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Stanislaus, Father  
Mary mediatrix -  
ADW 1862

# MARY MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACES

BY FATHER STANISLAS,  
O.F.M.CAP., S.T.D.

Translated and Adapted by  
Gregory Van der Becken, O.F.M.Cap.



Price 25¢

A GRAIL PUBLICATION

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St. Meinrad

Indiana



**MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACES**  
by Fr. Stanislaus, O.F.M.Cap.

25¢ a copy.

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## MARY, MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACES

The Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, is the Mediatrix of all graces. She is the one who intercedes for us before God, and she is the one who offers us to God. She is the one who holds the world in her hands, and she is the one who offers it to God. She is the Queen of the World.

### MARY, MEDIATRIX

*All-powerful Mediatrix . . . .*  
*Mary holds the world in her hands . . .*  
*And with maternal love offers it to God.*  
*Queen of the World.*



## THE MARIAN WAY

*The Virgin is the royal road by which the  
Savior has come down to us . . . .*

*Beloved Brethren . . . .*

*Let us endeavor to ascend by*

*That road towards Him,*

*Who followed it to descend unto us . . . .*

*And through Mary*

*Strive to share in the*

*Grace of this Jesus,*

*Who through Mary has deigned*

*To come down to us*

*To share in our misery.*

(St. Bernard 2nd sermon for Advent: P. L. t.  
CLXXXIII. 43).



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OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART  
MARY MEDIATRIX

*The Virgin holds in her hand the heart of  
Her little Jesus,*

*And her tender and penetrating look seems  
To say to you:*

*This Divine heart with all its infinite  
Treasures belongs to me.*

*I dispose of its riches according to  
My good pleasure . . . .*

*My child, I await but word from you to  
Draw from this treasure  
And overload you with favors.*

*You are weak—*

*Come to me and I will share with you  
Its powers.*

*You are ignorant—*

*Come to me, I will fill your soul with  
Its Divine wisdom.*

*Your heart is tepid—*

*Come to me, I will inflame it with the  
Fire of His love.*

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THIS little book was originally written in the French language, under the title *Médiatrice*, by Father Stanislas, O.F.M. Cap., S.T.D., to offer a devotional and yet dogmatical explanation of Mary's part in our Redemption, her universal Mediation.

The main purpose of the book is to explain the term *Mary Mediatrix* to ALL, both young and old. Therefore no attempt at literary achievement has been made in this translation. In fact, it would be more precise to call it an adaptation rather than a translation since, with the permission of the author, certain freedoms have been taken with the English rendering of the French work.

The book was written, as the author tells us in the first chapter, for LITTLE ONES. Its language is so simple that the LITTLE ONES BY NATURE (teenagers) as well as the LITTLE ONES BY GRACE (all humble souls) may read and understand it with ease. With this in mind, poetic effusions and dogmatic terminology have been avoided wherever possible.

The translator wishes to express his gratitude to the Very Rev. Theodosius Foley, O.F.M., Cap. (died



May 29, 1951), who graciously gave his time and talent to the final polishing.

Fr. Gregory Van der Becken, O.F.M.Cap.

## INTRODUCTION

For whom are these pages written?

They are written for all little and humble souls, souls who are aware of their helplessness; souls distrustful of themselves; souls, who, on their journey to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and through Him to His heavenly Father, wish to take the easy and safe road; the road of our heavenly Mediatrix, the most Blessed Virgin Mary.

In a very special way these pages will be useful to the members of the Legion of Mary. We wish to show them in detail what the Mediation of Mary really consists of; the Mediation of her who is the center of their spiritual life and endeavors.

Depending on a constant union with Mary and upon an ardent love of her, the Legionary dedicates his life to Mary without reserve. Furthermore, the Legionary promises to strive not only after his own personal spiritual advancement, but also after that of his neighbor.

Basic to the apostolate is an intense personal spiritual life; sacrifices lovingly made and prayer well performed. For his program of action there is a definite rule, a discipline more military in aspect, which however is carried out always in humble obedience. The LEGION is a KNIGHTHOOD. The

Legionary is a soldier, a Knight of Mary. Whether he be man or woman, rich or poor, highly educated or not, he sees himself as one sent by his Queen on a mission to protect and promote the spiritual welfare of her children. His particular quest is that of "lost sheep" in whom no one is interested. He penetrates all levels of society. As an example of his activity, when occasion presents itself, he will arrange for the revalidation of a marriage, or he will be instrumental in the baptism of an adult.

The Legionary realizes full well that of himself he can do nothing, but at the same time he knows that the good God has given all power into the hands of Mary, and that **THROUGH HER, HE CAN DO ALL**. In this attitude of mind lies the **SECRET OF HIS POWER AND SUCCESS**.

The Legionary is seen "going about his Mother's business" quietly, modestly and unselfishly. He helps his parish priest in various ways. His activities cover the entire range of Catholic Action. This range being quite enormous, we may ask whether this army of Mary will not prove to be the leaven of which Jesus speaks in the Gospel; the leaven which will be instrumental in the "raising" of the entire "mass." We can easily understand why the Spiritual Director of the Legion in Australia said on Christmas Day, 1939, that the Legion had the providential mission



of "hastening the advent of that Marian Era, that AGE OF MARY, predicted by Saint Grignon De Montfort."<sup>1</sup>

In any event, the diffusion of the Legion of Mary is truly marvelous. It is one of the most powerful movements in our modern times. It seems to have originated in the Heart of Mary itself in behalf of the salvation of the world.

Has the Legionary reasons to be optimistic in the fulfillment of his holy ambition? How could he possibly doubt when he realizes that he fights under the leadership of Mary, the Virgin who is to the devil "terrible like an army in battle array," the Virgin who is the Dispenser of God's treasures?

Only let him never forget that IN JESUS, MARY IS HIS ALL; his all for his own spiritual life; his all for the success of his apostolate. Let him realize that before he can love her more and more, he MUST STUDY HER WITHOUT CEASING. Therefore we must say that THE FIRST DUTY OF THE LEGIONARY IS TO KNOW THE PRIVILEGES AND THE GLORIES OF HIS HEAVENLY MOTHER.

There are too many Christians who do not really know Mary. Also there are some who even ignore her. They do not seem to understand "that as constant companion of Jesus, from Bethlehem to the



summit of Calvary, penetrating more than any other creature the secrets of His Heart, distributing as her maternal right the riches of the graces that He merited for us, Mary is necessary for us if we wish to arrive at the knowledge and the love of Christ. . . . Deceived by the artifices of the devil and by false doctrines, they believe to be able to do without her. They are truly unfortunate who neglect Mary under the pretext of rendering more honor to Jesus. As if it were possible to find the Divine Infant any other place than with His Mother.”<sup>2</sup>

Have we not even heard of individuals who became scandalized when the marvelous beauty of this “Paradise of God” was unveiled before them? This “Paradise of God,” this Virgin without equal, whom Pius IX greets “as the ineffable miracle of God”—*velut omnium miraculorum apex*.<sup>3</sup> They are scandalized because, in their false reasoning, they think that to proclaim Mary’s greatness and excellence is to place her on an equal level with God Himself.

Now we know very well that Mary is and always will be a CREATURE, and therefore at an infinite distance from God the Creator. But we also know that the same God has showered upon her such a profusion of the riches of the divine life of grace that Mary found herself placed, according to an expression attributed to Saint Thomas Aquinas, “at

the very confines of the Divinity." As a consequence we need not be surprised that to the dazzled vision of the "little ones" there is danger that Mary is almost entirely lost in the impenetrable heights of the infinite splendor of the Godhead.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding this sublime exaltation, Mary is very near to us on account of her love for mankind. Therefore the Legionary should approach his heavenly Mother without the least fear, with a filial assurance, in study and meditation. He should constantly keep in mind that it is necessary for him to **KNOW WHAT MARY REALLY IS**. It is necessary for his own sake, for the joy and consolation of his childlike heart. It is necessary for him to know Mary also for the sake of others. **HIS MISSION IS TO DIFFUSE EVERYWHERE THE KNOWLEDGE AND THE LOVE OF MARY MEDIATRIX**. A very enviable task indeed.

It is to help the Legionary to accomplish this task that we wish to tell him **WHAT MARY IS**. We will tell it in a simple manner, so that anyone who reads may understand, and having understood he may, in the joyfulness of his soul, live and radiate all around him the doctrine of true life.

Let him not be troubled when critics tell him that this doctrine of Mary's Universal Mediation is not yet **DEFINED** by Rome. This is true. The Church

has not as yet officially—EX CATHEDRA—declared this doctrine. But whilst awaiting this blessed public act of recognition, which numerous indications permit us to hope will occur in the near future, the Church lets us know her mind quite clearly on this subject in her traditional teaching.

The mediation or INTERCESSION of Mary, the distributor of all graces, is a doctrine universally admitted. Ever since the controversy in which Saint Alphonsus Liguori won the victory, this doctrine has never met with any opposition.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the ACQUISITION of grace for all men, all theologians teach that Mary cooperated by giving her consent to the Incarnation and Redemption. To the next question i.e. did Mary contribute to the acquisition of grace BY HER OWN MERITS, many theologians are of the opinion that she did. Their opinion reads: "Especially in her sorrowful compassion at the foot of the Cross, Mary has in union with Jesus and in dependence upon Him, satisfied for our sins and merited grace for all with a merit of supreme congruity."<sup>6</sup>

"Because Mary," writes Pius X, "was associated with Christ in the work of Redemption, she has merited for us by the merit of congruity that which Christ has merited for us condignly"<sup>7</sup> i.e. in strict justice, through His own merit, which is adequate



and sufficient and in fact superabundant because His merits are infinite.

So we can rightly conclude that the Society of the Legion of Mary has nothing to fear. It may hold aloft among the people of the entire world its "vexillum," the Standard of the Virgin, her blessed hands ready to shower graces upon the sick world. The Legion may proudly unfurl everywhere the Banner of Mary the Universal Mediatrix; Mediatrix, not only useful but necessary, in the sense we will indicate, to the entire human race.

We sadly realize that not all souls will respond with the same enthusiasm to this "revelation." Not all will walk at the same pace in the Way of Mary. There are so many grades of response where there is question of love; grades differing all the way from the ordinary Christian who is satisfied with a few ordinary practices in honor of Mary to the fervent Christian who performs all his actions for her and through her. However, when souls become more acquainted with Mary's power and goodness, a very great number among them, we are sure, will eagerly want an increase of her influence in their life. Who knows but that fidelity in her service will bring to several those special graces ordinarily reserved for a comparatively small number. These are they who place their soul "under the sign" of Mary by means

of a perpetual consciousness of her presence, or rather by means of a constant realization of her help within their soul.

May the flood of that divine light that Our Lady of Fatima, by opening her hands, projected upon the world; that light in which the little shepherds saw themselves as it were immersed in God, radiate the choicest graces upon all. In truth can there be anything more valuable, more desirable, than to live IN FULL a life in union with Jesus through Mary?

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M. Cordier, "What the Church Thinks of the Legion of Mary," p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Pius X: Encyclical, *Ad Diem Illum*, for the fiftieth anniversary of the definition of the Immaculate Conception, Feb. 2, 1904. The French text of the pontifical document cited in this work is generally borrowed from the translation made by the "Bonne Presse."

<sup>3</sup> Constitution, *Ineffabile*, on the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, Dec. 8, 1854.

<sup>4</sup> In the cited document Pius IX also proclaims that Mary "approached the Divinity Itself as much as is permitted to a created nature, and therefore she is above all the praises of the angels as well as those of men."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. Dublanchy, *Dictionnaire de théologie*, article Mary, Vol. 2-2,403.

<sup>6</sup> In theology we speak of two special kinds of merit: "*de congruo*," by way of concession, and "*de*

*condigno*," in strict justice. For instance, God accepts our good works and expiation as merit "*de congruo*," not as though these have any intrinsic claim in justice to His acceptance but because He deigns to regard them so because of their connection with Christ's merit "*de condigno*." With Christ, the Redeemer, it is the opposite. Being God, our Savior's good works and atonement take on title "*de condigno*," or claim in strict equity to sufficient, yea even superabundant, reward and expiation in themselves.

