



a Kendall Hunt Company

Mother of God, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session

Numbers 6:22-27

Luke 2:16-21

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

O God, you blessed Mary in a special way to be the mother of your son, Jesus. Help us be like Mary in our faith and obedience. Through Jesus we pray. Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

Give each student a piece of clay and have him/her shape one of the characters in the nativity story. Using a simple stable for display, invite youngsters to put their figures in place telling the story in chronological order.

- What are some characteristics that make Mary a good disciple?
- How are we like Mary?
- Why do you think Mary is called the Mother of God?

Allow time for discussion. Mary obeys God even when she doesn't fully understand God's plan. She doesn't completely understand what the shepherds are telling her; but she still listens to God's messengers, thinks about what they have to say, and obeys.

Listening to the Word of God

In the Old Testament reading we hear an ancient blessing that is familiar to us today.

Read Numbers 6:22-27.

Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- What is God calling Moses to do?
- What does God promise to do in this blessing?
- What does this blessing mean for us today?

In the gospel today, the shepherds come to see Jesus and give Mary and Joseph a message from the angel.

Read Luke 2:16-21.

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Allow for silence.

Scripture Discussion Starters

- Why did the shepherds come to the stable at Bethlehem?
- How do we know that Mary didn't fully understand everything the shepherds told her?
- What did the shepherds do after they left Mary, Joseph and Jesus?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechists Background and Preparation section.

Upon hearing good news from the angel, the shepherds follow God's sign to find the Savior. They tell everyone they meet, including Joseph and Mary, that this child is indeed special, the Son of God and Savior of the world. People can't really understand what all this means; even Mary, still young in her faith journey can't fully grasp all that the shepherds say. We are told, however, that she keeps the words of the shepherds in her heart. She reflects on these words throughout her life. Eight days later, Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple where he is named Jesus.

Questions for Deeper Reflection

- What happens when we take the time to really ponder something?
- What are some thoughts you treasure in your own heart?
- How do you bear Jesus to the rest of the world?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Mary is the Mother of God and all of humanity.

We believe in the full humanity and full divinity of Jesus. We also recognize Mary's role in God's saving plan. While she is the mother who bore Jesus, the human baby, she is also the Mother of God because we believe Jesus is fully divine. Mary is the mother of the whole person of Jesus, both his humanity and his divinity. At the Council of Ephesus in 431 the Church proclaimed Mary truly to be the Mother of God.

Mary is part of the salvation won by Christ and hears this news when the shepherds come to the stable. She does not fully understand what they say to her, but she follows God's laws, contemplates the words of the shepherds, and fully cooperates with the mystery of God.

- How is it possible for Mary to be our mother, too?



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- Why do we say that Mary is part of salvation history?
- What can we do to cooperate with God's saving plan?

Sacrament Connection

In baptism we become a member of the family of God and our parents choose a special name for us. They also choose people to help them as Christian parents. Mary chose a special name for her son, too. He was called "Jesus," and that meant he would be our savior. Besides our parents and godparents, we have a special helper in Mary as well.

The Gospel in Life

What is one area in your life where you need to be more obedient to God?

