

saint mary's press

Discover!

Finding Faith in Life

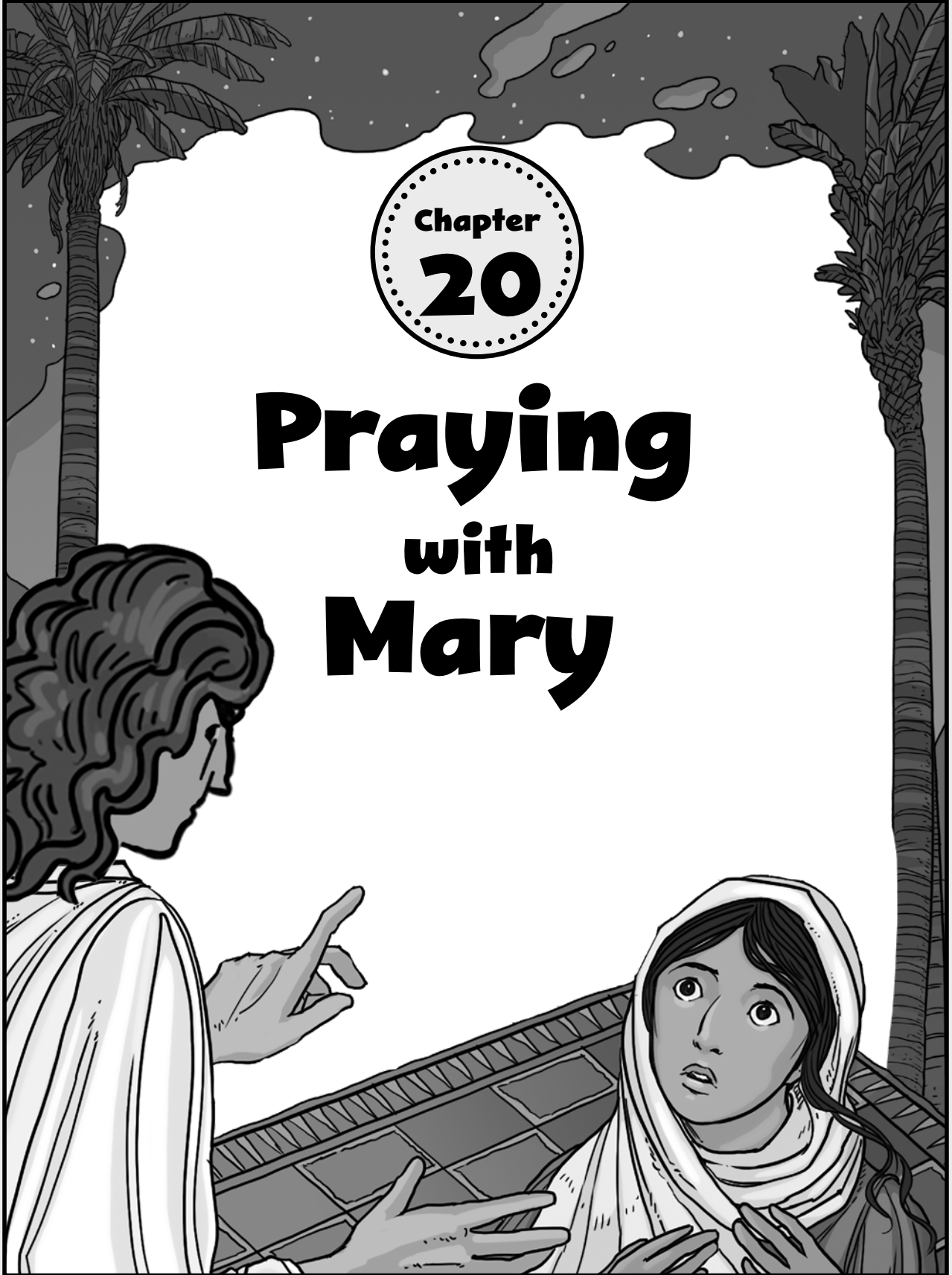
Catechist Guide

2



Chapter
20

Praying with Mary




 Chapter
20

Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Luke 1:30–33, 38

Lesson Goals

- to identify that prayer can help us be open to God's plan
- to state that Mary is an example of complete trust in God
- to recall that we can always call on Mary to help us trust in God

