

Mother of the Most Beautiful Love

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God - Lk 2:16-21

Ave Maria Catholic Church, January 1, 2023 - Fr. David M Vidal

What is the world without God? It is a place that has been cursed, a place of thorns and thistles, a place of sweat and dust, a place of suffering and death. This world is not paradise. Paradise was a place of friendship with God, a place in which Adam and Eve enjoyed a conversation with God, who moved about with them in the garden at the breezy time of the day. But after original sin, the doors of paradise were closed, and tragically, this world became the new place for humanity.

A world without God is a world without love, truth, goodness, and purity. How could virtue exist without the presence of the Creator of what is excellent and perfect!? This is our world; this is the world after original sin.

Now when we read the history of humanity, we discover a mixture of good desires with so many imperfect acts. We discover a search for love combined with self-interest and gratification without God and against God.

Without God, the purity of love is eradicated from this world, and only God can bring it back. In his book, *The World's First Love*, the Venerable Fulton Sheen writes about the first pure love that this world experienced. In the opening chapter of his book, he tells us that “*love begins with a dream.*” Let us listen to Fulton Sheen’s words:

God has within Himself blueprints of everything in the universe. God has in His Mind an archetypal idea of every flower, bird, tree, springtime, and melody. A tree is truly a tree because it corresponds to God's idea of a tree. A rose is a rose because it is God's idea of a rose wrapped up in chemicals and tints and life. But it is not so with human beings.

God has to have two pictures of us: one is what we are, and the other is what we ought to be. He has the model, and He has the reality: the blueprint and the edifice, the score of the music and the way we play it. God has to have these two pictures because in each and every one of us, there is some disproportion and lack of conformity between the original plan and the way we have worked it out.

There is, actually, only one person in all humanity of whom God has one picture, and in whom there is a perfect conformity between what He wanted her to be and what she is, and that is His Own Mother. The model and the copy are perfect; she is all that was foreseen, planned, and dreamed.

Love begins with a dream, and Mary is the perfect realization of that dream of love. She was chosen by God from all eternity, to be the Mother of the Word who became flesh for our salvation. Then, Mary became the Mother of God.

Mary is not an accidental component of God's plan of salvation. She is a central figure in our return to God.

When God willed to become Man, He had to decide on the time of His coming, the country in which He would be born, the city in which He would be raised, the people, the race, the political and economic systems which would surround Him, the language He would speak. All these details would depend entirely on one factor: the woman who would be His Mother.

And God took the initiative. He planned Mary, created Mary, and preserved Mary from every stain of sin. God made Mary the most blessed among women because, in God's plan of love, Mary was chosen to be the Mother of the Redeemer, the Mother of God.

Now, as the Venerable Fulton Sheen also notices, *His Mother was not like ours, whom we accepted as something historically fixed that we could not change; He was born of a Mother whom He chose before He was born. It is the only instance in history where both the Son willed the Mother, and the Mother willed the Son.*

That was the most extraordinary moment in the history of humanity. The creator of the universe, who planned, created, and endowed Mary with every kind of gift to be the Mother of the Savior, does not impose Mary to be his Mother.

God sends his angel to announce the plan of salvation. God respects the gift of free will. For this reason, the angel announces and waits for Mary's answer. Mary is truly consulted.

Then, Mary listens, Mary ponders, Mary asks, and Mary answers: *"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word,"* (Lk 1:38).

This was the moment when Mary became the Mother of the Most Beautiful Love. When Mary said, *"fiat"* (let it be done), when Mary gave her consent, when Mary accepted God's plan of redemption in her life with all its consequences, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Then, through her *"fiat,"* through her *"yes"* to God, Mary became the Mother of God.

As we begin the first day of the New Year of the Lord, our first thought is directed to Mary's yes.

Do we not know that from all eternity, God thought of each one of us? God also willed us to be and He endowed us with many gifts. Unfortunately, we fall short of the perfect image

that God has of us, but in his love and mercy, God gives us time to be closer to that beautiful and perfect image of the person we must become according to his plan.

Is there any other reason for this new year? If God gives us time, it is not for the simple reason of getting older, but for the truest reason of getting closer and closer to Him. Then, our question is: how do we get closer to God? And the answer to this question is: by giving our “fiat” to God as Mary did!

Do we not remember the passage when Jesus asks: *“Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?”* This is Jesus’s answer: *“Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother,”* (Mt 12: 48.50).

A life of *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* is never imposed but accepted. We must give our daily “yes” to what is true, good, and pure.

God does not impose holiness. We must give our “yes” and embrace with our whole hearts the consequence of that word. When we give our “yes,” we are saying to God, let it be done to me according to your plan for me. Let that perfect image of me, that you have thought from all eternity, be accomplished in my life. Let the copy of my life be like the model that is in you. Let the reality of my life be more like the dream that you have of me.

May this be our prayer as we start this new year of grace. May the Blessed Mother of God, and our Mother, help us to repeat our “yes” all the days of our lives. Amen