

**Sainte Marie of the Incarnation**  
(Marie Guyart of the Incarnation)  
1599-1672

Catechetical Activity

*Ages 6-8*

## **Sainte Marie of the Incarnation (1599-1672)**

**Materials Needed:** Sainte Marie of the Incarnation's biography (short version), pencils, and pencil crayons.

### **Catechist Preparation:**

1. Read the short biography of Sainte Marie of the Incarnation.
2. Copy the work sheet - 1 per child.
3. Think of a time when you or someone you know moved to a new city/country/school or moved away from their family. Be prepared to share this with the children.

### **Gathering:**

1. Have the children sit quietly with their eyes closed for a moment.
2. Ask the children to imagine what it would be like if they had to pack everything up and move with their family to a new city.
3. Use prompts to encourage the children to think about what this experience might be like: Would you be excited? Would you be nervous? Who will you miss?

### **Listening:**

1. Read aloud the biography of Sainte Marie of the Incarnation (short version on pages 3-4). You may find it necessary to paraphrase some parts of the biography for the children.
2. Have a short discussion with the children about Sainte Marie of the Incarnation's life, and think about what the experience might have been like to leave your family behind and travel to a new country. Place emphasis on her qualities of being nurturing and charitable.

### **Doing:**

1. Ask the children to complete the activity sheet by describing ways they can help those in need in their school, their parish, and their community (page 5).
2. Encourage the children to be creative and colour the activity sheet.
3. Allow the children to share their examples with the group. Ask the children to listen for examples that are different from the ones they wrote down.

### **Going:**

1. Bring the session to a close by saying the prayer on page 6 with the group.

# **Sainte Marie of the Incarnation (Marie Guyart of the Incarnation, 1599-1672)**

## **The Teresa of New France**

**Feast Day: April 30**

### **Her Life**

Marie Guyart was born in Tours, France, on October 28, 1599. When she was 17 she married a master silk worker. Marie's husband died only two years later, leaving her a widow with a six-month-old son, named Claude. Penniless, she went to live with her family and took care of the education of young Claude.

From this time, her prayer life grew stronger and she felt a strong presence of God. Her call to consecrated life pursued her, so in 1631 she asked her sister to look after her son, who was now 12 years old, and she entered the novitiate of the monastery of the Ursulines of Tours. She took the name in religion of Marie of the Incarnation.

In 1639, God was calling her to Canada "to create a house for Jesus and Mary." So she embarked from Dieppe on May 4, with two other Ursulines and four Hospital Sisters. When she arrived in Quebec, Marie of the Incarnation would later write, "The first thing we did was to kiss the ground of the place to which we had come to fulfill our lives in the service of God and the Indigenous people." She was never to return to France.

She organized the building of a small monastery for the consecrated community and a boarding school for First Nations and French girls whom the Ursulines decided to shelter and educate together. She welcomed and fed the Huron and Algonquin adults who knocked at the door; she gave them Christian instruction and encouraged them to share the Good News with their communities.

She wrote the Constitutions and Rule of the Ursulines of Quebec (1647), and created dictionaries, grammars, catechisms and prayer books in four First Nations languages. She maintained an ongoing correspondence with her relatives, friends and benefactors in France. Nearly 300 letters have been conserved; they are of great historical and spiritual interest.

Marie of the Incarnation died in Quebec on April 30, 1672. She was beatified by Pope (now Saint) John Paul II on June 22, 1980 and canonized by Pope Francis on April 3, 2014.