Catechism Pillar

Pray

Catechism References

965, 967–969, 973–975

Key Words

gracious, ancestor, descendants

Music Suggestions

- "Mary Did You Know," by Pentatonix (RCA records)
- "I Say Yes, My Lord," by Donna Pena (GIA Publications, Inc.)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and the chapter 20 activity booklet
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for planting seeds: cups or small pots, soil, water, flower seeds
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Background Reflection

We can imagine that Mary had an immense capacity for love and that she was a person who prayed often. In fact, it seems that she might have prayed so often that being aware of God's presence was as much a part of her as breathing. When Mary was presented with the angel's news about God's plan for her, she was able to trust God completely.

Isn't this what we want? to have such a constant and steady awareness of God's presence in our lives? to know that everything around us is truly from God? to be free enough to say yes without hesitation when God presents his plan to us? to be so aware of God within us and beside us, just as Mary was?

We can ask Mary to lead us to her Son. She is uniquely able to show each of us how to let God into our lives. She can and will show us how to be close to God, so that knowing his presence becomes as automatic as breathing.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the chapter 20 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet to the group. Invite all the children to say “Amen,” and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share some of the qualities that people think of when they think of mothers. List these on the board as the children respond.
- Encourage the children to share reasons why mothers are seen as special and important. You may want to acknowledge that some mothers may struggle and not always be the best they can be. Some children may not have a relationship with their mother or have a strained or negative experience with their mother.
- Ask the children what they know about Jesus’ mother and what she did for Jesus.
- Tell the group that they will be reading about Jesus’ mother in this lesson and will see how she responded when God chose her to be the mother of Jesus.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Luke 1:26–38 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (page 1572). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 1574. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on page 1572.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1574–1575 and describe what they see.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Be sure to discuss the bold key words with them. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - Who sent the angel to Mary? (*God*)
 - What was the message the angel told Mary? (*that God has been gracious to her, and she would give birth to Jesus*)
 - What was Mary’s answer to the angel? (*that she is the Lord’s servant; yes*)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: afraid, gracious, Jesus, great, Son, servant, happen*

Understand It!

- Read the Understand It! on page 1575, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - The angel told Mary that God chose her to be the mother of Jesus, and that Jesus would be a great king.
 - Even though Mary did not know how this would happen, she trusted God and said “Yes!”
 - Because Mary said yes to God, Jesus was able to save us all.
 - Good things happen whenever we say yes to God, like Mary did.
- Emphasize that even though Mary was afraid of such a great responsibility, she still trusted God totally. Tell the children that Mary is a model for us by showing us how to trust God completely.

Live It!

- Read the Live It! on page 1575, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to pray the prayer to Mary together.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 1575.
- Invite volunteers to share what is shown in each box and how it relates to the Scripture story. (*Image 1 shows an angel talking to Mary. Image 2 shows an angel telling Mary that God wanted her to be the mother of Jesus. Image 3 shows an angel telling Mary that her Son would be a great king. Image 4 shows Mary answering the angel.*)



Discover! (25 minutes)

Core Learning Activity

Seeds of Faith

- Invite the children to share what they know about planting and growing seeds.
- Present the class with materials for planting seeds: cups or small pots, soil, water, flower seeds.
- Call the children’s attention to the details of the seeds: size, color, etc. If the seeds are from a packet, show them the picture on the packet and tell them a little about the kind of flower the seeds are from.
- Show the group how to prepare the soil and plant the seeds. Help them complete each step as necessary.

