

Reflection Thursday Week 23 Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary 2022

Every human birth is a call for new hope in the world. The love of two people has joined with God in his creative work. The loving parents bring forth hope into a world filled with troubles. A new child has the potential to be a channel of God's love and peace to the world. This is true in a magnificent way in Mary. If Jesus is the perfect expression of God's love, Mary is the foreshadowing of that love. If Jesus has brought the fullness of salvation, Mary is its dawning. Birthday celebrations bring happiness to the celebrated as well as to family and friends. Next to Jesus' birth, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the world. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large.

St Augustine believes that Mary was more blessed in accepting faith in Christ than in conceiving the flesh of Christ (*De santa virginitate* 3.3). He regarded Mary not so much as above all Christians but as the most perfect of all Christians; that it was more important that Mary have God in her heart than the Son of God in her womb. He recommended Mary as a perfect example of the Christian life, encouraging us to be like Mary and give birth to Christ in our world today. Thank you, Mary, Mother of Jesus and our mother too.

A prayer for creation: God our Father, you created the world and sent Jesus to live among us, made of the same stuff, breathing the same air, marvelling at sunrise and sunset just as we do. Help us to participate in the life around us and within us as your life, as you living in us and we living in you and in each other. God of love and life, restore us to your peace, renew us through your power and teach us to love all that you have created and to care for the earth as your gift and our home.

Why are birthdays good for you? People who have the most - live the longest.

Does a pink candle burn longer than a blue one? A: No, they both burn **shorter!**

Last week I asked my wife what she wanted as a present for her birthday.

"Oh, I don't know", she said. "Just give me something with diamonds".

So, I gave her a pack of playing cards.