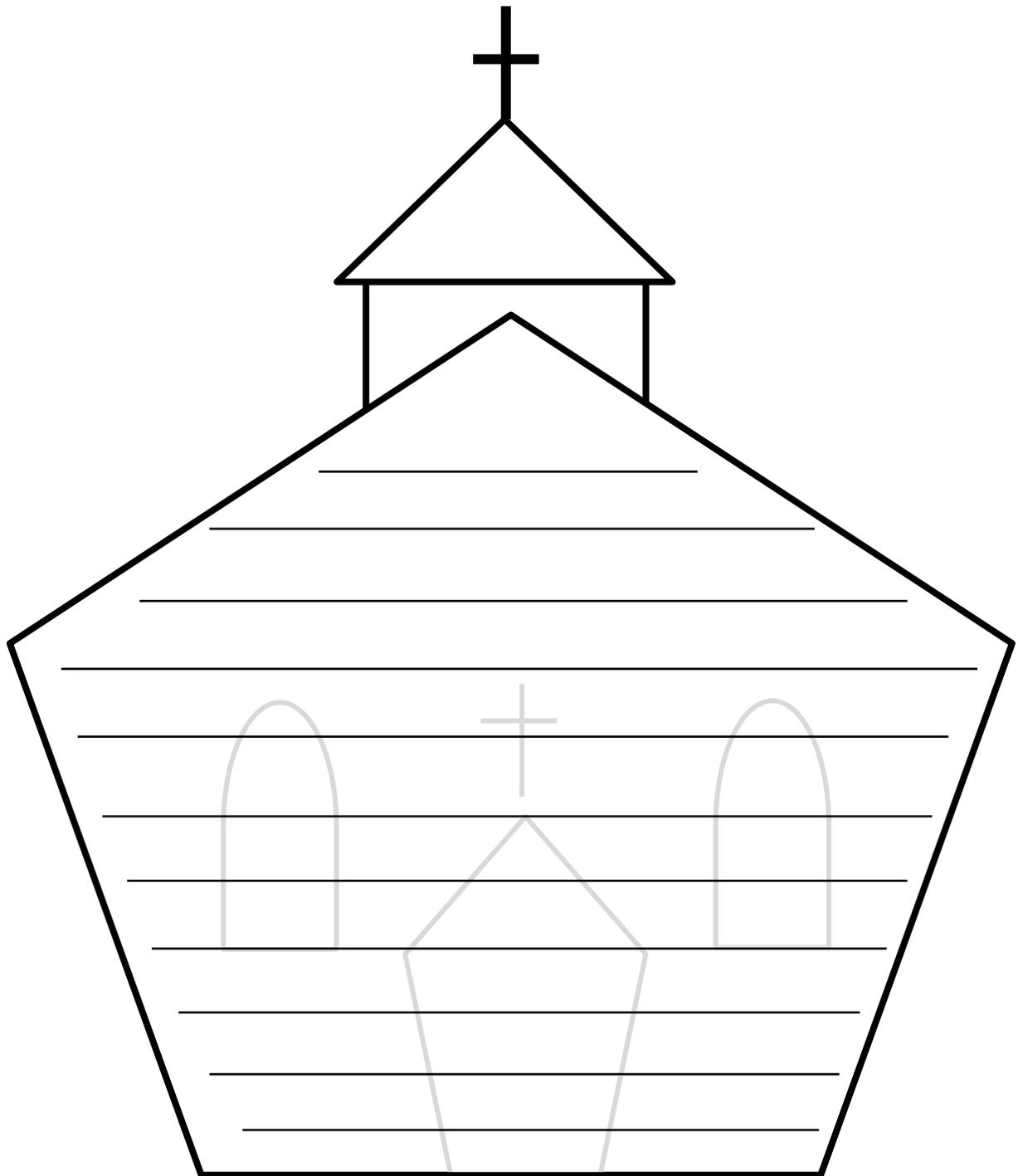
### **Her Spirituality**

Even as a young girl Marie of the Incarnation was compassionate toward the poor and wanted to give away everything she had. It was said of her that she had been born to be charitable; everything she did was in a spirit of charity and not for her personal profit.

She lived a relationship of love with God, one based on trust, faithfulness, and mutual self-giving. She addressed God with familiarity, as her protector. Marie of the Incarnation burned with a desire that the God whom she loved should be known and loved by others.

## Sainte Marie of the Incarnation (1599-1672)

Use the space below to list ways that you can help the less fortunate in your school, community, and your parish.



A large outline of a church with a cross on top, containing horizontal lines for writing. A faint watermark of the church is visible in the background.



Photo credit : François-Marie Héraud, Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré Shrine

O God, thank you for the blessings of this day.

You have given me the gift of life,

and the gift of your Holy Spirit.

I wish to use them well.

Help me to hear and answer your call to serve you.

Keep my heart open to following Jesus' way of serving others.

May your Holy Spirit inspire others,

and make known your will for my life.

We ask this through  
Christ our Lord. Amen.