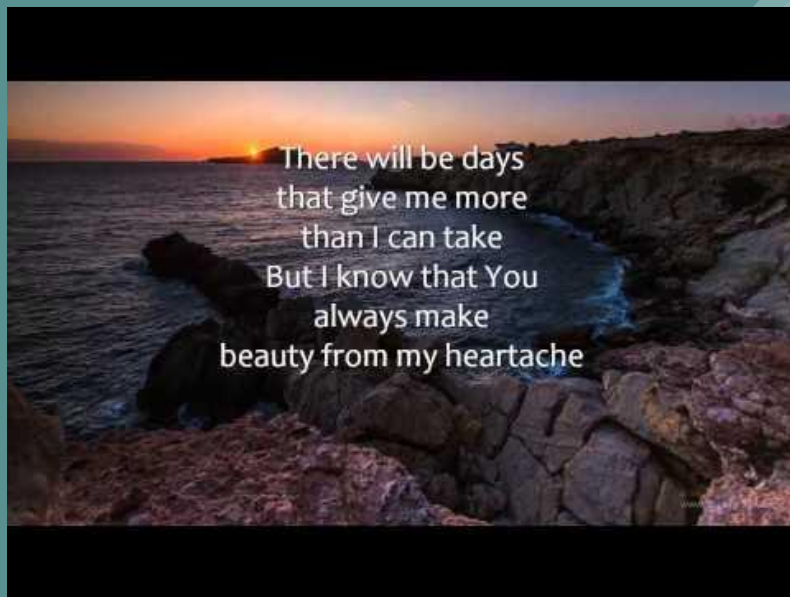
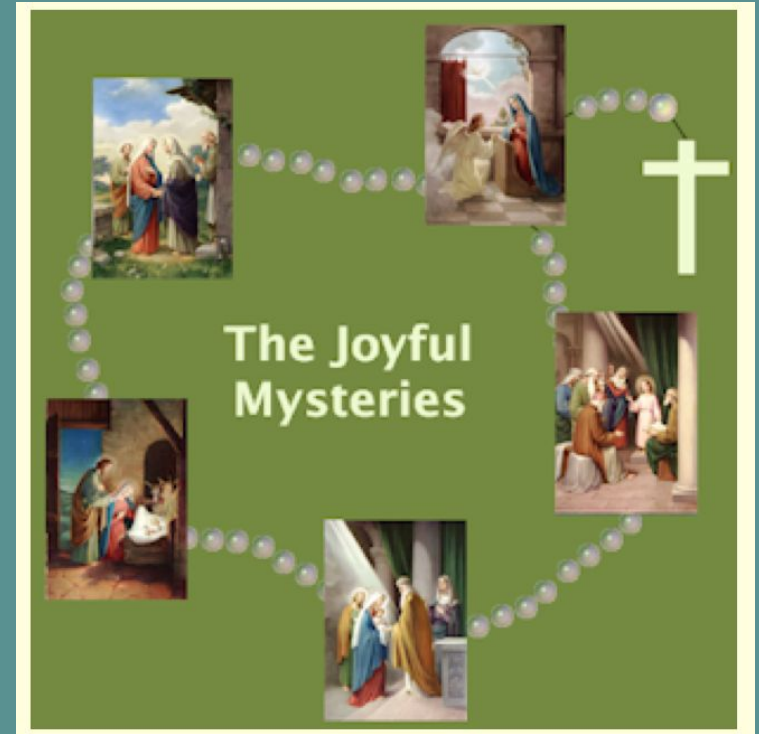


Monday



Monday

On Mondays and Saturdays we think about the Joyful Mysteries. They remind us of all the happy moments that Jesus and Mary shared. They are...



1st Joyful Mystery: "The Annunciation"

Gabriel tells Mary she will be the mother of Jesus.

2nd Joyful Mystery: "The Visitation"

Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth and tells her how excited she is to be expecting Jesus.

