

1-2007

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Pope Benedict XVI

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*January 1, 2007 to January 28, 2007*



**2007**

**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God and 40th World Day of Peace - Homily on January 1, 2007**

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

As in a mosaic, today's liturgy contemplates different events and messianic situations, but attention is especially focused on *Mary, Mother of God*. Eight days after Jesus' birth, we commemorate the Mother, the *Theotokos*, the one who gave birth to the Child who is King of Heaven and earth for ever (cf. *Entrance Antiphon; Sedulius*).

The liturgy today meditates on the Word made man and repeats that he is born of the Virgin. It reflects on the circumcision of Jesus as a rite of admission to the community and contemplates God who, by means of Mary, gave his Only-Begotten Son to lead the "new people". It recalls the name given to the Messiah and listens to it spoken with tender sweetness by his Mother. It invokes peace for the world, Christ's peace, and does so through Mary, Mediatrix and Cooperator of Christ (cf. [Lumen Gentium](#), nn. 60-61).

We are beginning a *new solar year* which is a further period of time offered to us by divine Providence in the context of the salvation inaugurated by Christ. But did not the eternal Word enter time precisely through Mary? In the Second Reading we have just listened to, the Apostle Paul recalls this by saying that Jesus was born "of woman" (Gal 4: 4).

In today's liturgy *the figure of Mary*, true Mother of Jesus, God-man, *stands out*. Thus, today's Solemnity is not celebrating an abstract idea but a mystery and an historic event: Jesus Christ, a divine Person, is born of the Virgin Mary who is his Mother in the truest sense.

Today too, *Mary's virginity* is highlighted, in addition to her motherhood. These are two prerogatives that are always proclaimed together, inseparably, because they complement and qualify each other. Mary is Mother, but a Virgin Mother; Mary is a virgin, but a Mother Virgin. If either of these aspects is ignored, the mystery of Mary as the Gospels present her to us, cannot be properly understood.

As Mother of Christ, Mary is also *Mother of the Church*, which my venerable Predecessor, the Servant of God Paul VI chose to proclaim on 21 November 1964 at the Second Vatican Council. Lastly, Mary is the *Spiritual Mother of all*

*humanity*, because Jesus on the Cross shed his blood for all of us and from the Cross he entrusted us all to her maternal care.

Let us begin this New Year, therefore, by looking at Mary whom we received from God's hands as a precious "talent" to be made fruitful, a providential opportunity to contribute to bringing about the Kingdom of God.

... Let us ask Mary, Mother of God, to help us to welcome her Son and, in him, true peace. Let us ask her to sharpen our perception so that we may recognize in the face of every human person, the Face of Christ, the heart of peace.

### **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God and 40th World Day of Peace -Angelus Address on January 1, 2007**

... With fortunate intuition, my venerable Predecessor, the Servant of God Paul VI, wished the year to open under the protection of Mary Most Holy, venerated as the Mother of God. The Christian community, which in these days has remained in prayerful adoration before the crib, looks with particular love to the Virgin Mary, identifying itself with her while contemplating the newborn Baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Like Mary, the Church also remains in silence in order to welcome and keep the interior resonances of the Word made flesh and in order not to lose the divine-human warmth that radiates from his presence.

The Church, like the Virgin, does none other than show Jesus, the Savior, to everyone, and reflects to each one the light of his face, the splendor of goodness and truth. Today, we contemplate Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, in his prerogative of true "Prince of Peace" (Is 9: 6). ...

To the Most Holy Mother of God we confidently address our prayer, so that sacred respect for each human person and the firm refusal of war and violence may develop in consciences. Mary, you who have given Jesus to the world, help us to welcome his gift of peace and to be sincere and courageous builders of peace.

After the Angelus:

I welcome all the English-speaking pilgrims present for this Angelus on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Today, we recall the wonderful mystery that through Blessed Mary, virgin and mother, God has become man! Filled with awe, knowing that the world has been given a Savior, we give thanks to God. Today is also the World Day of Peace. May Mary show us, in her Son, the way of peace, and enlighten our vision so that we may recognize Christ's face in the face of every human person.

### **General Audience – January 3, 2007**

At this first Audience of the New Year, we continue our joyful reflection on the birth of our Redeemer. Gazing upon the helpless infant in the crib, alongside Mary and Joseph, we share their sense of wonder at God's infinite goodness and gratuitous love.

### **"Every Child Who Is Born Brings Us God's Smile" - Homily on the Feast of Baptism of the Lord on January 7, 2007**

The Christmas Season, which ends precisely today, has made us contemplate the Child Jesus in the poor grotto of Bethlehem, lovingly tended by Mary and Joseph. ... The House of Nazareth where the Holy Family lived is the model and school of simplicity, patience and harmony for all Christian families. ...

In Baptism we are adopted by the Heavenly Father, but in this family that he establishes there is also a mother, Mother Church. Man cannot have God as Father, the ancient Christian writers were already saying, unless he has the Church as mother. ...

Let us entrust these children and their families to the Virgin Mother of Jesus, Our Savior, presented in today's liturgy as the beloved Son of God: may Mary watch over them and accompany them always, so that they can fully carry out the project of salvation which God has for each one. Amen.

### **On Migrant Families – Angelus Address on January 14, 2007**

Together we ask this of the Lord, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, and of St. Francesca Xavier Cabrini, patroness of migrants. ...

To all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors I offer a warm welcome. In today's Gospel, Mary says to the servants at the wedding feast in Cana: "Do whatever he tells you." May you respond generously to her exhortation, so that your hearts may be filled with the peace and joy of Christ her Son. Upon all of you, I invoke the abundant blessings of Almighty God.

### **On Christian Unity Week – *General Audience on January 17, 2007***

May the Virgin Mary, whom we invoke as Mother of the Church and help of all Christians, obtain support for us on our path to Christ.

### **On Ecumenism – *Angelus Address on January 21, 2007***

May Mary, Mother of the Church, help all the faithful to let themselves be opened ever more profoundly by Christ to mutual communication in charity and in truth, to be transformed in him into only one heart and soul (Acts 4:32).

### **On Ecumenism in 2006 – *General Audience on January 24, 2007***

We commend ourselves to the constant intercession of the Mother of God and of our protector saints so that they will support and help us not to fail in our good intentions, so that they will encourage us to intensify all efforts, praying and working with confidence, convinced that the Holy Spirit will do the rest. He will give us complete unity when and how it pleases him. And, strengthened by this confidence, let us go forward on the path of faith, of hope and of charity. The Lord is guiding us.

### **On the Faith-Reason Synthesis – *Angelus Address – January 28, 2007***

Let us pray so that Christians, especially those in the academic and cultural realm, are more able to express the reasonable character of their faith and to witness to it with a dialogue inspired by love. We ask this gift of our Lord through the intercession of St. Thomas Aquinas, and above all Mary, Seat of Wisdom.