

# For Intermediate Grades

## Materials Needed:

- Costumes and props *(optional)*
- Print resources about grasshoppers and/or internet access
- Half-sheets of drawing paper
- Wax crayons
- Toothpicks *(one per young person)*
- Coins *(one per young person)*

## Faith Connection

### Before Telling the Story

1. Invite the young people to share what they do when something hard is happening in their lives. *(Welcome all responses, and be sure to highlight that one suggestion is to pray.)*
2. Ask them to listen for the hard thing that happens in this story and for what the people decided to do.

### Telling the Story

Tell the story in your own words, as is appropriate for the age of the young people you are teaching. This would be an excellent story to dramatize, with costumes and props suggested by the text.

### After Telling the Story

1. Invite volunteers to share what happened in the story, and what the people decided to do. *(Grasshoppers ate the crops; the people followed their pastor's advice to build a chapel and to gather there for prayer to Mary that their crops would be saved.)*
2. Invite volunteers to share what they think is the message of the story. *(Welcome all responses, and be sure to highlight how Mary cares for us and hears our prayers; we can take our concerns and prayers to Mary. Also highlight the importance of not giving up, but of being faithful in prayer.)*
3. Ask why the people call Mary "Our Lady of the Grasshopper." Remind the young people that "Our Lady" is a title of great respect and honor. *(The people prayed to Mary and the grasshoppers stopped eating their crops.)*

### Putting Faith into Action

1. Ask the young people to name some hard things that are happening in people's lives and in the world today. *(Homelessness, hunger, sickness, war, joblessness, loneliness, and so forth.)*
2. Choose a day of the week to pray together to Mary for one of the hard things you named in #1 above. Create a title for Mary to use at the beginning of your prayer, such as: Our Lady of the Homeless, Our Lady of the Hungry, Our Lady of the Sick, Our Lady of Peace, Our Lady of the Jobless, Our Lady of the Lonely, and so forth. Decide on a number of weeks to offer the prayer. *(Nine weeks would be a novena, a "special time of prayer".)*

3. At the end of your designated time of prayer, talk about how it felt to pray to Mary each week, like the people in the story did. Encourage the young people to continue to pray to Mary in times of need and in happy times too.

## Curriculum Connection: Science and Art

### Before Telling the Story

1. Before telling the story, invite the young people to work with partners to find five interesting facts about grasshoppers.
2. Invite the partners to share their findings with the class. Vote on the top five most interesting facts shared.
3. Invite the young people to listen for the role grasshoppers play in the story of Our Lady of the Grasshopper.

### After Telling the Story

1. Invite the young people to tell what role grasshoppers played in the story. (*They ate the crops.*)
2. Give each young person a half-sheet of drawing paper and crayons. Invite the young people to color their backyards, a jungle, a beach, or a cornfield. Their drawings should fill the entire half-sheet of drawing paper.
3. After they have completed their drawings, have the young people cover over their artwork with black crayon. Then invite them to exchange their drawings with another young person in the class.
4. Tell the young people to use a toothpick to draw the outline of a grasshopper on their mystery half-sheets of paper. Then invite them to remove the black crayon inside their outlines with the edge of a coin.
5. When all of the young people have uncovered their grasshoppers, invite them to guess whether their grasshoppers are in the backyard, in a jungle, on the beach, or in a cornfield.

### And Furthermore . . .

After completing this lesson on Our Lady of the Grasshopper, display the young people's artwork with the caption, "Our Lady of the Grasshopper, pray for us!"