

**Remarks by Bishop Felipe J. Estévez
For the Blessing of the Child in the Womb
Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche
at Mission Nombre de Dios, St. Augustine
October 10, 2015**

Christmas is a day of everlasting tenderness.

Could the joy of Christmas be given every day? Could every day be Christmas?

Yes, The Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche: to encounter the Most Blessed Virgin Mary title of Our Lady, is to wonder in awe the gift of the child in Mary's immaculate hands.

Blessed are all the mothers who are blessed by a child – a child, a wonderful gift, a gift in need of the most reverent care.

These women and men have been blessed with the gift of a child. But there is a first blessing: the blessing of first accepting the child within your mind; the idea of welcoming and desiring the child. It is this blessing that made a difference. You, too, pregnant mothers, your faith in recognizing God as the author of life and your expectation of baptizing your babies as children of God – a temple of the Holy Trinity – is a far greater blessing that is to come.

It is no coincidence that on the eve of the dedication of this Shrine of Our Lady of La Leche, this holy site where hundreds of parents ask for a child, you come in awe to present your child in gratitude and thanksgiving.