

The Living Word

Mary, Mother of God

1 January 2023

First Reading Nm 6:22-27

They will call down my name on the children of Israel and I will bless them.

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, ‘Say this to Aaron and his sons: “This is how you are to bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them:

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord let his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace.”

This is how they are to call down my name on the sons of Israel, and I will bless them.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 66:2-3. 5. 6. 8. R. v.2

(R.) *May God bless us in his mercy.*

- God, be gracious and bless us and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. (R.)
- Let the nations be glad and exult for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples.
you guide the nations on earth. (R.)
- Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing till the ends of the earth revere him. (R.)

Second Reading Gal 4:4-7

When the appointed time came, God sent his son, born of a woman.

When the appointed time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the Law, to redeem the subjects of the Law and to enable us to be adopted as sons. The proof that you are sons is that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that

cries, ‘Abba, Father’, and it is this that makes you a son, you are not a slave any more; and if God has made you son, then he has made you heir.

Gospel Acclamation Heb 1:1-2

Alleluia, alleluia!

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; now he speaks to us through his Son. Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 2:16-21

The shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the crib... When the eighth day came they gave him the name of Jesus.

The shepherds hurried away to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw the child they repeated what they had been told about him, and everyone who heard it was astonished at what the shepherds had to say. As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds went back glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was exactly as they had been told.

When the eighth day came and the child was to be circumcised, they gave him the name Jesus, the name the angel had given him before his conception.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

It is fitting that on New Year's Day we celebrate the calendar-shattering event in human history: the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

In the Western Church, the young woman is titled 'Mother of God'. This signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship. We know that it encompassed a mother's horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but Mother of God.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? In the Book of Genesis, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word', the human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began, the fulcrum of history from which our calendar begins.

We could pause for a moment to pray that at the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, we may share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.

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St Raymond of Peñafort was a Spanish born priest who became the master general of the Dominicans in 1238. He was involved in writing Church law and started a school that taught missionaries the language and culture of the people to be evangelised in Northern Africa and Spain. His compassion helped many people to return to God through Reconciliation. He is the patron saint of lawyers and canonists.

Follow the maze into the centre of Mary's heart



CROSSWORD

Across

- 1: not expecting something
- 3: to have given someone your word
- 4: animals that produce wool
- 5: the Son of God
- 9: Old testament prophet who received the commandments
- 10: giving praise
- 11: the mother of God

Down

- 2: people who look after sheep
- 3: mothers and fathers
- 6: given a name
- 7: a special messenger sent by God
- 8: infant