3rd Joyful Mystery: "The Nativity"

Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

4th Joyful Mystery: "The Presentation"

Mary and Joseph bring baby Jesus to the Temple to offer him to God.

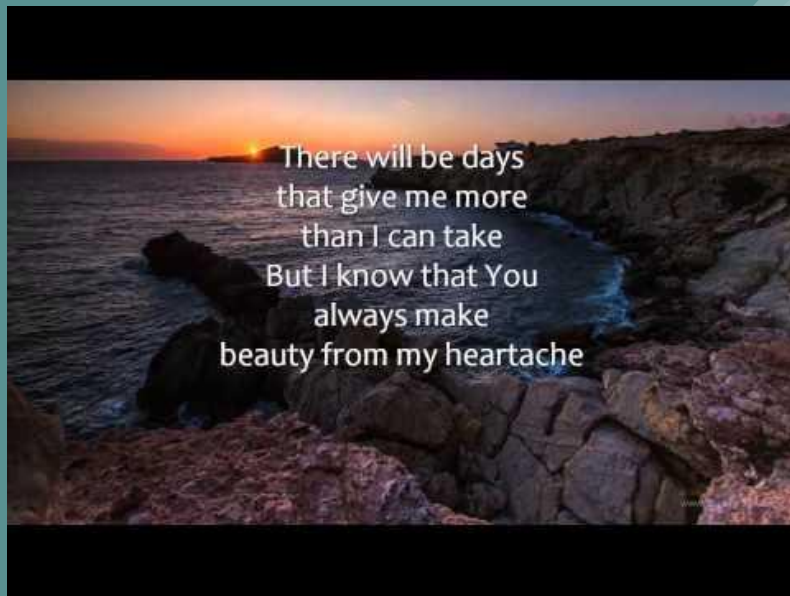
5th Joyful Mystery: "The Finding in the Temple"

After Jesus gets lost one time, Mary and Joseph find him safe and sound in the Temple.

For centuries there have been reported stories of Mary appearing to people giving them great messages of love and hope. Over the next few days we will learn about these appearances. They are called Marian Apparitions.

In 1531, St. Juan Diego saw Mary on top of a hill just outside Mexico City. Mary appeared to him three times. Mary requested that a church be built on top of the hill. When Juan told the bishop about this he demanded proof. The next time Juan saw Mary he told her this and Castilian roses bloomed at his feet-even though it was winter. Juan took the roses and put them in his cloak. When he showed the roses to the bishop, they both saw a detailed image of Mary on the cloak. There is a big church on the hill now and each year 15 million people visit the church to see the image of Mary on the cloak. Since 1754, December 12th is the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe- Mary.

Tuesday



St. Bernadette was a poor girl who lived in Lourdes, France. In February of 1858 she saw Mary one day when she was out collecting firewood. Over the next 5 months, Mary appeared to her 18 times. One of the times, Mary told Bernadette to dig in the ground- crystal clear water came from the muddy hole. Mary told her, "I am the Immaculate Conception." Today, as many as 14,500 gallons of water pours daily from the spring. Many people believe they have been healed by this water. Lourdes is one of the most popular healing shrines in the world.