- Invite the children to talk about what their next steps will be to care for the seeds they have planted. Remind the children about the importance of the right amount of sun and water for the seeds. Have the group clean the area.
- Tell the children that they will take the seeds they have planted home. Remind them to care for them there.

Process the Activity

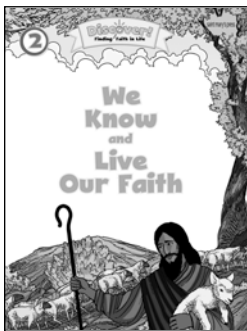
- Remind the children that when they have a seed to care for, they can't ignore it. Explain that it must be watered and exposed to sunlight.
- Compare the seed to their relationship with God. Tell them that knowing about God and loving God need attention.
- Explain that their faith and their love for God started out when they were baptized. Tell them that their faith was small like a seed. Help them understand that because they are learning about God and praying, the seed of their faith is growing daily.
- Invite the children to share their thoughts on how they can care for their relationship with God. *(Encourage responses such as going to church, praying, and reading the Bible.)*

Additional Activity Options
 If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 209 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that when God chose her to be the mother of Jesus, Mary knew she could trust God and told the angel that she would do what God asked her to do. Tell them that Mary said yes to God because she knew that God had a special plan for her.
- Explain to the children that God also has a special plan for them. Tell them that they probably don't know yet what that plan is, but if they continue to talk to God every day in prayer, they will understand, more and more, what God's plan is for them.
- Point out that Mary showed us, by her example, what it is like to trust God completely. Tell the children that we can always ask Mary to help us understand what God's plan is for us and to help us grow in our faith and trust in God.

- Tell the children that the Hail Mary is a prayer that we say often. Explain that in this prayer we ask Mary to pray for us. Direct the children to locate the Hail Mary on page 1991 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Say the prayer together.
- Invite the children to turn to page 1996 and have a volunteer or volunteers read the paragraph about the Rosary. Emphasize that this is another special kind of prayer devoted to Mary.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - How can we discover what God has planned for us? (*Pray; accept reasonable responses.*)
 - What does Mary's yes to God model for us? (*complete faith and trust in God*)
 - What are two prayers we pray that are devoted to Mary? (*the Hail Mary and the Rosary*)
- Invite the children to turn to the activity on page 3 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Answers: 3, 1, 4, 6, 2, 5*
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read the "People of Faith" section to the group. Add any other information you know about Our Lady of the Rosary, and encourage the children to say, "Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "Mary Is the Mother of God," page 16

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Prayer can help us be open to God's plan.
 - Mary is an example of complete trust in God.
 - We can always call on Mary to help us trust in God.
- Remind the children to take their planted seeds home and care for them.
- Invite the children to locate the image of of Mary and the angel on the bottom of page 1574 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Encourage them to find this image on their folders. It can be found in one place.



Closing Prayer

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Together pray the Hail Mary.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- a rosary to use as an example
- a rosary for each child, if possible

The Rosary (15 minutes)

- Show the rosary to the class. Ask if any of the children have prayed the Rosary before. Invite them to share what they know about this prayer.
- Direct the children to turn to page 1996 and 1997 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*.
- Invite the children to read through the description of the Rosary.
- Distribute, if possible, actual rosaries to the children, or use the rosary you showed to start the activity.
- Explain the diagram on page 1996 to the children. Have them start at the cross. Ask a volunteer to read aloud the short paragraph or descriptive line. Ask the children to point to the diagram at that spot and then point to the actual rosary at that spot.
- Direct the children's attention to the next page and explain that when we pray the Rosary, we remember different events in the life of Mary and Jesus.
- Briefly discuss some of the events listed on this page.
- Conclude the activity by praying a decade of the Rosary together.

Materials Needed

- a statue of Mary
- short strings of yarn, one for each child

The Queen of Heaven (15 minutes)

- Show the children the statue of Mary you have brought to class. Explain that "Queen of Heaven" is one of the special titles we call Mary.
- Tell them that crowning Mary as Queen of Heaven is a tradition that has been part of our faith for many years. Share that when we crown Mary, we honor her because she is Jesus' mother and she showed us how to trust God.
- Give each child a short string of colored yarn and instruct them to tie it in a ring shape so that it can fit on the head of the statue of Mary.
- Invite each child to place their yarn "crown" on the head of the Mary statue while you sing a song about Mary or pray the Hail Mary.

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- pictures of Mary
- blank paper
- markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Images of Mary (15 minutes)

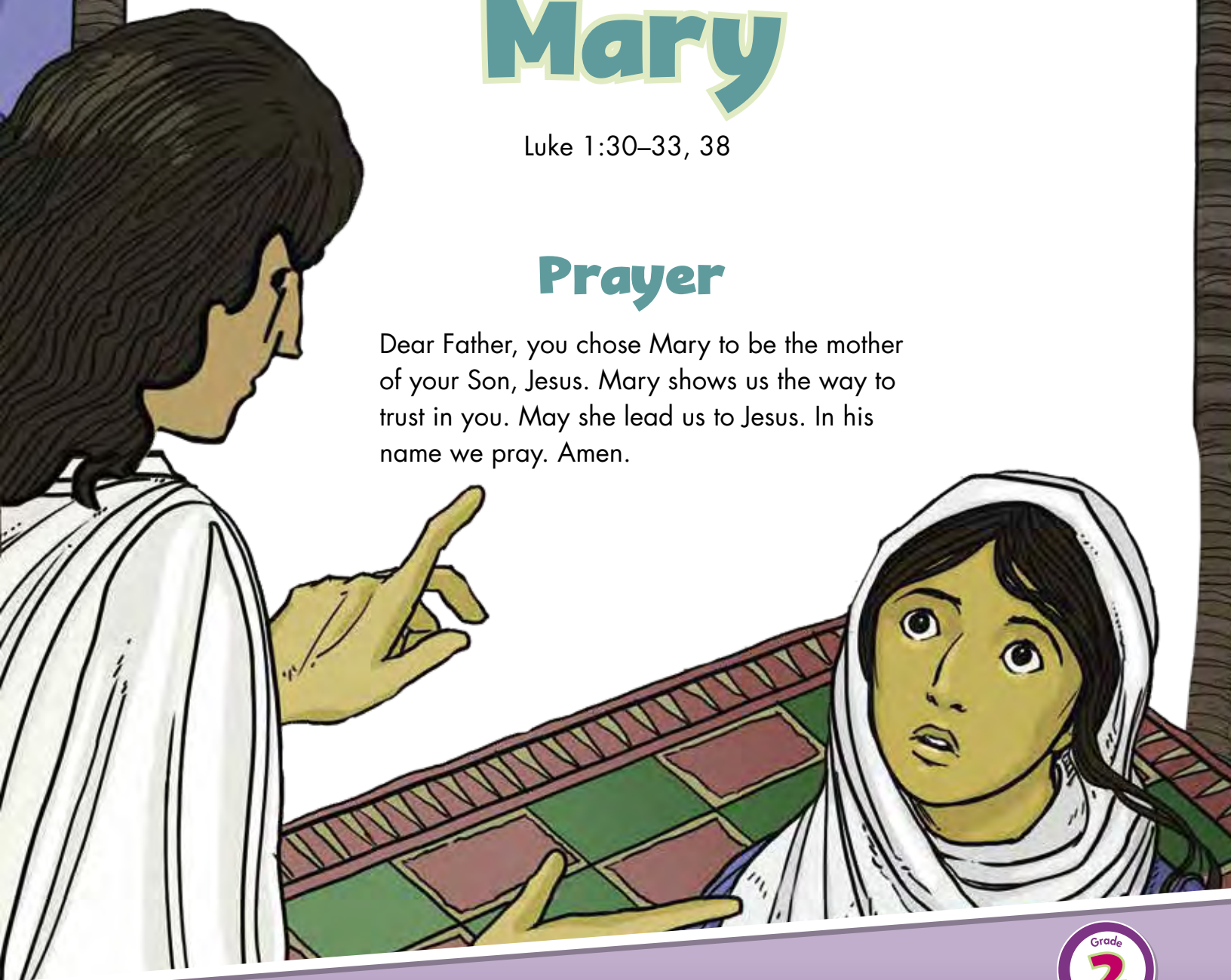
- Watch the video "Why We Should Love the Virgin Mary: Pope Francis Minute" (YouTube, 2:36).
- Explain to the children that Mary has been the inspiration for artists for hundreds of years.
- Show the class some pictures of Mary you have either downloaded or found in books, Christmas cards, or holy cards. Talk together about what the pictures show about Mary.
- Distribute the blank paper and drawing materials, and ask the children to draw their idea of what Mary might have looked like. Encourage them to include symbols of Mary and Jesus in their art.
- Invite the children to show their art to the class and explain any features they have included.

