

January 1, 2017
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts!

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalms 67:2-3,5-6,8

Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:16-21

Today's readings emphasize God's mercy and his many blessings bestowed upon us. Moses and the psalmist indicate this while Paul explains Jesus' mission brings us the unsurpassed gift of eternal life. Find a time today to be still and let the awe and wonder of our merciful God's spirit fill your heart.

The prophet Moses receives the Lord's message and tells Aaron how to bless the Israelites: The Lord blesses you, keeps you, gives you peace, looks kindly upon you, is gracious to you, and his face shines upon you.

The psalmist reemphasizes these words: may God bless us in his mercy, give us the guidance so that the Lord's way upon this earth be known; God rules in equity, guides the nations, and all peoples should praise him while the ends of the earth should fear him.

Paul notes that God sent his Son to ransom the people, putting the spirit of his Son into our hearts in order that we may receive adoption as sons and daughters making us heirs by God's design.



In the Gospel, the shepherds are led to Mary, Joseph, and the baby and later told the story of what they have been told. All who heard it were amazed while Mary reflected on all these things and kept them in her heart. The child's name is Jesus, the name previously identified by an angel.

The Father sent the Son to ransom us
And bring the Holy Spirit into our hearts.

Our savior, whom the written word presents to our eyes on all the paths he trod on earth in human form, lives among us disguised in the form of Eucharistic bread. He comes to us everyday as the bread of life.....When we see that Savior before us with the eyes of faith as the Scriptures portray him, then our desire to receive him in the bread of life increases. The Eucharistic bread, on the other hand, awakens our desire to get to know the Lord in the written word more and more deeply and strengthens our spirit to get a better understanding.

(St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, formerly Edith Stein, a Jewish convert)

