

## MOTHERS & GOD

### Discussion Guide

1. **REMEMBERING:** Share an example of how your perspective on a person or situation expanded and matured over time.
2. **REFLECTING:** What caused the change—besides time—and how did the changed perspective affect your behavior?
3. **DISCOVERING:** Read the chronologically ordered passages below about Jesus and his mother. Comment on how Mary’s perspective and behavior toward him changed over time.

**In utero:** *Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.” (Lk 1:29-37)*

**Newborn:** *When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. (Lk 2:17-19)*

**Eight days old:** *“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.” The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” (Lk 2:29-35)*

**Two years old:** *On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. (Matt 2:11)*

**12 years old:** *Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days, they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why*

*have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. (Lk 2:41-51)*

**Early 30s:** *On the third day, a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.” “Woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My hour has not yet come.” His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” (Jn 2:1-5)*

**Early 30s:** *He replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” Pointing to his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” (Matt 12:48-50)*

**Early 30s:** *As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.” He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” (Lk 11:27-28)*

**Early 30s:** *If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. (Lk 14:26)*

4. **CONNECTING:** What lessons/principles do you learn from Mary or from Jesus that you can apply to your own life?
5. **RESPONDING:** Take some time this week to reflect again on the lessons/principles you discovered in these passages.

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*That thou art nowhere to be found, agree wise men, whose eyes are but for surfaces;  
Men with eyes opened by the second birth, to whom the seen, husk of the unseen is,  
Descry<sup>1</sup> thee, soul of everything on earth.  
Who know thy ends, thy means and motions see: eyes made for glory soon discover thee.*

(George MacDonald, *The Diary of an Old Soul*)

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<sup>1</sup> Perceive