

# Sodality Formation Material



# Table of Contents

<b>General Outline of the Material</b>	<b>5</b>
Meditations	5
Formation	5
Faith Sharing	5
<b>Created and Prepared by Love</b>	<b>7</b>
Beloved from Eternity	8
Meditation	8
Formation Material	10
Faith Sharing:	11
The Immaculate Conception: Graced and Prepared for her Mission	12
Meditation	12
Formation Material	13
Faith Sharing	14
The Presentation of Mary: Transparency before the Lord	15
Meditation	15
Formation Material	16
Faith Sharing	17
Betrothed to Joseph: Journeying with Others	18
Meditation	18
Formation Material	19
Faith Sharing	20
<b>Receptivity and Availability</b>	<b>21</b>
The Annunciation, 1: Discernment	22
Meditation	22
Formation Material	23
Faith Sharing	24
The Annunciation, 2: An Open “Yes”	25
Meditation	25
Formation Material	26
Faith Sharing	27
Visitation: Called into Service, Making Haste in love	28
Meditation	28
Formation Material	29
Faith Sharing	30
The Magnificat: Humility of Praise	31
Meditation	31

Formation Material	32
Faith Sharing	33
<b>Poverty of Spirit</b>	<b>34</b>
On the Way to Bethlehem: Abandonment to Divine Providence	35
Meditation	35
Formation Material	36
Faith Sharing	37
The Nativity: Radical Poverty of Spirit	38
Meditation	38
Formation Material	39
Faith Sharing	40
Mary's Pondering: The Life of Prayer	41
Meditation	41
Formation Material	42
Faith Sharing	43
Presenting Jesus: A Pierced Heart	44
Meditation	44
Formation Material	45
Faith Sharing	46
<b>Devotion</b>	<b>46</b>
The Hidden Years: Offering the Little Things of our Vocation	48
Meditation	48
Formation Material	49
Faith Sharing A Spiritual Offering	50
Letting Jesus Leave: Freedom in loving others (Against Spiritual Comparison?)	53
Meditation	53
Formation Material	54
Faith Sharing	55
The Wedding at Cana: Holy Authority	56
Meditation	56
Formation Material	57
Faith Sharing	58
Following on the Way: To Do God's Will	59
Meditation	59
Formation Material	60
Faith Sharing	61
<b>The Cross</b>	<b>62</b>
Mary Receiving Rebukes: Perseverance	63
Meditation	63
Formation Material	64

Faith Sharing	65
At the Side of Her Son: Suffering with Christ	66
Meditation	66
Formation Material	67
Faith Sharing	68
The Pieta and the Tomb: Grieving with Grace	69
Meditation	69
Formation Material	70
Faith Sharing	71
Holy Saturday: Bearer of Hope for the Church	72
Meditation	72
Formation Material	73
Faith Sharing	74
<b>Rejoice in the Lord</b>	<b>75</b>
Receiving the Resurrection: Living in the Joy of the Risen Lord	76
Meditation	76
Formation Material	77
Faith Sharing	78
Pentecost: A Witness to the World	78
Meditation	79
Formation Material	80
Faith Sharing	81
Pentecost: Mother of the Church, Ministry of Consolation	82
Meditation	82
Formation Material	83
Faith Sharing	84
The Assumption: Coming Home	84
Meditation	85
Formation Material	86
Faith Sharing	87

# General Outline of the Material

## Introduction

“Do whatever He tells you” are the last words spoken by Mary that are recorded in the Scriptures. And, although surely Mary must have said many other things after that first miracle of Jesus at the wedding of Cana, nevertheless, in this simple sentence she provides a concise summary of all the words of the rest of her earthly life. In so many ways, Mary’s message was always the same: Listen to Jesus and follow this my Son.

And so, whenever we genuinely draw closer to Mary, we naturally attend to her own desire that we follow Jesus more closely. In order better to know and love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we have recourse to Mary, who, as the mother of his humanity and perfect handmaid of his divinity, knew and loved Jesus in a way beyond comparison. For this reason, one of the surest and most solid means for coming to better know and love Jesus is through the help of Mary.

This booklet containing material for formation is designed to be a resource for those leading women’s branches of the Sodality of Our Lady at the university level so that its members might find themselves more conformed to the life and virtues of Mary, the new “Mother of all the living.” Following the moments and the mysteries of Mary’s life, gathered together under certain formational themes, each sodalists is encouraged to live and love in the way that Mary did.

