

Adam and Eve wait for her answer, all confined in hell wait for her answer. With grateful heart, we thank Mary, the Wise and Prudent Virgin, for saying “yes” to God on our behalf. Her simple words: “Let what you have said be done to me,” (Lk 1:38) brought down to us the Savior and has changed the world forever. She obeyed the Angel, not the Devil, and thus she pleased God: “Blessed are you because of your belief that the promise made to you by the Lord would be fulfilled” (Lk 1:45)

At the offertory, the Church blesses “Our Lady of Expectation” with the Angel’s greeting “Rejoice, so highly favored. The Lord is with you” (Lk 1:29); “Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb” (Lk 1:42). Mary is doubly blessed: in her virginity and Motherhood, and thus stands as an ideal and inspiration for every woman single or married. Her virginal womb is blessed with the Divine Life. She is the Mother of every child ever conceived under the mother’s heart. What an example she offers to all expectant mothers to welcome, to nurture life and to bring it to the full maturity of Christ’s humanity.

The Holy Virgin Mary, “**Our Lady of Expectation**”, is a great educator of the Christian family. Christmas is a family celebration. We all want to be home for Christmas. She teaches us how to love and enjoy our own humanity, and the humanity of her Son, who we celebrate on Christmas Day.

*(excerpted from:www.polamjournal.com)

Come, Lord Jesus!

PRAYER FOR CONCEIVING A CHILD

******Mother of Christ, you were graced by God with the privilege of bearing our Divine Savior. You experienced the joys and challenges of being a parent. Your life was blessed with seeing Jesus grow from infancy and childhood, into his adult years of teaching a ministry. With St. Joseph, you created a home for your family to love and share together. Please intercede before the God of all life, that (here mention names) may conceive a baby and raise healthy children, with whom they can share the Lord’s good gifts. May their children honor them and You by lives of virtue and caring for others. May their home be holy and their family be blessed with health, happiness and abiding love. Amen.

***(excerpted from:www.spiritualwoman.net)*

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Our Lady of Expectation December 18th



“As for Mary, she treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart.”

Our Lady

**From the very beginning of Christianity, the believers in Christ cherished a special love for Mary, His Mother. Instinctively they sensed that she must be the purest of virgins and the most honored of all women, to whom they could confide all their trials. Reading the Holy Gospels and then following the teaching of the early Fathers of the Church, they learned more of her unique role in the life of Jesus and of her power of intercession. Beneath the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, we see the inscriptions that depict Mary as the one who intercedes for the departed Christians to her Son, the Judge. In the Roman Catacombs, we find the wall drawings that represent Mary as the throne of wisdom “Sedes Sapientiae” holding the baby Jesus, the Incarnated Wisdom on her knees whom she presents to the poor shepherds of Bethlehem and to the Wise Men from the Orient.*

As the Christian message began to reach different parts of the world, across the Mediterranean Sea, the knowledge of Mary increased considerably in the minds of the believers and the love for her grew ever deeper in their hearts. To express their sentiments of veneration, a litany of invocations was collected and new titles multiplied in number and affection. The popular devotion began to spring up in various regions and countries that enriched greatly the Marian piety. Many lovely hymns and prayers, mostly in Latin, were composed, just to mention the Angelic salutation “Ave Maria...” (Hail Mary), “Salve Regina” (Hail, Holy Queen) and the most ancient of them “Sub Tuum Praesidium” (Under your protection) and they are still much loved to this day. Hundreds of new titles were given to Our Blessed Lady by her devotees and many of them were approved by the Church and included in the sacred liturgy. Some of them are celebrated in a particular region, country or continent.

As we celebrate Christmas

As we celebrate Christmas again, the mystery of the Incarnation, we are to contemplate the greatest gift of God for His people, the gift of His Son, born of the Virgin Mary, promised from the dawn of time, the woman’s “offspring, who shall crush the serpent’s head” (Gn 3:15) one day; proclaimed by the prophets: “The Virgin is with Child and shall bear a son, and she will call him Emmanuel” (Is 7:14); and fulfilled in time, “The Word of God became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth” (J 1:14). And “while they were there, the time came for her to have a child, and she gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.” (Lk 2:67).

*One of the most inspiring days preceding Christmas is the feast of “**Our Lady of Expectation,**” unknown to many today, but still kept alive in many countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy and Poland as well as in a few religious orders. In older editions of missals, this feast is still listed as a votive Mass. The feast is celebrated on the 18th of December, a week before Christmas Day. Our Blessed Lady, well advanced in pregnancy, is portrayed in the highest dignity of her Divine Motherhood. Dressed in royal apparel as daughter of David the King, she awaits with joy the arrival of her divine Son, the Prince of Peace. Her whole posture suggests how she remains wholly consumed in contemplation of her Son under her heart. Her immaculate womb has become a living portable sanctuary of divinity.*

The Gospel Message

The Gospel message on this feast relates the story of the Annunciation. God asks a woman, his creature for a favor to be Mother of his Son, and at the same time, He respects her freedom. She is free to say “yes” or “no”. There is a moment of waiting in heaven and on earth: God waits for her answer, the heavenly messenger waits for her answer, the first parents