

Whenever I have the funeral of a mother – I usually always remind her children – usually adults sitting before me – that no matter how old we get – we never really outgrow the need for our mothers – and mothers never lose their maternal instincts no matter how old their children get.

I think this is because long before any child ever sees the light of day – a special bond begins to develop between a mother and child as we spend those nine months in the womb.

Consequently in life, our mothers usually do know what’s best for us – and that’s also true for the mother we honor today: Mary, the Mother of God – and Mary, the Mother of the Church.

So on this day when we honor her and on this first day of the New Year – when we often make resolutions for ourselves to live out during the coming year – let’s ask Mary what she would want us to do. What are some transforming truths she would want us to ponder at the outset of the 365 days to come in 2015?

Perhaps she would want us most of all to consider the insight of St. Paul’s words for us from today’s second reading: through Baptism, we are no longer slaves – but sons and daughters of God and heirs to God’s glory!

Now most of us have heard that before --- but does it mean anything to us in our daily lives? Has it become one of the central guiding principles of our lives? Before we answer yes or no – perhaps we need to explore a little bit what it means to be a child of God. . .

First and foremost – it means that we are not orphans – left alone in the world to fend for ourselves. No, God loves and treasures us – more than we can ever comprehend. He has called us to be his own – and he will never abandon us – no matter how far we try to run and hide. As the good shepherd – he will lay down his life in order to find us. >>

Like the father of the prodigal son – he will always be waiting to welcome us back home. When we are children of God – we are NOT orphans.

The second thing to consider about being a child of God – is that it means we carry “the family name.”

Divinity is part of our DNA – it is our identity. It not only defines who we are – it also tells us what we can become as we learn to cooperate with God’s grace – pulsing within us. It even tells us we can come to bear a resemblance to our heavenly Father because we share in his very nature.

So while we go about formulating our New Year’s resolutions today – ask Mary to guide you. Each day of this coming year –make it a point of reminding yourself of who you are – and who you are called to be ---- a son, a daughter of God. And remember, like Mary, you are called to give birth to the Savior. Through your words and actions you have a choice everyday: you can bring forth the Savior through your kindness, your understanding, your generosity, your encouragement, your creativity, your compassion, your forgiveness – or you can choose not to.

Every day, for the next 365 days – you can make the choice of fanning to become ever brighter – your gifts and talents and the gifts and talents of others – or you choose to extinguish them. Every day, you can say yes to the will of God in your life – or you can say no.

Amazing! Awesome! Unbelievable – that God calls you to do such great and wonderful things. A New Year. 365 days before us. Choose wisely – and make your mother, Mary, proud of you!