

January 1 – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Gospel – Adapted from Luke 2:16-21

The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. When they saw this, they told them the message they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed by what the shepherds said. And Mary reflected on all these things in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, giving glory to God, and praising him for everything they had seen and heard, just as they had been told by the angels.

After eight days, the baby was circumcised and given the name Jesus, the name given to him by the angel before he was conceived.



Reflection

Today we celebrate the feast of Mary, Mother of God, and the Gospel brings us back to Christmas night. Mary and Joseph are in the stable with the newborn Baby Jesus, when some visitors arrive. They are shepherds, who have received a message about the miraculous birth from a group of angels. Isn't this amazing? These shepherds – poor, dirty, uneducated – are the first people God calls to His Son. These shepherds had faith. God gives them a message, He calls them, and they follow.

When they got to the stable, they found Mary and Joseph with the Baby. Mary must have been surprised, but she welcomed them to adore her Son. And the Gospel tells us something else:

“Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” Mary heard the amazing thing that God



did for the shepherds, and she reflected on it in her heart. Mary always takes the things that God does to heart, and she reflects on them. She doesn't ignore them, or forget about them; she keeps them in her heart and learns from them. She allows the things that God does to shape who she is. That is why she follows God and loves Him so perfectly. She is a model for us. God is always acting in our lives; He is always speaking to us through the Scripture; He is on our altars at Mass. Do we pay attention? Do we stop to reflect on what God does, and allow it to change us? If not, let us start today.



Discussion Questions

Why do you think we have a special feast to celebrate Mary as the Mother of God?

How can we follow Mary's example in today's Gospel? How can we follow the shepherds' example?

Vocabulary

- **Christmas** – The birthday of Jesus.
- **Mother of God** – Mary is Jesus's mother, and Jesus is God. Therefore, Mary can be called the Mother of God.
- **Prayer** – Prayer is our conversation with God, and it feeds our personal relationship with Him. Prayer can be talking to God, thinking about Him, listening to Him. Any time we give God our focused attention, it is prayer.
- **Reflection** – When Mary reflected on things in her heart, she thought deeply about them and prayed about them, so she could understand them better.

Fill in the blanks

- 1** We can not grow closer to God if we don't spend time with Him in _____.
- 2** _____ is important, because thinking deeply about spiritual things will allow them to affect us more.

3 We are still in the _____ season.

4 Today we celebrate the incredible honor Mary received by being the _____.

Quiz

1 Who told Mary and Joseph what angels had told them about Jesus? 2 Where was Jesus when the shepherds found Him?

A Three wise men

B Shepherds

C A drummer boy

D The innkeeper

A In the temple

B In Nazareth

C In a manger

D Hiding from the wise men

3 What did Mary do about the things she was told?

A Reflected on them in her heart

B Wrote about them in the Bible

C Told her cousin Elizabeth

D Told them to the shepherds

Mary, Mother of God

C S U E G P S L E G N A J S K
V H X T R O S M V C V C I H V
L H R A R D T Y K G S H T E I
L L Y I K A M B R H Q A D P U
H E W U S K V L T N R O O H U
R O L W F T P Q M X G B V E H
S N G E B R M L Y F W U K R F
T H U O G M N A O A P R H D S
Q P Y Y U V K R S H Q S L S C
N M J E H L E W S Q R O O J V
J Q B F E H Q Z C Y G D N W C
Q S E T T R E F L E C T I O N
G P R O A I T F S R R W W G G
K K M H Q C B O F K N D S L W
Z A J A E R X W E B Q H N P V

ANGELS

CHRISTMAS

MOTHER OF GOD

PRAYER

REFLECTION

SHEPHERDS

Answers:

Fill in the blanks

1 Prayer

2 Reflection

3 Christmas

4 Mother of God

Quiz

1 B - Shepherds

2 C - In a manger

3 A - Reflected on them in her heart