Wednesday

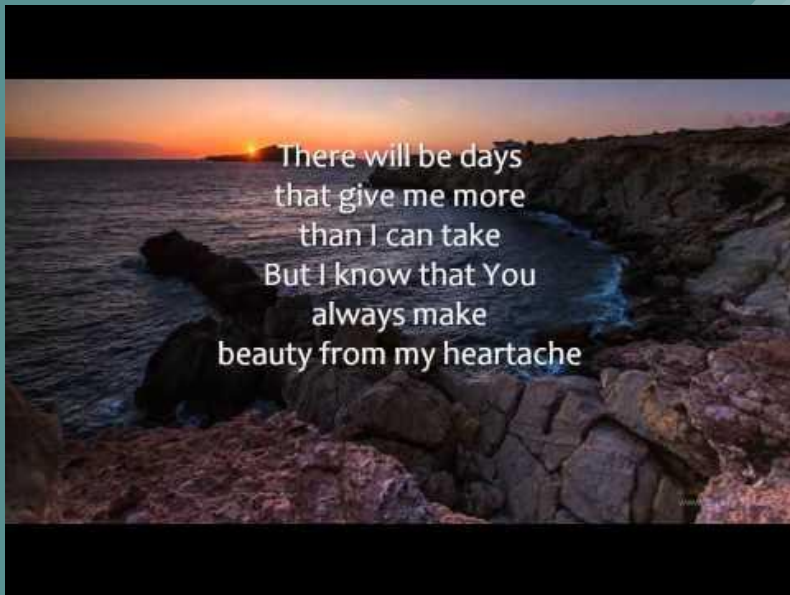


Lucia dos Santos and her two cousins were tending their sheep when they had a visit from Mary. The year was 1917 and they lived in Fatima, Portugal. The first apparition was May 13th and Mary appeared to them on the 13th of each month from May until October. Mary encouraged them to pray the Rosary for world peace. They said the Holy Mother was “more brilliant than the sun” and when Mary put out her hands, streams of light shone from them toward where the children stood. Millions of people visit Fatima and report miracles of healing. Pope John Paul II visited Fatima in 1967 and met Lucia there.



The oldest of the three Fatima visionaries, Lucia (center) witnessed Our Lady's apparitions in 1917 with Bl. Francisco and Bl. Jacinta.

Thursday



God's Gift of Mary

On the prayer table place a candle, the Bible, and a statue or picture of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Leader

The blessed Mother of Jesus is the greatest example of motherhood ever known. She loved, protected, nourished, supported, encouraged, and taught Jesus. On the cross Jesus gave his mother to us so we may all benefit from her love.

Reader One

When the Angel Gabriel asked Mary if she would be the mother of the saviour, Mary responded,
"I am the Lord's servant, may it be done to me as you have said" (Luke 1:38)

Reader Two

When Jesus was twelve years old, he stayed behind after the family had visited the Temple. Just as any parent whose child is missing. Mary let Jesus know she was very concerned.

When his parents saw him, they were astonished.

His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this?

Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you" Luke 1:48

Reader Three

When Jesus grew up. Mary stayed close. She was responsible for his first miracle.

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2 1-5)

Reader Four

As Jesus died, Mary stood at the foot of the cross, faithful as ever. At that time Jesus gave his mother to John and thus to all of us.

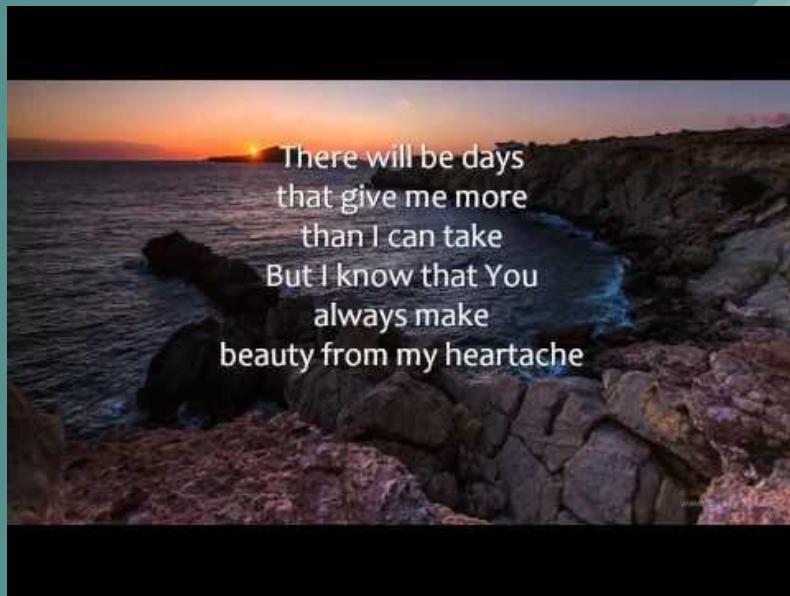
When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, " Dear woman, here is your son, " and to the disciple, Here is your mother."

