New Year 2020

MDP of God

[Tonight at Midnight we will close one great door in the hall of time and open another] OR [Last night at midnight we closed one great door in the hall of time and opened another]

As we take our first few steps across the threshold into a new year- it’s fitting that we salute her whose “yes” to God- brought one era to an end and the dawning of a new age--- who was the first believer in the New Testament

Mary- the Mother of God—Mary the great door in time through which the eternal Son of God came to share our clocks and our calendars

She is the door through which our redeemer came to us—*she is now forever the gate through which we come to Him*- the gate of heaven, as one of her many titles in her litany proclaims

Jesus didn’t come into the world by magic---God chose to make His coming into the world reflective of God’s inner life

God wanted Jesus’ presence to reflect freedom- commitment- and divine intimacy

And so for the Mother of God*- He chose someone who was free-* committed to faith- filled with God’s love--////-*He chose Mary* **and Mary freely consented**

“Mother of God” was one of many titles that Mary received from the ancient church

I recently came across a homily preached in the 4th century by St John Chrysostom; and notice here the many titles he gives her--- “Rejoice, then, Mother and heaven, maiden and cloud, virgin and throne, the boast and foundation of our Church”

“Plead earnestly for us *that through you* we may obtain mercy on the Day of judgment and receive good things reserved for those who love God --- through the grace and the love of our Lord Jesus---to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory and power now and forever and for all eternity” End quote

As is evident from St John Chysostom’s homily – devotion to Mary is as ancient as the Church itself

Her prominent roles in the gospels of Luke and John make that clear

In St John Chysostom’s homily Mary is called many things—the first believer of the New Testament- Mother of God- the great door in time- the gate- the Gate of Heaven- filled with God’s love- maiden – the cloud (just as Israel was led by the cloud in the dessert- Mary leads us to her Son the Christ)

These names only scratch the surface of the many titles given to Mary over the past 2,000 years

In the New Testament Mary is the first one to be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit--- *later Jesus will be at His baptism* – the Apostles will be on the day of Pentecost--- the Apostles by the way are with Mary when the Holy Spirit comes upon them

But Mary was the first

It was through Mary that Jesus performed His first miracle—in that story of the wedding feast of Cana we’re told after the miracle that His disciples came to believe in Him – *but Mary believed in Him before the miracle* – **it was her belief that brought the miracle about**

Mary tells the servants at the wedding feast “do whatever He tells you to do”

**That’s her message for us as well**

So she is the first disciple- the first one overshadowed by the Holy Spirit- She is the one who brought Jesus to the Father in today’s gospel when she has Him circumcised on the 8th day as the law of the Lord required- she’s the one whose faith brought about the first miracle- she’s the one who calls us to do whatever He tells us to do

In short- we can go to Mary to grow closer to her Son

That is Mary’s role – that is her greatest desire- that is her greatest glory--- to lead her other children to her Son Jesus

[As we approach the gate of a new year ] or [as we enter through the gate of this new year]

Let’s go to Mary- the gate of heaven

Let’s allow Mary to bring us closer to her Son

Let’s turn to the Mother of God through whom our salvation came into the world

As Mary was the first disciple who brought Him into the darkness of our world– let us be faith filled disciples- bringing Jesus and His light to everyone we meet

God bless you and Happy New Year

Homily idea from “Sunday homily Helps” – St Anthony Press