<sup>7</sup> "Ea tamen quoniam . . . a Christo ascita in humanae salutis opus, de congruo, ut aiunt, promeratur nobis, quae Christus de condigno promeruit . . . (Cited Encyclical). Some theologians interpret this text to refer to the mediation of intercession, but it seems rather that Pius X wishes to confirm here the almost common opinion of the theologians, who, ever since the sixteenth century, admit that the Blessed Virgin merited for us by a true merit of congruity. An opinion almost unanimous among the modern theologians, so much so that Fr. Hugo, O.P. could already write in 1904, in his work "La Mère de Grace," "The Mother of Grace," p. 2: "that Mary merited for us *de congruo* that which Christ merited for us *de condigno*. It is an axiom commonly accepted by the theologians." (Cf. Merkelbach, O.P.: *Mariologia*; Paris, Desclée De Brouwer, p. 328.)



## CHAPTER 1

### *MARY THE MEDIATRIX OF ALL GRACES BETWEEN GOD AND YOU*

Mother, I come to thee, poor, little and feeble:  
I come to thee because thou art loving and merciful.  
I come to thee because thou art the sole refuge in  
my misery.

I come to thee, above all, Mother, because despite my  
weakness and my faults, I love thee.

Accept me in thy maternal pity, and offer me without  
reserve and forever

To the most Sacred Heart of thy Divine Son Jesus.  
It is a miracle of sanctification I implore of thee  
this moment,

But art thou not . . . the treasure of God, the  
Dispensatrix of life, our omnipotent Mediatrix?  
Thou, who by means of thy grace distributed by  
thy hands

Hast formed the hearts of so many saints,  
Transform my heart for a complete surrender to love.

WHEN the Blessed Virgin on one occasion ap-  
peared to the ravished eyes of Catherine Labouré,  
she was represented as standing on top of the globe  
with the world as a footstool for her virginal feet.



She was standing close to God. From her hands escaped in profusion rays of divine grace, as we see depicted on the Miraculous Medal.

In like manner Mary stands between God and your soul.

As we have said elsewhere in this book, the Blessed Virgin holds in creation, in the divine plan, in the Mind of God, a place distinct from every other creature. She is all pure and all holy. She is overwhelmed by divine grace. Mary surpasses in perfection all other created perfection. Mary's place is immediately after Christ.

There in that place given her by God, between Christ and our soul, Mary plays an important role in our behalf . . . She is **MEDIATRIX BETWEEN US AND OUR GOD.**

What is meant when the Church bestows upon Mary the title of Mediatrix? The Church means that Mary stands between God and us in order to reconcile us to God. The sin committed in the Garden of Eden by Adam, the father of the human race, had, humanly speaking, frustrated, destroyed the plan God had made for the world. Original sin separated you from God. It broke the sacred bond of grace which made you a child of God, a member of a divine family.

This sinful break was so real and complete that you could do nothing of your own accord to mend or repair it. You were expelled from the paternal hearth to which God had called you in His infinite goodness. You were wandering upon the earth where the breath of divine life could never reach you. From the status of a child of adoption you had fallen to that of a child of wrath. You were doomed to remain forever far from God.

Far from God forever . . . Realize, if you can, the depth of your fall . . . the immensity of your misfortune . . . You could not possibly go to Him, for you were an infinite distance away from Him, a distance no human power can traverse.

In His infinite goodness God took pity on you.

Was it not possible for God to overlook your misery and allow you to enter His house without further ado? His sanctity and justice could not allow this. Why then did He not abandon you to your fate? His tender mercy would not allow that.

So a mediator was necessary. And God provided this mediator. He placed between Himself and you Someone who could effect a reconciliation.

This Mediator was Jesus. He is the Mediator of your reconciliation. He is the Mediator of your pardon. He is the Mediator of your salvation. The Son

of God became incarnate. He became Man while not ceasing to be God. Since He is at the same time God and Man, He could do that which you, a mere human being, could not do, namely, bring man back to God, unite once more God and man in the bond of friendship.

In order to bring about this reunion, this reconciliation, a ransom was demanded by divine Justice. Through the sin of Adam you contracted a debt towards God, a debt so enormous that it was absolutely beyond your power to discharge it. But Jesus, the God-man, placed Himself between His heavenly Father and you. He said to His heavenly Father: "Father, since I have assumed a human nature this man is My brother. He cannot satisfy for his debt. Father, I offer to assume it for him. I offer to satisfy Your infinite justice. Heavenly Father, in order to expiate the sin of man, I will die upon the Cross."

Divine mediation was indeed necessary.

No one is saved except by Christ. He is the Principle of salvation for all. By Him you have been transferred from death to life. Through Him you once more have access to the Father and have again become His child.

This mediation of Christ was sufficient in itself. He alone sufficed in this task of mediation. He had no need of anyone else to help Him.



Still, in His role of Mediator, in His work of Redemption, He willed to be associated with one who was one of His creatures. This chosen One, as you know, was the Virgin Mary, His Most Blessed Mother. He willed that she should be Mediatrix. He willed that together with Him she should serve as intermediator between God and you.

Let us always keep in mind, of course, that the role of Mediatrix with which Jesus honors His Blessed Mother is secondary to His own, and that Mary is Mediatrix only because Christ willed it so. The mediation of Mary receives its entire efficacy from the Mediation of Christ, which was perfect and more than sufficient in itself.<sup>1</sup> But all this does not lessen the truth of the statement that Mary is really your Mediatrix. It does not lessen the truth of the statement that, dependent and founded upon the merits of her divine Son, she is established between God and you for the purpose of reconciling you with God.

Mary occupies herself with trying to make you more and more pleasing in the eyes of God. She tries to make you once more the beloved child of the heavenly Father, heir of His heavenly Kingdom, friend of Jesus, brother of Jesus.

We may compare Mary, albeit in a crude comparison, with a bridge thrown across the abyss of

sin which separated you from Christ. Thanks to this bridge, communication between the world and God, interrupted by sin, can once more be resumed. Once more communication between the earth and heaven has been established. By means of this bridge you can avoid the whirlpool of hell... You can arrive in the heavenly Fatherland.

<sup>1</sup> The role of Mary in the Redemption, far from diminishing the glory of the mediation of Christ, on the contrary only enhances this glory, since Mary's part received its power and efficiency only in Christ and through Christ. Some individuals, victims of false and emotional piety, fear that the excellence of the mediation of Christ is diminished by extolling the part Mary took in it. Does it not show Mary to be here, as in everything else, the little "handmaid of the Lord"?

## CHAPTER 2

### MARY AND THE GIFT OF CHRIST

LET us go back in spirit to Adam in the Garden of Eden. The revolt against God had just been perpetrated. All is lost. But wait . . . All would be lost if it were not for Mary. Whilst you consider the abysmal misery into which our first parents are fallen, hear the voice of God: "I will put enmities," He says to the serpent, "between thee and the woman, between her seed and thy seed, and she shall crush thy head." (Gen. III, 15).

The woman who will crush the head of the serpent and bring peace into the world, you know is Mary. Now Adam can leave Paradise. He has heard God's promise. He knows that some day the curse will be lifted from him by the woman. He begins to carry in his soul the memory of her who some day will avenge his defeat. Grateful love dawns in his heart for her who will reopen the door of life, his *Porta coeli*, Gate of Heaven. Henceforth he places all his hope in Mary. This hope of salvation he will pass on as a heritage to his offspring from generation to generation. Through the darkness of sin Mary will shine like a bright star, a *Stella matutina*, the Morn-



ing Star of creation. With eyes fixed on this star the human race will wait for the blessed day of fulfilment of God's promise.

Of this blessed day the holy Gospel has kept the record. Let us read the inspiring account.

"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And when the angel had come to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women." When she had seen him she was troubled at his word, and kept pondering what manner of greeting this might be.

"And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his father, and he shall be king over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.'

"But Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this happen, since I do not know man?'

"And the angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of



the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born, shall be called the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth thy kinswoman also has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month; for nothing shall be impossible with God.”

“But Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.’ And the angel departed from her.” (Luke I, 26-38).

In this manner the Word was made Flesh. The divine plan is now realized . . . Mary is the “Mother of God” . . . God is in our midst, hidden in the chaste womb of Mary. And rightly so. Does He not come from her? It is then but just that He should first of all and for a certain length of time at least, belong entirely to her. Yet in her and through her Christ belongs to you also; and Mary knows this well.

Contemplate her going up to Bethlehem to give Jesus to you. Listen once more to Saint Luke, or rather to Mary, who narrated these happy tidings to the Evangelist and thus passed them on to you.

“Now it came to pass in those days, that there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus that a census of the whole world should be taken. This first census took place while Cyrenus was governor

of Syria. And all were going, each to his own town, to register.

“And Joseph also went from Galilee out of the town of Nazareth into Judea to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem—because he was of the house and family of David—to register, together with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were shepherds in the same district living in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them and the glory of God shone round about them, and they feared exceedingly.

“And the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which shall be to all the people; for there has been born to you today in the town of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’”

As the light of the dawn heralds the rising of the sun, Mary announced the coming of Christ. She was the dawn of the Sun of Justice. And ever since this dawn appeared, 2000 years ago, the Christian people have exulted in its light. For well nigh 2000 years

Christianity places its hope in her, invokes her blessed name, unceasingly sings her praises.

All through these centuries, at the times of its greatest sorrows, Mary always favored the world with personal visits, with her apparitions. Witness again in our own tragic times the many apparitions of Mary in ever so many localities of Europe. Fatima 1917, Beauraing 1932, Banneux 1933, Bonate 1944. Long since the world can no longer keep strict account of the many graces received through her. Thousands of times it has experienced her power and her goodness.

At all times she has been for humanity the divine instrument of salvation. She still stands today between the world and God, striving to give Christ to the world. In the darkness of our present times, in a world which has rejected Christ, Mary shines as the star which lights up the way for all who do not deliberately close their eyes.

Virgin Mary, **BE UNTO US THE MEDIATRIX.**  
In behalf of the world today do not desist from taking upon yourself the role you played at Bethlehem. Mother of God, once more **GIVE JESUS TO THE WORLD!**



### CHAPTER 3

## *MARY AND THE GIFT OF THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST*

MARY gives Christ to the world. Try to understand, dear reader, the full importance, the vast implication of this. Mary gives you Jesus so that He may become your very own possession; so that you may be filled with His life; so that you, in a certain sense, may become transformed into Him; yes, so that you, together with all Christians, your Brethren, may become the Mystical Body of Christ.

Here allow me to explain a truth, the knowledge of which will greatly clarify the role of Mary, her place in your own life.

This truth is that all of us, all Christians, constitute with Christ one single body which is the Church . . . **THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST.**

What does the Church mean when she teaches that we are one body with Christ? Let me put it very simply. **WE CHRISTIANS, UNITED AMONGST OURSELVES AND UNITED WITH CHRIST, CONSTITUTE A SPIRITUAL UNION WHICH BRINGS ABOUT A DEFINITE RELATION SIMILAR TO THE RELATION THAT EXISTS**

## AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIC PHYSICAL BODY.

Notice that in the human body there are various members or organs, each one having its own particular function to fulfill. Our eyes, for example, are destined to see; our ears to hear; our tongue to do its share in the articulation of sound. All these various members are assembled according to a very definite plan determined by the Creator. From this arrangement there results that wonderful coordination in the entire structure. These members are not isolated, but they are conjointly responsible, one for all and all for one. They do not work egoistically, i.e. only for their own good and welfare. Each one is employed eagerly and devotedly in the service and for the usefulness of all the others. Our eyes take in the light not merely for the sole enjoyment of seeing, but rather to allow the entire body to guide itself in its many various functions and activities. When our hands busy themselves with our daily tasks, it is to earn our daily bread which will sustain the powers, health and vitality of the entire body. Through all these various members, there circulates the same blood, they all share the same life. Similarly in the Church.

The Church which is the Mystical Body of Christ is likewise composed of many various members: Jesus,

Mary, the Holy Father, the Bishops, the priests and all the faithful. There is a real harmonious grading among these various members. In the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, Christ Himself is the Head, i.e. Christ is to the Church what the head is to the human body. He performs in the Mystical Body the functions which may be compared to the functions performed by the head of the human body. As from the human head, the most noble part of the human body, come movement, direction and life for the other members, so also from Christ, our Head and Leader, there descends into the body of the Church its very life, the divine life of grace.