From that time on, this disciple took her into his home(John 19:26-27).

Leader

Take a few moments to share some of the good qualities of your mothers, grandmothers, and caregivers.

Friday



Guided Meditation

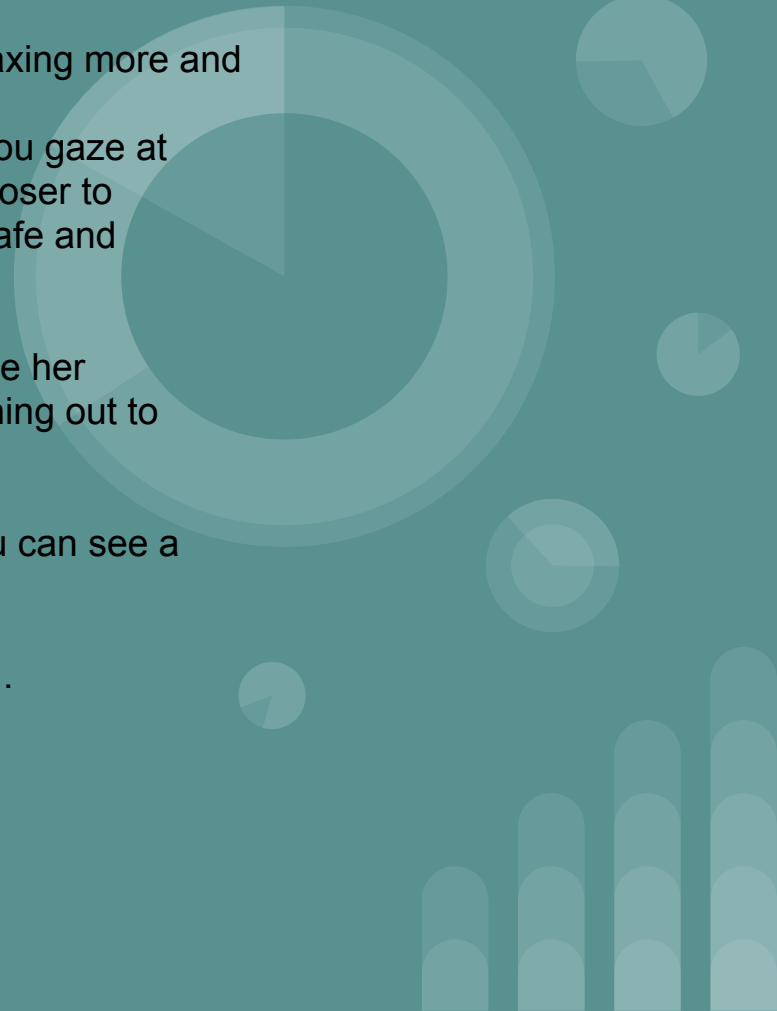
Close your eyes and take several deep breaths... Feel yourself relaxing more and more, and watch your cares and worries drift away...

Now imagine that a huge white cloud is hovering above you... As you gaze at the cloud take three more deep breaths... The cloud is moving in closer to you... The cloud has surrounded you completely and it feels very safe and comfortable...

Imagine that in this cloud you meet Mary, the mother of Jesus... See her smile... Notice her caring eyes gazing at you... Feel her hand reaching out to take yours...

Holding her hand, walk together to the edge of the cloud where you can see a silky white curtain...

