

Sept 8, 2018 the Nativity of Mary

Temporary Profession of Novice Caleb (Brother Joshua) Rosario

- 1. This is a feast of many beginnings.** How many beginnings can you count on this feast? The most obvious is the beginning of Blessed Mary's Life: her birthday. But none of our readings speaks of Mary's birth! The Gospel actually and rightly focuses on Jesus' birth: "A genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham." So we have two beginnings: Mary's birthday and Jesus' birthday. Only in the light of Jesus' birthday can you understand Mary's birthday, just as you cannot fully understand your birthday unless you understand your father's and mother's birthday. **Without them you wouldn't be born. Without Mary, Jesus wouldn't be born.**
- 2. But Matthew is pointing to something bigger.** The first two words of Matthew's Gospel are "biblos geneseos"; "biblos" for "book" and "geneseos" for "genealogy." Another way of translating these two words is "book of Genesis" or "book of beginning" or "book of origin." You see the obvious connection? **These two words take us back to the Book of Genesis, where the pre-history of the one human family unfolds: our genealogy.** Our own beginnings also make an entry into this feast. So today's feast is about Mary's birthday, Jesus' birthday, and the birthday of our first parents. **That is why last night at our office of Vigils we read the story of Adam and Eve from the Book of Genesis, Chapter 3.**
- 3. But as we said earlier, none of our readings speaks about Blessed Mary's birth.** They do speak about the virginal conception of Jesus, the Messiah-King, son of David and son of Abraham. And though they remain silent about Mary's perpetual virginity, they don't exclude it.
- 4. The whole liturgy of this feast proclaims one mystery: the significance of Mary's birth for us and the Church's understanding of it.** Without the Book of Genesis we cannot understand the importance of Mary's birth. From the first child born of Adam and Eve down to the last child born before Christ's coming, all children will carry the seed of corruption of original sin. Their souls will be open to the darkest evils and their bodies destined to rot in their graves. **Nobody can stop this tsunami of evil in every generation, except God.**
- 5. Matthew wants us to know this very intervention of God, when he says:** "All this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet." Never was it known that a virgin would conceive and bear a child. That's impossible. Never was it known that a virgin would be conceived and born immaculate from sinful parents. God speaks and God does these things, just like Genesis says: God spoke and it was! God intervened in our common human genealogy and began a new "biblos geneseos"! **With Mary and Jesus he begins a new "biblos geneseos", a new genealogy.**
- 6. If Mary were not without sin, then Jesus' humanity would inherit the stain of original sin.** The same divine power that

kept Jesus free from all stain of sin preserved Mary free from sin from the moment of her conception so that she could give birth to a new “biblos geneseos”. Only she can conceive and bear the Messiah-King, who alone is capable of “saving his people from their sins!” **Mary’s birth, then, is a cause of great rejoicing.**

7. So because Mary is born, Jesus can be born for us. And because Jesus can be born for us, he can also die for us. When Jesus dies for us he brings about a new birth on the Cross.