The Holy Father, the Bishops, the priests in their respective ranks of the hierarchy may be called the arteries of the Mystical Body. With their consecrated hands they dispense the holy sacraments. From their instructions we derive the words of divine truth. And so we can say that the divine life of grace originates in Christ, flows through them like through so many arteries and is distributed throughout the entire Mystical Body.

You too, dear reader, are a member of this Mystical Body. You in union with all the other faithful; all working under the direction, the vital influence of Christ, our Head, our Leader; all, united in the most intimate union; each individual contributing to



the benefit of all, and all contributing their share toward the benefit of the individual. It cannot be otherwise because they all participate in the same life, the divine life, the life of grace, the life of Christ.

Do you ask what place Mary occupies in the Mystical Body of Christ? Here is the answer. True to her role as Mediatrix, Mary may be called the heart of the Mystical Body of Christ. You can readily see the justification for this comparison. The human heart receives impulses from the nerve centers located in the head. It pumps blood to all parts of the human body, thereby distributing health and vitality to all members of that body. Mary, under the influence of Christ and in complete dependence upon Him, communicates the life of grace to all the members of the Church.

Mary occupies the place between Christ and us, between the Head and the other members. Mary may thus be called the cervix, the neck, of the Mystical Body. In the Old Testament she is called the "stem of the root of Jesse." And rightly so. Has Mary not carried Jesus as the stem carries the flower? Now in the human body is it not the function of the neck to carry the head? And not only to bear the head but to connect it with the body. It furnishes communication between the head and the body. In the human body the vital impulses of the brain pass



through the cervix or neck before they can reach the other members. So also the divine life of grace which originates in Christ comes to us through Mary.

Now let us stop just a moment and consider the grandeur, the sublimity of Mary's function in the Mystical Body. Mary communicates to all the faithful, to the entire Church, the life of Christ. Mary generates Christ in the souls of men. Mary molds the Church. Mary gives to the world the Mystical Body of Christ.

It is the second gift of Mary, or rather the fullness, the completion of her first gift. The Mystical Body of Christ is in reality together with the humanity of Christ but one single gift, namely the entire Christ. Therefore, since Mary is the Mother of the physical Body of Christ she must at the same time be the Mother of the Mystical Body.

A similitude may help us to understand this union of the two, this dependence of one on the other. We find it in the writings of Grignion De Montfort, one of God's recently canonized saints. He is renowned for his ardent devotion to the Blessed Mother. It may easily happen that some day the Church may proclaim him the Doctor of the Universal Mediation of Mary. In regard to the case in point the saint writes: "When a mother brings her little child into the world she brings him into the world entirely.

The mother gives life to her infant's entire being, to its head, to all its other members. She cannot bring the other members of its little body into the world without its head nor the head without the other members of the body." (Le Secret de Marie, No. 12.)

Now the Blessed Virgin conceived and brought Jesus into the world. Jesus is the Head of the Mystical Body. Consequently she had to give at the same time life to the other members of the Body. She had to bring into this world the entire Christ. This includes the Mystical Body of Christ.

An echo of this teaching is found in a remarkable passage contained in the Encyclical *Ad diem illum*. We know that Pius X was well acquainted with the doctrine of Saint Grignon De Montfort, the Apostle of Mary as some call him. Pius X wrote: "The Blessed Virgin conceived the Son of God not only so that taking His human nature from her He would become man but also in order that He, using this nature, would become the Savior of men. Accordingly in the chaste womb of the Virgin where Jesus took upon Himself mortal flesh, there also He took upon Himself a spiritual Body composed of all souls who would believe in Him. And we may say that carrying Jesus in her womb Mary also carried all those souls whose spiritual life was enclosed in the life of the Savior. All of us who are united to Christ

are, as the Apostle tells us, the members of His Body; issued from His flesh and from His bones, we must call ourselves offspring of the womb of the Virgin whence one day we came forth like the living members of a body which must needs be attached to its head.”

Strong words . . . Powerful doctrine . . . The role of Mary is described here in forceful yet plain and simple language. Mary gives to the world the entire Christ, the gift of the Holy Humanity of Jesus, including, in accordance with the divine plan . . . **THE GIFT OF THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST.**



## CHAPTER 4

### *MARY IN THE PREPARATION OF THE VICTIM*

THE Mystical Body of Christ is the gift of Mary.

In the previous chapter we were told that the reason why Mary gave us the Mystical Body of Christ is because she gives us Jesus who is the Head of the Mystical Body. The present chapter will explain the method by which Mary gave us this Mystical Body. She does it by acquiring in our behalf the life necessary to animate this body, namely the life of grace.

Grace being a divine life, Mary cannot obtain it but from God, and God will not part with it except in exchange for the merits of Mary.

Mary acquired this life for the Mystical Body of Christ by merit of "supreme congruence." This means a merit which is sufficient for the reparation of the offence NOT IN OR OF ITSELF but only because of GOD'S ACCEPTANCE of it as sufficient. This merit of congruence Mary obtained by cooperating with her divine Son in the work of the Redemption.

Strictly speaking, Jesus alone has paid the ransom for our sins. He alone merited the necessary and superabundant grace for us and with it life and



salvation. Yet Mary was intimately united, associated with Christ in this work of ransom. And in this we have the very essence of Mary's mediation.

Mary became associated with the work of Redemption, first of all when she conceived in her chaste womb the Victim who was to immolate Himself for the salvation of all. Yes, Mary may be called CO-REDEMPTRIX BECAUSE SHE HAS GIVEN US THE REDEEMER. Other reasons will follow in subsequent chapters.

When the Archangel Gabriel announced to her that she had been chosen to become the Mother of the Savior, Mary gave her consent in the following words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word." Through her consent given at the time of the Annunciation, Mary accepted the invitation to participate in procuring the ransom of the human race. No doubt this consent brought her the joys of the Redemption, the joys of divine maternity...but...it also brought her tremendous sorrows.

The moment of the Incarnation was the most important moment in the history of the human race. Salvation for all depended on the answer of Mary. Had she refused to become the Mother of Jesus, there would have been no ransom for us. Listen to Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. On account of his writ-

ings, so full of unction and love for his heavenly Queen, he is called the "Marian Doctor" His words read like an echo of the ardent longing of the Patriarchs. He writes: "The angel awaits your answer. The time has come for him to return to God. We too await that consent, O Blessed Lady. We too await that word of mercy, we unhappy ones who groan under the curse of God's condemnation. Behold, the price of our salvation is now offered to thee; give thy consent and at once we are set at liberty.

"By the Eternal Word all of us have been created, but we all perished miserably. One single word from thee can restore life to us; just one word, O loving Virgin.

"Exiled from Paradise, with all his miserable offspring, Adam implores this favor of thee. Abraham entreats thee for this; David asks it of thee; the Patriarchs, thy own ancestors implore it of thee. See, the whole world prostrate before thee awaits thy answer; upon thy word depends the consolation of the afflicted, the redemption of the captives, the pardon of the guilty, the salvation of all the children of Adam; the salvation of thy brethren, yes, the salvation of the entire human race.

"O sovereign Virgin, speak that word that the earth, the infernal regions (Limbo), yes, all in

heaven itself are waiting to hear. Make haste, therefore, to answer the angel or rather through the angel to answer the Lord. Say the word and receive the Word—*responde verbum et suscipe Verbum*. Oh, let that one human word ascend to heaven and the Eternal Divine Word will descend upon earth.”

This was indeed a decisive moment for the human race. Upon it depended its happiness or its eternal misery. Had Mary not given her consent, her divine maternity and with it the entire Christian religion would have been prevented from becoming a reality. If Mary had refused to become the Mother of God, as willed by Him from all eternity, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity would not have become incarnate; there would have been no glad tidings of the Gospel; there would have been no God dying upon the Cross to save you; there would have been no Church; all of us poor sinners would have been abandoned to our misery; heaven would have been closed forever to us all.

But the holy Virgin, generous above all others, entirely submissive to the holy will of God, pronounced her liberating “FIAT” and immediately the Word became incarnate in her chaste womb. Mary became the Mother of the Savior and the Redemption began. By saying “Yes” to the angel, Mary, the Mother of God, opened heaven to all of us.



## CHAPTER 5

### *MARY AND THE IMMOLATION OF THE VICTIM*

BY procuring the Victim, by providing the Redeemer with the body which on the day of His final sacrifice He would immolate for our ransom, Mary saved us. She saved us, but at what a price! It may seem that the blessed hour of the Incarnation should bring her joy only and no sorrow. We cannot doubt that there was joy in that blessed hour which united Mary in such an intimate union to Him who was her life and the soul of her soul. There are those who even think that at that moment Mary had a foretaste of the beatific vision. This may be true, but these holy delights were also messengers of the tremendous sacrifice she would have to make all through her mortal life. It was in view of these forthcoming sorrows that the heart of the Blessed Virgin needed to be strengthened by compensating joys. When Mary accepted the honors of becoming the Mother of God, she also accepted the consequences following in the wake of such a sublime vocation. She entered in a most intimate manner into the work of Redemption, consecrating her entire being and her entire lifetime to every kind of martyr-



dom, even what Saint Bernard called "the martyrdom of the heart."

Of all this, Mary was fully conscious when she pronounced her "Fiat." It is but befitting to think that God did not keep Mary in a state of darkness in regard to the road she was taking, especially since every step on that road would bring her nearer to Calvary. The Infant Savior, who came from heaven to be her Child, must have given her some anticipation of all the sorrow He was bringing to her. Yes, she was fully aware that He Himself would be her martyrdom, for it was her very love for Him that would make her life one protracted suffering.

"Listen, my daughter," Mary said one day to Sister Josefa Menendez, "already in my childhood days I had knowledge of divine things and knew which road the coming Messiah was to travel. Therefore when the angel announced to me the mystery of the Incarnation and I saw myself chosen to be the Mother of the Savior, my heart, in full submission to the holy will of God, was submerged in a torrent of bitterness and sorrow. I knew all that this tender and divine Child would have to suffer. The prophecy of old Simeon later on did only but confirm my maternal anxieties.

"You can then imagine what, from that moment on, were my sentiments whenever I contemplated

the natural charms of my Son, His face, His hands, His feet, His entire being which I knew would be so cruelly maltreated.

“I kissed His hands, and it seemed to me that my lips were already stained with the blood that would some day gush forth from their wounds. I kissed His feet, and I could see them already nailed to the Cross. I combed His soft hair, and I beheld it clotted with blood, entangled in the crown of thorns. And when at Nazareth He made His first steps and ran to meet me, His little arms extended, I could not restrain the tears at the thought that these same arms would in a few years be extended on the cross upon which He had to die.

“When He grew up into adolescence, there was in Him such a comeliness and beauty, that no one could look at Him without admiring Him. Only my maternal heart became painfully oppressed when I thought of His torments of which I already then experienced the effects.”<sup>1</sup>

So then for a period of thirty years between the Heart of Jesus and the heart of His Mother there was a continuous interchange of suffering, a martyrdom which we poor sinners will never be able to understand, for the reason that we cannot fathom the love between Jesus and Mary.

“Suffering is measured by the immensity of one’s

love," says Cardinal Bellarmine, and the love of Mary for Jesus is immense, tremendously tender, extremely delicate and possesses an unbelievable capacity for commiseration and sympathy.

To her martyrdom of apprehension we must add the vision of both the near and distant future that Mary had constantly before her eyes, the vision of that life of Jesus in its helplessness, dependence, disdain, obscurity, neglect by so many of His creatures. A little serious reflection on these truths will make you understand to some degree at least why we can apply to the Mother that which Angela of Foligno said to her Son: "Where does He (she) dwell if not in the house of sorrow?"

All this however was but the beginning of Mary's part in our salvation. In order to merit the life of grace more fully in your behalf it was necessary for her to be united still more with the work of the Redemption.

Jesus, who through His cruel passion and death has snatched you from the flames of hell, willed to have His immaculate Mother as associate even on Calvary. Since it was through the Cross that He became the Redeemer, it was through the Cross that Mary became Redemptrix. Her cooperation in our salvation which began with the Incarnation at Nazareth was continued up to the very immolation of



the divine Victim and consummated only in His martyrdom and hers on Calvary.

