



Reflecting On Our Blessings

for the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God

Read:

Num 6:22-27

Ps 67:2-3, 5-6, 8

Gal 4:4-7

Luke 2:16-21



On this holy day, which includes an obligation to celebrate Mass because it's as important as Sunday, use the prayers of Mass to consecrate your new year to the protection and help of our Blessed Mother Mary and to make this a year of many blessings.

In Numbers 6:22-27, God teaches Moses how to pass blessings onto others. The responsorial, Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8, includes a request for God to bless us. Galatians 4:4-7 describes the greatest blessing we've received: our adoption by God the Father. As his children, we inherit all that belongs to him. He has made available to us eternal life and every blessing under the heavens and in heaven.

Blessings come to us all the time. Every breath and each heartbeat is a blessing of life. But would you like to be amazed by your blessings, like the people in Luke 2:16-21 who heard the testimony of the shepherds?

Such amazement is the awe we feel when we recognize the presence of Jesus and are truly conscious of what's happening. We are blessed whenever we see, do, hear, or feel something that is Jesus or comes from Jesus or reveals him to us. Thus, we're even blessed in situations that feel like curses, because he is there, guiding us through it!

To be fully aware of our blessings, we have to keep our eyes on Jesus at all times. Admittedly, this is hard to do, but it's possible with

decisive effort and the help of the Holy Spirit. Look past the problems: There is the victorious Jesus! Look past your emotional reactions to hardships: There is the peace of Christ! Look past the person who is sinning against you: There is Jesus comforting you!

Be awed by the fact that Jesus is always there and that everything good you do in this world is a good that you are doing with Jesus and also to Jesus. In hardships, we need to become aware of the blessings of God's love and sympathy. Then we'll find other blessings, too.

The next time someone fails to be good to you, stop expecting it from them and look for Jesus himself to give you what you need. As you improve at recognizing him, you'll become aware of his blessings even during the heat of the trial.

In every situation, always keep your eyes on Jesus to see his hand reaching toward you, blessing you.

Let us learn from Mary. She observed everything that happened and reflected on it to see what God would do. When Mary looked at the shepherds, did she see stinky, unkempt strangers barging in? Of course not. Look at the scruffy people in your own life – through her eyes. How many blessings do you see?

There's an old cliché that tells us to "count your blessings." Does that really help? Listing them isn't enough. Let's change it to: "Connect to your blessings." Don't just name them – enter into them.

May your New Year be filled with fully realized blessings!