

# Why Do Catholics Pray to Mary and the Saints? A Lesson Plan

## Background Material

- [Angels and Saints: A Biblical Guide to Friendship with God's Holy Ones](#)
- [Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary's Queenship](#)
- [Catechism of the Catholic Church: Devotion to the Blessed Mother](#)

Why do Catholics pray to Mary and the saints? This lesson plan will help youth understand that it is like asking a friend to pray for you. And it points out that prayer is not the same as worship.

## Game for Lesson Plan about Praying to Mary and the Saints

Play protection dodge ball:

1. Choose three people to throw the dodge balls.
2. Divide the rest of the group into teams of two.
3. One person on each team ("protector") should try to protect the other person ("protectee") from being hit.
4. If the "protectee" is hit, the team is out.

For complete instructions, see [how to play protection dodge ball](#).

Follow up with a few questions:

- Was it easier to avoid being hit with someone helping you?
- Do you think this game is easier as a team?
- How well did you work together?

## Why do Catholics pray to the saints?

As Catholics, we believe that all who are baptized are members of the mystical body of Christ. We are all connected in a very special way. We support each other in our faith journey.

- Have you ever asked another Christian to pray for you? Why?
- Have you ever prayed for someone else?

Yes, part of that support includes praying for each other. The bible tells us that we should pray for each other.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.

James 5:16

We also believe that the faithful, when they die, go to heaven, where they worship God with the angels and all of the saints. And the book of Revelation tells us

Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a gold censer. He was given a great quantity of incense to offer, along with the prayers of all the holy ones, on the gold altar that was before the throne. The smoke of the incense along with the prayers of the holy ones went up before God from the hand of the angel.

Revelation 8:3-4

So the angels and saints in heaven are able to pray to God. But they aren't praying for themselves, since they are already in heaven.

So who are the angels and saints praying for? Us!

Catholics believe it is totally appropriate to ask others for prayers. We do this all the time with other Christians on Earth. This is why we pray to the saints. We are asking them to offer prayers to God for us. As members of the mystical body of Christ, it is right that we ask those who are already in heaven to pray for us also. This is why Catholics pray to the saints.

And it is important to understand that prayer is not the same as worship. Worship is for God alone. When we worship God, we recognize him as our creator and the ultimate mover in our lives. Prayer is a spiritual conversation. When we pray to the saints, we are not worshipping them. We know that they have no power on their own. But in prayer, we ask them to repeat our requests to God and ask for his help for us. This is no different than asking a friend to pray for us.

## Why do Catholics Pray to Mary?

So why do Catholics pray to Mary in particular?

### Jesus listens to Our Blessed Mother

Mary, as the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, has a special place in our hearts. And we know that when she asks something, Jesus listens to her. Consider the wedding at Cana

When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

And Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

John 2:3-5

We know the rest of the story, Jesus turns the water into wine. He does this at the request of his mother Mary.

## Mary is the Queen

It is also important to understand a little history. During the time of King David and the later kings, the king's mother held a very important position. She advised her son, the king, especially concerning the needs of the people.

In fact, the title of queen did not belong to one of the king's many wives. Instead, the king's mother was the queen. And she was greatly honored. Consider how King Solomon treated Bathsheba, his mother. Then Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, and the king stood up to meet her and paid her homage. Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king's mother, who sat at his right.

1 Kings 2:19

She is advocating for one of Solomon's brothers. Solomon stands up, bows to her, and sets up a throne for her.

Mary, as the mother of our Lord, holds this position in our spiritual lives. We proclaim Jesus Christ as our king. According to Jewish tradition, this makes Mary, his mother, our queen. And just like the queens of the past, we believe she advocates for the needs of us, the people of God.

## Reflection Questions for “Why Do Catholics Pray to Mary and the Saints?”

- Why is it helpful to ask others to pray for us?
- Do you feel comfortable asking Mary and the saints to pray for you? Why or why not?
- Do you ever ask a personal saint, such as a grandparent who has passed away, to pray for you? How does your relationship with this person impact your prayer?

## Challenge for the Lesson Plan

When you pray this week, ask one of the saints or our Blessed Mother to pray with you. Remember that you are not on your own. You belong to a vast community as a member of the mystical body of Christ. And that community includes those here on earth and those in heaven.

## Additional resources for “Why Do Catholics Pray to Mary and the Saints?”

- [Make a Rosary Slide Bracelet or Key-Chain](#)
- [Read About One Of The Saints](#)
- [Angels and Saints: A Biblical Guide to Friendship with God's Holy Ones](#)
- [Rethinking Mary in the New Testament: What the Bible Tells Us about the Mother of the Messiah](#)