“In our praise of the Mother of God,” the saintly Pope Pius X teaches, “it is not sufficient to say that Mary clothed the Incarnate Lord with the flesh which would be immolated on Calvary. We should add that it was her divinely imposed mission to watch over the Victim, to nourish Him and on the day decreed from all eternity to offer that Victim on the sacrificial altar. Hence that life-long partnership between the Son and His Mother, that continuous cooperation in their life and labors, which permits us to apply equally to the One and to the other the words of the Prophet: “My life was filled with sorrow and my years with lamentation.” And when the time for the supreme sacrifice had arrived we see His Mother standing near the Cross, immersed in a sea of sorrow and at the same time happy over the fact that her Son offered Himself for the salvation of the human race. Yes, happy with so great a compassion and grief that if it had been possible she would have preferred exceedingly to take upon herself all the torments endured by Jesus. By means of this continuous sharing of sorrow and sentiment between her and Christ, Mary has merited to become with a just title the atoner for the sins of the world and therefore the dispenser of all the blessings which



Jesus has procured for us through His death and the shedding of His blood.”<sup>2</sup>

Yes, the Immaculate Mother of God, entirely without the least stain of guilt, suffered the tortures of the Cross. She suffered in her heart that which Jesus suffered in His body and in His soul. Through these sufferings Mary became the CO-REDEMPTRIX OF THE HUMAN RACE.

In closest union with her suffering, agonizing, dying Son, heart-broken and sunk in deepest desolation, Mary offered to the heavenly Father the Son whom He had given to her. This was the price she paid for your soul.

The Blood which streamed down the side of the Cross; that life infinitely more precious than her own; that life which was now ebbing away in a slow agony . . . these were her very own. She had given them to the divine Victim. At that moment Mary, abdicating her maternal rights, gave complete consent to the final immolation of her Son. By this supreme act of conformity to the holy will of God, in union with Christ, she merited for you pardon and life.

And life it really was for you, for Mary, meriting grace, gave you birth into supernatural life. As an earthly mother brings forth her child in suffering and sorrow, so also Mary in suffering and sorrow united

to and in dependence on Christ gave you birth into the life of grace.

“It was she,” the present Holy Father Pius XII tells us, “it was she, who, exempt from original sin as well as from all personal sin, always most closely united to her divine Son, *arctissime semper cum Filio suo conjuncta*, offered Him to the eternal Father upon Golgotha for all the children of Adam who were stained by the deplorable fall of the first man, joining in this offering the holocaust of maternal right and of maternal love. In this manner, she who was the Mother of our Head according to the flesh became spiritually, by a new title of suffering and of glory, the Mother of all the members of Christ . . . *ita quidem ut quae corpore erat nostri Capitis Mater, spiritu facta esset ob novum etiam doloris gloriae-que titulum, ejus membrorum omnium Mater.*”<sup>3</sup>

Since we are coming near to the Cross, let us gratefully stop a moment before our Mother, our Co-redemptrix. Look . . . Never could she lay more claim to our gratitude than after standing at the foot of the Cross, united to the martyrdom of her Son, in our behalf. Let us endeavor to realize how costly a price she paid for us all, and never forget that if Jesus at Bethlehem was the Son of her joy, upon Calvary we were the **CHILDREN OF HER SORROW.**

<sup>1</sup> "An Appeal to Love": The Message of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to the World and its Messenger, Sister Josefa Menendez; Editions of the Apostolate of Prayer, 9 Montplaisir Street Toulouse, p. 574. This work was rapidly translated into many languages and preceded by a Foreword of Cardinal Pacelli (now our present Holy Father Pius XII). One can hear the beat of the Heart of the Divine Master, loudly proclaiming to the world His unbelievable love, His infinite mercy, inviting us to confidence. "My words will give light and life to an incalculable number of souls," Christ said to Josefa on November 15, 1923. "I will give them a special grace, so that they will be able to enlighten and convert many souls."

<sup>2</sup> Encyclical *Ad diem illum . . . Ex hac autem, Mariam inter et Christum communionem dolorum ac voluntatis, promeruit illa ut reparatrix perditum orbis dignissime fieret atque ideo universorum numerum dispensatrix quae nobis Jesus necesse et sanguine comparavit.*

<sup>3</sup> Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ: epilogue.



## CHAPTER 6

### THE SORROWFUL MOTHER MARY MEDIATRIX BY MEANS OF THE CROSS

“Lord, we offer Thee  
The merits of Mary,  
Thy Mother and our Mother,  
At the foot of the Cross,  
In order to appease the Divine Justice.  
If you remember our iniquities, Lord,  
Lord, who shall be able to stand before Thee?”\*

Before we proceed further we shall endeavor to impress upon our minds and hearts the sorrows of Mary at the foot of the Cross.

No creature has penetrated the mystery of the

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\* *This little offering of the merits of the most blessed Virgin which was edited and distributed by the House of the Visitation Sisters of Paray-le-Monial and of Toulouse, 13, Dabade Street, has been enriched with indulgences by several Cardinals and Bishops of all nations. Within a few months more than a few million copies were printed and distributed, causing a tremendous increase of devotion and trust in Divine Providence. Some have used the little prayer in the form of a novena. Numerous graces have been obtained.*

Cross so profoundly as has Mary. Nothing in her entire Passion of Christ escaped her knowledge, her mental vision. True, the Gospel does not make mention of the fact that Mary was physically present in Gethsemane at the time of Christ's agony in the garden. Neither does the Gospel tell us that she followed Jesus that night amidst the servants of the High Priest. But, dear reader, do you think it was necessary for the Evangelists to stress something which was quite evident? Associated with Christ throughout His entire life; associated with all the works of her Son, how could it have been possible for Mary not to be with Him at the time of His greatest and last suffering?

Exactly in what manner she participated in those last hours of Christ's natural life upon earth we do not know. It is one of God's secrets. But we may be certain that Mary was present, if not physically, at least in spirit, but in a very special, mysterious, yes miraculous way. I am sure, dear reader, you do not doubt this.

Mary shared in her Son's bitter agony in the Garden of Olives. She witnessed this scoffing, the insults, the foul spittle, the cruel blows heaped upon Him. The whips of the scourging cut into her own soul. When the thorns of the crown tore the sacred brow of her Son, they lacerated her maternal heart.

Listen to the words Mary herself spoke to Saint Bridget. "They scourged His innocent Body. When I heard that first blow I who was very near Him fell down as one struck dead. When I recovered my consciousness I saw His Body wounded and bruised to such an extent that parts of His ribs were laid bare. Fragments of His sacred Flesh adhered to the scourges as they were withdrawn between each blow. All through this horrible ordeal my Son held Himself quite erect. By the time the horrible spectacle stopped His sacred Body had been so torn that it seemed there was no longer any place left where the scourges could fall.

"Then He put on His garments and I saw the place where He stood literally covered with blood. I could easily follow in His footsteps due to the bloody traces on the pavement. They did not give Him even an opportunity to put on His garments in peace, but shoved and pushed to hurry Him on His way. Whilst He was being led away like a criminal, I saw Him wipe away the blood from His eyes. *Cum autem duceretur quasi latro, ipse filius meus extersit sanguinem ab oculis suis.*"

Let us strive to imagine the compassion and suffering of the Mother as she witnessed all this.

Now Jesus walks through the streets laden with the Cross. At one of the crossings Mary waits dis-



consolate and in deepest anguish. When Jesus arrives at the place where she stands, He stops for a few moments. Mother and Son behold each other face to face; not one cry, not one word is exchanged. But in this look they fully understand each other; in this look two souls exchanged mutual feelings; two hearts in which love swells to infinite proportions suffered an additional martyrdom of mutual compassion.

We may be certain that this meeting was one of the most heart-rending moments for both Jesus and Mary. Words cannot describe this meeting. Only contemplative love can pierce the veil.

The divine Victim surrounded by the mob has passed by. The Mother follows her Son as soon as the pressing mob allows her. She will be with Him unto the end. She will drink with Him the final dregs of the bitter chalice . . . Jesus has reached the summit of Golgotha. . . . Mary in turn is reaching it.

Listen to the blows of the hammers resounding in Mary's soul. Those cruel nails are meant for her also. They must tear her hands also. She has a right to all this . . . the right of her maternal love . . . of her love for Jesus who is suffering . . . of her love for you, dear reader, for whom Jesus suffers. . . .

The Cross is raised and allowed to fall into the hole dug for it. Mary is standing near . . . immov-

able like unto Him who hangs immovable on the Cross . . . like Him suffering in her entire being.

Filled with grief, bitter grief, she looks upon her Son with all the tenderness of which her maternal heart is capable. She beholds Him hanging on the gibbet of infamy, unrecognizable on account of the blood that covers His Body . . . indeed crushed like a worm.

But the heart of Mary penetrates much deeper than these external wounds . . . even to the very Heart of her Son. . . . She sees His agonizing soul plunged in the greatest shame, in a desolation, an abandonment that is almost infinite. . . .

"I beheld my Son," Mary told Saint Bridget, "hanging there in His abysmal misery. It was hardly possible for me to remain standing, so deep was my consternation, so great was my affliction. . . . With a trembling voice He cried to His heavenly Father: 'FATHER, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?' . . . as if He wished to say 'There is no one who has pity on Me, not even You, my heavenly Father.'

"Then the light in His eyes fading . . . the expression on His face growing more sad than it had been through His entire Passion . . . His mouth opening . . . His tongue tinged with blood . . . in this condition He cried out: 'FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT. . . .'

“When I heard that voice, I trembled in all my members. I felt in my heart a pain more piercing than ever before, and ever after when I recalled that voice, it seemed as though I actually heard Him cry out those last words. . . . Immediately after this last cry, His sacred head dropped forward. . . . His Heart had broken under the violence of His sorrow.

“Then some one said . . . ‘Mary, your Son is dead . . . .’

“Some time afterward one of the soldiers advanced toward the Cross and plunged a lance into the side of my Son. He did this with such violence that it almost pierced to the other side of His Body. At that moment my own heart felt as though it were being pierced by the same lance.

“Finally they took His Body down from the Cross and I received Him upon my lap. He resembled a leper. I dried and cleaned His wounds and closed His eyes and His mouth left open in death.”

Take a little time and ponder over this account of Mary. It was here that she reached the bottom of the abyss of her martyrdom. Consider a little while the manner in which she became God’s helper and your advocate. Behold the price she paid for participating in paying your ransom. . . . Indeed she deserved the title **MATER DOLOROSA . . . THE SORROWFUL MOTHER.**



## CHAPTER 7

### *MARY MEDIATRIX—DISTRIBUTOR OF THE LIFE OF GRACE*

AT Bethlehem Mary gave us Jesus our Redeemer. United with Him in His suffering and through Him, she purchased the life of grace for us. Do you think, dear reader, that these two reasons are not sufficient for us to praise and glorify her and to express our appreciation and gratitude? Of course they are. And yet, Mary's love for us urged her on to do still more. Not satisfied with having purchased our supernatural life for us, she herself administers that life to us. She is the intermediary between God and us in the distribution of that divine life of grace. . . . Mary is God's treasurer.

"God does not will," says Saint Bernard, "one single grace, one single blessing to come to the earth without passing through the hands of Mary."

Let us never lose sight of the fact that Mary does not produce this life of grace. It is Jesus being God who "produces grace and truth."<sup>1</sup> But He does not part with it except at the prayer of His Mother. Jesus

is the source of grace. Mary is the channel which receives this life at its very source and brings it down to us.

The seraphic doctor Saint Bonaventure, one of the illustrious doctors of the Church who passionately loved the most Blessed Virgin, speaks in the same terms. He shows Mary to be the source, the secondary source, whence the floods of spiritual life flow abundantly upon the souls of men.<sup>2</sup> Mary is not the principal source, to be sure, because it is in the bosom of the eternal Father that all grace originates. Furthermore, Christ, in as much that He is Man is, as it were, the first outlet of the riches of the Father; but after Christ, from whom she receives all, Mary may be compared to a tremendous reservoir or storehouse filled by God with all the heavenly gifts.

Mary became this when the Holy Spirit, overshadowing her on the day of the Annunciation, filled her with such an abundance of grace that henceforth she became capable of sanctifying all others.

Before Mary had conceived the Word, she was already "full of grace." After the Second Person of the adorable Trinity had assumed His human body from her, her amount of grace grew to almost infinite proportions. The Mother of the Word Incarnate was the Mother of God. She now possessed Him who is the original source of all grace. And He gave to His

Mother the power to dispose of that grace at will. It is through Mary that all grace descends from God upon the earth. Mary asks and Jesus gives His consent. He places into her hands the treasures of heaven, i.e., all sanctity, all perfection, all life, all that is good, all that is noble, all that is beautiful. Without Mary there is nothing for us to expect, neither pardon nor salvation. God wills it this way. Mary is the universal Mediatrix, the Distributor of all grace.