However, since each Sodality is going to have its own particular needs, this resource is designed to be tailored to each group. Through a process of discernment, the leaders of each Sodality can better decide how and when to apply, modify, and expand upon these materials, according to what may be best. But, hopefully, this booklet can provide a point of departure for those looking for a place to begin, for those seeking a formational trajectory, or simply for those looking for some ideas on how the meetings can look. In summary, ideas are proposed in order to spark other ideas.

With the assistance of the Holy Spirit which once overshadowed Mary and now is poured out into the hearts of Christian everywhere, we have tremendous confidence that the God who formed us from our mother’s womb will continue to form the members of the Sodality to be holy disciples of Jesus and beloved daughters of the heavenly Father. Now and always, we entrust our lives to the maternal care of Mary so that we might be more fully united to her Son Jesus Christ and, through him, come to partake in the divine life of the Trinity.

## Meditations

Brief Explanation of what it is and how it can be used.

## Formation

Brief Explanation of what it is and how it can be used.

## Faith Sharing

Brief Explanation of what it is and how it can be used.

# Created and Prepared by Love

## Beloved from Eternity

Song of Songs 2: 10, 13-14

*My beloved speaks and says to me:*

*Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away.*

*O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,  
in the covert of the cliff,  
let me see your face,  
let me hear your voice,  
for your voice is sweet,  
and your face is comely.*

### Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace to know how You have loved Mary from all eternity so that I might also know how You have loved me from all eternity.

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine Mary, spouse of the Holy Spirit, dressed as a bride on her wedding day. I will behold the beauty of her face and the radiance of her dress. I will look upon her gentleness and the sweetness of the way she acts and talks, etc.

#### Reflections:

1. When people fall in love, every little detail of their beloved's personality fills their hearts with joy, and they can't seem to get the person off of their mind. If this is the reality of love, how much truer it is for God and the Blessed Virgin Mary! From all eternity, the Lord held Mary in mind and loved her as a Bridegroom loves his Bride. Before Mary was formed in the womb, God knew her and desired her to be the spouse of the Holy Spirit, saying, as it were, "*Arise, my love, my fair one...let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely.*" It is as if God were saying that all the little details of her personality would give joy to His heart. From this overflowing, infinite love, God created Mary in all her beauty...

2. Just as Mary was created by God's infinite love, she was also created for the purpose of love. As a mirror reflects the light which it receives, the beauty of Mary was created for the sole purpose of reflecting in her own unique, unrepeatable way the infinite goodness and beauty of God. With her own particular gifts and personality, Mary has the gift and the call to show the goodness of God to the world in a way that is totally specific and particular to her....

Application to my life:

Just as God held Mary lovingly in mind from all eternity, God has lovingly thought of me from all eternity and has looked upon me as His bride. In the eternal heart of God which is so ablaze with love, my name is written forever. It is as if there were a hole in the divine heart, which only I can fill. And, just as the Lord created Mary by love and for love, so too I was created for the purpose of reflecting God's goodness and radiating divine beauty in my own unique and unrepeatable way. The Lord knows the beauty of my entire being—both body and soul—the goodness of my personality with all its little details, and the wondrous capacity that I have to love and be loved. Like Mary, the Lord longs to have me also as a spouse of the Holy Spirit, saying to me as He creates me, *“Arise, my love, my fair one...let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely.”* In the never-erring eyes of God, I am good, and I am beautiful. etc...

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

### Activity: Contemplating Faces

There is a ninth century hymn to the holy name of Jesus in which our Savior is invoked as “Jesus: Lover of every human face.” Jesus is the lover of every human face.

Let come before your mind’s eye now the faces of the people who fill your day-to-day life, the faces of the people you care about. See if you can get a sense of the love that Jesus bears for each one of these human faces.

Now let come before your mind’s eye your own human face, as if looking back at you from a mirror. Jesus loves this face too. See if you can get a sense of the love that Jesus bears for your own human face.

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. When I think of myself, what first comes to mind? What is my self-image?

---

---

---

---

---

2. How does God view me and look upon me? What is God's perspective on my life?

---

---

---

---

---

3. In what ways do I feel that my own unique personality and gifts are an unrepeatable gift and reflection of God's goodness to shine for the world?

