cream is optional but preferred!)



ICE BREAKER

Face to Face

Set Up: Gather enough chairs for each person and set them up facing each other. Prepare the conversation topics ahead of time and place them in a box for the caller to hold.

How to Play: The family members will pair up and sit across from each other. When the caller calls out the topic, each team of two will have 30 seconds to discuss the answer. When the 30 seconds is up, the caller will tell the teams to switch partners. The game is over when all four questions are answered.

Ask questions appropriate for the age group. Some example topics could be:

- 1) "If you could create your own subject in school, what would it be?"
- 2) "If you could meet a saint, who would it be and why?"
- 3) "What is your favorite sandwich creation?"
- 4) "What is your favorite place to eat?"



Adapted from kidactivities.net

1. Hook/Question:

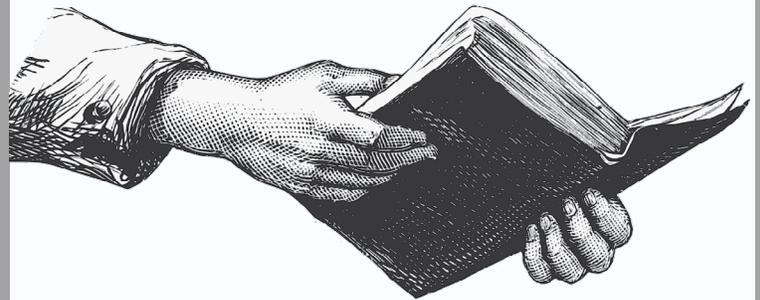
TEACH

2. Answer: Prophet

Does anyone remember what Samuel of the Old Testament's job was?



Explain: Yes, today we're going to begin by learning about the Old Testament Prophets.



CONTENT

Watch: *Prophets* | Catholic Central (5:40)

Explain: As we learned from the video, the prophets who are identified in the prophetic books of the Old Testament served Israel from approximately the 8th century BC to the 1st century AD and were often advisors to kings. At our last gathering, we read from the Books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. These books tell about three earlier prophets, Eli, Samuel and Nathan. In fact, in 1-2 Samuel, we read about how King David was advised, first by the Prophet Samuel, and then later by the Prophet Nathan.



Although God's people had received His commandments and made a covenant with God promising to belong to Him alone, many times throughout their history the ancient Israelites worshipped false gods and broke their covenant promises to God. Though the Lord respected the freewill of the Israelites, and allowed the natural consequences of their sins to be brought upon them, His heart was always that of a loving Father, waiting for the return of His children.

In the Book of Jeremiah, the prophet Jeremiah wrote, "Is Ephraim (Israel) not my favored son, the child in whom I delight? Even though I threaten him, I must still remember him! My heart stirs for him, I must show him compassion!" Jeremiah 31:20

As we read in the Old Testament, each time the children of Israel went astray, God would send a prophet to call His people back to living in covenant relationship with Him. The people would eventually turn their hearts back to God, but later they would inevitably start worshipping false gods again. They could not be faithful to the Old Covenant for very long. It was clear that something had to change.

Read: [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)

The breaking of the Old Covenant by the Israelites, and the remaking or renewing of the Old Covenant (which was primarily the work of God) occurred over and over, from the time of Saul and David for nearly 1,000 years until, one day, an angel appeared to a teenage girl in the town of Nazareth.

Provide: [Annunciation Prayer Craft](#) for the children to color.

Invite: Please open your bibles to Luke 1:26.

Explain: You have probably heard these scriptural verses read in church many times. These chapters are titled, "Announcement of the Birth of Jesus" but they are also about Mary's covenant fidelity with God.