In his admiration, Saint Germanus of Constantinople cries out: "There is no one who is saved except through thee, O most holy Mary; no one who is delivered from the evils of this life except through thee, most chaste Virgin; no one to whom is granted any celestial gift except through thee, most pure Virgin; no one who finds grace before God except through thee, O most glorious Mother of God."

Dear reader, does all this mean that under penalty of not being heard you must address each prayer directly to Mary? Not at all. Yet the fact is this, prayer addressed to God does not reach Him except through Mary. When we pray to God, Mary prays to God for us. And whether you pray to her directly, or whether you pray to God without even thinking of her, it is always she who must obtain for you the favor you ask. This is so even in the case of the saints. Whenever they wish to obtain a favor sol-



licited through their intercession, they are not heard except through the mediation of Mary.

At Pellevoisin in France in 1876, at one of the apparitions of the Blessed Mother to a girl by the name of Estelle, the Blessed Virgin herself gave testimony to the truth that she is the distributor of all graces. Estelle narrates that she saw an abundance of little drops of rain falling from the hands of Mary. It was a symbol of the innumerable graces which at the prayer of Mary fall upon the world like a refreshing dew. The girl explains further that in each one of those little drops of rain it seemed as though there was inscribed the name of the special grace contained in them such as . . . piety, health, confidence, conversion, protection, perfection, etc., etc. Then the Blessed Mother uttered the following words which explain clearly the mediation of Mary: "THESE GRACES," Mary said, "I OBTAINED FROM MY DIVINE SON, I TAKE THEM FROM HIS HEART." And Mary added, emphasizing the omnipotence of her prayer over the Heart of Jesus . . . "HE CAN REFUSE ME NOTHING."

No, Jesus cannot refuse His Mother anything. Behold her in the heavens standing between God and us in the glory of her Universal Mediation, powerful through her prayers today as she was in the past on Calvary, powerful by her suffering. Ap-

proach then with the fullest confidence her whom the holy liturgy calls the MOTHER OF DIVINE GRACE. Through her YOU WILL OBTAIN THE LIFE OF GRACE.

<sup>1</sup>“Gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta est.” (John 1:17)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sermon III and V on the Annunciation and Sermon IV on the Assumption. Quarrachi, t. II and IX.

## CHAPTER 8

### MARY MEDIATRIX, THY MOTHER

"I WILL SOON GO TO HEAVEN. YOU WILL REMAIN HERE BELOW FOR SOME TIME IN ORDER TO MAKE KNOWN TO THE PEOPLE THAT WHICH THE LORD WISHES TO PROMULGATE IN THE WORLD, NAMELY THE DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY.

"BE SURE TO MAKE THE WHOLE WORLD REMEMBER THAT IT IS THROUGH THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY THAT THE GOOD GOD WISHES TO GRANT US HIS FAVORS.

"IT IS FROM THE IMMACULATE HEART THAT THEY MUST ASK FOR THEM."

*(Words of Jacinta recommending to Lucia the accomplishment of the mission confided to them by Our Lady at Fatima.)*

"I PROMISE SALVATION TO THOSE WHO WILL EMBRACE THE DEVOTION TO MY IMMACULATE HEART. THEIR SOULS WILL BE LOVED BY GOD WITH A LOVE OF PREDI-



LECTION, AS FLOWERS PLACED BY ME BEFORE HIS THRONE.”

*(Our Lady at Fatima to Lucia at the second apparition June 13, 1917.)*

Jesus gave Mary to us as our Mother on Calvary, or rather it was on Calvary He declared her to be our Mother. For Mary was our Mother long before the tragedy of the Cross. Even though she would have to undergo much suffering before bringing us into the life of grace, Mary was already our Mother ever since the day of the Incarnation. From the moment when the Word became Flesh in her chaste womb, together with Jesus, we too became her children. It was then on Calvary, where the participation of Mary in the sufferings of the Cross brought to full bloom her state of maternity in our behalf, that Jesus solemnly declared the fact.

Let us go back in spirit to Golgotha. The hour when He will die for us has struck. He suffers and agonizes for our sins whilst He thinks of us all. He knows He is leaving us and He does not want to leave us orphans. What will He do? The beloved Apostle Saint John who was privileged to rest his head upon the Heart of Jesus was present there and he describes the scene. . . . “Now there was standing by the cross of Jesus His Mother. . . . When Jesus saw His Mother and the disciple standing by, whom

He loved, he said to His mother, 'Woman, behold thy son.' Then He said to the disciple, 'Behold thy mother.'"<sup>1</sup>

*ECCE MATER TUA...* Behold thy mother. This was the testament, the last will of Jesus. It is necessary that He leave us because His death is our ransom. He will return to His heavenly Father. There in heaven He will prepare a place where we will enjoy in the presence of God true peace, true joy, true happiness without end.

But in the meantime we will be left alone... without Him, our Friend, without Him, our Father... without Him our God. Who, during the time of our exile will be our consoler, our guide, our helper? Who in His place will be able to love us as He has? There is only one answer to that and it is... Mary.

"*ECCE MATER TUA.*" The treasure most dear to Him, most precious to Him; the object most worthy of His love here below Jesus gives to us... Mary, His Mother... Mary, our Mother. Mary becomes the divine legacy... the last will of the Heart of Jesus.

Do you realize the full importance of these words—Mary, your Mother? Do you know that she is your Mother? You have been told this fact away back

in your childhood days and since then you have given her that sweetest of all names a thousand times. But do you know exactly how she fulfills that office?

I am confident that it will be quite easy for you to understand now, since I made an endeavor to prepare your mind and your heart for this sublime truth in the previous chapters. Mary fulfills her role as Mother in your behalf by becoming your Mediatrix which means that all the heavenly blessings and favors God has in readiness for you Mary obtains from Him and bestows on you.<sup>2</sup>

See for yourself. What does any mother do for her child? First of all, she gives it its body, she brings it into the world. Next, she fosters and develops that body by nourishing it with her own milk. Finally, she overwhelms it with maternal care until the day when the child attains fullness of its being and powers, until it acquires full maturity.

Well now, Mary does all this for your soul. It is through her, as I have already told you, that we receive all grace and therefore all supernatural life. Similarly as you would say of your earthly mother you can say of your spiritual Mother Mary that she has brought you into life, into your supernatural life. She conceived you in the life of grace when, on the day of your baptism, you first received the divine life



into your soul. This life, remember, was purchased by her in union with and in dependence on Jesus at the price of the sorrowful sacrifice she made of her Son in your behalf. Mary furthermore sustains and develops that life in you when she bestows upon you with a merciful generosity the innumerable graces which nourish and fortify your soul . . . the graces that enlighten your mind, that move your will . . . the graces of the sacraments, especially and in particular of the Holy Eucharist, the divine nourishment that surpasses all other. Finally Mary will protect and guide you as she has always done for the saints, her children of predilection. And if you are faithful to these graces, like they were, she will lead you as she led them into the perfection of the supernatural life, into sanctity.

Listen once more to Saint Grignon De Montfort: "Mary has received a special charge over souls to nourish them and to make them grow in God. Saint Augustine goes so far as to say that in this world all the predestined are, as it were, enclosed within the bosom of Mary and that they come to see the light of day only when this good Mother gives them birth into life eternal. Consequently, as the infant draws all its bodily nourishment from its earthly mother who can give only in proportion to her own weakness or strength, so also the predestined draw

all their spiritual nourishment and all their strength from Mary.”<sup>3</sup>

In this way, then, Mary fulfills her duties as our Mother. Alas! how many Christians are ignorant of this. We who know should not hesitate to instruct others. We should tell them briefly that Mary is our Mother because she does for us in the supernatural order, for the life of our soul, all those things an earthly mother does for the corporal life of her child.

Yes, Mary is our Mother and we are her children. What happiness and what dignity, especially when we consider that Mary could not be the Mother of Christ without becoming also our Mother. Mary is our Mother because she is the Mother of Jesus! We should frequently strive to estimate the height to which this fact exalts us, dear reader. Mary is our Mother because Jesus is her Son . . . Does not this imply that we are raised, through mercy and grace, to the level even of Christ? Yes, Jesus is our Brother through Mary.

And now you are informed of all that Mary is for you, just what role she plays in your life. To repeat it briefly . . . Mary is the Mother of Jesus. Because she is the Mother of Jesus who is the Head of the Mystical Body she is also the Mother of the members of the Mystical Body. She is the Mother of all

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Christians who are incorporated in Christ, their Head. Mary gives birth, supernatural birth, to your soul and makes this divine life of grace increase in you. Mary transforms you, making you Godlike. Mary forms Christ within you, making you live His life. Mary snatches you away from your poverty and your misery to make you her child, a brother of Christ . . .

**ANOTHER CHRIST.**

But now do you see and fully realize that you are living entirely in dependence upon Mary? In all truth, you just cannot do without Mary. This is such a tremendous and far-reaching truth that the vast majority of people never fully realize it. You should not be one of them. *Pray* that you may become more and more conscious of and more and more conscientious concerning all that is so profoundly real in this motherhood of Mary.

When you think of your earthly mother, you have no difficulty at all in realizing all that you owe to her. You can see and feel the body she has given you. But in the case of our spiritual existence the life we have received from our heavenly Mother, being supernatural, being invisible and intangible, we are in great danger of not appreciating it at its full value.

This is a great pity, for the supernatural is by far more real than the material, even though the latter



may be so easily perceived by the senses. Heaven and the things of heaven are by far more true and real than the earth and the things of the earth. Consequently the most Blessed Virgin is by far more truly and more really our Mother than our earthly mother is.

Mary is in all truth, in all reality, **OUR MOTHER.**

<sup>1</sup> John, 19:25-27.

<sup>2</sup> The Liturgy of the Church unites the idea of Mary to the idea of her being our Mediatrix. "Lord Jesus Christ, our Mediator with the Father, Thou who hast constituted Thy Mother, the ever Blessed Virgin, **OUR MOTHER AND OUR MEDIATRIX BEFORE THEE**, grant propitiously that anyone who comes to Thee to ask for favors, may have the joy of obtaining them all through her..." (Oration of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary Mediatrix of All Graces, Feast May 31st.)

<sup>3</sup> "The Secret of Mary," No. 14.

## CHAPTER 9

### *YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE IN MARY*

YOU have come to the knowledge of what Mary is to you. You understand now what the term Mary Mediatrix means. You grasp now all that the term Mary your Mother implies. There remains for you to realize fully what your attitude should be towards Mary.

Since Mary has been instrumental in giving you supernatural life, and since she develops that life in you, it is necessary for you to **LIVE WITH MARY.**

Oh, would that the Blessed Mother might deign to help me here to write down clearly this salutary doctrine! If, like the soil in the parable of the Gospel into which fell good seed, your soul today allows itself to be penetrated with this idea of "**LIVING WITH MARY,**" "**LIVING A MARIAN LIFE,**" it will surely be for you the starting point of a new kind of existence, namely sanctity.

To "**LIVE WITH MARY**" . . . what does it mean? It means to place yourself habitually and affectionately in the presence of Mary as a child before its mother, in an attitude of entire dependence on her.

Yes, we must all assume the attitude of children, very little children. For we are all in reality very little compared to our heavenly Mother, that Virgin so blessed, who from the very first moment of her existence possessed such superabundance of grace that it surpassed the sum total of grace given by divine munificence to all the Angels and Saints.

Saint Grignon De Montfort was blessed with an extraordinary talent to make people love her whom he called "his dear Mother." Enlightened and guided by this special gift he wrote with loving emphasis on this kind of life in union with Mary. In a book entitled *Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, a beautiful work which you cannot read too often, the Saint devoted several valuable pages to the description and explanation of what kind of life the true child of Mary should lead. He compares this life with that of the boy Jacob living with his mother Rebecca.<sup>1</sup>

"Jacob, meek and peace-loving, loved to be near his mother as often as he could. He did not leave her except when she sent him on an errand. He cherished and honored her. He obeyed her diligently in all things. Above all, he strove with all his powers to imitate the many virtues of which she was the living image . . .