---

---

---

---

---

# The Immaculate Conception: Graced for the Mission

Genesis 3: 15, 20

*“I will put enmity between you[, the serpent,] and the woman,  
and between your seed and her seed;  
he shall bruise your head,  
and you shall bruise his heel.”*

*“The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.”*

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace to understand how You graced and prepared Mary for her mission to be Mother of God through the Immaculate Conception so that I may also sense how you have graced me and prepared me for my mission.

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine the parents of Mary, that is, Sts. Anna and Joachim, as they rejoiced together in expectation for the birth of Mary. I may even imagine what it may have been like for St. Anna to be pregnant with Mary, as this sweet, little child grew in her womb.

### Reflections:

1. According to the plan of God’s infinite love, the Lord wished to make Mary the mother of His only-begotten Son, when the time was right. In this way, God honored women with this infinite dignity so that, not only would a woman be the Mother of God, but she would also become the new *mother of all those living* in the grace of her Son Jesus. In this grand and wondrous mission, the grace of God shines forth!

2. However, the Lord did not leave Mary alone in fulfilling this grand and wondrous plan. In order to prepare her for her mission, God gave to her the miracle of the Immaculate Conception. For the sake of preparing her to one day be the Mother of Jesus, God made it so that Mary was conceived in the womb of St. Anna without any stain of original sin. This separation from sin from her very conception was the enmity foretold in the book of Genesis, when God said to the serpent, *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed*. And so, while Mary began her life in the womb of St. Anna, God graced and prepared her with special gifts so that one day she might worthily carry Jesus in her own womb.

### Application to my life:

Although I have not received the particular grace of an immaculate conception; nevertheless, like Mary, the Lord also has given me all the graces which I need to fulfill my particular mission. I have been prepared by the Father’s love for the great and wondrous plans which God wishes to accomplish and realize in me. And so, I will take some time in prayer to call to mind some of these gifts that I have received. I will ponder with deep affection how much God has done for me since my conception in my own mother’s womb. I will reflect how the Lord has given me life, has granted me the ability to know and love, and even has made me a temple of the Holy Spirit, since I am created according to His image and likeness. I will also consider how God has labored and continues to prepare me with his grace day by day through the people, places,

and things around me. From the friends who support me, to the creation that sustains me and gives me joy, to the graces that I have received through my family, God has been preparing me so that I might more fully live in and from His infinite love for the life of the world. Like Mary, I have been graced and prepared for mission.

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

2. When I think of myself, what first comes to mind? What is my self-image?

---

---

---

---

---

3. How does God view me and look upon me? What is God's perspective on my life?

---

---

---

---

---

4. In what ways do I feel that my own unique personality and gifts are an unrepeatable gift and reflection of God's goodness to shine for the world?

---

---

---

---

---

# The Presentation of Mary: Transparency and Integration before the Lord

Psalm 16: 1-2, 5-9, 11

*Preserve me, O God, for in thee I take refuge.  
I say to the Lord, "Thou art my Lord;  
I have no good apart from thee."  
The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;  
thou holdest my lot.  
The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
yea, I have a goodly heritage.  
I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.  
I keep the Lord always before me;  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.  
Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;  
my body also dwells secure.  
Thou dost show me the path of life;  
in thy presence there is fullness of joy,  
in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace to live completely transparent before the Lord, hiding nothing but rather offering everything to Him, as Mary lived her life entirely before the presence of the Lord.

Setting the Scene: According to tradition, after Mary was born and when she was old enough, St. Joachim and Anna brought her to the temple to dedicate her to the Lord, just as Hannah had dedicated Samuel in the Old Testament. And, as the account goes and may be piously believed, when the young child Mary was placed upon the steps of temple before the high priest, she danced with joy before the Lord, signifying her consent and self-offering to the Lord. From that young age until she was of the age to be married, she spent her days in the temple praying, learning, serving, and performing acts of charity. And so, here I will take a moment to imagine the child Mary living and growing up in the temple in Jerusalem, how she would have acted, how she prayed, how she studied, how she loved the Lord and her neighbor, etc.

