

12-2012

## December 2012

Pope Benedict XVI

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## *December 2012*



**Dec. 1 – Pope's Address to Circus Performers and Traveling Shows: "You Spread Around You a Joyful Atmosphere and You Ease the Burden of Daily Work" – Translated Conclusion (Dec. 3, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... I entrust all of you to the Virgin Mary, the "star of the way," who with her maternal presence accompanies us every moment of our life.

[Comment in English]

... I pray that your faith in Christ and your devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary may sustain you in your life and work.

**Dec. 2 -- On Advent: "The Virgin Mary Perfectly Incarnates the Spirit of Advent" – Translated conclusion of the Angelus address (Dec. 2, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... The Virgin Mary perfectly incarnates the spirit of Advent; this spirit is one of listening to God, of profound desire to do His will, of joyous service to our neighbor. Letting ourselves be guided by her, so that the God who comes does not find us closed and distracted, but can, in each one of us, extend a part of His kingdom of love, of justice and of peace.

**Dec. 2 – Pope's Homily at Vespers with University Students: "Believing Means Entrusting Our Life to the Only One Who Can Give It Fullness in Time" – Translated conclusion (Dec. 3, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... The handing over of the icon of Mary *Sedes Sapientiae* to the Brazilian delegation by the university chaplaincy of Rome 3, which this year celebrates its twentieth anniversary, is a sign of this common commitment on the part of you young university students of Rome.

To Mary, Seat of Wisdom, I entrust all of you and your loved ones, along with the study, teaching and university life in which you share. I also entrust to her, in a special way, the journey of education and witness of this Year of Faith.

**Dec. 3 – Pope's Address to Venerable English College: "Let Your Hearts Burn with Love for Christ, for the Church and for the Mass" – Conclusion (Dec. 3, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... Commending you, and all to whom the Lord sends you, to the loving intercession of Our Lady of Walsingham, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing.

**Dec. 3 – Benedict XVI's Address to Plenary**

**Assembly of Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace: "The Rights and Duties Do Not Have as Their Sole and Exclusive Foundation the Social Conscience of Peoples, But Depend Primarily on the Natural Moral Law" – Translated conclusion (Dec. 5, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... May the Virgin Mary, she who with faith and love received in herself the Savior to give Him to the world, guide us in the proclamation and witness of the Social Doctrine of the Church, to render the New Evangelization more effective.

**Dec. 5 – On the Beauty of God's Plan of Salvation: "God's Self-Revelation in Christ Corresponds to Our Deepest Human Hopes and Aspirations" – Translated comments after the Angelus address (Dec.5, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... The season of Advent, which has just begun, receives light in these days from the shining example of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. May she urge you, dear young people, along your way of adhesion to Christ. For you, dear sick people, may Mary be your support for a renewed hope. And may she be a guide for you, dear newlyweds, in building your family.

**Dec. 7 -- Pope Benedict's Address to the International Theological Commission: "Without Openness to the Transcendent [...], Mankind Becomes Unable to Act in Accordance with Justice and Work for Peace" – Translated extracts (Dec. 7, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... I am pleased that the International Theological Commission wanted to show its support for this ecclesial event through a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Santa Mary Major, to entrust to the Virgin Mary, *Praesidium fidei*, your Commission's work and to pray for all those who, *in edio Ecclesiae*, are dedicated to bringing to fruition knowledge of the faith for the spiritual benefit and

enjoyment of all believers.

... We pray to the Immaculate Virgin, model of those who listen and meditate on the Word of God, to obtain for you the grace to always joyfully serve the knowledge of faith for the benefit of the whole Church.

...

**Dec. 8 – Pope's Angelus Address on Feast of the Immaculate Conception – Translated extract (Dec. 9, 2012, Zenit.org).**

I wish you all a happy feast of Mary Immaculate! In this Year of Faith I would like to emphasize that Mary is Immaculate by a gratuitous gift of the grace of God that, however, she was perfectly open to and cooperated with. In this sense she is "blessed" because she "believed" (Luke 1:45), because she had a firm faith in God. Mary represents that "remnant of Israel," that holy root announced by the prophets. The promises of the Old Covenant are welcomed in her. In Mary the Word of God finds an ear, acceptance, response, he finds that "yes" that allows Him to take flesh and to come dwell among us. In Mary humanity, history truly open to God, accept His grace, are ready to do His will.