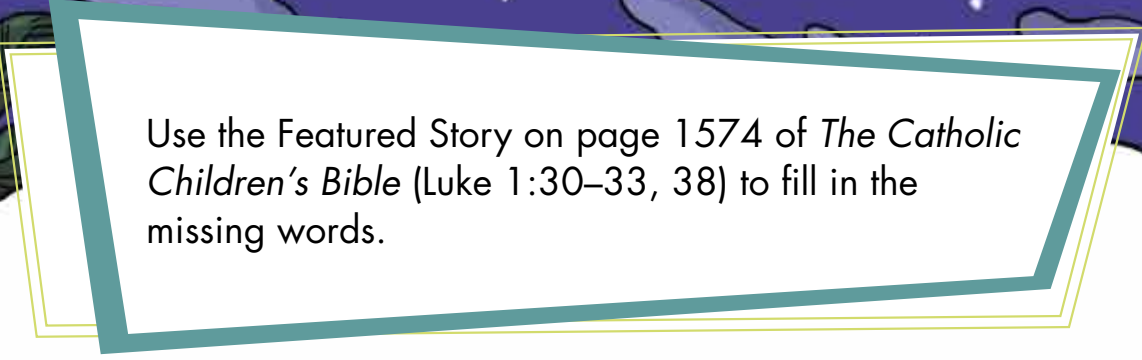
Praying with Mary

Luke 1:30–33, 38

Prayer

Dear Father, you chose Mary to be the mother of your Son, Jesus. Mary shows us the way to trust in you. May she lead us to Jesus. In his name we pray. Amen.





Use the Featured Story on page 1574 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Luke 1:30–33, 38) to fill in the missing words.

afraid

happen

servant

gracious

great

Jesus

Son

The angel said to Mary, "Don't be _____,

Mary; God has been _____ to you.

You will become pregnant and give birth to a son,

and you will name him _____.

He will be _____ and be called the

_____ of the Most High God."

Mary answered, "I am the Lord's _____.

May it _____ to me as you have said."

Write the correct number on each line to put the words of the Hail Mary in order. You can look on page 1991 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* for help.

_____ Blessed art thou among women,

_____ Hail Mary, full of grace,

_____ and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

_____ now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

_____ the Lord is with thee.

_____ Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,



Family Page

Background Reflection

We can imagine that Mary had an immense capacity for love and that she was a person who prayed often. In fact, it seems that she might have prayed so often that being aware of God's presence was as much a part of her as breathing. When Mary was presented with the angel's news about God's plan for her, she was able to trust God completely.

Isn't this what we want? to have such a constant and steady awareness of God's presence in our lives? to know that everything around us is truly from God? to be free enough to say yes without hesitation when God presents his plan to us? to be so aware of God within us and beside us, just as Mary was?

