

Our Lady's Bug

BY JESSICA GORDON

“We never give more honor to Jesus than when we honor his mother, and we honor her simply and solely to honor him all the more perfectly. We go to her only as a way leading to the goal we seek—Jesus, her Son.” — ST. LOUIS MARIE DE MONTFORT

Because May is considered the fairest month of the year, this month is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. As God renews his creation in dazzling splendor and nature blossoms to new life, the glorious month of May recalls the Father's redemptive action through Mary. Mary's participation in the role of redemption 2,000 years ago, still continues reinvigorating souls today through her intercession. Sinners that turn to Mary cultivate the fresh life of grace in their souls. As a garden is watered and nurtured, souls devoted to Mary grow in grace and enjoy the freedom and peace of God's love. During the growing season, gardeners may experience ladybugs, red and black beetles who eat damaging aphids when they emerge. This brings us to the story of how the “lady” in ladybug refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary:

“In Europe, during the Middle Ages, swarms of insects were destroying the crops. The farmers prayed to the Blessed Virgin Mary for help. Shortly thereafter, the Ladybugs came, devouring the



plant-destroying insects and saving the crops! The farmers called these beautiful insects ‘The Beetles of Our Lady.’ Over time, they became known as ‘Lady Beetles,’ in Germany as *Marienkäfer* (Mary Beetles), and in America as ‘Ladybugs.’ The red wings were said to represent the Virgin’s cloak and

the black spots were symbolic of both her joys and her sorrows.”

The following craft combines a ladybug with the Hail Mary prayer, creating a beautiful reminder to always honor Our Lady—the mother of Jesus.

—Source: CelticBug.com/Legends/Lore.html

MATERIALS NEEDED

- * red, black, and green card stock or construction paper
- * glue
- * hole punch (for punching black spots out of paper/card stock to use as spots)
- * black crayon or marker
- * googly eyes (2 per child)
- * leaf, heart and circle templates (optional)
- * Hail Mary prayer card (prayer printed on white paper, optional)

WITH THE CLASS

1. Cut out a large green leaf, a red heart (ladybug's body), and a black circle (ladybug's head).
2. Glue the black circle onto the tip of the heart to create the ladybug.
3. Glue on the googly eyes.
4. With a black crayon or marker, draw a line down the bug's back to create its wings and two antennae next to the bug's head.
5. Glue the ladybug on one side of the leaf.
6. Have the children copy the Hail Mary prayer on the other side of the leaf, or cut and glue a pre-printed prayer card.
7. Using a hole punch and black paper, create dots for the ladybug.
8. Have the children pray a Hail Mary for each dot they glue to their ladybug.

NOTE: This craft was inspired by American Life League's Culture of Life Studies Program's "Ladybug Warriors" mini-lesson. You

can print out their complete lesson along with templates and additional activity suggestions here: CultureOfLifeStudies.com/Newsletter/Ladybug-Warriors/

LET US PRAY

My dear Child: The Blessed Virgin is your Mother in Heaven. She loves you because her Son, Jesus, loves you and has died for you. She is anxious to help you. You may be sure that she will hear your prayers. She is powerfully with Jesus. He will not refuse her anything she asks. Is it not wonderful to have this lovely Queen of Heaven for your mother? You must try to show her that you love her. Pray to her every day. Let her sweet name and that of Jesus be first on your lips in the morning and last at night. Wear the Scapular and Miraculous

Medal. It is a sign that you are hers. Say her Rosary. It is a wreath of beautiful roses which you can lay at her feet. Imitate her virtues. Try to avoid the least sin; be humble and obedient, and love Jesus with all your soul.

Remember, O most loving Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thine intercession, was left forsaken. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins! My Mother. To thee I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O mother of the Word! Despise not my words, but graciously hear and grant my prayer. Amen.

—Excerpt from *Jesus, Make Me Worthy*

Jessica Gordon blogs at ShowerOfRoses.blogspot.com and CatholicCuisine.blogspot.com.