Mary is the genuine expression of grace. She is the new Israel that the Scriptures of the Old Testament describe with the symbol of the bride. And St. Paul takes this language up again in the Letter to the Ephesians where he speaks of matrimony and says that "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, to make her holy, purifying her with the bath of water through the word, to present the Church to Himself, all glorious, without a blemish or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and immaculate." (5:25-27) The Fathers of the Church developed this image and so the doctrine of the Immaculate was first born in reference to the Church as virgin-mother, and then in reference to Mary. Ephraim the Syrian poetically wrote: "As

bodies themselves have sin and die, and the land that is their mother is cursed (cf. Genesis 3:17-19), so because of this body that is the incorruptible Church, her land is blessed from the beginning. This land is the body of Mary, the temple in which a seed has been sown" (*Diatessaron* 4, 15: SC 121, 102)....

To read the entire article visit: [Pope's Angelus Address on Feast of the Immaculate Conception.](#)

**Dec. 8 -- Pope's Immaculate Conception Address at the Spanish Steps: "Mary Immaculate Teaches Us to Listen to the Voice of God That Speaks in Silence" – Translated (Dec. 9, 2012, Zenit.org).**

It is always a joy to gather together here in the *Piazza di Spagna* on the feast of Mary Immaculate. Finding ourselves together--Romans, pilgrims, visitors--at the feet of the statue of our spiritual Mother creates in us a feeling of unity in the sign of faith. I would like to underscore this in this Year of Faith that the whole Church is observing. I greet you with affection and would like to share with you some simple thoughts, suggested by the Gospel reading for this solemnity: the Gospel of the Annunciation.

To read the entire article visit: [Pope's Immaculate Conception Address at the Spanish Steps.](#)

**Dec. 9 -- On Awaiting the Coming of the Lord: "Let us Prepare to See, with the Eyes of Faith, God's Salvation in the Humble Grotto of Bethlehem" – Translated extracts of the Angelus address (Dec. 9, 2012, Zenit.org).**

In the season of Advent that liturgy brings to the fore, in a special way, two figures that prepare the way of the Messiah: the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist.

... To the maternal intercession of Mary, the Virgin

of Advent, we entrust our path to the Lord who is coming so that we are ready to welcome Emmanuel, God-with- us, in our heart and in our entire life.

**Dec. 9 -- Pope's Address to Participants of "Ecclesia In America" International Congress – Translated conclusion (Dec. 10, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... As a model of openness to God's grace and of perfect concern for others, there shines forth on your continent the figure of Mary Most Holy, Star of the New Evangelization, invoked throughout America under the glorious title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As I commend this Congress to her maternal and loving protection, ...

**Dec. 12 – On the Unfolding of God's Self-Revelation: "God Continues to Draw Near to Us" – Translated extracts from the General Audience (Dec. 12, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... The song of the *Magnificat*, too, which the Virgin Mary raises to God, is a lofty example of this history of salvation, of this memory that makes and keeps present the action of God. Mary exalts the merciful action of God in the concrete journey of her people, his fidelity to the covenant promises made to Abraham and his descendants; and all this is a living memory of the divine presence that never fails (cf. Luke 1:46-55).

Today we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas and the patron saint of the new evangelization. Dear young people, at the school of Mary learn to love and hope; dear sick people, may the Blessed Virgin be for you a comfort and companion in your suffering; and you, dear newlyweds, entrust to the Mother of Jesus your marital journey.

**Dec. 16 – On The Fruits of Conversion: "It Is There, in Our Conduct, That We Must Show That We Are Following His Will" – translated**

**conclusion of the Angelus address (Dec. 16, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... So let us pray to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary Most Holy, that He help us to prepare ourselves for Christmas bearing the good fruits of conversion (cf. Luke 3:8).

**Dec. 16 -- Pope's Sunday Homily at *San Patrizio* Parish in Rome – Translated extracts (Dec. 16, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... The passage begins with the words: “Rejoice, daughter of Zion ... exult and acclaim with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem” (Zephaniah 3:14), which is similar to that announcement of the angel to Mary: “Rejoice, you who are full of grace” (Luke 1:26).

... The joy that is promised in this prophetic text finds its fulfillment in Jesus, who is in Mary's womb, the "Daughter of Zion," and in this way makes His dwelling among us (cf. John 1:14)

.... let us run to meet the Lord who is coming, invoking and imitating ... the Virgin Mary, who awaited and prepared, in silence and prayer, the birth of the Redeemer.