"In like manner the true children of Mary will



be happy to remain near Mary—in her house, i.e. they will love seclusion. They will love the interior life, the life of prayer. They will not seek publicity. They prefer to be alone with their Mother. They prefer it to all the glamor and clamor of the world. They prefer the hidden life of Nazareth, a life of silence and oblivion. They honor Mary as their dear and loving Mother. They love her with a tender and strong love which does not recoil from sacrifices. They obey her faithfully, following her counsels in everything they attempt. They avoid with zealous care all that could displease her. When there is a choice between two or more ways of doing good they perform that which pleases her most. In imitation of her they practice all the virtues, especially those they know are most agreeable to her, i.e. charity, humility, obedience, purity. They place in her a confidence without limit. They invoke her assistance without ceasing. They confide to her all their troubles with a childlike candidness of heart, and so draw upon themselves her mercy and her sweetness. In order to obtain the pardon of their sins through her intercession, or in order to experience her maternal kindness in trouble and weariness they cast themselves, yes, bury themselves habitually in her loving and virginal Heart so that they become inflamed with her pure love and find there Jesus

who resides in her heart as on a throne of glory.”

As you can see, this life in union with Mary absorbs the activity of the entire soul. It means a continual imitation of her virtues, transforming the child into the image of its Mother and consequently into the image of its divine Brother Jesus Christ. It is the intimate union of our soul with her soul; of our heart with her heart, of our actions with her actions.

May I suggest some practical ways in which to realize this life in union with Mary? When you assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, picture to yourself Mary standing near the altar as she stood near the Cross, and with her offer up her Divine Son to His heavenly Father with the same sentiments and for the same intentions which were hers on Calvary.

When you receive Holy Communion acknowledge your unworthiness but ask Mary to receive Holy Communion together with you.

When you pray, offer your prayers through Mary, so that it is no longer YOUR prayer but rather hers.

When you make the Stations of the Cross, follow Jesus in company with Mary, endeavoring to compassionate in the sorrows of the Son the heart of the Mother, offering your tears, your sympathy through her.

When you undertake any work at all, begin the work in the name of Mary. Be careful not to be too anxious for success. For of what importance is earthly success? Be convinced that all work takes its value not from its success as judged by earthly standards, but solely from the love which inspires it. Yes, apply all your energies to the task in hand but look only for the accomplishment of Mary's good pleasure.

Begin no task without first having consulted her. Ask her with a humble insistence to be with you in all your ways. And frequently, habitually throughout the day, turn your thoughts upon her. Love to greet her with the words: AVE MARIA! HAIL MARY! . . . AVE MATER! HAIL MOTHER!

Once more let us listen to the words of Saint Grignon De Montfort. "Mary is the tree of life. If we wish to enjoy its fruit we must give that tree attention and care, and it is a wise soul that will make the care of that tree its principal occupation."<sup>2</sup>

Make a serious effort to keep permanently in your heart the resemblance of your Mother, so that without ceasing you may keep bright the flame which must consume your soul.

This kind of attention demands, of course, great fidelity and perseverance. But fear not. As a help in attaining this orientation of your entire being



towards Mary there is no lack of efficacious means. There is nothing more helpful in repressing the incursions of a wandering imagination than to think of Mary as being present right at your side. A rather simple practice, yet capable of achieving in a short time surprising results. I beg you to make the experiment and see for yourself. The great Saint Teresa of Avila, renowned mystic of the 16th century, proposes and strongly recommends a similar practice to the soul that desires to live in constant union with Jesus.

Perhaps you will object that true devotion is less a matter of "thinking" than it is a matter of "willing." There is no doubt about this being so. Our blessed Lord Himself tells us: "You are my friends, if you DO the things I command you." Nevertheless, we must never forget that true love does not stop with frequently thinking upon the beloved but that it is whilst THINKING upon the beloved that the soul generates an ever-increasing love. Would you not doubt the love of a son for his mother if he would never or seldom think of her?

Furthermore there are those who will contend that even a loving child does not always keep its eyes fixed upon its mother. You are right. And I did not say that the thought of Mary in your mind should be uninterrupted in the strict sense of the

word; at least we can strive to attain this continuous realization that some one is present within our environment. Nevertheless, we grant, when it is a matter of a spiritual presence, this might prove extremely difficult except for a privilege which would come close to the miraculous. The weakness of our poor human nature and the distractions to which we are all the more or less subject will not allow us to attain this happiness here below. Therefore whilst you lovingly make the effort to retain the memory of Mary, try to avoid all tension and strain which would inevitably cause mental fatigue and exhaustion and lead sooner or later to discouragement.

Neither did I intend to create the impression that devotion and the thought of Mary had to be exclusive of anything else. We must remember that the Church proposes ever so many objects for our devotion and meditation. Nevertheless, be assured that far from being a shackle, real devotion to Mary will make your soul free.

Has the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus any special attraction for you? By all means foster that devotion by frequently thinking of the Heart of Jesus and frequently assuring Him of your love. Does the Holy Eucharist captivate your mind and heart? Try to live within the shadow of the tabernacle. Does the tenderness of the heavenly Father flood your

soul? Or does the most Holy Trinity absorb your mind and heart in Its infinite mystery? Follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads you. However, be firmly convinced that if you really belong to Mary, if she has taken the place in your life which by right belongs to her . . . the place of Universal Mediatrix . . . each one of those devotions mentioned above can and will be fostered naturally and developed peaceably and more efficaciously in a soul that is not unmindful of Mary.

There is in that soul a certain mysterious and vital power which will repeatedly bring it back to the object of its love. Even in the midst of the most absorbing task the image of the Mother of God appears in the deep recesses of the heart; a smiling image which will encourage a more assiduous practice of virtue.

In prayer too the soul knows and feels that it is not entirely alone. It knows that Mary is there, presenting its requests to the most High God. Fully conscious of his unworthiness, but nevertheless humbly anxious to offer to God all praise due Him, the individual does not cease to unite his poor heart to the all-pure Heart of Mary. He wants to love the Father with the all-respectful tenderness of His well-beloved Daughter. He wants to love the Holy Ghost with the flame of holy fire which burns in the Heart



of His immaculate Spouse. As the object of his meditations, whenever he is free to choose, he prefers the mysteries in which the Blessed Virgin is the central theme.

“When Jesus has special designs on any soul, and He wishes to lead it to a higher degree of sanctity,” the Blessed Mother herself revealed to Benigna Consolata, “He puts that soul in my special care and I immediately become its personal guardian, guide and nurse. I do not leave that soul even for a moment, just like a mother will not take her eyes off her child when it is trying its first steps. A soul that in this way becomes the special object of my care must strive so much the more to remain in constant union with me; think continually on me; invoke me frequently and especially confide and entrust all to me.”

Let me warn you again. In this practice all mental tension or strain must be avoided. Take notice however that I do not say every EFFORT must be avoided. The soul should strive to let itself be led wherever it pleases Mary to lead, but always in serenity, peace and tranquillity. And whilst Mary presides over the activity of that privileged soul enlightening its intellect, captivating it more and more, that soul of its own free will does not cease to keep itself under the loving sway of Mary's Mediation by

which it lives. The soul exists surrounded with a tender love, a watchful tenderness to which it surrenders itself with all the energies of its will.

Happy state of dependence indeed! Truly sublime way of life!

It is rather difficult to explain that attitude of fear which paralyzes so many well-meaning souls in their striving to advance in the spiritual life. It almost seems as though they fear to come too close to Mary their Mediatrix and by doing so they deprive themselves of the most necessary help and favors. The reason for this fear is a very regrettable illusion. Pride is not the cause of it. This little book is not written for those who think themselves too mature, too "big" to make themselves "little" before their heavenly Mother. Such unfortunate individuals are incapable of understanding our language. The ones I refer to as laboring under an illusion are those honest souls who, though they earnestly seek after God, at the same time fear that Mary would be—dare I say it—an obstacle in the way that leads to Jesus.

Let me emphasize that this is a very regrettable error, very far from the truth. The fact is that as soon as we raise our voices in supplication to Mary she immediately blesses us with her divine Son, the little Jesus Himself.

In a passage which betrays a loving child of Mary it seems that Pius X took upon himself the task of enlightening us on this so very important matter. In that passage which I will quote, His Holiness strives to dissolve all difficulties, dispel all darkness which Satan is intent upon accumulating in our minds.

Taking as a starting point the necessity of "restoring all things in Christ," borrowing the words of the Apostle, the saintly Pontiff indicates the providential means to achieve that goal. The means His Holiness advises us is none other than to seek Christ **THROUGH MARY**, because, and I quote, "there is no route more sure, more easy to arrive unto Christ, and through Him, to attain to the perfect adoption of sons, which renders us holy and without blame in the eyes of God."

True, God could have sent Jesus to us in some other way than through Mary. But "since it has pleased the eternal Father that the God-Man was given to us through the Virgin and since she received Him through the operation of the Holy Spirit Himself and then carried Him in her chaste womb and brought Him into the world... what is there left for us to do but that we receive Jesus from the hands of Mary?"

It is from Mary also that we will receive all knowl-



edge and love for Jesus. Did she not have the privilege, alone among women, to live with Him constantly for thirty years of His life, under the same roof, in the intimate relations which are to be found only between mother and child, living the very same life of Jesus, "initiated into His counsels and into the sacred designs of His adorable will? No one therefore has known Him as Mary did, and there is no one who could be a better teacher, no better guide to bring us to Him. Consequently no one is as capable as she to unite man to Christ. If eternal life consists in knowing the Father and Him whom He has sent, namely Jesus Christ, if since it is through Mary that we learn to know Christ, then through Mary also we obtain that life more easily and surely, that life of which Jesus is the source and principle."<sup>3</sup>

Can anyone show more clearly that Mary not only is no obstacle to union with Christ but that she actually is the way we must follow to arrive at that union?

Now what else could Mary desire, what else does she have in mind when she "accepts" a soul into her special care if not to make Jesus reign in that soul? And what else could she love in us if it be not Him, Him into whom grace transforms us, makes us live His life. Also remember that it is in proportion to our faithfulness, our generosity, our spirit of sacri-

fice, that we become more and more Christlike and that in that very same proportion Mary's love for us develops and increases.

What Mary really aims at is to inflame our hearts with the love that burns in her own heart. One day our Lady said to Gemma Galgani: "Do you love anyone more than me?" And the saintly child cuddled in her arms answered: "My dear Mother, I do love someone more than you . . . Your Son." "Oh yes," answered the Blessed Virgin, joyfully pressing the child to her own bosom . . . "Yes, do love Jesus, love Him as much as you possibly can."

Why should it be that so very few understand the true nature of Mary's Mediation? That Mediation of love and union with God? Why is it that so many souls anxious and eager for union with God hesitate to take her for their guide and helper who is the powerful Mediatrix and the sweet Mother, Mary?

As far as we are concerned be assured that Jesus, when He came to us through Mary, showed us the very way by which we must come to Him. Do not think you can find Jesus away from Mary. Jesus came to you through Mary and it is through Mary that you must go to Jesus.

Frequently repeat to yourself with the firmest conviction that since Mary is the Mother of divine love,



she possesses the secret of attaining to union with God. No one else is better acquainted with the way that leads to the Sacred Heart of her Son Jesus. And be assured that in proportion as you are united to her, in that same proportion you will imbibe the life of God.

<sup>1</sup> See "Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin," Marian Library, Calvary, Montfort, Pontchateau, Loire-Inferieure, No. 191. The manuscript of this work, a little masterpiece of Marian theology, hidden in a trunk during the French Revolution, was found only in the year 1842 by a religious of Montfort. A remarkable incidence is that Saint Grignon De Montfort, the author of the book, seems to have had a premonition or perhaps a revelation of the lot which awaited the work. He writes in No. 114 of the book: "I see a number of ferocious animals, trembling with anger, attacking with great fury, trying with their diabolical teeth to destroy this little work...or at least to bury it in the darkness and oblivion of a trunk." The demon who becomes terribly enraged as soon as anyone undertakes the glorification of Mary, must have foreseen the tremendous influence that this writing, with its forty translations and innumerable editions, would exercise throughout this last century in the entire Church, orientating souls to a profound love of Mary and causing a virile and sincere piety towards the most holy Virgin Mary. God, no doubt, reserved this blessing for our times



of decadent faith to sustain the courage of the elect, to keep them pure in the midst of general corruption and to render them intrepid in the battle to come under the leadership of the Virgin who is to the demon "terrible as an army set in battle array." "The Secret of Mary," which has been mentioned in this book, is a brief exposition, clear and precise, of the doctrine contained in the "Treatise." But it is not just a simple resumé of it. From more than one standpoint the reading of this little work proves itself extremely useful even to those who are acquainted with the contents of "The Treatise."

