

Homily: Mary Treasured All These Things

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the Gospel today, the shepherds hurry to Bethlehem after hearing the message of the angels. They find exactly what was promised: Mary, Joseph, and the child lying in a manger. Nothing spectacular on the outside—no palace, no crowd—just a family and a newborn. Yet this is the greatest moment in history: **God has entered the world.**

The shepherds respond immediately. They see, they believe, and they make known what has been told to them. Then they return, glorifying and praising God. Their encounter with Christ changes them. They go back to the same fields, the same work, but they are no longer the same people.

Mary's response is different—and deeply important. Luke tells us, **“Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.”** She does not rush. She does not speak. She treasures. Mary teaches us that faith is not only about action but also about contemplation—about allowing God's work to sink deeply into our hearts.

This child she holds is named Jesus, **“God saves.”** On the eighth day, He is circumcised, fully entering the human family and the covenant of God's people. From the very beginning, Jesus belongs to us, and we belong to Him. And Mary stands at the center of this mystery—not as someone who understands everything, but as someone who trusts completely.

This is why the Church calls her the **Holy Mother of God**. The title does not glorify Mary for her own sake; it proclaims the truth about her Son. The one she carries, names, and presents is truly God. And because He is **God-with-us**, Mary becomes our mother as well.

As we celebrate this Vigil Mass—standing on the threshold of a new year—we may feel much like Mary: holding joys and worries together, not knowing what lies ahead. Today’s Gospel reassures us that God is already present in what we carry. He is already at work.

Mary invites us to begin this new year as she did: by treasuring Christ, by reflecting on God’s presence in our lives, and by trusting that the Savior who has come among us will continue to guide us.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May Mary, the Holy Mother of God, teach us to hold Christ in our hearts. And may we, like the shepherds, leave this place praising God for all we have seen and heard. **Amen.**