

The Nativity of our Blessed Virgin Mary

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The Nativity of our Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother is celebrated universally by the Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches and Anglican Churches on the 8th of September. The Birthday of the Mother of Jesus is very special for us because she has been chosen to be the Mother of our Savior by God Almighty who deigned her to be conceived without original sin. We read in the book of Hebrews: "When Christ was about to come into the world, he said to God: —You have prepared a body for me" (10.5).

Usually we plan to celebrate the birthdays of our dear ones, foreseeing the dates, planning to buy some gifts, search in the internet for a special gift, place the order before time so that we get it on time to be given to our dear ones on their birthday. Our Mother Church, in view of the celebration of the Birthday of our dear Mother, is starting a special prayer of Novena from 30th of August. We are privileged to join with the Universal Church in this Novena.

In this context, I am very happy to share with all, about the most favorite prayer which our Mother likes. It is nothing but the prayer: "Hail Mary, full of Grace; the Lord is with you". God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth with a message to Mary. So what the angel told her was exactly what the Heavenly Father asked the angel to tell Mary. (Lk. 1.26-28). The angel was only a messenger to carry out what was told her by the heavenly Father. So when we pray Hail Mary, we are addressing our Mother in the very words of our Heavenly Father. I am sure that our Heavenly Father is happy when we repeat His words

devoutly.

When Mary visited Elisabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, Elisabeth said: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk. 1.41, 42). These words which came from her mouth was definitely being influenced, motivated and inspired by the Holy Spirit. There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit is only happy when we recite repeatedly these words with devotion.

In the second half of the prayer, 'Hail Mary', we boldly address her as the Mother of God, which again was said by Elisabeth when she was filled with the Holy Spirit. (Lk. 1.43). So we can be sure that the Holy Spirit is happy when we repeat these words with devotion.

Many Exorcists, including the Chief Exorcist of Vatican, Father Gabriel Amorth (May his soul rest in peace) have agreed with Mother Mary that the prayer of Rosary is a powerful weapon against our enemy, the Satan. From their experience in the Ministry, they say that each 'Hail Mary' is a deadly blow to Satan, like a nail hitting their forehead!

Once a Benedictine Brother asked his Rector permission to join for the supper little late. This Brother had the habit of completing a full Rosary – the Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries- (Luminous was not formulated that time) every day before dinner. Because he could not complete it that day he went to his room. Since he did not come back after some time, the Rector sent another Seminarian to bring him. When he went to the other Brother's room, he found it closed and he could hear some melodious voice from inside. He peeped through the key hole. He found the Brother inside, kneeling before a statue of Mother Mary, looking at her face and devoutly praying the Rosary. Each Hail Mary was turning into a beautiful Rose and was being added to the crown of Mother Mary. Fascinated by this sight, he stood there looking at it. When the second Brother also did not return, the Rector

himself got up to go to the room and he too eye witnessed the fact!

Recently, when I was in Fatima for preaching a retreat along with Fr. James Mariakumar, we were in the convent chapel where we were staying on the 14th of Aug, the Eve of the Feast of Assumption of our Lady. That night we were completing our 33 days Novena for our Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mother Mary. With the joy of doing the Consecration on the following day, which was the Feast day of our Mother, as we were in the chapel for some time, I strongly felt the fragrance of Roses. I realized that our Mother has blessed us with her Presence, for there were no roses in that chapel with such fragrance. The next day when I shared my experience with one of our friends, she asked me: "Was it not the fragrance of Lily?" Yes, usually people get fragrance of Lily, but I realized that our Mother gave me the fragrance of Roses, because I share the experience of this Benedictine Brother in my classes on Mother Mary or on Rosary.

Dear friends, let us also devoutly pray 'Hail Mary's and add Roses to her crown. Especially in these Novena days let us pray a full Rosary or few 'Hail Mary's with this intention: 'Dear Mother, I want to give a Beautiful bouquet of Roses on your Birthday'. Let us pray the prayer which is very dearest to her heart with much love and devotion. And we can take this bouquet on 8th Sept. when we go to church to celebrate her Birthday and joyously present it to her while attending the Holy Eucharist or while participating in the Procession.

May our dear Mother cover all of us – the whole world- within her Mantle and take us safely closer and closer to her dear Son, our Saviour and Lord Jesus.

Mary Pereira.

Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Today, the 21st of November the Church celebrates the Feast of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. God has chosen her to be the uncorrupted Ark of the dwelling place of His Son, our Saviour Lord Jesus Christ.

Mary sang in her 'Magnificat' (Song of Praise'): "Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed" (Lk. 1.48). The Church gives her due respect and honor because God has chosen her and honored her 'looking with favor on her lowliness'. Let us honor this 'gentle woman', 'Morning Star', 'Virgin most pure', 'the most beloved of the Holy Spirit. St. Louis de Montfort has said: "When the Holy Spirit finds Mary in a soul, He flies to it".

