

January 1 2026 © Teresa Elder Hanlon
Numbers 6: 22-27; Psalm 67; Colossians 3: 12-17; Luke 2: 13-19

Today is not only a Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, but the World Day of Peace. In the readings today, I notice a transfer of peace from God to people. The 1st reading records the Jewish blessing for the people for all time. These familiar phrases connect us as children of God to God's face, shining on us. The result is that we receive peace.

In the second reading, Paul describes the regalia of God's love, meaningful attitudes of the heart that we are to put on. Also, in our hearts, when we pay attention and live in these gifts of compassion, kindness, humbleness of heart, gentleness of spirit, the end result is unity with one another or peace.

One comment from the Wisdom commentary about Mary in the gospel is that the Greek word used for "kept or treasured" in regard to how Mary remembered the events around Jesus' birth is a word nuanced with meaning, 'to preserve against harm or ruin, to protect, defend' and 'to keep in mind, be concerned about'. Mary's action is not the least passive. Like the shepherds who keep watch, Mary guards all that has occurred, putting things together, connecting, and interpreting. Like a feminist theologian, she continually interprets what God is doing in her life and that of her family and her people." (Barbara E. Reid and Shelley Matthews, *Wisdom Commentary LUKE 1-9*, p. 81-82).

So where do we stand in regard to the meaning of scripture and the designation of this day, January 1, as a Solemnity for Mary, Mother of Godde? I suggest several possibilities (taken from my January 1 bishop's article in *The Review* (<https://rcwpcanada.altervista.org/>)).

Give thanks for the woman, Miriam, over two thousand years ago who said 'yes' to birthing and raising a child, not her husband's, in a time of terror when such sons of royal and priestly lineage like hers could be murdered by the rulers in power.

Feel gratitude that she and many other women have been resourceful in seeking out safety for themselves and their children when under threat (she went to Elizabeth, her cousin's home).

Identify with her that, she feared for her offspring's wellbeing, and was thoughtful, faithful in her approach to life.

Honour her leadership as she was faithful to the Early Church as an apostle.

Rejoice that Mary aged, grew in wisdom and founded, with others, the Early Christian table worship.

Continue to investigate the faith, and receive the blessings of love and peace that you continue to move in this world as she did, a maker of peace and restoration.

SHARING What did you notice in the readings? What will you surrender to Godde this year?