

The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, January 1: Holy Day of Obligation

With great and holy joy the Church will bring the Octave of Christmas to a close as we celebrate, on Thursday, January 1, the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. This day is also known, of course, as New Year's Day and as World Day of Prayer for Peace. As the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, it is a Holy Day of Obligation. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered at the cathedral at 9:30 AM.

This title for the Blessed Virgin Mary—Mother of God—is the oldest of all of the various titles she possesses and is the greatest of them all. As the Mother of God the Blessed Virgin Mary is exalted above all of the angels and saints in heaven and she is revered by all of the children of men here on earth. As Mother of God the Blessed Virgin Mary watches over all of God's children and guides them to the Sacred Heart of His only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

On this holy day of prayer for world peace we look out into the world and wonder whether men and nations will ever live in the true peace of Jesus Christ. On the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, on New Year's Day, on World of Prayer for Peace, we ask our Blessed Mother to pray with and for us that at the dawn of a New Year we might rededicate ourselves to true and lasting peace, to peace founded on the Gospel of Life, to peace rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Holy Catholic Church. With trust in the love and mercy of the Mother of God whose Son is the Prince of Peace we ask her to pray with and for us that all of the world might one day be at peace.

One of the very practical and powerful ways that each of us can help to promote peace and justice in the world is through the praying of the Holy Rosary each day. Saint Pope John Paul II urged every Christian person, and especially every Catholic family, to pray the Rosary each day for peace. Throughout history, Our Blessed Mother has instructed her children to pray the Rosary every day because she knows how efficacious it is for the salvation of individual souls and for the salvation of the entire world. How can we deny our Mother, from whom we have received the Prince of Peace, this simple request? Imagine the world we would live in if every single person prayed the Rosary every day for peace!

Today and every day of this year may we unite our prayers with those of our Holy Father Pope Francis and go to the Mother of God in our great time of need. May the great Mother of God, Mary Most Holy intercede for us and grant us her special care and protection. No matter what it is that God has in store for us this year may we face it with the confidence and trust with which the Blessed Virgin Mary accepted God's will for her life. Mary, the Mother of God, pray for us!

May God continue to grant you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year!