

CONSECRATION OF CANADA TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

CATECHETICAL ACTIVITY
AGES 6-8

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Bible, copies of colouring page (page 3), copies of the *Hail Mary* prayer (page 4), colouring pencils.

CATECHIST PREPARATION:

1. Read the lesson outline.
2. Copy the colouring page (1 per child).
3. Prepare by reflecting on your relationship with your parents or with your children and be prepared to share an example of how special your relationship is with your loved ones.
4. Scripture passage, John 19:25-27

Jesus Entrusts Mary to John:

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

5. Consider the ways in which the relationship that we have with our parents is one of the most important relationships that we will ever have. The relationship between a child and a mother is particularly special as a mother develops a deep bond with her child before he or she is even born. A mother is a nurturer. A mother always knows best. When they are babies a mother knows by the sounds the child makes whether he or she is hungry, tired, bored or in need of a diaper change. The relationship between a mother and a child remains special throughout one's life. It is our first relationship and influences all of our other relationships.

GATHERING:

1. Ask the children to describe something that they do with their parents that makes their relationship special. (For example, "each night before bed Daddy reads to me and then we say our prayers together", or "When Mommy makes my lunch she puts a special treat in the bag - something that she knows I will really like", or "Mommy always knows what to say when I am feeling sad", or "Daddy and I play outdoor hockey together on the weekends", etc.).

What makes these moments special? Is it because it is just between the parent and child? Is it because it is their special time?

LISTENING:

1. Scripture passage, John 19:25-27. Please read from the Bible.
2. In the Scripture passage, just before the time of His death, out of His deep love for His mother, Jesus tells her that someone will care for her – the disciple John.
3. When children get older, they want to care for their parents, just as their parents did for them when they were younger. We see this in the Scripture passage that Jesus entrusts His mother Mary to John, and He entrusts John to His mother Mary. Jesus wants to make sure that they look after each other and love one another.
4. Jesus also wants us to have a special relationship with His mother. He wants us to care for her, and for her to care for us. That is why we pray through Mary that she will ask God to help us when we need it. We are comforted in the knowledge that Mary loves us and cares for us just as our parents do.
5. This year Canada is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Just as Jesus entrusted the disciple John to His mother Mary, and His mother Mary to John, we as Catholics are marking this special occasion by entrusting our country to the care of the Blessed Virgin Mary. By doing so, the Blessed Virgin Mary will ask God to help us live together in peace and harmony.

DOING:

1. Ask the children to colour the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary (page 3).

GOING:

1. End the session by praying the *Hail Mary* together (page 4).
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HAIL MARY

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.