

January 1, 2008
The Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
World Day of Prayer for Peace

Readings of the day may be found on the following link:

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab>

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8.

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:16-21

And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

A few years ago, I was picking up my grand daughter from Pre-School. We were leaving the parking lot of the church Our Lady of Grace, when I heard her refer to the school as *My Lady of Grace*. I corrected her, saying, "It's Our Lady of Grace." To which she replied, "Oh, I guess she is everybody's lady." I recall that conversation whenever we celebrate a feast of Mary. I am grateful she is everybody's lady and yet, I find a profound truth in the innocent words of my grand daughter who called her 'my lady'. She belongs to all of us and each of us, and for that I am thankful. Mary is the model of complete surrender. She is the model of giving without concern for one's self. She is the one to whom I turn when my selfish desires get the best of me, when I would prefer to take care of me rather than serve the needs of the world. I think that it is perfect that we celebrate The World Day of Prayer for Peace on her feast day for she is the conduit through which peace in the world is possible. I have never thought about asking Mary what peace looks like through her eyes. I wonder too what she pondered and held in her heart. What were her desires, and fears? What did she long for? She had to know what rejection and hatred looked like given the experiences of her life. What does she have to teach us today about peace? So I pray, Mary, what do you have to teach *me* today about peace?

Pope Benedict says in his message for World Peace, "... the peoples of the earth, too, are called to build relationships of solidarity and cooperation among themselves, as befits members of the one *human family*: "All peoples"—as the Second Vatican Council declared—"are one community and have one origin, because God caused the whole human race to dwell on the face of the earth (cf. *Acts 17:26*); they also have one final end, God"

I encourage you to read Pope Benedict's message for the celebration of The World Day of Prayer for Peace. Pope Benedict XVI's Message Celebrating World Day of Peace, 2008: "[The Human Family: A Community of Peace](#)"