### Reflections:

1. In celebrating the presentation of Mary in the temple, I can recognize how Mary dedicated her whole life to the Lord. From such a young age, she offered everything to the Lord, spending her days growing up in the temple in Jerusalem. And so it can truly be said from the perspective of Mary, *I keep the Lord always before me*. Displaying a perfect and holy transparency before the Lord, she held nothing back; but rather she gave everything and consecrated it to

God—even the parts which might have appeared shameful to other people, such as her poverty, her low social status, or her youth. Mary hid nothing from God but offered everything to the living presence of the Lord, as if to say, *the Lord is my chosen portion and my cup and in Your presence there is fullness of joy.*

2. While growing up as a child, Mary spent time in prayer, applied herself to studies, performed works of charity to those most in need, made various friends, and did various acts of service for the worship of God in the temple. And all of this was done before the Lord in the temple. In this way, Mary's life shines as an example of integration. Her life with her friends, her time spent in study, her life of prayer, and her life of service to the community were not separated; but they all came together harmoniously in the great love she had for God.

#### Application to my life:

In Mary's presentation I can find a model for my own life. Just as Mary lived her childhood in the presence of the Lord in the temple, I am called to live before the Lord and offer every part of my life to the divine goodness. In other words, I am called to live a holy transparency before the Lord, hiding nothing from God: I am called to consecrate every part of my existence and all of my actions to Him. Although this may be especially exemplified in the consecrated religious life, which Mary's presentation and life in the temple prefigures; nevertheless, it can apply to my life no matter what my vocation may be. And then, flowing forth from this transparency before God, I can integrate every aspect of my being in love of God. Like Mary, my life of prayer, my life of study, my life with my friends, and my life in service of the community do not have to be separated from one another. Then too, like Mary I may *keep the Lord always before me* so that I may truly say, "*my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; and my body also dwells secure. For in God's presence there is fullness of joy and in His right hand are pleasures for evermore.*"

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. Is there an area of my life (past, present, or future) that God might be desiring me to “present” to him? Is there an area of my life I feel afraid to present to Him?

---

---

---

---

---

2. Is there a relationship the Lord is inviting me to present to Him for healing or transformation?

---

---

---

---

---

3. What is one area of my day or week I feel Jesus calling me to consecrate to Him more concretely?

---

---

---

---

---

# **Betrothed to Joseph: Journeying with Others**

## **Meditation**

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

### Reflections:

1. Mary did not walk her path alone, but rather she had others who helped and supported her along the way. In God's infinitely wise plan, He did not want Mary to be without companionship in her mission; and so He willed her to have a husband who would love and support her in her great mission to be the Mother of God, despite the unconventional circumstances. And just as in Mary's Betrothal to Joseph, God shows the goodness of holy companionship, so too He reveals the beauty of a holy family that would be formed in the household of Mary and Joseph.

2. In this moment of the betrothal of Mary and Joseph, it can be clearly seen how the Lord was at the center of Mary and Joseph's relationship. Both Mary and Joseph knew that they were called by God to be holy and to follow the Father's will. They each had a unique plan within God's designs of salvation history. And Mary and Joseph did not allow their human relationship to get in the way of living the love of God. Rather they lived their relationship in a way that they helped one another to flourish in their call to love and to realize the holiness for which they were created.

### Application to my life:

Just as God did not wish Mary to journey alone along her path, so too God does not wish me to journey alone. Rather the Lord gives me companions and relationships so that I might flourish, grow in love, and realize the holiness for which I was made. But in order for these relationships to give life, Mary's betrothal to Joseph teaches us the lesson that God must be at the center of my relationships. Of And so I can take some time

Honoring the vocation to Marriage and the family.

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. What friendships in my life are currently bringing me closer to God? Which friendships leave me feeling distant from God, or depleted spiritually or emotionally?

---

---

---

---

---

2. Reflecting on how Mary and Joseph spoke to and about each other, and how they treated each other even in the discomforts of travel, how do I feel called to grow as a friend?

---

---

---

---

---

3. What do I desire or need in friendship, that Mary and Joseph likely gave to one another? How does God provide this for me? How might He provide this for me through friendship?

---

---

---

---

---

# Receptivity and Availability

## The Annunciation, 1: Discernment

### Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

### Reflections:

1. M

2. I

### Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

1. Recalling our “first love” (Pope Benedict XVI)
2. Examen (Bree has resource)
3. Rules of Discernment: Consolation vs. Desolation

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. When and where do I feel most available to receive God's message or hear His voice?  
When or where have I noticed I might feel closed off from receiving God's word?

---

---

---

---

---

2. Have I experienced God's overwhelming love for me, or sensed Him speaking to me before? What did it feel like / What did His "tone" sound like?

