



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION  
SUNDAY 15 AUGUST 2021 – The Blessed Virgin Mary**

**COLLECT**

Almighty God,  
who looked upon the lowliness of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
and chose her to be the mother of your only Son:  
grant that we who are redeemed by his blood  
may share with her in the glory of your eternal kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen

**Psalm 45.10-17**

- 10 Hear, O daughter; consider and incline your ear; ♦  
forget your own people and your father's house.
- 11 So shall the king have pleasure in your beauty; ♦  
he is your lord, so do him honour.
- 12 The people of Tyre shall bring you gifts; ♦  
the richest of the people shall seek your favour.
- 13 The king's daughter is all glorious within; ♦  
her clothing is embroidered cloth of gold.
- 14 She shall be brought to the king in raiment of needlework; ♦  
after her the virgins that are her companions.
- 15 With joy and gladness shall they be brought ♦  
and enter into the palace of the king.
- 16 'Instead of your fathers you shall have sons, ♦  
whom you shall make princes over all the land.
- 17 'I will make your name to be remembered through all generations; ♦  
therefore shall the peoples praise you for ever and ever.'

## **Galatians 4.4-7**

<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. <sup>6</sup>And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

## **Luke 1: 46-55**

And Mary said,  
'My soul magnifies the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

### ***A Reflection from Peter***

Today the Church celebrates Mary, the Mother of the Lord. It is a feast that invites us to look in two directions at once: first, to wonder at the way in which God chose someone like us, a human being, an ordinary woman, to be a key player in God's reaching out to us in love; and secondly, to marvel at the way in which Mary, without really knowing what she was doing, was able to say 'Yes' to the message of the angel and so become part of the greatest moment in human history – with all the joys and sorrows that followed. This is a moment for thanksgiving and celebration, giving thanks for the incredible way in which God takes such immense care of creation, making everything holy by choosing to enter the world himself as a helpless baby; and rejoicing that God does indeed invite us to share in the work of love. St Paul understands the full wonder of this moment: writing to the Galatians he says, 'God sent his Son, born of a woman, so that we might receive adoption as children.' This is an amazing insight. The birth of Jesus, says

Paul, changes everything. God is no longer a remote, sometimes kindly, sometimes frightening power 'out there'. Now, by being born himself, the Son of Mary, God declares that he is Father to us all, loving us with the intimacy and tenderness that he has for Jesus. Mary's own story knows the whole range of human experience, as artists have shown us over the centuries. In June I saw this remarkable *Pietà* by Fenwick Lawson in Durham Cathedral. The portrayal of grief and shock in Mary is breath-taking. Being 'adopted' by God, knowing ourselves to be loved as God's children does not shield us from the realities of life in the world, but it gives them meaning and hope. Mary, in her patient, steadfast faithfulness shows us the way.

