Almost 500 years ago there was a town in Mexico called Guadalupe. At the time, many people there did not yet know the message of Jesus. An Aztec Indian named Juan Diego lived with his uncle. Franciscan missionaries came to their neighborhood, and Juan was baptized a Christian.

One morning, Juan saw the Virgin Mary standing on a hill called Tepeyac Hill. Mary asked Juan to tell the bishop that she wanted a chapel built on the hill.

Juan Diego quickly ran to the bishop to tell him this very important message from Mary. But the bishop did not believe Juan Diego. Why would Mary appear to him? Why would she want a Church to be built? The bishop told Juan Diego to ask Mary for a sign. Mary visited Juan as he walked home, and she promised him a sign the next day.
But the next day, Juan had to care for his uncle, who was very sick. He went to get a doctor, and tried to avoid seeing Mary. But Mary appeared to Juan anyway. She told him he ought always to ask her for help. “Am I not here,” she said, “I who am your mother?”

Mary then told him to gather flowers and to bring them to the bishop. Juan Diego was not expecting to find flowers because it was winter. But God worked a miracle, and he found flowers growing on the hill. He gathered them in his tilma, or cape, and brought them to the bishop.

Juan presented the flowers to the bishop. When the miraculous flowers fell to the ground, all the people in the room beheld another miracle: on Juan’s tilma there was now a beautiful image of Mary.

This image had not been painted with human hands. In the image, Mary is pregnant with Jesus and is praying. The image is Mary’s way of helping us to remember her Son. She wants us to trust Jesus and know that we can always trust her.
can visit the image on Juan’s tilma today in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

The bishop agreed to build a chapel on Tepeyac Hill, and Juan moved there to care for the chapel and the grounds. He died seventeen years later. Many years later, in 2002, the Church declared him a saint.
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Our Lady of Lourdes

Directions: Read the story with your parent and then color the picture.

St. Bernadette Soubirous ("Soo-be-roo") was born in 1844 and lived in Lourdes, France. Bernadette was a very humble girl. In school, she had a hard time learning. No one thought that she was very smart. Her family was very poor. In fact, they lived in an old jail that was no longer used for prisoners. They all had to work together so that there was enough food on the table.

One day, when Bernadette was 14, she was gathering firewood by a grotto (a cave). The grotto was cold, dark, and muddy. Pigs would sleep there during the night.

Suddenly, a beautiful lady appeared to Bernadette. Bernadette told people, but many did not believe her. They thought that she was making it up. The lady asked Bernadette to visit her several more times. Even though the lady did not give her name, many people who heard Bernadette’s story...
believed her and knew that it had to be Mary, the Mother of God.

Mary’s message was very simple: that we should all pray for sinners and turn away from sin. One day, the lady asked Bernadette to dig in the muddy ground and to eat some nearby herbs. When she did this, people thought she was eating mud and made fun of her. But Bernadette trusted the lady. Soon, a spring of water began to form in the area. As the water came, it cleared out the mud. Soon, sick people came and drank from the spring. Everyone was surprised when many of them were healed of their sickness.

Because people still doubted, the lady said she would reveal who she was. She said that she was the “Immaculate Conception.” This means that Mary was always without sin, even in her mother’s womb. She did not carry the sin of Adam and Eve.

Even though this happened in the year 1858, the miraculous spring is still there today, and many people have experienced miracles of healing there. St. Bernadette once said that it was not the water
that healed them but the great faith in Jesus that the people brought with them there.

We can learn much from St. Bernadette’s example. She was young, like you. She was very humble. She was very honest. She trusted Jesus and Mary with her whole heart.
Our Lady of Lourdes
Our Lady of Fatima

Directions: Read the story with your parent and then color the picture.

In 1917, the world was at war. People were very scared, and there was much suffering and hardship. In Fatima, Portugal, three children were taking care of sheep. Their names were Lucia (who was 10 years old), Jacinta (who was 7 years old), and Francisco (who was 9 years old). Like St. Bernadette, they were poor, but their families loved each other very much. Although they were young, like you, they worked hard every day, faithfully taking care of their sheep.

On May 13, 1917, they were in a field near their homes. A woman dressed in white and holding a rosary appeared and said to them, “Fear not. I am from Heaven.” Her message was simple: to turn to Jesus, to turn away from sin because it offends God, and to pray the Rosary so the war could be over.
The Lady asked them to come every month on the 13th day. On the last appearance, on October 13, 1917, she promised a great miracle.

People who heard the story came from all over. Some believed Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco. Some did not. Some were curious. But on October 13, 70,000 people came to the field. Our Lady gave the following message to the young visionaries: “I am Our Lady of the Rosary. I have come to exhort [or urge] the faithful to change their lives and to stop offending the Lord by their sins. He is already too much offended. If men amend their ways, the war will soon end.” Our Lady also taught about the need to do penance, which is to do acts of goodness, love, and self-sacrifice to make up for the sins we all commit.

The crowds could not see or hear Our Lady speak, but they soon witnessed a great miracle: 70,000 people reported watching the sun transformed in the sky. Many saw it as a silver disk shooting off light. Some even saw the sun dance around and come toward the earth. Although it was
a day of pouring rain, the rain stopped during the miracle and the ground dried immediately.

Mary taught us something very special about how we can change the world with our prayers. The same Rosary we still pray today is more powerful than any weapon. At Fatima, Our Lady asked that a special prayer be said at the end of each decade of the Rosary: “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.” It’s a reminder that Jesus wants to help us all to get to Heaven and that His love for us is very strong.
Our Lady of Fatima

“I AM THE LADY OF THE ROSARY”