



BIBLE STUDY THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD YEAR A

St. Maria Goretti and
St. Peter Claver
Parishes

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And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Lk 2: 19

Reading I: Numbers 6:22-27

GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME! Our time here on earth is limited. What will we do with the time given to us? As Christians, our time on earth must be spent changing the world, as we live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It has been said that, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." These prophetic words suggest that we must give our time if we want to change our current circumstance.

Perhaps that one reason that we celebrate Mary as Mother of God is because she gave the gift of time so that we could share fully in the inheritance of eternal life. The time she gave us was her time as the Mother of God. St. Augustine called her blessed because she gave us the Son of God. This took time in her life. She took time to become even more



She Kept All These
Things In Her Heart!

blessed by believing in Him. She first conceived Jesus in her heart by faith. Full of faith, she conceived Jesus first in her womb. Thus she became the Mother of all believers as she committed her time on earth to the revelation of her Son Jesus to the world. (cf. Saint Augustine, Sermo 215, 4).

The Aarobic Blessing in the first reading is appropriate for Mary because she was blessed and kept by God (v. 24). She is ever virgin, highly favored, kept from the stain of original sin. The face of God shined on her for thirty three years as she cared for her Divine Son Jesus (v. 25). When she kissed His face, she kissed the face of God. The Lord looked kindly on her and gave her peace, which included good health, prosperity, friendship, general well being and happiness (v. 26). As Jesus died on the cross, He commended her to the care of John when he said, "behold your mother" (John 19:26-27). By agreeing to be the mother of Jesus, she helped name all followers as people of the Christ or Christians. The name of Jesus Christ is the name of God and all God represents. She blessed us with her gift of time.
DISCUSSION QUESTION: What will you do with your gift of time?

THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH - IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

The Prayer of the Virgin Mary

2617 Mary's prayer is revealed to us at the dawning of the fullness of time. Before the incarnation of the Son of God, and before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, her prayer cooperates in a unique way with the Father's plan of loving kindness: at the Annunciation, for Christ's conception; at Pentecost, for the formation of the Church, his Body. In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time. She whom the Almighty made "full of grace" responds by offering her whole being: "Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word." "Fiat": this is Christian prayer: to be wholly God's, because he is wholly ours.

Reading II: Galatians 4:4-7

GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME! St. Paul gave the Galatians the gift of his time. The churches of Galatia were the fruit of his first missionary journey (Acts 13-14). But these churches were almost immediately undermined by the Judiazers who distorted the Gospel that St. Paul preached. They argued that Christians must first become Jews. St. Paul did not give up on these churches. *He gave more time.*

In Galatians from Chapters 2:23 to Chapter 4:7, ST. Paul explained that God intended to bless all nations through Abraham (Gen 18:18). He concluded that we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (3:14) and the Galatians' reception of the Spirit is the fulfillment of God's promise. Then in verses 4-7 he declares that when the "*time was right,*" that is in the "*fullness of time,*" God sent His Son. The times of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and second coming are God's gifts of His time on earth to us during which we are redeemed. Thank you, Lord, for your gift of time. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Do you spend time learning how God fulfills His promises? Have you explained it to others?

Gospel: Luke 2:16-21

GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME! At Christmas dinner, our family shared with each other the gifts that we would give to the world in gratitude for the gift that Jesus gave us. One said love, another peace, and another understanding, and so on. The gift that stands out to me was the one of my eleven year old granddaughter. She said that she will give the gift of time. It dawned on me that a teaching moment came out of the mouth of a child. The greatest gift that we can give someone is our TIME. The gift of time is great, because when we give time; we give a portion of our life that we will never give back. Time is free, but it is priceless. We can't own time, but we can use it. How will we spend our time this year?

The Gospel shows how Mary, the mother of God, spent her time. It also shows how the shepherds spent their time. It challenges us to spend our time with Jesus, living the Gospel by sharing ourselves with others.

The shepherds made good use of their time. They listened to the message of the angels and responded to the announcement that the Messiah and Lord had been born. They immediately went to see what had been revealed to them (vv. 15-16). They spent their time seeking and finding Jesus Christ, the Messiah, with His mother. Because they gave a portion of their lives that they would never get back, to reveal the fact that salvation had come to the entire world. When the shepherds accepted the revelation, they preached, and proclaimed to all what God had revealed to them. This was time well spent (vv. 17-18). The revelation of God prompted them to spend time glorying and praising Him for all they had heard and seen (v. 20).

Mary spent her time showing us what the fullness of time means. It means just at the right time. Just at the right time in history, God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus Christ. Just at the right time, Mary was betrothed to Joseph, an event that gave Jesus civil and religious legitimacy since; they were both from the house of David. Therefore, Jesus was a true son of Abraham who would save the world. Mary spent her time in obedience to the Word of God. Her "yes" allowed her son to be named "*Jesus - God Saves*", the name given to Him by the angel before his conception (Lk. 1:31). Perhaps, what Mary kept in her heart was that she understood what is meant by *the, "fullness of time"*. It means that just at the right time, and by her "yes," mankind became adopted children of God (Gal. 4: 4-7). Mother Mary, thank you for your gift of time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: How much time do we waste each year? How much time do we spend in service to others?

Pray About It.

Monday

Read Galatians 4:4-7. Is it time to reclaim your relationship with Jesus the Messiah?

Tuesday

Read John 19:26-27. To whom will you give spiritual and moral support this week?

Wednesday

Read Psalm 67: 2-3. Who will you bless today?

Thursday

Read Numbers 6:22-27. Will the Lord bless you in this way?

Friday

Attend Mass and receive the Eucharist.

THE FULLNESS OF TIME.

The fulfillment of time is an important concept, because it shows God's sovereign control of time in order to bring His promises to pass. Only the Lord knows the times and seasons for fulfillment (Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 5:1). God has indicated that what He promised long ago would be fulfilled (Isa 37:26; Titus 1:3). God warned that Jerusalem would be destroyed if His people continued in disobedience. The prophet Jeremiah lamented after their downfall that their time was fulfilled (Lam 2:17).

In the New Testament Jesus announced that the promised kingdom of God was at hand (Matt 4:17). Jesus continually stated that His hour, or time, had not yet come (John 2:4; 7:6,8,30; 8:20); it was to be fulfilled when He was crucified (John 12:23; 13:1; 17:1). In fact, when Jesus came into Jerusalem in His triumphal entry, He stated that Israel should have known the time of the visitation of the Messiah (Luke 19:44). Jesus' death was prophesied in the Old Testament and the fulfillment of this was seen in His death at the appointed time (Rom 5:6; Gal 4:4; 1 Tim 2:6). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Resources: The Sunday Readings Cycle A Father Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M. Franciscan Herald Press Chicago 1971; pp. 48-54. Living Liturgies for Sundays and Solemnities Year A 2017, Joyce Ann Zimmerman, C.P.P.S. Kathleen Harmon, S.N.D. de N. Rev John P Tonkin, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minn. pp. 28-31. https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_time.html; cf. Saint Augustine, Sermo 215, 4

This meditation is prepared by Deacon Terrel J. Broussard for personal use in Adult Faith Formation at St. Peter Claver and St Maria Goretti Parishes in New Orleans, La. ©2016