We can ask Mary to lead us to her Son. She is uniquely able to show each of us how to let God into our lives. She can and will show us how to be close to God, so that knowing his presence becomes as automatic as breathing.

Family Activities

- Talk with your child and compare faith in God to a seed. Explain that faith is deep inside us, but we cannot always see it. Help your child understand that faith needs to be watered with prayer every day. Explain that prayer helps us to be open to God's plan for us.
- Read the Featured Story on page 1574 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Luke 1:30–33, 38) together. Ask your child to share what she or he has learned from this story.
- Watch the video "Why We Should Love the Virgin Mary: Pope Francis Minute" (YouTube, 2:36) together. Talk with your child about how Mary can help us trust in God. Pray the Hail Mary together as a family.

People of Faith

Our Lady of the Rosary

For thousands of years, Christians have asked Mary to help them follow Jesus. The feast of Our Lady of the Rosary was begun in 1573 to thank Mary for the many blessings we have received through her prayers. We celebrate this feast on October 7.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Dear God, when you chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus, you gave your Son the perfect mother. Bless our family, and show us how to be more like Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in our love and care for one another. Amen.

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Discover!

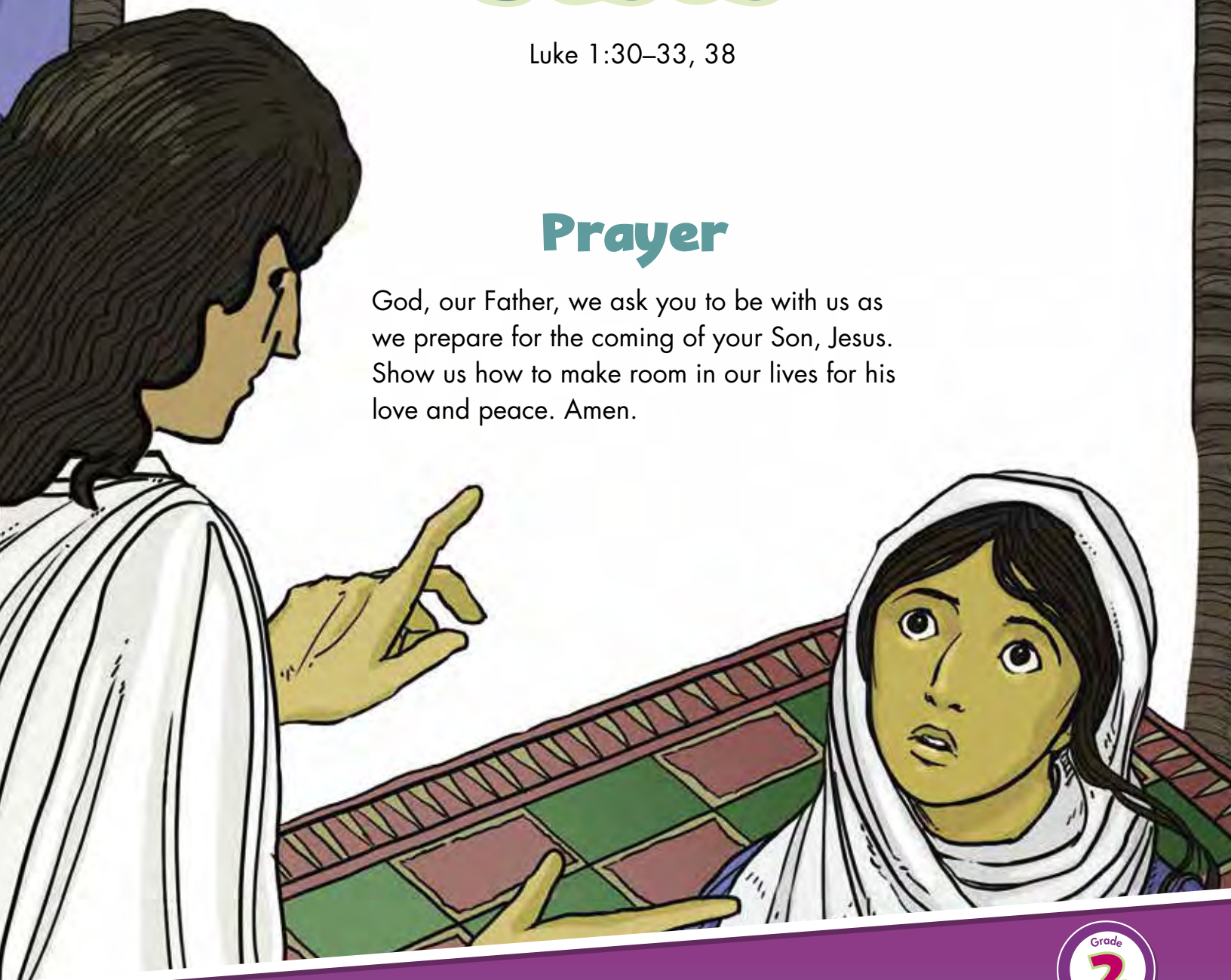
Finding Faith in Life

Welcoming Jesus

Luke 1:30–33, 38

Prayer

God, our Father, we ask you to be with us as we prepare for the coming of your Son, Jesus. Show us how to make room in our lives for his love and peace. Amen.



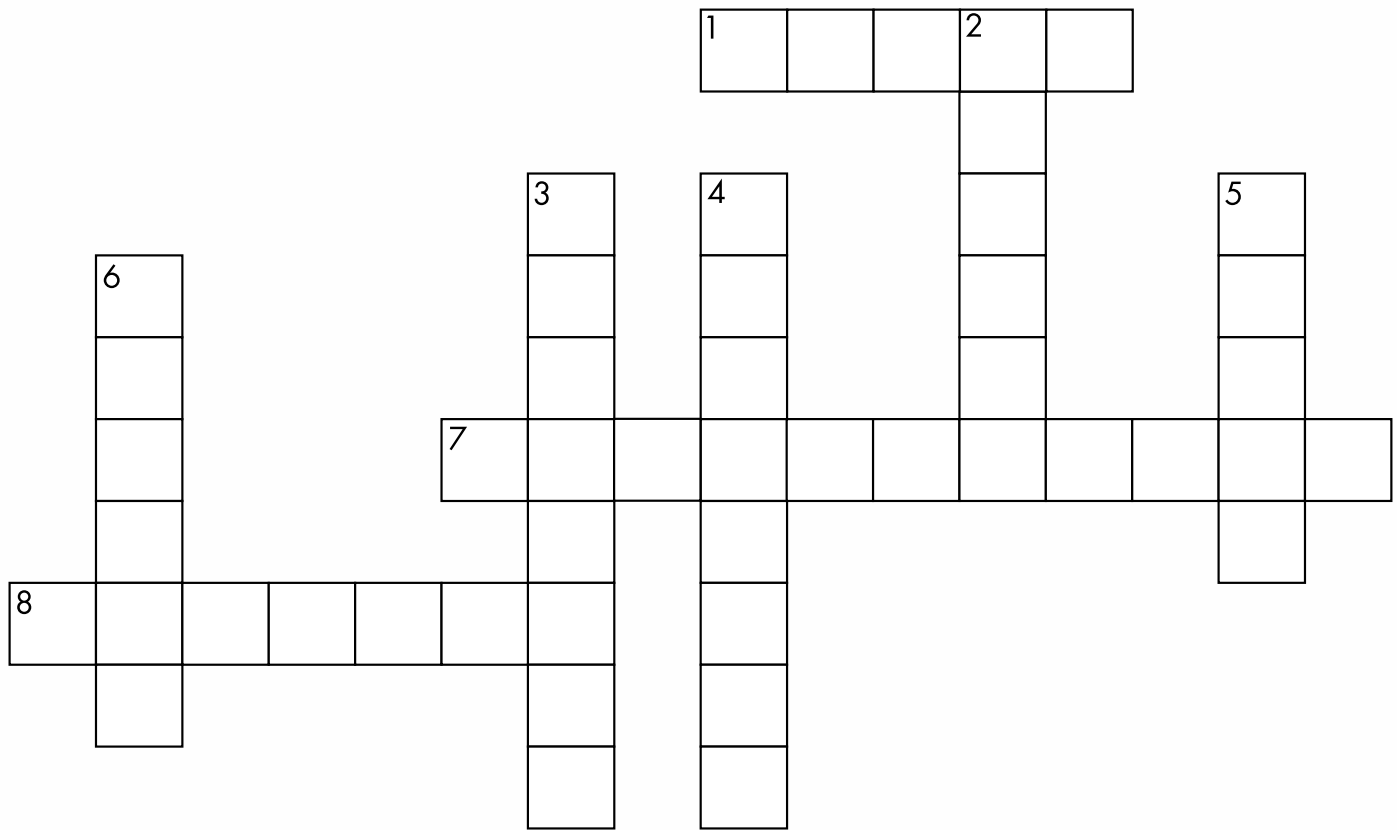
Use the Featured Story on page 1574 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Luke 1:30–33, 38) to solve the clues to the crossword below and learn more about the angel's message.

