

# “OUR TAINTED NATURE’S SOLITARY BOAST: MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD”

In this episode, Father Barron masterfully correlates the Catholic Faith’s testimony to the revelation of God in Christ with the vivid practices of reverence offered to his Mother. Mary is explained as “an on-going presence, an actor in the life of the Church.”

Father Barron journeys to the humble remains of Mary’s house in Nazareth, to the ruins of the ancient city of Ephesus and to the great Marian shrines of Lourdes and Guadalupe to explain the Church’s teachings about Mary as the Mother of God, the Immaculate Conception and the dogma of the Assumption.

## Outline:

### I. The Annunciation

- a. The angel Gabriel: “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” (Luke 1:28)
- b. Mary called to be the new Ark of the Covenant
- c. Mary’s response is her *fiat*, her humble and holy “Yes” (Luke 1:38)
- d. Mary is the New Eve; she was conceived without sin, filled with divine life
- e. The Ave reverses Eva: the attitude of the fiat (“let it be”)

### II. Mary and Zion

- a. The Bridge between Old & New Covenant
- b. Chartres Cathedral: Body of Mary
- c. Mary is a daughter of Israel, a true Jew
- d. Mary personifies Israel, the bridal people of God, faithful to the covenant
- e. Mary responded to God’s call, promptly, quickly, and obediently
- f. The model disciple

### III. The Mother of God

- a. The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431)
  - i. Convened to combat Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople
  - ii. *Christotokos* (Christ-bearer) vs. *Theotokos* (God-bearer)
  - iii. Twelve anathemas proposed by St. Cyril of Alexandria
- b. Jesus Christ is one Person with two natures, human and divine
- c. Mary is not the mother of a human nature, but a person: Jesus Christ
- d. Calling Mary the Mother of God defends the Incarnation

### IV. The Immaculate Conception

- a. The two dogmas, declared in 1854 and 1950 respectively, have ancient roots
- b. Pius IX (*Ineffabilis Deus*): Mary born “free from all stain of original sin”
  - i. This is why Gabriel says, “Hail, Full of Grace”
  - ii. Mary gifted with “sublime grace” (*Lumen Gentium*, 53)
  - iii. Mary is a perfect and holy vessel for reception of the Word
  - iv. Mary’s salvation a matter of *how*, not *if* or *what*.
- c. St. Bernadette and Lourdes

### V. The Assumption

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- a. Pius XII (*Munificentissimus Deus*): Mary’s body did not corrupt
- b. Mary did not have to wait “for the redemption of her body”
- c. Mary perfectly shared in her Son’s life, death, Resurrection
- d. The Assumption is a “singular participation in her Son’s Resurrection” (CCC 966)

### VI. The Mother of the Church

- a. Mary continues to be active today
- b. Dec. 9, 1532: Mary appeared to Juan Diego in Mexico
- c. The sign given: *tilma* filled with roses, imprinted with miraculous image
- d. The image of the Virgin echoes Revelation 12

### VII. Mother of the New Covenant

- a. Human Sacrifice
- b. Rene Girard: The Scapegoat
  - i. The Scapegoat is at the foundation of society; provides communal cohesion
  - ii. Satan is the Accuser
  - iii. Christ rejects Satan; thus he rejects a world ordered by violence
  - iv. Christ becomes scapegoat to show us our violence
  - v. Christ orders society through love and non-violence

### Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. What surprised you? What will you do differently?
2. What did you learn from this episode?
3. What do you want to share with others after viewing this episode?

### Questions from the Study Guide:

1. What was the Annunciation? What was revealed to Mary about herself? About God's plan of salvation? And what was revealed to us about Mary? (CCC 484, 2676; Luke 1:31-33)
2. What are some of the reasons Mary is called a "new Eve"? (CCC 411, 501, 511, 726, 2618)
3. If you were asked, "Why do you believe Mary was sinless?", how might you respond? What misconceptions might you have to address when giving your answer? (CCC 490-93, 722)
4. In calling Mary "the Mother of God," what are we saying about Jesus? What is the difference between a "nature" and a "person"? Why is it important to understand? (CCC 466, 481)
5. Does the dogma of the Immaculate Conception indicate that Mary did not need a Saviour or salvation? Why or why not? How is this dogma often misunderstood or misrepresented?
6. What are some theological reasons for the dogma of the Assumption of Mary? (CCC 964-66)