

My friends in Christ, there are three things about the Blessed Virgin Mary that are important for us as faithful Catholic Christians in a particular way – three things about her that January 1st (this day) invites us to consider as we celebrate today in honor of her as Mother of God. The first is that the two most important celebrations of the Church any given year are Christmas and Easter, and so important are they, so glorious and triumphant, that we cannot be constrained to celebrate them on only *one* day each year. So we celebrate them for *eight* days: what is called the Octave celebration of those two particular feasts. This day, January 1st, is the eighth and final day of the *Christmas* Octave; and so, to a certain extent, today is so important to us because we are celebrating Christmas all over again. But no more presents, sorry! But there *is* football!

Secondly, today gives honor to Mary; but *really*, it gives all glory, laud, and honor to her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, because what we are doing here is celebrating Mary, the Mother of *God*. We are affirming the perfect divinity of Jesus Christ: Jesus *is* God; He is God the Son, and to dare say otherwise is to spout heresy. But we are Catholics, not heretics!

And thirdly, today is the New Year for the world – and what better way to start off the new year on the right foot than by entrusting the whole year and a whole year’s worth of every endeavor to our Blessed Mother? We entrust our lives to our *own* mothers while we are unborn and, after we are born, while we are yet still young; we entrust a happy, healthy home to our mothers; we entrust all of life’s cares and concerns, our worries and our fears as well as our hopes, to our mothers. We do well, then, to turn to our Blessed Mother, the Mother of God, in much this same way – and it is *because* she is the Mother of God that we turn to her.

May it be, then, that as we start the New Year with this special celebration of Mary, Mother of God, we will make the New Year resolution to turn to our Blessed Mother in prayer for our *every* hope and need, trusting that she will, in turn, intercede for us with her Son....

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.