

# Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

## Suggestions for Leading Worship



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**RE:** Liturgical Suggestions for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – Cycle A

**Feast date:** January 1, 2008

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Dear Fathers and Deacons,

### **An Overview...**

January 1 offers us many opportunities. It is the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, when we honor Mary for carrying Jesus in her womb, and for actively participating in God's plan for our salvation. It is also World Day of Peace and New Year's Day, certainly times for us to ponder where we are in our spiritual lives and where we want to be.

In the day's Gospel, we hear that Mary observed the shepherds glorifying and praising her new born son. The Scripture tells us that she kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Perhaps with this Gospel, the church is challenging us to move beyond the events at the manger, to live our everyday lives contemplating the presence of God in our own lives and the mysteries that unfold for us with Jesus' death and resurrection. We also hear that Jesus was given His name, which connects to the First Reading from Numbers which tells us that the God instructed Moses to invoke the name of God over the Israelites. St. Paul's letter to the Galatians proclaims that God sent His son, "born of a woman," helping us to focus even more deeply upon the Mother of God.

### **Some Considerations as you Prepare...**

1. A possible penitential rite:

During this celebration of Mary, the Mother of God, may we draw closer to the Son she bore and ask for His mercy:

- a. Lord Jesus, you are the Word made flesh in the womb of Mary; Lord, have mercy.
  - b. Christ Jesus, you are the gift of peace to your people; Christ, have mercy.
  - c. Lord Jesus, you bestow on us the abundant blessings of God; Lord, have mercy.
2. Either of the Opening Prayers would be appropriate today.
  3. The Preface to be used is the first one for feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
  4. A Solemn Blessing for the Christmas season, the Blessed Mother or the beginning of the New Year could be used.
  5. You also have the option of using a “Mass of Peace and Justice” today. Readings can be found in the Mass for Various Needs and Occasions, and offer some readings which carry thought-provoking messages given the world’s situation as we begin this new year.

### **Reflection Questions...**

1. What helps me to develop a more contemplative posture in my faith and my daily living?
2. What does it mean to be like Mary and participate in God’s plan of salvation for others?
3. What is most significant for me to be God’s adopted child and heir (2nd reading)?

### **Looking Ahead...**

Sunday is the feast of the Epiphany. It is still the Christmas season. Seasonal decorations should not come down before the January 13 observance of the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

## **Suggested Intercessory Prayers for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**

*Priest:* As children of God, we bring our prayers before the Lord.

*Deacon* (or another reader if there is no deacon):

1. For our Church, that we, like Mary, may carry Jesus to our broken world, we pray to the Lord.
2. For a New Year filled with peace, for nations to find a way to live together in harmony, we pray to the Lord.
3. For all who face new beginnings; a new job, a new school, a birth, a sickness, a death, we pray to the Lord.
4. For those who are hungry, homeless or poor this holiday season, we pray to the Lord.
5. For quiet and simpler moments to reflect on God's presence in our lives, we pray to the Lord.
6. For our beloved dead, that they may share in the inheritance God promised His faithful, we pray to the Lord.

*[pause; the presider alone concludes]*

*Priest:* Almighty and gracious God,  
you sent to us our greatest gift, your Son, to live among us.  
Grant all that we need,  
so that our actions may always bring Him glory and praise.  
We pray in His name, forever and ever.  
Amen.