---

---

---

---

---

3. How can I make myself more available and receptive to God's message each day this week?

---

---

---

---

---

# **The Annunciation, 2: An Open “Yes”**

## **Meditation**

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

1. My "Fear List"
2. Holy Indifference
3. Teddy Bear image

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. What do I feel God inviting me to lately? Have I made space to hear His invitation?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What fears might be keeping me from feeling free to give a total “yes” to God’s invitation?

---

---

---

---

---

3. How does God see me in my fear? What does He say when I bring them to Him? What might God have in store for me if I say yes?

---

---

---

---

---

# Visitation: Called into Service, Making Haste in love

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

1. Time, Talent, Treasure
2. Servant Leadership Styles
3. Filling one another's cup: Love Languages?
  4. Serving from a full cup...
    - a. God loves a cheerful giver (scripture)

# Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. When have you felt yourself come alive while serving? What were you doing? What gifts were you using as you blessed someone else?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What gift do you have (time, talent, treasure) that you feel called to give more of?

---

---

---

---

---

3. How do you want to intentionally serve someone this week? What does that look like? What gifts do you have that will help you to do this joyfully?

---

---

---

---

---

# The Magnificat: Humility of Praise

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

CCC Prayer of Praise

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. When is a time you felt overcome with a heart of worship or praise?

---

---

---

---

2. When does it feel hard to praise? What is a way you can praise even when you are suffering or the future is unclear?

---

---

---

---

3. How do you sense the Lord's presence or expression when you are praising Him (in song, in prayer, with a friend...)?

---

---

---

---

# Poverty of Spirit

## On the Way to Bethlehem: Abandonment to Divine Providence

### Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine Mary traveling on the path to Bethlehem. I will see how wide the road is, the terrain around it, the curves in the path, and the hills and valleys, etc.

### Reflections:

1. Maria did not know completely what was to take place. The Lord gave her what was sufficient so that she could give her consent—her open-ended “yes.” But probably she did not guess that she and Joseph would be called to Bethlehem for the census by the decree of Caesar Augustus, or that she was about to give birth in such conditions because there was no room in the inn, etc. In this way, the way to Bethlehem represents a larger reality of Mary’s entire life. She was not able to see where exactly the path would end, and yet, despite this fact, she trusted in the Divine Providence of the Lord. She abandoned herself to be guided on the way of God by God. As clay within the hands of the craftsman, Mary placed herself into the hands of the Lord, ready to be molded and shaped and directed in whatever way God desired.

2. Even through the difficulties but also through the joys, Mary was able to see the will of God present, the will of God which is infinitely good and infinitely loving. And, for this reason, she was able to rejoice always, knowing that the Lord, in his power, wisdom, and goodness, would not allow any evil to befall her or those whom she loved which God himself was not able to turn into a greater good. Mary knew the secret of...(paul) She entrusted her to the Lord because she trusted in the Lord. She surrendered and abandoned herself into the hands of God, recognizing that there is no better place than the hands of the merciful God.

### Application to my life:

In my life, not always know what is next on the path, etc. but abandoning myself to God’s loving plan.

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.



## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

*Trusting God when the path is unknown or uncomfortable*

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. Can you think of a time when your plans were disrupted and you had to trust God more deeply? How did you respond?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What does “abandonment to divine providence” mean to you on a practical level? Is there an area of your life where you’re being invited to surrender?

---

---

---

---

---

3. How do you handle fear or anxiety about the future? What might it look like to walk forward in peace like Mary, even without clarity?

---

---

---

---

---

4. Where do you see God inviting you to take the next step without knowing the outcome?

---

---

---

# The Nativity: Radical Poverty of Spirit

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. What areas of your life feel cluttered - with distractions, expectations, or attachments - that might be keeping you from deeper intimacy with Jesus?

---

---

---

---

---

2. How do you react to moments of “lack” or “insufficiency”? Could these be invitations to radical dependence on God?

---

---

---

---

---

3. Poverty of spirit is about making space for God. What might He be asking you to let go of so He can fill you?

---

---

---

---

---

# Mary's Pondering: The Life of Prayer

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M

2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. What does it mean to you to “ponder” something with God rather than just think about it on your own?

---

---

---

---

---

2. Do you give God space to speak into your experiences, joys, and confusions? What helps you to do that - or hinders you?

---

---

---

---

---

3. What are you currently “holding in your heart”? How might you bring that into prayer with Mary as your model?

---

---

---

---

---

# Presenting Jesus: A Pierced Heart

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. How do you typically respond to suffering - your own or others'? How might Mary's silent strength challenge or inspire you?