<sup>2</sup> "The Secret of Mary," No. 72. The author compares true devotion to Mary to a tree planted in the soul by the Holy Spirit. A tree that we must cultivate with the greatest care. He tells us that in this case we must not depend too much upon the authority of mere men, but solely upon the help of Mary herself. And we should never trouble ourselves about the tempests raised by the anger and hatred of hell. Then this marvelous tree will give its fruit, "the lovable and adorable Jesus, who always was and always will be the unique fruit of Mary."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Constitution "*Ineffabile*."

## CHAPTER 10

### *SUMMIT OF THE MARIAN LIFE*

VERY few people can surmise to what heights of perfection the Blessed Virgin sometimes draws those who follow her faithfully and perseveringly. In this chapter I will endeavor to write a few lines concerning the spiritual state in which, by special heavenly favor, the soul vividly experiences the actions of Mary upon itself.

We all are the beneficiaries of this action, of this influence. The Universal Mediatrix, the Mother of our divine life, Mary, without interruption, radiates the life of grace upon us. But only to a small number of privileged souls is it given to perceive, to sense the effects of this action upon them.

Mary becomes really present to them. Not in the way that God is present everywhere. Our Lady is actually substantially present only in Heaven, but the soul becomes in a very definite way conscious of Mary being near her.

"This experience," writes a cloistered Carmelite nun, "is so wonderful and so peculiar that I am at a loss to find the proper words to express it. The

nearest that I can come to describing it is that I feel the most amiable Mother to be the life of my soul and therefore the soul of my soul. I feel that Mary is continually generating the divine life of grace within my soul.”<sup>1</sup>

The soul senses this presence of Mary in a way extremely delicate and yet very real. Mary never leaves the soul entirely. She lets it know whatever God expects of it every moment. Over and above, we are told, Mary goes to such an extent as to “lend to that soul her own heart.” Mary unites the soul’s disposition to her own, rendering its virtues more perfect, more acceptable to God, increasing the love of God in that soul to a degree of ardor unknown to it before. This love is no longer a small flame lazily escaping from a poor, tepid heart. It becomes rather like a “blazing furnace.”<sup>2</sup>

The soul “established in Mary” finds itself possessing extreme happiness, as the Venerable Olier experienced. It becomes aware of a more abundant participation in grace, more aware of Mary’s perfections and of her very life. It falls into a self-forgetfulness more deep than ever before. Truly blessed state when our Blessed Mother takes possession of the heart of her child in this manner! Oh, how happy they are during the mystical raptures of union with God!



Now we may be sure that our heavenly Mediatrix is always on the alert, always ready to take possession of our soul, of course for no other reason than to hand it over to Jesus. She recalled to the Venerable Olier that which her dear Son Himself had told him upon a previous occasion, namely, "that He (Christ) would not live in him except in and through His Blessed Mother, as though she were a kind of sacrament by means of which He wished to communicate His life of grace to **him**."

Fully conscious of the influence Mary has upon its spiritual life, the soul begins to ignore all vain fears. Far from meeting an obstacle in the Blessed Virgin, the soul finds that Mary proves to be, on the contrary, a necessary "bond of love and union with God." In her and through her the soul seeks Mary, finds her, contemplates her as though she were a mirror—Mirror of Justice—where the dazzling splendor of the Godhead marvelously tempers and adapts itself to the weakness of our vision, and the result is that the soul looks at Mary but it is God it beholds.

Another mystic of the last century tells us: "In one of those delightful moments which satisfy and even surpass all that we can wish and hope for, I saw that Jesus, our love, renews especially in behalf of souls that are suffering the gift which on the

Cross He made to humanity, the gift of the august and most holy Mother. Mary seemed to stand between God and my soul, and yet it seemed there was only Him and my soul. O Mystery of unity, divine unity which unites everything to itself without confusion of substance! O sacred threshold the human mind cannot trespass but where love sees and adores that which it cannot understand.”<sup>3</sup>

These are the heights of life in union with Mary. On these summits, as far as the soul is concerned, the Blessed Virgin becomes as one with God. The soul that has experience in these ways senses the radiant beauty, understands the astounding depth of the message which the author of this little book would like to bring to the entire world, namely that Mary Mediatrix is eminently the gift of God, since ultimately that gift is none other than Christ Himself.

Therefore, do not be scandalized when I give you boldly the assurance that in Mary you will find all that is good: light and power, truth and justice, wisdom and charity, divine life and . . . divine life in its fullness, i.e. sanctity.

Here I ask you to read once more that page of Holy Scripture which refers to divine wisdom, in which you hear the song of the Holy Spirit placing His own praise upon the lips of His humble

Spouse at the same time inviting you to make the riches of Mary your very own.

“I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life, and of virtue. Come over to me, all ye that desire me, and be filled with my fruits.

“For my spirit is sweet above honey, and my inheritance above honey and the honeycomb.

“My mercy is unto everlasting generations.

“They that eat me, shall yet hunger; and they that drink me, shall yet thirst.

“He that harkeneth to me, shall not be confounded; and they that work by me, shall not sin.

“They that explain me shall have life everlasting.”  
(Ecclus. 24:24-31)

So then, strengthened with these words of encouragement, follow Mary without fear. Follow her with a heart expanded with holy joy. Follow, Christian soul, with Mary the path leading without fail to Jesus. If you do, you will be astounded at the amount of progress you will make in your spiritual life.

However, never expect to achieve this without strife. Furthermore, be assured that Mary will take great care not to remove from your life the blessed Cross of Jesus. You may have to advance in the ob-



scurity of faith a long while, your entire life perhaps, but what of it? The soul that is actually favored with "the sweet presence of Mary" is not necessarily the one that loves Jesus and Mary the most. The "Little Flower," Saint Therese of Lisieux, privileged as she was, hardly received any consolations at all in this life. Be sure to keep in mind that the life of divine grace is not a matter of feeling. Grace may be abundant in a heart tormented with aridity, and remember also that the "one thing necessary" is not to FEEL that we are living, but to be ALIVE.

Leave for the present, "poor little slave, to your Queen the clear, unobstructed vision of God. Contented and satisfied with faith pure and simple"<sup>4</sup> strive with all your power, even against all odds, to live in union with Mary. Strengthened with firm faith in her presence and consoled by her smile, carry your daily crosses with happiness in such a way that, torn away from your indigence in the spiritual life, you will see yourself carried away with your heavenly Mother into the infinite abyss of God's love.

We hope and pray that soon you will understand that which I fear I have not been able to tell you in this book. Words cannot adequately express it. We hope and pray that you will experience that life in union with Mary is LIFE in the full meaning of the

word. A life in which the pure soul of Mary penetrates your soul and transforms it more and more into her own. A life of total dependence, a life of love which completely captivates your heart and permeates the very depths of your soul; a life of complete abandonment, of unlimited confidence, of holy intimacy, of peace, of joy even in suffering; a life in which you give to Mary all that belongs to you, all that you are; a life in which Mary communicates to you all of her virtues, Mary becoming your substitute; Mary covering your poverty with her riches, your weakness with her power, your tepidity with her charity, with her love; a life which is in perfect agreement with her sentiments, with her will, with her good pleasure; a sweet and irresistible impulse which turns the soul constantly towards Mary as if by natural instinct; a veritable need of her; an irresistible longing to converse with her, an unquenchable desire to love her ever more and more.

This is but a slight intimation of what it means to live in Mary. Do you not think that in it, even in these feeble words, you can see sufficient reason for you to attempt to live this life? **NO ONE KNOWS . . . NO ONE CAN FORETELL, WHAT GOD HAS IN STORE FOR THE SOUL THAT ATTACHES ITSELF IN A CHILDLIKE MANNER, WITHOUT RESERVE, TO MARY.** It is



the secret formula for a truly happy life here and hereafter. With Mary, your Mediatrix, your Mother, you will solve all your difficulties, you will proceed joyfully and freely and rapidly in the way of virtue; with her you will readily find Jesus. After having here below in this valley of tears lived in union with her, under her maternal love, your hand in her hand, you will surely, most assuredly go . . . to HEAVEN.

<sup>1</sup> Mary of St. Therese. We borrow this quotation and also the following from the testimony gathered by Father Neubert in a remarkable article on the Spiritual Life, 1937, p. 20 "Mystical Union With the Blessed Virgin." Fr. Neubert is also the author of a little book which we earnestly recommend to our readers, "My Ideal, Jesus Son of Mary," edition Xavier Mappus, Le Puy.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Colette of the Sacred Heart, Poor Clare, died in the odor of sanctity at Besancon towards the end of the nineteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> To these impressive testimonies we may add that very recent one of Sister Therese of the Infant Jesus (1899-1945), a humble Franciscan lay sister, a great lover of the Eucharistic King. Her life of "sacrificial hostage" was spent, whenever possible, within the radiance of the monstrance. She achieved her spiritual development in Mary and through Mary. Resting upon the Heart of the divine Master, the sister learned one day "what it means to be loved by Mary whom she calls her "all." The Blessed Mother



told her "together we will love Him. Let your heart bury itself in mine, in order to offer to Jesus, in union with me, a love worthy of Him." Some time after Mary again revealed herself to the sister "as never before" asking her to give herself to her Mother forever and in recompense Mary would "abide in her soul" henceforth.

<sup>4</sup>A little note on the expression "slave of Mary." It was chosen by Saint Grignon De Montfort to express a total loving dependence upon Mary. The Blessed Virgin herself made use of this expression when she gave her answer to the Angel on the day of the Annunciation. The Greek word which was translated into Latin by the word "ancilla", meaning servant, really means slave. Vd. "Treatise on the True Devotion to Mary." c. 2, a. 2.

## EPILOGUE

### *THE REIGN OF MARY MEDIATRIX*

DURING one of the apparitions at Fatima the Blessed Virgin pointing to her heart surrounded with thorns told the little shepherds that those thorns signified the sins of men which pierced the Heart of her Son and therefore had the same effect upon her own heart.

The reign of Mary, like that of Jesus, cannot establish itself except in a pure heart. The Blessed Virgin, like Jesus, is the arch-enemy of sin. And it is the triumph of her Mediation to be able to destroy sin whilst sowing the life of grace in the very place where sin had sown death.

He who cooperates with Mary in her role of Mediation will not deserve the reproach recently addressed by the Holy Father in a radio broadcast to the National Catechetical Congress in the United States. In his message Pius XII accused our modern generation of having lost "the sense of sin."<sup>1</sup> He who has taken to heart the role that Mary plays in the salvation of the world will feel in his soul a real aversion, a holy anger towards everything that causes

offense to God. A devotion to Mary which would not keep us from habitual sin or which would not inspire us with the sincere desire to amend, such a devotion would indeed be a false and wrong kind of homage.<sup>2</sup>

Surely Mary is the Queen of mercy and, as she told Saint Bridget, there is in the world no sinner so cursed as not to excite her pity. Precisely in this Mary demonstrates her clemency and goodness, namely in not abandoning the guilty to divine justice. She tries with all her power to snatch the sinner from his state of revolt against God, from his shameful life.

Now what does our Mediatrix expect of us? Just this, that we do what God commands, that we conform our will to the holy will of God. Briefly, Mary wants us to become holy, for sanctity is nothing else than a life of constant conformity to the divine good pleasure.

To establish my life once for all in this conformity there is no shorter or surer means than to try with all my power to discover and to fulfill the good pleasure of Mary. This is true, because Mary does not want anything except what God wants. Now then since Mary really does not want anything but what God wants, we by fulfilling her good pleasure really fulfill the good pleasure of God. The rule of life for a Christian may be reduced very definitely



to this: to fulfill cheerfully and lovingly the good pleasure of Mary; to form and conform his will so completely to hers that it becomes identified with hers, becomes one with hers; to give her all that we have and all that we are; to ask her to dispose of it all according to her wishes; to accept with resignation all that she permits to befall us; to hasten to fulfill joyfully all her least desires.

