

THE VIRGIN MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

Today, we celebrate the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, who worked with God in bringing salvation to us through and in the person of Jesus Christ. Before the Virgin Mary conceived Jesus in her womb, God had already planned that she would be the mother of our savior and that our messiah would enter our world through her. This plan was made known to the people through some ancient prophets. God said these through one of the prophets: "Behold, the Virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel" (Matthew 1:22-23). It was God's intention that the VIRGIN MARY became the mother of Jesus Christ. GOD CAN DO WHATEVER HE WANTS WITH ANYBODY BUT HE ALWAYS SEEKS THE CONSENT OF THE PERSON OR TRIES TO CONVINCING OR EMPOWER THE PERSON TO ACCEPT HIS WILL OR GIVES THE PERSON A PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HE WANTS TO DO WITH THE PERSON. God respects our individual freedom or right and encourages us to make better choices. God did not force the Virgin Mary to become the mother of Jesus; God sought her consent. God sent Angel Gabriel to tell the Virgin Mary about His intention and sought her consent. She only inquired about how she can become the mother of Jesus without destroying her virginity. When the Angel told her how God planned it, that she will conceive through the power of the Holy Spirit, she accepted God's will, that is, to become the mother of God. GOD IS NEVER LIMITED. FOR GOD TO BECOME A HUMAN BEING LIKE US HE CHOSE A MOTHER AND THROUGH THE CHOSEN WOMAN ENTERED OUR WORLD. Most people acquired their first knowledge about God and the world from their parents. As a human, the infant Jesus learned from His parents too "In Mary, the eternal Word not only became flesh but also learned to recognize the maternal tenderness of God" (Pope Francis). The Virgin Mary through her acceptance or consent accepted to participate in the suffering of her son. It was painful for the Virgin Mary to see her son suffering and His horrific death on the cross. IN ACCEPTING TO BE THE MOTHER OF OUR SAVIOR, MARY ACCEPTED ALL CHALLENGES THAT WOULD COME HER WAY AS THE MOTHER OF GOD. Do we accept the challenges accompanying the will of God in our lives? If we want God to keep sustaining our lives in this world, we need to face the challenges of this present life. For the fact that we are in this present world, different challenges must come our way. We need to believe in God and be patient like the Virgin Mary. She was not angry with God and did not complain about why God should allow her son to suffer. Today, we celebrate the Virgin Mary not only as the mother of God but as our own mother too. WE SHARE THE

VIRGIN MARY WITH JESUS. In the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus points out that whoever does what His Father in Heaven wants the person to do or whoever does the will of the Father in Heaven, is His brother, sister, and mother (Matthew 12:50). The Virgin Mary did what the Father in Heaven wanted her to do by accepting to be the mother of God and by participating in her son's suffering. We can only answer Jesus's brothers and sisters when we do the will of God. If Jesus treats us as His brothers and sisters because we try to do the will of God what prevents us from treating Jesus's mother as our mother? According to Pope Francis, "Celebrating the Holy Mother of God reminds us that we have a mother. We are not orphans" (Pope Francis). She is qualified to be called the mother of Jesus in all ramifications. The Virgin Mary was able to endure seeing her son in pain and got consoled after the death of her son because she accepted her son's paschal mystery as the will of God. When the Virgin Mary consented to be the mother of Jesus, she accepted loyalty and rejection from those whom her son would save. Are we among those who honor her because of her role in our salvation enterprise or are we among those who do not value her or fail to appreciate her for playing a great role in our salvation enterprise? IF GOD HONORED HER BECAUSE OF HER ROLE IN OUR SALVATION ENTERPRISE, WE NEED TO HONOR HER TOO. Today's feast reminds us that "we are children, we are family, we are God's People" (Pope Francis). May the Virgin Mary pray for us all through the New Year, Amen. I wish you a blessed New Year.