

MARY

LIBBY: Please let the show go well today ...

KAI: Hey Libby.

LIBBY: Bless our crew and our director ...

KAI: Oh sorry, didn't mean to interrupt.

LIBBY: And our viewers, and please let Kai be prepared today ...

KAI: I'm always prepared.

LIBBY: Through the intercession of Our Lady, amen.

KAI: Oh whoa, what did you say?

LIBBY: Amen.

KAI: Yeah, no, but you just prayed to Mary.

LIBBY: Yeah, I did. Why?

KAI: Just be careful with that, don't want people to get the wrong idea. She's not God.

LIBBY: Oh yeah, totally not God. But super important. Should we roll on this?

CATHOLIC CENTRAL OPENING CREDIT

Hi I'm Libby.

KAI: And I'm Kai.

Welcome to Catholic Central.

LIBBY: And today, we're talking about Mary, the Mother of God.

KAI: There's so much to say about this incredible woman and God's plan for her life, that it could fill a whole season of shows.

LIBBY: That's right. Mary must have been awesome. She was chosen to be the Mother of God.

KAI: And you can see that right away in the story about her that most folks know.

LIBBY: The first Christmas.

KAI: Mary was a young Jewish woman engaged to a man named Joseph.

LIBBY: Before they were married, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and exclaimed the scripture found in Luke 1:28.

KAI: "Hail, full of grace. The Lord is with you. You have found favor with God and will conceive in your womb and bear a son. And you shall call his name Jesus."

LIBBY: Now if that was me, I'm freaking out and saying, "Please, reconsider your choice. I don't have what it takes to be an outcast, and unwed mother in Nazareth in 0 B.C." But that's not what she said.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to your word." This is also known as Mary's Fiat. Latin for let it be done. Her yes, to God. And it was a big yes. Be the bearer of God himself. The irony is the great humility it required to accept that honor.

KAI: And you know what else it required? Courage.

LIBBY: Women in Mary's time, especially young women, did not make many decisions on their own, yet Mary didn't tell the angel, "One second, I'm gonna go ask my dad or my fiance." She said "Yes." Fiat.

KAI: That response alone tells us that she had a mighty faith in God.

LIBBY: And we also find that Mary knew her tradition well. Her greeting to her cousin Elizabeth found in Luke 2 is full of references to Isaiah. Girl knew her Scriptures.

KAI: What Mary's words reveal is that she was the first believer in Jesus as the Messiah.

LIBBY: And so, although she was his mother and literally raised him, she was also his first disciple. Even before the 12 Apostles, before anybody.

KAI: All while being very human. I mean, it's hard to imagine how Mary must have felt when, as the second chapter of Luke tells us, Jesus at about age 12, went missing in Jerusalem.

LIBBY: Any mother would be frantic, but can you imagine? "Oh boy, I just lost Jesus."

KAI: But she was a really good friend too. She nudged Jesus to do his very first miracle at the wedding of Cana because they were running out of wine. Mary just walked up to Jesus and said ...

LIBBY: "Jesus, they have no wine."

This by the way, is a pretty good example of how to pray. Just walk up to Jesus and say it.

Then she tells a servant, "Do whatever he tells you."

KAI: And that has pretty much been Mary's message to all of us ever since. Do whatever Jesus tells you.

LIBBY: You're so right. No wonder Catholics worship her.

KAI: Libby, Catholics don't worship Mary.

LIBBY: I know, I'm teasing.

But as Mary was so uniquely and intimately involved in Jesus' ministry for all of his life, Catholics do regard her with a special honor.

KAI: We all love our mothers.

VOICEOVER: Aww.

LIBBY: And Mary is mother to all of us. On the Cross, Jesus said to Mary, "Woman, behold your son." And to John he said, "Behold your mother." That's her title and her role.

KAI: Mary could be a mother to anyone who is alone, who needs hope or inspiration.

LIBBY: That is special.

KAI: But the special honor given to her, often referred to as veneration, is not adoration. She was set apart as an extraordinary human and a holy saint who cares for God's people, but absolutely not a deity to be adored.

LIBBY: The show is going great by the way, so please continue to pray for us.

KAI: We have a caller.

CALLER: Hi guys, love the show. But it looks an awful lot like Libby's praying to the statute. Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't that idolatry?

LIBBY: Have you ever kissed a photo of your grandma or your Chihuahua puppy? So when we do that we know the photo is not grandma or little Caesar right?

KAI: Right. So you're saying that we're not worshiping an icon. We don't mistake the photo for a reality. We're kissing the reality

beyond the photo. But the photo stirs our imagination and our hearts.

LIBBY: And that's why Catholics have paintings and statues of Mary. It opens their religious imagination to her living reality. And from her always to Jesus.

KAI: So the image reminds us that we can ask Mary, just as we can ask our friends, to pray for us.

LIBBY: Catholics call it intercessory prayer or intercession. Only, as we have been talking about, Mary is absolutely the most intimate person with Jesus. She's happy to approach her son on behalf of all of her children.

KAI: Now, you might be saying, "Well wait, I can just ask Jesus myself."

LIBBY: Well of course, but prayer is really about relationship. In fact, Catholics encourage us to ask our friends, including all of the saints who went before us, to pray for us. Not just so you have more asking power, which you do, but because it draws us all more deeply together and into God.

KAI: Mary will pray for our intentions like any mother would, if those intentions will draw us more deeply to Christ. And she happens to be closer to his ear.

LIBBY: She was and is uniquely and intimately connected to Jesus Christ.

KAI: Which explains the assumption, why Mary was taken up or assumed into Heaven, body and soul.

LIBBY: The Church teaches that Mary was so intimately united with Jesus on earth, unlike any human before or since, that she remains united with him in Heaven.

KAI: I'd bring my mom with me too.

LIBBY: Well, actually, Catholics believe that all followers of Jesus, including you and your mom, someday hope to follow Mary into Heaven, body and soul.

KAI: Now there's much more to explore about Mary's unique and honored place in the Catholic church than we have time for in this episode.

LIBBY: And such is the rosary, a prayer which is a meditation on the life of Christ through Mary's experience.

KAI: And then there are the appearances of Mary to certain individuals, which the church calls apparitions. Such as her appearance to Juan Diego, who saw her as Our Lady of Guadalupe. Or her appearance at Lourdes.

LIBBY: So what we're saying about Mary is that she is special. She inspires us with her strength and cares for us in her intercession. Catholics stress that devotion to Mary must lead us to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

KAI: Which is just the way she wants it.

Sounds like we're wrapping up.

LIBBY: Yeah.

KAI: Oh, did you get a new car?

LIBBY: Yeah, I want to say yes to God more often so I need a car that says "Let it happen."

KAI: I get it, you're driving a ...

LIBBY: Fiat.

KAI: Yeah.

I'm Kai.

LIBBY: And I'm Libby.

KAI: This is Catholic Central. Thanks for watching, and remember to thank your mother.

LIBBY: Thanks, Mom!

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