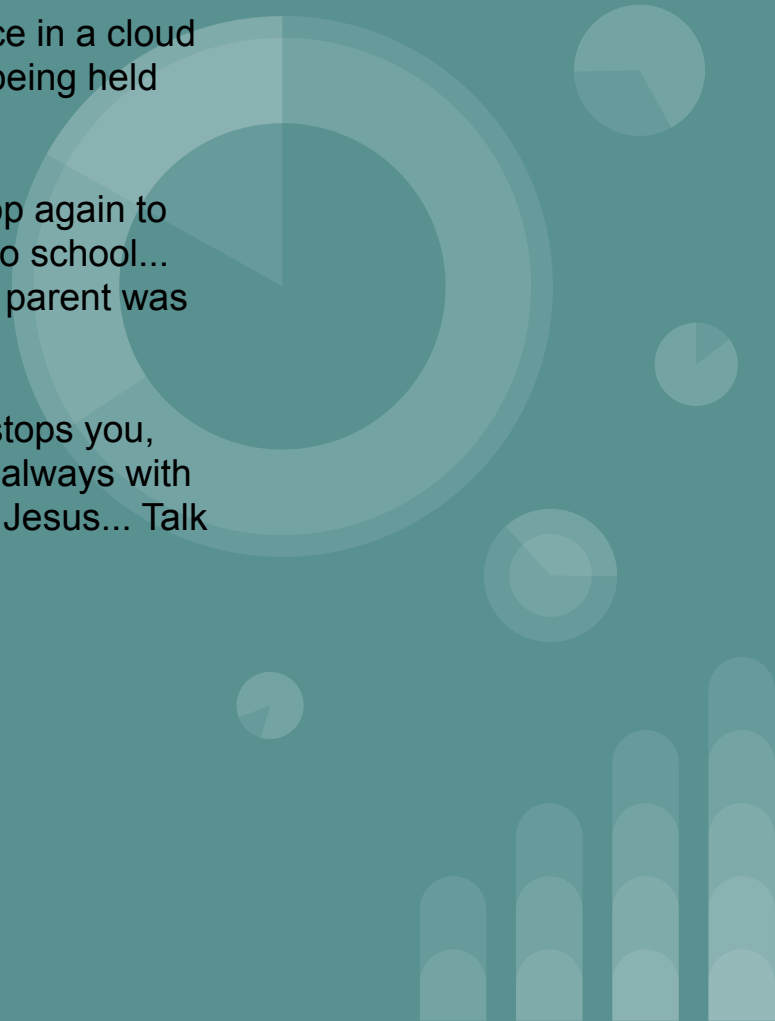
Mary pulls open the curtain... and there is a long corridor behind it... With Mary still holding your hand, begin to walk down the corridor...



After a short distance, Mary stops and points to a scene taking place in a cloud at the side of the corridor... It is you as a baby... You are laughing, being held lovingly... Enjoy this scene for a while...

Mary gently tugs at you and you move on... Soon you and Mary stop again to view a happy scene of you and your mother or father on your way to school... Can you remember that day?...Can you remember being glad your parent was with you?...

You are moving on now, down the corridor... This time when Mary stops you, see yourself as you are now...Some of your friends are there... Are always with you? She asks you if the way you live now reflects the presence of Jesus... Talk to Mary about this for a few minutes...



At the end of the corridor, Mary lets go of your hand. She smiles at you...
She is leaving now, disappearing into a cloud...

In your mind and spirit, can you believe that Jesus will come to help you
whenever you need him?...Do you believe Mary's words?...How did it feel to
be led by Jesus' mother?...

Take another deep breath... Relax... And when you are ready return to the
group...

Closing Prayer

Light the candle on the prayer table and invite one of the children to hold up Mary's picture
or statue as sign that Mary points the way to Jesus.

Left Side Dear God, thank you for giving us Jesus and his mother Mary.

Right Side Help us to be good children for our parents and caregivers and to
love them as Jesus loved Mary.

All: We believe that Jesus is always with us, loving and guiding us.
Thank you for this great gift. Amen.