

Rev. Derek Fairman

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Today (tonight) we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. We remember that she is our spiritual mother and that as we approach the Newborn King we find Our Lady there with Him. When the shepherds received the words of the Angel, they went to see the Newborn King and they found that He was not alone. Instead, they found the Christ Child with Mary His Mother and St. Joseph.

What we think about too is that the Lord Jesus could have come to us any way that He wanted. His humble birth in the manger is something that He chose for Himself. He wanted to depend on His mother for everything. We did not get to choose how we entered the world, but the Lord Jesus did, and before all the ages of the world, He chose Mary to be His mother. We know that she is there with the Lord Jesus, and that she is there, contemplating the Mystery that lies in the manger.

We also think about Mary's interior life, because she was not just physically present at the manger, but spiritually and emotionally as well. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us of the importance of Mary's devotion to her interior life. He tells us that St. Luke repeats several times that she meditated silently on all the extraordinary things that God was doing in her life. We hear this in the Gospel: "Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart."

Pope Benedict points out to us that the Greek verb used in this Gospel passage means "piecing together." There she is, piecing together the mystery of what His coming means. She does this by prayer and reflection. She does this by caring for the Child as any mother would, but then by reflecting upon what this means. She listens to what the shepherds tell her, and she reflects upon it. We do not find her at the manger managing everything and everyone, but she is there silently meditating on what everything means. She silently worships the Newborn King along with all those who come to the manger.

The Virgin Mary is concerned about the welfare of her spiritual children. She was not the main character in her own story; in her life, the Lord was, is and always will be first. All that the Lord has done for her: she knows all of these things and many others are the Lord's doing and not her own. In all these things, she grew in faith and wisdom, and came to understand more and more God's plan of salvation, which she was part of. Her heart did not swell with pride, but rather her heart opened up to the Mystery that God was present in her life.