---

---

---

---

---

2. Is there a cross in your life that God might be inviting you to embrace rather than escape? How does love transform that cross?

---

---

---

---

---

3. Have you ever loved someone deeply and suffered because of it? What did that reveal to you about the heart of God?

---

---

---

---

---

## Devotion

# The Hidden Years: Offering the Little Things of our Vocation

*The Lord sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart. 1 Sam 16:17*

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace to live the ordinary moments of my vocation and calling with the extraordinary love that Mary knew.

Setting the Scene: After returning from Egypt, the holy family settled in the little town of Nazareth, where they lived a seemingly ordinary, simple life. And so, I suppose what it must have been like for Mary to go about these usual things, like the chores around the house and cooking for the holy family, like praying in the synagogue and throughout the day, like her conversations with neighbors and friends, and like the precious moments with Joseph and Jesus as a family.

### Reflections:

1. For most of his lifetime on earth, Jesus lived an ordinary, simple life in Nazareth; and so did Mary as she accompanied him in his childhood and raised him as a most loving mother. And so, wondrously, most of the lives of Jesus and Mary are shrouded in a certain silence of this seemingly eventless time, in these so-called hidden years. But this ordinariness is according as *man sees*, looking on the outward appearance. But, according to God, who looks on the heart, their lives were anything but commonplace: Their lives were extraordinary because of the extraordinary love with which they lived the most little and mundane activities of daily life. In a sense, the smallest moment became a wealth of riches because it was permeated and saturated with the grace of God. And so, whether she was preparing the humble meals for the family, spending time with her friends, or watching out for the little Jesus as he grew up, Mary lived her vocation to the fullest, making the ordinary extraordinary by offering it all to God with love.

2. If Mary's presentation can especially symbolize the consecrated life of a religious, as was mentioned in that meditation, these hidden years can especially represent the beauty of the vocation to the married life. But this beauty is not to be equated with ease. Surely, the holy family had its fair share of hardships and difficulties, living in poverty as a Jewish family under Roman occupation. Nevertheless, despite these challenges—or perhaps even through these challenges—the beauty of Mary's family life can be seen because she lived her vocation well, because she lived day in and day out her fidelity to her family and, above all, to God.

### Application to my life:

Just as Mary spent the majority of her life carrying out the seemingly ordinary tasks of her vocation, so too much of my life will be filled with these little moments. But, like Mary, I can make something extraordinary out of them by permeating them with love and offering the simple tasks of my vocation to Jesus. Also, just as Mary's life in the holy family was not just a life of ease, neither will my life be without its fair share of hardships, whether that is in my family or

in the other spaces of life in which I find myself. Yet, precisely there God's grace wishes to enter. And precisely there, living the day-in and day-out of my vocation in the loving fidelity that Mary showed, I too can go about my usual activities in a way that is extraordinarily beautiful in the eyes of God, who looks on my heart.

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing

### A Spiritual Offering

At the very heart of the spirituality of St. Therese of Lisieux is a total offering of her life to Merciful Love. And, in this spiritual offering, she compares herself to a little flower, saying: “I offered myself to Our Lord to be His Little Flower; I longed to console Him, to draw as near as possible to the Tabernacle, to be looked on, cared for, and gathered by Him.” Tonight, as we prepare for our spiritual conversation, let us imagine that we too are like little flowers with each moment of our lives being like individual petals of a rose. Then at the end of our time in prayer, feel free to approach Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and place the petals of roses that we have distributed, symbolizing each moment, prayer, and action offered to God.

And so, we can reflect and ponder:

- How sweet to Jesus must be the fragrance when we offer to Him and consecrate all the moments of our lives, even the littlest, as if they were petals of roses! What a beautiful scent that is!
- Each flower and each of its petals are unique and unrepeatable in its shape, color, and texture. So too, in offering my life and its moments, I am delighting the heart of Jesus with a gift that no one else can give.
- One of the titles of Mary is “the mystical rose” because she so perfectly reflects this offering to Merciful Love. Being so well practiced in this life of offering, Mary wants to help us as we try to bring our entire lives before her Son, our loving Jesus. This is the core of Marian Consecration. How reassuring it is to know that we are assisted by such a good mother and received by such a loving Lord!

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1. How does or how might the spiritual practice of a total offering to Merciful Love transform how I go about my daily life? What has been my experience of the Morning Offering prayer?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What is one area of my life right now that I find difficult to offer to the Merciful Love of Jesus? How might the Lord be inviting me to place this flower petal of my life before Him?