Read: [Luke 1:26-27](#)

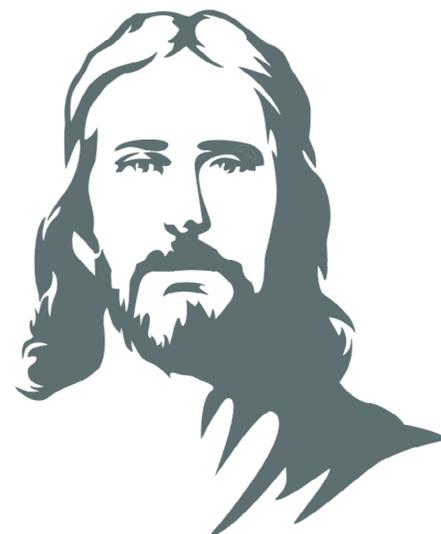
Explain: In Ancient Israel and in some places around the world today, betrothal or engagement, such as the one Mary and Joseph had, was a very serious covenant between a man and a woman. This meant that they were promised to one another for life, even though they had not yet had the final ceremony and were not yet living together under the same roof.

Ask: Did anyone notice from whose line or house did Joseph come?

Answer: David.

Ask: Why is that important?

Answer: Because in God's covenant with David, God promised that the King of kings would come from David's line.

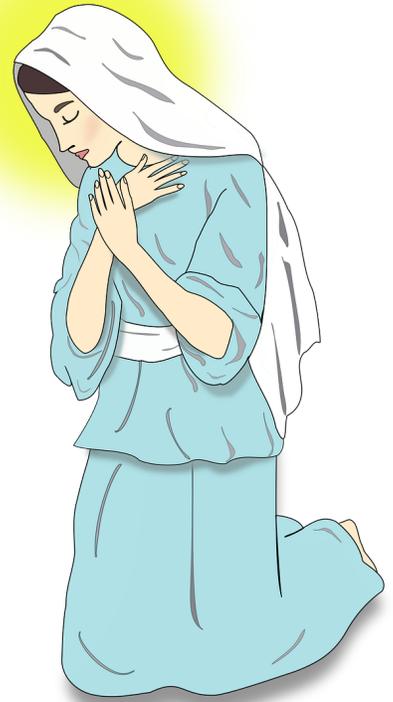


Read: [Luke 1:28-34](#)

Explain: At first, Mary pondered and questioned the angel's words. Because she had the gift of wisdom and, as Scripture and Tradition indicate, had made a special promise of purity, Mary asked him questions to discern the true meaning of the message.

Read: [Luke 1:35-37](#)

Explain: The Angel Gabriel explained that God was calling Mary to be the Mother of His Son, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy from long ago (Is 7:14). This would be done through the power of the Most High overshadowing her. Mary was being invited to say "yes" to God's covenantal promise in a way that Israel never anticipated fully, even though this was what the Lord was preparing His people for throughout the Old Testament. Israel, whom the prophets depicted as the Lord's bride (see Hosea, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah, for example), was often unfaithful, rejecting the Lord's covenant. Mary, on the other hand, was always faithful. She was being invited to say yes to a new promise—one that would fulfill all the promises of the Old Covenant.



Mary was being called to be the bride of the Lord in a new way, as the mystical "spouse of the Holy Spirit," faithfully keeping Israel's covenant with God. In her "yes," Mary is the beginning of the Church. She prefigures or foreshadows the Church as a faithful bride. The decision was entirely up to her. She already had a very close relationship with God, but she never expected to be offered such an honor, one that would also require great sacrifice on her part. Yet, she was assured that all this would happen without her breaking any of the vows she had already made.

Read: [Luke 1:38](#)

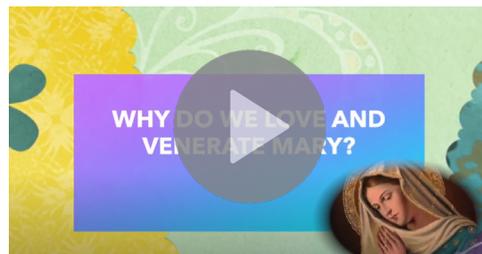
Explain: This is what we call Mary's Fiat, meaning her "Yes" to God.

Ask: Do you remember why we call Mary the New Eve?