**Dec. 19 -- On the Faith of Mary, the Virgin Mother of Christ: "Mary's Faith Combines Complete Trust in the Lord's Promises with a Certain 'Unknowing'" – Translated introduction from the General Audience (Dec. 19, 2012, Zenit.org).**

In the journey of Advent, the Virgin Mary has a special place as the one who in a unique way waited for the fulfillment of the promises of God, accepting Jesus in faith and in the flesh, the Son of God, in full obedience to the divine will. Today I would like to reflect with you briefly on Mary's faith, beginning from the great mystery of the Annunciation.



To read the entire article visit: [On the Faith of Mary, the Virgin Mother of Christ.](#)

**Dec. 23 -- On the Visitation: "Let Us Strive Again to Make Room in Our Hearts to Welcome the Christ Child with Love and Humility" – Translated extract of the Angelus address (Dec. 23, 2012, Zenit.org).**

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, which precedes the birth of the Lord, the Gospel narrates Mary's visit to her relative Elizabeth. This is not merely a polite gesture but, with great simplicity, depicts the meeting between the Old and the New Testament. The two women, both pregnant, in fact, incarnate expectation and the One expected. The older Elizabeth symbolizes Israel, who awaits the Messiah, while the younger Mary bears the fulfillment of this expectation to the benefit of all humanity. In the two women we meet and recognize first of all the fruit of their wombs, John and Christ. The Christian poet, Prudentius, comments: "The child in the old womb greets, through His mother's mouth, the Lord, son of the Virgin" (*Apotheosis*, 590: PL 59, 970). The elation of John in Elizabeth's womb is the sign of the end of the waiting: God is about to visit his people. At the Annunciation the archangel Gabriel spoke to Mary about Elizabeth's pregnancy (cf. Luke 1:36) as a proof of God's power: sterility, besides the advanced age, was transformed into fertility.

To read the entire article visit: [On the Visitation.](#)

**Dec. 24 -- Benedict XVI's Christmas Eve Homily: "What Would Happen If Mary and Joseph Were to Knock at My Door?" – Translated extract (Dec. 24, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... what would happen if Mary and Joseph were to knock at my door? Would there be room for them? And then it occurs to us that Saint John takes up this seemingly chance comment about the lack of room at the inn, which drove the Holy

Family into the stable. He explores it more deeply and arrives at the heart of the matter when he writes: "He came to His own home, and His own people received Him not." (Jn 1:11) ...

**Dec. 25 -- Pope Benedict XVI's *Urbi et Orbi* Message: "Truth has Sprung Up, Bringing Kindness, Justice and Peace" – Translated extract (Dec. 26, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... In Jesus, born in Bethlehem of the Virgin Mary, kindness and truth do indeed meet; ... Saint Augustine explains with admirable brevity: "... truth has been born of the Virgin Mary." (En. in Ps. 84:13) And in a Christmas sermon he says that "... The Truth, which is in the bosom of the Father has sprung out of the earth, to be in the womb of a mother too. The Truth which rules the whole world has sprung out of the earth, to be held in the arms of a woman...." (*Sermones*, 185, 1)

... Kindness and truth, justice and peace have met; they have become incarnate in the child born of Mary in Bethlehem....

**Dec. 26 -- On the Feast of St. Stephen: "St. Stephen Is a Model for All Those Who Want to Serve the New Evangelization" – Translated conclusion of the Angelus address (Dec. 27, 2012, Zenit.org).**

... We pray to the Virgin Mary, so that the Church, in this Year of Faith, sees more men and women who, like St. Stephen, know how to give a convinced and courageous witness of the Lord Jesus.

**Dec. 30 -- Faith Is a Precious Gift to Nourish – Translated extract (December 30, 2012, VIS).**

Mary and Joseph's concern for Jesus, Benedict XVI said, "is the same as all parents who are raising a child, to introduce him to life and an understanding of reality.

... In imitation of the Holy Family of Nazareth, parents must be seriously involved in the growth and education of their children, so that they may become responsible and honest citizens, never forgetting that faith is a precious gift to nurture in their children, particularly through personal example." ... May the love, fidelity, and dedication of Mary and Joseph be an example for all Christian spouses, who are not their children's friends nor the owner's of their children's lives, but the guardians of this incomparable gift from God.

May the silence of Joseph, a just man, and the example of Mary, who kept all these things in her heart, bring us to enter into the mystery of the Holy Family full of faith and humanity. I wish for all Christian families to live in the presence of God with the same love and joy as the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

To read the entire article visit: [Faith is a precious gift to nourish.](#)