

# Mary Garden

Honoring Mary in the Month of May

Religion for the week of May 11-15



The month of May is dedicated to honoring Mary, as Jesus' mother and our heavenly mother. Last week at our live-streamed school mass, we saw Vivian, our Student Council President, crown Mary as the Queen of Heaven! Catholics all over the world carry on this special tradition of crowning Mary and laying flowers at her feet during the month of May.

This week we are going to continue our month-long dedication to Mary, by creating a Mary Garden! This is a long-standing Catholic tradition, in which you create a garden filled with plants, flowers, and trees named for Our Lady and Jesus. Even as far back as the Middle Ages, the faithful saw reminders of Mary in the flowers and herbs growing around them, and began to design places of beauty that remind us of our Lord and Lady. These spaces allow us to experience God's creation, and invite prayer and thought. Since you may be limited in where and what you have, your garden can be as simple or elaborate as your supplies, space, and imaginations allow.



Here are some basic ideas, but you and your family can create a space that makes sense for your situation at home.

If you have lots of room, your Mary Garden can be in a secluded spot in your backyard or garden, or it can face the neighborhood in front, so people passing by can stop and look at your beautiful sacred place. It can be in a pot or planter on a patio, or in a courtyard. If you don't have lots of room, you can make a mini-garden on your apartment's balcony, or grow small plants in dishes, glasses, planters, or even fishbowls, for inside your home. It can be placed indoors on a windowsill or on a kitchen table. (It can even be a nice gift project for you to give to someone who may be lonely.)

Once you have decided on your spot, start with an image of Mary. It can be a statue, plaque, holy card, or icon. You can paint a rock, or use a statue of Mary from your Christmas Nativity set. If you don't have anything you can use, you may want to draw, color, paint, or print off a picture and try attaching it to a popsicle stick. If you want, you can put your picture in a plastic bag to weather-proof it.

Your Mary Garden can be formal or wild and include flowers, plants, and herbs that you like or can find. Some plants may have special significance to you or may represent Mary from tradition or legend.

Here are just a few examples of some flowers, but anything you decide to plant will be lovely.

- Impatiens (also called "Mother's Love because of its constant blooms)
- Marigolds (Mary's Gold)
- Rosemary (it's in the name)
- Morning glories, bachelor buttons, delphinium, irises (these are all blue flowers)
- Lilies (the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary carrying a lily at the Annunciation)
- Roses (Mary is often referred to as the Rose)

I have included a few pictures for inspiration on the next page. After you create your Mary Garden, please visit it (and water it) often. You can pray "The Hail Mary," or say your own special prayer to Mary. You can also add pinwheels, stones, and shells as prayer requests.

Be sure to take a picture and send it to me. I always look forward to seeing the work that you do!



