

## **Mary, Mother of God II**

### **Introduction**

We are still in the midst of our Christmas Season.

While many complain about the commercialization of this Season, we can take advantage of the month's long presence of Christmas by regarding it with spiritual eyes.

- Christmas does tear asunder the day in and day out experience of most of our year... the same ol', same ol' humdrum daily routine of so much of our year.
- Christmas brings to our minds a sacred meaning to our lives which we can overlook at times.
- Christmas reminds us that our God loves us and will not abandon us to the darkness and evil which so often seems to surround us.
- The beauty and graciousness of our God pours thru the rent in the everyday fabric of our lives... Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Christmas presents, Christmas carols and the manger scene – all reminds us of our God's coming among us, of our God's pouring God's self out in love and coming as a little baby into our midst.

### **Refrain... Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel....**

#### **I Mary, Theotokos**

Today continues our reflection on this sacred event.

Today is the feast of Mary, Mother of God. The early Church called her Theotokos – God bearer.

Today's celebration continues to tell us more of our story –our Christmas story...

Our Christmas story helps us to remember what our lives are all about – in the midst of a post Christian society which has so many other stories about life – from *Survivors* to *The Apprentice* to *The Price Is Right*, *The Voice*.

Today the Church asks us to reflect on a young, prayerful, faithful servant of God who dedicated her life to doing God's will and bearing God's own son in her womb for nine months... then giving birth in circumstances which were not of her choosing. But Mary was faithful and trusting.

Mary brought this baby into our world thru God's intervention and the power of God's Spirit.

This baby is our God, now made flesh, now living and breathing among us.

The early Christians called Mary Theotokos – God bearer.

But remember also... when Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple to have him circumcised as was the Jewish custom, the wise elder Simeon prophesied that Jesus would be a 'sign contradicted' by the people to whom he was sent, and 'a sword would pierce the heart of Mary.'

Remember also, Mary and Joseph had to keep the baby Jesus safe and flee into Egypt to escape the mad butchery of Herod who had all of the infants around Bethlehem slaughtered because he feared the words of the Wise Men from the East that a new King was born.

Remember also, that in his public ministry 30 years later Jesus tried to bring light into darkness,  
and, as John's Gospel describes it,  
the darkness would have none of it, but rather tried to extinguish the light.

Suffering enters the life of everyone, even the members of the Holy Family and even Theotokos – Mary, the God bearer.

**Refrain... Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel....**

## **II We Are Now Theotokos**

What might this feast mean to us today?

What might it tell us about our lives as we try to follow God's will and be faithful and trusting, as was Mary?

### **The Hands of Christ**

*During the Second World War after the D Day invasion of France the American soldiers liberated a small French village on their way through France. After the fighting the villagers came out into the village square to discover that the fighting had scarred their beautiful life sized statue of Jesus. It was covered with dirt, and had several bullet holes, along with other scratches. Worst of all, both of the hands of Christ had been blown off.*

*Some of the villagers suggested that they get a new statue.*

*Others suggested that they clean up the statue, but leave the bullet holes and the scars as a reminder of their blessed liberation. But they wanted to get a sculptor to make two new hands for the statue.*

*A third group suggested they clean up the statue and keep it as a reminder, but that they put no new hands on the statue.*

*To this day the life sized, scarred statue of Jesus stands in the village square, with no hands. Below it is a plaque, which reads, "We are the hands of Christ."*

This will probably entail some suffering as we try to bring the culture of life into a society which so often seems tilted toward

the culture of death, or rejection, of hatred of the foreigner... and at times a culture of self-centered pampering.

We are meant to bring Jesus' light into our world with its light, its darkness and its shades of gray.

If we would honor Mary on this feast day, let us follow her example. Let us be God Bearers – theotokoi – bringing Christ into our world.

**Refrain... Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel....**

**Conclusion**

As we continue with this feast day of Mary we offer ourselves to our loving Father as did Jesus and his Mother.

We remember Jesus' love for us poured out on the Cross.

We invite Jesus into the manger of our hearts at communion time.

We ask Jesus' strength to live his way of life in this New Year.

We ask Mary to intercede for us – so we too might be Theotokoi – God bearers bringing compassion, forgiveness, care and concern – the culture of life into our world in this New Year.

**Refrain... Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel....**