

“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” Today we contemplate Mary’s divine maternity. With her fiat, “Let it be done to me according to thy word.” Mary became the mother of Christ, and by his divine command from the cross, “Behold your mother”, she became our mother, too. So today, in a special way, we contemplate the divine maternity of Mary, for she is really and truly the Mother of God. Sacred scripture itself testifies to this truth when it says “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said: ‘Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us’.” Mary, that humble, most perfect daughter of Zion, was asked by God the Father to conceive in her womb, by the power of the Holy Spirit, He in whom the fullness of deity resides in human flesh, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah of God.

What we as Catholics believe about Mary is made necessary by what we believe about Christ; and what the Church teaches about Christ illuminates what she teaches about Mary. From all eternity God chose this daughter of Israel, a young virgin of Nazareth, the most perfect human being ever created by God, to be the mother of his Son, the Mother of God. The maternity of Mary was much more than a merely human maternity; it was an act of divine condescension, it was a divinely ordained maternity. Divine in its origin, divine in its object, and divine in its gift, the maternity of Mary was a supernatural intervention by God in human history. Mary’s maternity was divine in its origin because her bodily conception of Christ came through the overshadowing power of the Holy Spirit; it was divine in its object because it was the Son of God who was conceived within her virginal womb; her maternity was divine in its gift because it was the gift of God’s own paternal love for his children that is expressed in the gift of divine life formed in the womb of this fourteen-year-old daughter of Zion. All this came about because,

by the fullness of grace that dwelt within her, Mary's soul was united with God in an intimate embrace of love from the very first moment of her own immaculate conception, and by his grace the long promised Emanuel is conceived in her virginal womb, the Messiah, the savior of mankind.

The divine gift of Mary's maternity began in eternity for it was conceived in the mind of God long before the age of men began. From before the dawn of time God knew Mary, the one most perfect soul chosen from the entire human race to be the mother of his only beloved Son, born in the fullness of time, taking his humanity from hers. From the beginning he loved her for herself more than all other creatures. Because of her singular purity, he endowed her with the most precious of all the treasures of his divinity: freedom from sin. Mary was so filled by grace with such a plenitude of innocence and holiness that God himself delighted in her virtue. From her, the second person of the most Holy Trinity, the Word of God, would take his humanity and so she became really and truly the Mother of God.

May the Mother of God sustain us and accompany us on the arduous journey to the cross of Christ and let us never tire of praying for her intercession. Mary, Mother of God and Queen of Peace, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen