

September

September 8th--Our Lady's Birthday

Nine months after the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Church celebrates the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. Since the 6th century in Jerusalem the birthday place of Mary has been venerated. In a very real sense, Mary's birth prepared for the Redemption.

Readings:

Micah 5: 1-4

Matthew 1: 18-23

September 14th--Feast of the Triumph of the Cross

The cross used to be a symbol of shame and death. But the redeeming death of Jesus made the cross a symbol of glory and redemption. Following one of the most cherished Christian traditions, on September 14th the Church celebrates the splendid Triumph of the Cross of our Lord and Savior.

Family Activity: Tie red ribbons tastefully around the crucifixes that you have in your home. Say together this prayer:

Jesus, Divine Master, I thank and bless your most meek Heart, which led you to give your life for me. Your blood, your wounds, the scourges, the thorns, the cross, your bowed head tell my heart: "No one loves more than he who gives his life for the loved one." The Shepherd died to give life for the sheep. I too want to spend my life for you. Grant that you may always, everywhere, and in all things dispose of me for your greater glory and that I may always repeat: "Your will be done." In flame my heart with holy love for you and for souls.

A Child's Prayer: Jesus, I thank you for dying for me. I want to love you all my life and do what you want of me. I love you and help me to love you more and more.

Readings:

Exodus 21: 4-9

Philippians 2: 6-11

John 3: 13-17

September 15th--Feast of the Mother of Sorrows

On the day following the ancient feast of the Holy Cross we commemorate the compassion of Mary. We meditate on the reactions in the soul of Mary concerning the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ her Son. Simeon predicted that her heart would be transfixed with sorrows. So it was, as she stood under the cross of her Son. She is the Mother and Queen of all those who suffer. As Queen of Martyrs, Mary gives an admirable example of patience.

Readings:

Hebrews 5: 7-9

John 19: 25-27

Stabat Mater

(attributed to Jacopone da Todi in the 13th Century)

At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword had passed.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother highly blessed
Of the sole begotten One!

Christ above in torment hangs,
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying, glorious Son.

Is there one who would not weep,
'Whelmed in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear mother to behold?

Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that mother's pain untold?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent.

For the sins of his own nation
She saw him hang in desolation
Till his spirit forth he sent.

O sweet Mother! font of love,
Touch my spirit from above,
Make my heart with yours accord.

Make me feel as you have felt;
Make my soul to flow and melt
With the love of Christ, my Lord.

Holy Mother, pierce me through,
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Savior crucified.

Let me share with you his pain,
Who for all my sins was slain,
Who for me in torment died.

Let me mingle tears with you
Mourning him who mourned for me
All the days that I may live.

By the cross with you to stay,
There with you to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of you to give.

Virgin of all virgins blest!
Listen to my fond request:
Let me share your grief divine.

Let me to my latest breath,
In my body bear the death
Of that dying Son of yours.

Wounded with his every wound,
Steep my soul till it has swooned
In his very blood away.

While my body here decays,
May my soul your goodness praise,
Safe in heaven eternally. Amen.

Embroider a Picture of Jesus and Mary

Needed:

- a color print of a favorite picture of Jesus or Mary on thin paper (or thin holy card)
- different colors of embroidery thread
- cardboard slightly larger than picture

Directions:

Use fine stitches to fill in colored areas of the picture with like-colored embroidery thread. Use single threads of the finest shiny embroidery thread and stitch the areas of the crown and clothing. Use the satin, chain or simply running stitch. There is no need to tie note because when you are finished stitching you can glue the card carefully to the cardboard "frame."

