

Mary, the Holy Mother of God – 01/01/21

The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace!

The Lord commanded Aaron and his sons to bless the people of Israel in this way as a foretaste of His plan to bless all of His people in the future.

Nothing makes this clearer than today's Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

God was so gracious toward her that He filled her with His grace from the very moment of her conception preparing her to become His mother in time.

The fullness of what the Lord intended in Aaron's blessing was uniquely begun in Mary when she gave birth to Jesus Christ – God Incarnate – and the face of God shown upon Mary and Joseph for the very first time.

The shepherds were next to see the face of God. "When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed."

And then in the gospel we heard that important statement; "Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

So what was she reflecting on? Perhaps she was reflecting on how God would make it possible for the whole world to see His face? Or

maybe she had a revelation on how her Immaculate Heart would be despised in the future. But then again perhaps our Lord was revealing to her His plan to combine these two realities.

So how would the Lord accomplish this? Let's consider it for a moment. Of course only in heaven will we behold the face of God without end and in our day Mary gave us a special way to get there.

At Fatima, over 1900 years after the birth of Christ, Mary promised us all the graces necessary to get to Heaven if we only set aside five first Saturdays for her Son.

The First Saturday devotion is actually quite simple. Mary asked us to do four simple things in reparation to her Immaculate Heart.

Firstly, she asked us to go to confession so that we can be certain that we are in a state of grace.

Secondly, she asked us to receive Holy Communion while in the state of grace.

Thirdly, she asked us to say one mystery of the Holy Rosary.

And finally, in addition to the Rosary, she asked us to meditate for 15 minutes on the mysteries of Our Lord's life and Passion.

The reason she asked for five first Saturdays is because each Saturday corresponds to five kinds of offenses committed against her Immaculate Heart. These offenses are as follows:

The first offense is against her Immaculate Conception.

The second offense is against her perpetual virginity.

The third offense is against her divine maternity and many people's refusal to accept her as the Mother of all mankind.

The fourth offense is instilling indifference, scorn and even hatred toward her in the hearts of children.

And the fifth offense is against her sacred images.

Here at Saint Joseph the Worker we have every opportunity to fulfill our Lady's request since we have morning Mass at 9:30 am followed by adoration and a Rosary every Saturday – not just first Saturdays.

This Saturday is the first Saturday of the year and it would be a great way to begin this new year.

To those who faithfully follow Our Lady's request to honor the five first Saturdays, she has made a wonderful promise – “to assist us at the hour of death with all the graces necessary for salvation.”

In other words, she will help us in every way at the hour of death to enter heaven so that we can at last behold the face of God.

Today, let's resolve to listen to Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, so that as children of God and children of Mary the face of Christ may shine upon us.

May the Lord bless you and keep you! May He let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you! May He look upon you kindly – through Mary – and give you peace!