gracious
great

birth
ancestor

happen
servant

afraid
descendants



Down

2. He asked Mary not to be _____.
3. Mary's Son would be a king, as his _____ David was.
4. The angel told Mary that God had been _____ to her.
5. The angel told Mary that she would give _____ to a Son.
6. Mary agreed that everything should _____ to her as the angel had said.

Across

1. Mary's Son would be _____ and would be called the Son of God.
7. Mary's Son would be king of the _____ of Jacob forever.
8. Mary agreed that she was the Lord's _____.



Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

Leader: Loving God, heavenly Father, you sent your angel to Mary.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: The Angel Gabriel gave her the Good News that she would give birth to your Son, our Savior.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: We celebrate this Good News during Advent, and we look forward to celebrating Jesus' birth this Christmas.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: We light [this candle / these candles] as a sign of peace [hope, joy, love].

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: Jesus is the light of the world. May he light our way in Advent and throughout our lives.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

Leader: We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Family Page

Background Reflection

Advent is a time of preparing for the coming of Jesus. The word *Advent* comes from a Latin root meaning “to arrive” or “to come toward.” When we prepare for something, we walk toward it. We think ahead and make plans. We gather courage and hope, and we look forward to the joy the big event will bring.

All year long, we celebrate and try to follow Mary’s example in saying yes to God as we walk toward him throughout our lives. During Advent, we prepare to welcome him in a more intense, more immediate way. Let us pray that, like Mary, we will be ready to accept with peace whatever God asks of us.

Family Activities

- Read together the Featured Story on page 1574 in *The Catholic Children’s Bible* (Luke 1:30–33, 38). Talk about what Mary may have felt when she heard Gabriel’s news. Talk about what it is like to know that a baby is on the way.
- Brainstorm with your child to create a list of ways your family can say “yes” to God more often. Examples might include going to the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation together, beginning a habit of family prayer, or practicing more patient behavior with one another at home.
- Watch the video “Light the Advent Candle” (YouTube, 2:26) together. Talk about your family’s existing Advent wreath, or make plans to set up a new one. Rather than purchasing a new wreath, create a simple homemade wreath from craft supplies and recycled items you may already have.

People of Faith

Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531)

Mary appeared to a Mexican farmer named Juan Diego. She dressed as a Mexican woman and spoke in the local language. Mary asked for a church to be built in her honor for the people of Mexico. We celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Loving God, you sent the Angel Gabriel to deliver your message to Mary. You send messages to us too. Help us listen for your voice and say “yes” to what you ask. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