Answer: Because Eve said no to God through sin, and Mary said yes to God through her obedient and generous heart.

Provide families a copy of [Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary](#) (Litany of Loreto)

Watch: *Why does Mary have many titles?* (1:47)



FAMILY CONVERSATION

Mary has many titles. She is called:

Queen of Heaven

Mother of God

Mary Star of the Sea

Mother of Perpetual Help

Spouse of the Holy Spirit

Help of Christians

Mother of Mercy

Cause of Our Joy

In addition to these titles, there are more included in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary that you were given. Read through the titles and choose which one is your favorite. Then discuss why you like that title the most.

MISSION

1

First, Introduce Mission Activity

Mission Activities are to be done at home during Week 2 and to be shared at the gathering of families on Week 3.

2

Second, Explain Activity

1. Since we are still in the Easter Season, be prepared to share about how your Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan is going. Which activities are your favorite so far and why?
2. Together as a family watch the videos about Mary, the Ark of the Covenant.
3. Place a Mary statue or your Annunciation Prayer Craft and a candle on your home altar. Then together pray the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
4. Complete the [*Families Forming Disciples*](#) family survey (if you haven't already)

3

Model for Families

Model for the families by sharing about how your own *Living-the-Easter-Season Family Plan* is going and share about how praying the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary* has impacted you and your family.

REVIEW AND PRAYER



1. Set the Mary Statue on an altar, or where it can be seen.
2. Place the candle in front of it and light the candle.
3. Invite the families to share any intentions for which they would like everyone to pray.
4. Pray the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (Litany of Loreto)

REMIND

Remind families about the next meeting date and time.



SUPPORTING QUOTES FROM CHURCH DOCUMENTS

Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 64:

Through the prophets, God forms his people in the hope of salvation, in the expectation of a new and everlasting Covenant intended for all, to be written on their hearts. The prophets proclaim a radical redemption of the People of God, purification from all their infidelities, a salvation which will include all the nations. Above all, the poor and humble of the Lord will bear this hope. Such holy women as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Judith and Esther kept alive the hope of Israel's salvation. The purest figure among them is Mary.

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* (March 25, 1987), no. 1:

The Mother of the Redeemer has a precise place in the plan of salvation, for "when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal. 4:4-6).

[...] In the liturgy the Church salutes Mary of Nazareth as the Church's own beginning, for in the event of the Immaculate Conception the Church sees projected, and anticipated in her most noble member, the saving grace of Easter. And above all, in the Incarnation she encounters Christ and Mary indissolubly joined: he who is the Church's Lord and Head and she who, uttering the first fiat of the New Covenant, prefigures the Church's condition as spouse and mother.

Pope Francis, Address for the Marian Day on the Occasion of the Year of Faith (October 12, 2013):

Mary first conceived Jesus *in faith* and then *in the flesh*, when she said "yes" to the message God gave her through the angel. What does this mean? It means that God did not want to become man by bypassing our freedom; he wanted to pass through Mary's free assent, through her "yes". He asked her: "Are you prepared to do this?" And she replied: "Yes".

But what took place most singularly in the Virgin Mary also takes place within us, spiritually, when we receive the word of God with a good and sincere heart and put it into practice. It is as if God takes flesh within us; he comes to dwell in us, for he dwells in all who love him and keep his word. It is not easy to understand this, but really, it is easy to feel it in our heart.

Do we think that Jesus' incarnation is simply a past event which has nothing to do with us personally? Believing in Jesus means giving him our flesh with the humility and courage of Mary, so that he can continue to dwell in our midst. It means giving him our hands, to caress the little ones and the poor; our feet, to go forth and meet our brothers and sisters; our arms, to hold up the weak and to work in the Lord's vineyard, our minds, to think and act in the light of the Gospel; and especially to offer our hearts to love and to make choices in accordance with God's will. All this happens thanks to the working of the Holy Spirit. And in this way we become instruments in God's hands, so that Jesus can act in the world through us.

