

BENEDICT XVI

Marian Thoughts

SELECTION OF TEXTS
BY POPE BENEDICT XVI
EDITED BY LUCIO COCO

Introduction by
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Illustrated in Color



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INTRODUCTION

THE living tent of the Word. With this image that condenses biblical memory and expressive beauty, Benedict XVI evokes in his typical language the central position of the Blessed Virgin's experience in history (*Homily*, May 26, 2005). She is the humble tent of the Word, moved only by the breath of the Spirit, where God's exodus to us begins and ends.

The collection of Marian thoughts edited by Lucio Coco outlines a successful narrative magisterium that traces the pilgrimage of Mary, motivated throughout her life by the first joyful prophecy: *kaire, rejoice*, faithful all her days to the long echo of the "yes" of the Annunciation.

This selection brings out the newest and most effective characteristics of Pope Benedict's use of language: sobriety, lucidity, and beauty. The Pope's discourse on Mary is brief but does not miss a single essential point. His strategic positioning of Mary within theology is precise: the meaning of her life is "[to magnify] the Lord" (cf. Lk 1:46), not to fulfill her own plan but as part of a greater design.

He reawakens attention to beauty, a powerful means of intuiting and of speaking, a force of the heart that creates all communion and "restores enchantment" to life.



1. The Annunciation

2. The Virgin of Advent

AT a crucial time in history, Mary offered herself, her body and soul, to God as a dwelling place. In her and from her the Son of God took flesh. Through her the Word was made flesh (cf. Jn 1:14). Thus, it is Mary who tells us what Advent is: going forth to meet the Lord Who comes to meet us; waiting for Him, listening to Him, looking at Him.

Mary tells us why church buildings exist: they exist so that room may be made within us for the Word of God; so that within us and through us the Word may also be made flesh today.

Homily, December 10, 2006

3. Mary Immaculate

IN today's consumer society, this period [Advent] has unfortunately suffered a sort of commercial "pollution" that risks changing its authentic spirit, marked by recollection, moderation, and joy, which is not external but intimate. It is thus providential that almost as a portal to Christmas there should be the feast of the one who is the Mother of Jesus and who, better than anyone else, can lead us to know, love, and adore the Son of God made man.



4. Christmas

38. Christmas

TO transform the world, God chose a humble young girl from a village in Galilee, Mary of Nazareth, and challenged her with this greeting: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you.” In these words lies the secret of an authentic Christmas. God repeats them to the Church, to each one of us: Rejoice, the Lord is close!

With Mary’s help, let us offer ourselves with humility and courage so that the world may accept Christ, Who is the source of true joy.

Angelus, December 17, 2006

39. Motherhood of Mary

THE mother is the one who gives life but also who helps and teaches how to live. Mary is a Mother, the Mother of Jesus, to Whom she gave her blood and her body. And it is she who presents to us the eternal Word of the Father, Who came to dwell among us.

Homily, December 31, 2005