

02-The Truth About Mary

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Intro There's no doubt that Mary has an honored place among women.

- A. For Catholics though, she has an extra special place that sometimes seems to exceed that of Christ.
 1. *"Among all the women who ever lived, the mother of Jesus Christ is the most celebrated, the most venerated, the most portrayed, the most honored in the naming of girl babies and churches. Even the Koran praises her chastity and faith. Among Roman Catholics, the Madonna is recognized not only as the mother of God, but also, according to modern Popes, as the Queen of the Universe, Queen of Heaven, Seat of Wisdom, and even the Spouse of the Holy Spirit."* (Richard N. Ostling, "Hand-maid or Feminist?" Time, Dec 30, 1991, pg 62)
 - a. In 431 AD, Mary's title as "Mother of God" was made official and incorporated into prayers which says something about how far back is this concept.
 2. *"At the command of Mary all obey, even God. She is omnipotent, for the queen, according to all laws, enjoys the same privileges as the king; and since the son's power also belong to the mother, this Mother is made omnipotent by an omnipotent Son."* (Alphonsus Ligouri, 1750, The Glories of Mary, p 114)
- B. What's the Truth About Mary?
 1. Mary is never mentioned in any epistles and only appears 4 times after the start of Christ's ministry:
 - a. At Cana (Jn 2:1-11); At Capernaum (Matt 12:46, Mk 3:31-35, Lk 8:19); At the cross (Jn 19:25); In upper room (Ax 1:14).
 2. We'll explore what Catholic teaching says and what the Bible says -and doesn't say- about Mary.

I. Mary's Immaculate Conception

- A. Most confuse "immaculate conception" with virgin birth though it refers to Mary's, and not Jesus', birth.
 1. *"The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin."* (Catechism, 491)
- B. The "immaculate conception" was a reaction to the error of "original sin," all men inherit the sin of Adam from birth.
 1. All people are born w/o sin, we're encouraged to be like children – **Matt 18:3-5**
 2. Rather than being born spiritually dead, the apostle Paul was born spiritually alive then was "killed" by sin – **Rom 7:9-11**
 3. Even Mary herself confessed that God was her "Savior" – **Luke 6:47**
 - a. Why exult in a Savior if she had no sin?
 4. Jesus is the *only* sinless one spoken of in the Bible.

II. Mary's Perpetual Virginity

- A. The Bible is clear about Mary's virginity when Jesus was conceived:
 1. **Luke 1:26-35; Matt 1:22-23**
 2. But Catholicism takes it further and claim that Mary's virginity was perpetual.
 - a. *"The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. In fact, Christ's birth "did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it ... and so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as Aeiiparthenos, the "Ever-virgin." (Catechism, 499)*
 - b. *"Jesus is Mary's only son"* (Catechism, 501)
- B. The Bible *implies* that she had other children
 1. **Matt 1:25; Luke 2:7**
- C. The Bible *states* Jesus had siblings
 1. **Matt 12:46; 13:55-56; John 2:12, 7:3-5; Gal 1:19**
- D. Catholicism goes to great lengths to explain away these passages but why not simply acknowledge Jesus' miraculous birth, Mary's honorable place in it, *and* her exemplary life as a mother?

III. Mary's Assumption Into Heaven

- A. The doctrine of original sin has given rise to many thorny questions. One of them is this: what do you do with the physical death of Mary? If physical death is supposedly the result of original sin, Catholicism could not very well argue that Mary died, because that would call into question her freedom from original sin. Hence, the doctrine of the bodily assumption of Mary in 1950:
 1. *"Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, so that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and conqueror of sin and death." ... "The Assumption of*

the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians." (Catechism, 966)

2. *"The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body."* (Catechism, 974)

B. Knowing that no verse in the Bible refers to this doctrine, in his chapter on Marian Beliefs a Catholic scholar wrote, "Fundamentalists ask, 'Where is the proof from Scripture?' Strictly, there is none. ... The mere fact that the Church teaches the doctrine of the Assumption as something definitely true is a guarantee that it is true." (Catholicism and Fundamentalism, Karl Keating, p 275)

IV. **Mary As Mediatrix or "Co-Redemptrix"**

A. Mary's honor, according to Catholicism, is elevated from mere honor to a place shared by her Son.

1. *"Mary's role in the church is inseparable from her union with Christ and flows directly from it. This union of the mother and the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception to His death."* (Catechism, 964)
2. *"Being obedient she (Mary) became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race"* (Catechism, 494)
3. *"Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix"* (Catechism, 969)
4. This implies 3 extraordinary doctrines:
 - a. Mary participates in the redemption achieved by Jesus
 - b. All graces that flow from the suffering & death of Jesus are granted only through Mary's intercession
 - c. All prayers and petitions from the faithful on earth must likewise flow through Mary
 - d. Instead of a Holy Trinity, it would appear there's a Holy Quartet with Mary joining Deity in man's salvation.

B. What does the Bible say about all this? About Mary's mediator status, nothing. But it says plenty about Jesus.

1. Jesus, not Mary is the Savior of the world – **Jhn 4:41-42**
2. Jesus, not Mary, is our Redeemer – **Eph 1:7**
3. Jesus, not Mary, is our Mediator – **1 Tim 2:5**
4. Jesus, not Mary, is our Intercessor – **Heb 7:25**

V. **What About The Vatican's 2025 "Revision"?**

A. In Nov 2025 the Vatican released some notes from a "revision" concerning the titles attributed to Mary.

1. *"In Mater Populi Fidelis ("The Mother of the Faithful People of God"), the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) said when an expression requires frequent explanation to maintain the correct meaning, it becomes unhelpful." ... "In this case, the expression 'co-redemptrix' does not help extol Mary as the first and foremost collaborator in the work of redemption and grace, for it carries the risk of eclipsing the exclusive role of Jesus Christ," according to the doctrinal note, released Nov. 4" (2025)*
(thecatholictelegraph.com/vatican-nixes-use-of-co-redemptrix-mediatrix-as-titles-for-mary/102874)
 - a. The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF) is the oldest and one of the most significant departments of the Roman Curia, responsible for promoting and safeguarding Catholic teaching on faith and morals worldwide. So what did they say?
2. The document confirms Mary's "unique" role and her "immaculate conception." But as for "co-mediatrix":
 - a. *The title "Co-redemptrix" first appeared in the fifteenth century as a correction to the invocation "Redemptrix" (as an abbreviated form of the title, "Mother of the Redeemer"), which had been attributed to Mary since the tenth century.*
 - b. *"The Second Vatican Council's terminology regarding mediation primarily refers to Christ; it sometimes also refers to Mary, but in a clearly subordinate manner. In fact, the Council preferred to use a different terminology for her: one centered on cooperation or maternal assistance."*
 - c. *"Mary's participation in Christ's work becomes evident when one begins from the conviction that the risen Lord promotes, transforms, and enables believers to collaborate with him in his work."*
(vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_dof_doc_20251104_mater-populi-fidelis_en.html)
3. The wording is vague and still clearly allows for an elevated role for Mary. She's blessed, has fulfilled her role but can do nothing for your salvation. But *you* can!

Conc: If any of these were true, the inspired Bible writers must have known and missed the opportunity to inform the world.

A. Again, there is no doubt that Mary occupies an honored position being the woman who bore Jesus. But Catholicism, without Scriptural authority, has elevated her into a status that I believe even she would deny.