

Hail Mary...

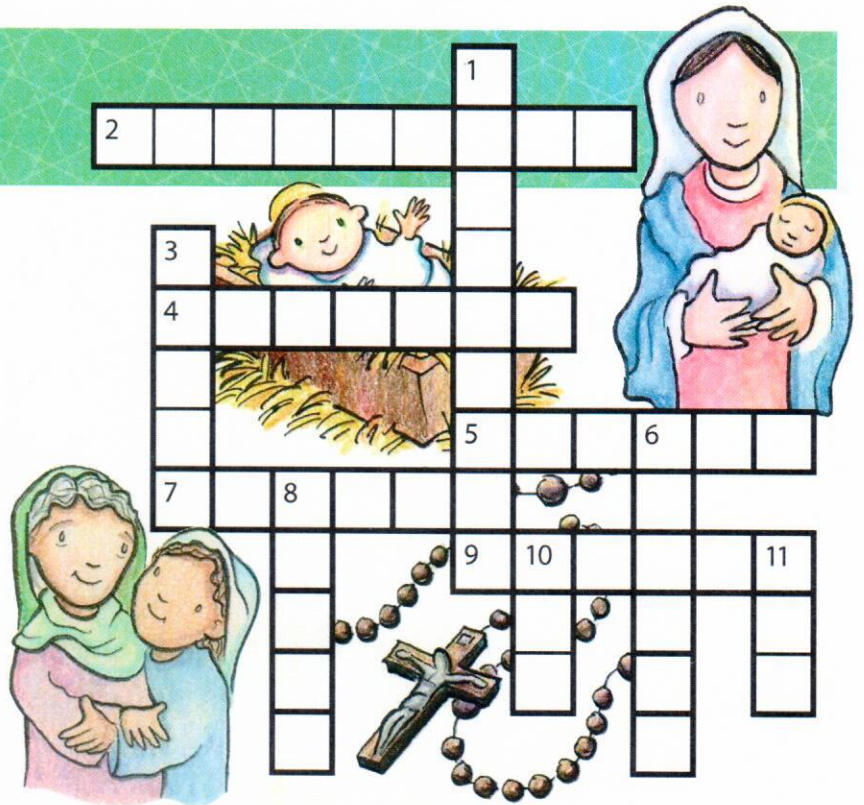
You've probably heard these words a lot. Maybe you say this prayer. But have you ever wondered why we say it? What about all the songs, statues and feast days dedicated to Mary? Why do we honor Mary so much?

First, think about this. People who do great and heroic things have schools, streets and even cities named after them. Some heroes even have holidays in their honor. Great people can inspire us to do great things too. It's a little like that with Church heroes. Except that when we honor the people who love and follow Jesus, we're not glorifying them, we're giving God the glory. Now, can you think of any saint who loved and followed Jesus more than his own mom?

Who could be more loving, kind and good than the person God himself chose to be the mother of his son?

No one else but Mary.

When we give Mary the honor that's due to her, we give glory to God who created her. And imagine how happy that makes Jesus!

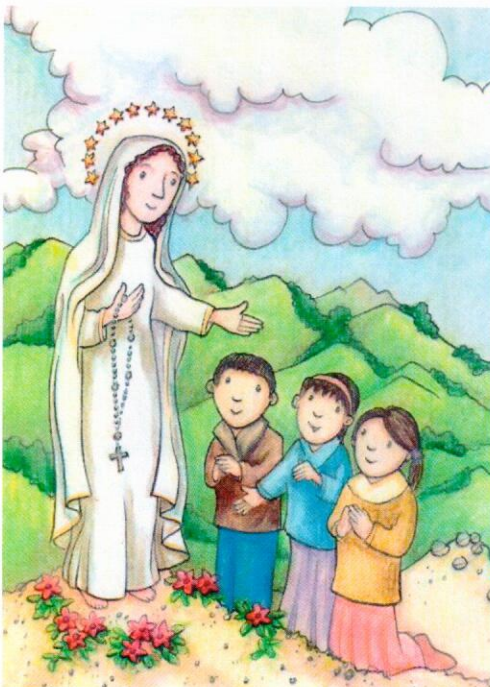


ACROSS

2. Mary's cousin
4. The angel who visited Mary
5. He wanted a sign from Juan Diego
7. Mary and Joseph took Jesus here to worship God
9. String of beads for praying

DOWN

1. Mary's birthday is this month
3. Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus escaped Herod here
6. At the end of her life Mary was taken up to _____
8. Mary asked St. Catherine to create the Miraculous _____
10. The angel called Mary "Favored _____"
11. Mary's answer when God asked her to be Jesus' mom



In Fatima, Portugal, Mary appeared to three kids

named Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco with an important message for the world to turn away from sin and back to Jesus.

Sometimes Mary gives us special reminders too. She appeared to Catherine Labouré, asking her to create a special medal. Nowadays, many people wear the Miraculous Medal to show they belong to God. Another time, Mary offered a small piece of cloth tied to a string, called a **scapular**, which some people wear as a reminder to live as Mary and Jesus lived.