---

---

---

---

---

3. When have I felt Mary's presence in my life? How has she been present to me as a loving mother and as a beautiful example of a life offered to the Lord? How does this shape and inform my understanding of what Marian Consecration is, especially in the Sodality?

---

---

---

---

---

# Finding Jesus in the Temple: Seeking God in all things

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

1.

---

---

---

---

---

2.

---

---

---

---

---

3.

---

---

---

---

---

# The Wedding at Cana:

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing:

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

4. How do you typically respond to suffering - your own or others'? How might Mary's silent strength challenge or inspire you?

---

---

---

---

---

5. Is there a cross in your life that God might be inviting you to embrace rather than escape? How does love transform that cross?

---

---

---

---

---

- 6.

---

---

---

---

---

# Following on the Way: To Do God's Will

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M

2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

4.

---

---

---

---

5.

---

---

---

---

6.

---

---

---

---

# The Cross

# Mary Receiving Rebukes: Perseverance

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

7.

---

---

---

---

8.

---

---

---

---

9.

---

---

---

---

# **At the Side of Her Son: Suffering with Christ**

## **Meditation**

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M

2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## Formation Material

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

10.

---

---

---

---

---

11.

---

---

---

---

---

12.

---

---

---

---

---

# The Pieta and the Tomb

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

13.

---

---

---

---

---

14.

---

---

---

---

---

15.

---

---

---

---

---

# Holy Saturday: Bearer of Hope for the Church

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## Formation Material

Spe Salvi

## Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

16.

---

---

---

---

17.

---

---

---

---

18.

---

---

---

# Rejoice in the Lord

# Receiving the Resurrection: Living in the Joy of the Risen Lord

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

## Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

19.

---

---

---

---

---

20.

---

---

---

---

---

21.

---

---

---

# **Pentecost: A Witness to the World**

## **Meditation**

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

Write the Gifts (and Fruits, if more options are needed) of the Holy Spirit onto small pieces of paper and place into a hat or bag, and have each woman draw one. The one chosen is this woman's gift or fruit of the Holy Spirit to begin learning about and praying for an increase of.

If desired, at the next meeting, or at the time of Faith Sharing, each young woman can tell about what she has learned of the Gift or Fruit she drew, and how she has seen the Lord increasing it in her life, or how she has noticed where she might like to ask for an increase in this Gift or Fruit.

## Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

### Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

22.

---

---

---

---

---

23.

---

---

---

---

---

24.

---

---

---

# **Pentecost: Mother of the Church, Ministry of Consolation**

## **Meditation**

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M
2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

Podcat: Abiding Together (w/ Sister Miriam)

Identity of a Woman Series, Episode on Woman as “Mother”

Reflect: Consider all of the women in your life who have mothered you in various ways. Draw out a blanket or “tapestry” and write their names or assign colors to the various roles that each woman has played in her maternal care towards you. What are some words or characteristics that come to mind that make up the “tapestry” of motherhood that God has woven into your life? Do you see any of these characteristics in your own heart in the way you “mother” or care for others, even those who are your own age or older than you?

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

25. What are some of the characteristics that you see in Mary's motherhood?  
What characteristics of Mary's motherhood do you desire to cultivate?

---

---

---

---

---

26. What does loving out of your "maternal heart" mean to you? In what relationships have you been able to console, accompany, or intercede for someone with a disinterested and self-giving love?

---

---

---

---

---

27. Have you ever experienced the power of your intercessory prayer for someone? How often do you intentionally intercede and/or fast for those you love?

---

---

---

# The Assumption: Coming Home

## Meditation

Recalling the Presence of God: Oh, Lord, let me take a moment simply to rest in your presence. You are here with me; let me be with you during this time of prayer.

Seeking Grace: Lord, I ask for the grace

Setting the Scene: Here I will take a moment to imagine

Reflections:

1. M

2. I

Application to my life:

Speaking Freely: Gathering the fruits of this prayer together, I will talk with Mary and God with whatever words come naturally when I think about what I just prayed on. Just presenting myself as I am, I will speak as one friend would speak to another or as a bride would speak with her bridegroom.

## **Formation Material**

# Faith Sharing

Setting Up the Conversation:

Time For reflection and prayer

- A
- B
- C

## Reflection Questions for Spiritual Conversation

28.

---

---

---

---

---

29.

---

---

---

---

---

30.

---

---

---