**THEME:** MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
**READINGS:** Numbers 6:22-27 / Galatians 4:4-7/ Luke 2:16-21
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

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The Jews had a custom of naming a child a week after his/her birth (*cf*. Lk. 1:59).  In this respect, the 1st of January (a week after Christmas) marks the naming of the newborn King as ‘Jesus’ (Lk. 2:21).  Now, naming ceremonies are often occasions to congratulate the parents (especially the mothers) of the babies.  Therefore, as a Church, we have set aside today to congratulate the mother of Jesus, by honouring her with the title, ‘***Mother of God***’.

Long before the Church honoured St. Mary with the title of ‘***Mother of God***’, the Holy Spirit had revealed to St. Elizabeth that the Blessed Virgin was becoming the ***Mother of our Lord.*** Is it not amazing that St. Elizabeth got this revelation even before the visiting St. Mary could tell her what the angel Gabriel had said? Indeed, at the instance of the greeting of the young Blessed Virgin who even then had ***no external sign*** of pregnancy, St. Elizabeth could exclaim: ‘why is it that the MOTHER OF MY LORD should come to me’ (Lk. 1:43)!

Moreover, Jesus, whom Mary gave birth to, is not simply our Lord; He is also our God.  Remember the confession of the converted St. Thomas.  He exclaimed when he saw the risen Jesus ‘***My Lord and my God***’ (Jn. 20:28)!  That Jesus Christ is God is evident in many other New Testament passages.  Let me refer to only chapter 1 of St. John’s Gospel.  This is the testimony of St. John: ‘in the beginning was the Word (Christ) and the Word (Christ) was with God.  And ***the Word (Christ) was God***’ (Jn. 1:1).  But then at the appointed time, in order to save us, ‘the Word (Christ) became flesh (man) and dwelt among us’ (Jn. 1:14) through conception and birth by the Blessed Virgin Mary (Gal. 4:4-7).  It follows that if Jesus Christ is God and St. Mary is his mother, then Mary could be referred to as the ‘Mother of God’.

Some still get confused when we call St. Mary the ‘Mother of God’.  Therefore it has to be clarified that when we use the title, ‘Mother of God’, we are not saying that St. Mary gave birth to the Son of God before the world was created.  Rather, what we mean is that when the eternal Son of God was to become man, it was Mary who conceived and gave birth to Him.   Thus, St. Mary is honoured with the title of ‘Mother of God’, because of who Jesus Christ is.  On the other hand, since Mary is human, this title informs us that our Saviour, though divine, became truly human (Phil. 2:5-11).

May He, who though divine became human, bless us with His power as God! Amen!

May He, who though rich (as God) became poor (as human), enrich and prosper us throughout 2016! Amen!

May He who gave His mother, Mary, to us as our mother (Jn. 19:26-27), favour you throughout 2016 as He favoured the couple at Cana (Jn. 2:1-11), at the intercession of His mother!  Amen!

Have a Happy New Year with God’s special blessings!