

## SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021

*Numbers 6:22-27*

*Galatians 4:4-7*

*Luke 2:16-21*

### HOMILY

New Year's Day is often a time for looking back but also a time for looking forward. You will agree with me that this past year has been a very anxious year. It has also been a most difficult year for most of us because of the Pandemic. All the same it is far from being over. We have actually carried it over into this new year. We still remain right in the midst of the Pandemic. However, with the vaccines that are coming on stream, we enabled to look forward to the coming year with hope. At the same time it is not just a passive hope: it is a hope that demands something of us. This hope demands each and everyone of us to keep doing what is right even when it does not make sense.

Today the first reading from the Book of Numbers leads us to start off this new year with a prayer:

***'May the Lord bless us and keep us.***

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

***May the Lord uncover his face to us and bring us peace'.***

This should be our prayer as we step into and begin to face the New Year.

After all, through the birth of Jesus, Mary's child, the Lord has already blessed us and kept us. With the Word taking flesh, the Lord's face has already shone upon us and the Lord has already been gracious to us.

Today we celebrate Mary as MOTHER!:

She is mother of Jesus,

She is mother of God's Son,

She is mother of God.

### BEGINNINGS OF HER MOTHERHOOD

- a) It was because of her 'yes' to God's call at the very beginning of that moment of the annunciation that God blessed us so abundantly through Jesus, her son. Isn't it right that at the very beginning of this new year we also have to say our 'yes's to God?
- b) It was because of her yes, to God's call that God revealed the light of his face to us, displaying his gracious love.

Ours is our God of surprises. Much will come to light as we go along step by step into this new year but under the condition that we have said the initial Yes to him now as we begin.

Mary did not understand what she was saying yes to and it all came in place in due course.

In the words of Saint Paul in today's second reading, ***it was because God sent his Son, born of a woman, born of Mary, that the Spirit of God's Son has been poured into all our hearts, drawing us into a share in Jesus' own relationship with God, enabling us to cry out 'Abba, Father'***, alongside Jesus. There is much to treasure and ponder here, and that is what we find Mary doing in today's gospel reading. When the shepherds share their night-time experience of the visit of an angel

announcing the birth of a Saviour, who is Christ, the Lord, we are told *that 'Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart'*.

As mother of God's Son, mother of God, she contemplates the wonder, the mystery, of it all, and she encourages us to do the same.

On this New Year's Day, because of the way God has blessed us through Mary's son, we all have much to treasure and much to ponder in a spirit of gratitude.