A beautiful, a sublime rule of life! And yet so simple that it is within the reach of all. It unifies, it focuses all our endeavors upon the fulfillment of the good pleasure of Mary.

There are more ways than one leading to the realization of this program of life. There are those, who in order to render more complete their dependence on Mary and to give it a characteristic of the absolute, of the irrevocable, yes, even of the eternal, there are some, I repeat, who dream of binding themselves by vow to this "liberating dependence." They have "sought a formula in which to express the exuberance of their heart's desire" and fervently address it to the very heart of their heavenly Mother.<sup>3</sup>

This formula we here suggest to them in the form of an Act of Consecration and abandonment to the good pleasure of the most Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Lord Jesus who hast said, 'I always do what pleases my Father,' in order to keep myself per-

petually in perfect conformity to His will which is also Yours, and in order to persevere in a loving attitude of humble and docile correspondence with the Holy Spirit, I desire to live in absolute dependence on Mary.

“Therefore:

“I, . . . in the joy of my soul confide to Thy Sacred Heart the Act which I make at this moment of complete surrender of myself. I abandon myself without any reservation to the good pleasure of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Thy divine Mother, the most Blessed Virgin Mary. I also promise from now on to accomplish in all things that which pleases her most.

“By this complete offering of myself I recognize thee, O Blessed Virgin, today as my Mediatrix and my Mother. I dedicate myself to thy love, thy tenderness, thy joys and thy sorrows. With all the power of my heart I unite myself to thee for time and for eternity. Amen.”

The result of such a resolution for a soul that is really earnest will be to place itself decidedly and in a very effective manner under the domain of Mary, body and soul, thoughts and actions, joys and sufferings, also the spiritual benefits that we will receive through the kindness of our neighbors, yes, even those prayers that will be said in our behalf

after our death. Absolutely everything that is ours under any title whatsoever is remitted into Mary's hands.<sup>4</sup> Above all, one's own will is surrendered in love and confidence and the soul conforms faithfully, free from any anxiety or fear, to all the wishes of Mary. Whether she sends us disappointments, a set-back, a trial or whether she grants favors, consolation and joy the soul remains in peace, quiet and indifferent. There is a higher degree of conformity still. Not satisfied with blind acquiescence to the dispositions of her maternal tenderness, in order to "go the whole way" in its spontaneous and joyful submission, the soul determines to detect that which will please its Mother most. In the strictest sense of the word the soul makes the good pleasure of Mary its only rule of life.

And finally, should the soul desire to take the very last step in self-surrender, if it would like to bind itself irrevocably to Mary, it can easily do so by the sanction of a vow. This it can do by promising never to revoke the willingness of complete surrender; on the contrary, it will resolve to persevere in it faithfully either for a specified period of time or till death.<sup>5</sup>

However, in a matter of such importance we should never become unmindful of our inborn spiritual weakness. Therefore, avoid all rashness, act



with the greatest prudence and only after having consulted a spiritual director or confessor.<sup>6</sup>

Taking all these prudent precautions, does it not seem to you, dear reader, that the formula offered to souls above is a means of better directing all their activities? Does it not seem to be a tremendous help in rendering more definite their spiritual aspirations and consequently their journey towards sanctity?

If nothing more, our formula shows clearly that the most important factor in real devotion to Mary is the union of our will, the passion to give pleasure to our beloved Mother and therefore to observe zealously that which we could call "the precept of Mary" i.e. "Do all that Jesus will tell you."

So then, any individual of "good will" can make use of the formula as long as he understands the meaning of it, is willing to put it into practice and intends to arrive, with the help of Mary, more easily and more rapidly unto the perfect love of God. I say, easily and more rapidly, because Mary all-good and all-powerful over the Heart of Jesus makes it her joy to smooth the way for those who entrust their progress in the spiritual life to her Mediation.

Let us emphasize "to her Mediation," because the soul which in everything seeks the good pleasure of Mary is the normal and logical subject of Mary's Mediation. Mary, the Mediatrix of divine life! Mary,

the road leading to Jesus! Mary, the link between God and us! Does all this not tell us that she is chosen above all others to animate with her powerful will our weak and impotent will and thus strengthen it sufficiently to obey the holy will of God in all things?

We cannot conclude this little work without expressing a desire, an ardent desire shared by many Christians. This desire is soon to behold the dawn of the blessed day when the doctrine of the Universal Mediation of Mary will be solemnly proclaimed a dogma of our holy faith.

It is our firm conviction that that day will bring upon the world an out-pouring of blessings and will mark a final step in establishing the Universal Reign of Mary. That blessed reign which Saint Grignon De Montfort declared was one of his most ardent wishes and which must procure, with the reign of Christ over all nations, peace all over the world.

Our joy would be great if this little work which we offer today to our Blessed Mother would be accepted by her and blessed by her. We sincerely hope that it will contribute not a little to hasten the hour of her triumph by turning the eyes and hearts of multitudes towards their heavenly Mediatrix. For this triumph should be brought about by the endeavor

of all Christians, of all her children. All then should busy themselves with this project. All should lovingly unite themselves in a new and holy crusade of prayer and sacrifice to obtain from Heaven the reign of Mary.

There are not a few among the faithful who have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered for this intention. We wish that this practice would become more widespread and that the priests of their own accord would offer every month at least one Holy Mass for this intention. In religious communities there could be established the custom of celebrating the Community Mass for that intention, perhaps every Saturday of every month and on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin. Oh, what a powerful means this would be to procure the glory of Mary and to attract her blessings to us all!

The intention for a Marian Mass could be formulated as follows: In honor of the Sorrowful and Immaculate Mary, Mediatrix of all graces; to obtain the proclamation of the dogma of the Universal Mediation of Mary and the establishment of the reign of her heart in the world; in thanksgiving for the innumerable benefits received from her Mediation; finally, in reparation for the indifference and ingratitude of sinners towards their Mother and Mediatrix and in expiation of the outrages and



blasphemies with which they pierce her Immaculate Heart.<sup>7</sup>

In the first edition of this work the author had among the various intentions mentioned above also the petition for the consecration of the human race to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This wish has been fulfilled, at least in part; the consecration was made on October 31, 1942, by His Holiness Pius XII in a radio broadcast to Portugal on the occasion of the Jubilee year of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima (May 13-Oct. 13, 1917); and also on December 8, 1942.

The following lines contain the principal thoughts of the broadcast.

“Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Help of Christians, Refuge of the human race, triumphant in all battles of God, before thy throne suppliantly we prostrate ourselves, confident of obtaining mercy and of finding grace and timely help in the present calamities, not on account of any merit of our own, for we do not possess any, solely on account of the immense goodness of thy Maternal Heart.

“To thy Immaculate Heart, We, as common Father of the entire Christian family, Vicar of Him to whom was given all power in Heaven and on earth and from whom we receive the responsibility of all souls that people the universe redeemed by His

Precious Blood: to thee, to thy Immaculate Heart, in this tragic hour of the history of humanity We confide, We offer, We consecrate not only Holy Church, the Mystical Body of thy Jesus who suffers and bleeds in so many lands, but also the entire world torn asunder by profound discord, inflamed with the fire of hatred, victim of its own iniquities . . .

“Finally, as the Church and the entire human race were consecrated to the Sacred Heart of thy Jesus, placing in Him all their hopes that He would be to them a pledge of victory and salvation, in like manner from this day forward they will be perpetually consecrated to thee and to thy Immaculate Heart, O Mother and Queen of the world, so that thy love and thy protection may hasten the triumph of the reign of God, and that all the human race in peace with God may proclaim thee All-blessed and with thee intone from pole to pole the eternal Magnificat of glory and love, of recognition of the divine Heart of Jesus, in whom alone we can find truth, life and peace.”

Is this the final act or is it the preparation for a more official consecration? We do not know. No matter what the case may be, this action of the Holy Father, placing in the Heart of Mary a human race crushed by misery and suffering, opens wide to the world the saving way of the salutary return toward Mary, the divine Mediatrix.



To promote this extremely salutary measure we know that Mary expects of us that we remain united in prayer and sacrifice, depending trustingly upon her Mediation which is always victorious, with child-like hearts overflowing with love striving incessantly to teach all men to know her and to love her, so that soon . . . SHE MAY REIGN.

<sup>1</sup> "Perhaps the greatest sin in the world is that people have begun to lose the sense of sin." Pius XII sees in this loss of aptitude to recognize sin when face to face with it the source of our moral decadence and of the many ills in the world today. His Holiness asks: "What is there left to prevent the hordes of God's enemies from unleashing selfishness, pride, sensuality and all the unlawful emotions of the sinner?"

<sup>2</sup> Constitution "*ad diem illum.*"

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Morineau, "The Song of the Soul with Mary," p. 182-183; edition Spee, Paris 1930.

<sup>4</sup> It would be more correct to say . . . it is the soul itself that refers everything it has or will have in the future to the intention which Mary wishes her to form. Take notice that we may continue to pray just as before for any person or for any grace or intention, only it is understood that those intentions henceforth are conditional and subordinated to those that are now automatically absorbed by the one intention of giving oneself entirely to Mary.

<sup>5</sup> For the taking of a vow in this respect the same formula may be used as for the Act with only a



slight alteration, namely, by substituting the word "vow" for "act" or "I am resolved." This would be something equivalent to, but always from the Marian viewpoint, the vow always to do what is more perfect. The taking of such a vow would naturally be advisable only for a very select number of individuals.

<sup>6</sup> Those for whom such a strict obligation could cause trouble or disquietude of soul might take the vow under pain of venial sin, not mortal sin, with the result that whenever the vow would not be lived up to, the transgression would never amount to mortal sin against the vow.

<sup>7</sup> As you may have noticed, this includes the intention of reparation recommended by Our Lady of Fatima. It is known that she promised to assist at the moment of death with all the graces necessary for salvation those who for five successive First Saturdays of the month will receive the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, recite the Rosary, and for fifteen minutes meditate on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary. This should be done, of course, with the intention of honoring the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart, to console Mary and make reparation for the many outrages and blasphemies of which Christ is the object on the part of so many ungrateful Christians. We have used the expression "Sorrowful" and "Immaculate Heart of Mary" in answer to the wish expressed by the Heart of Jesus to Bertha Petit. Christ Himself told this young lady that it was His desire to see this invocation spread throughout the Church, similar to the ejaculatory prayer addressed to His own Sacred Heart. The de-

votion to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Christ revealed in 1940, "is the last remedy I give before the end of time"; and again the following year . . . "Salvation will be the work of our two Hearts, the triumph of their love for mankind." It is a known fact that the invocation was favorably received by Pope Benedict XV, and Cardinal Mercier, not satisfied with making it the subject of three Pastoral Letters, consecrated the entire Belgian nation to the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

## PRACTICES

### 1. CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS THROUGH MARY MEDIATRIX.

Heart of Jesus, I come to adore Thee in order to give myself to Thee. That I may belong entirely to Thee, I consecrate to Thy Adorable Heart all that I have, all that I am. I give Thee all and ask in return only thy love.

For the purpose of loving Thee more and more I come before Thee. I do not wish for the goods of this world, nor earthly honors, nor success in my undertakings, nor the esteem of men. My only wish is to fulfill Thy most adorable and divine pleasure.

Behold, I am poor, miserable, little and sinful. I come to Thee, however, with complete confidence, because it is not in my own name that I come, but in the NAME OF MARY, Thy Mother and mine. In her Name I knock at the entrance of Thy Sacred Heart. She is my treasure which Thou hast given to me. This most blessed treasure I offer Thee. Let this most holy Mother of mine be my advocate and my all before Thy throne.



Mary, my Mother and Mediatrix, prostrate at thy feet, I thy child this moment look up to thee who art the WAY TO JESUS, "via ad Jesum." I wish to go to Him. Thy path will lead me straight to Him. If I follow thee, I will reach Him without fail. His divine Heart will readily accept the gift of my entire self when offered through thy hands.

Therefore, I consecrate myself entirely to thy Immaculate Heart, giving myself to thee without reserve. I beg thee, deign to accept as thy own possession all my thoughts, words and actions, my body and my soul. ALL THAT IS MINE IS THINE . . . THINE FOREVER.

Furthermore I proclaim the work of my salvation to be in thy hands. I undertake it only because it is thine. If I make progress in it at all it is because thou art with me.

In thee I wish to live a truly Christian life in the full meaning of the word, so that completely transformed by means of the divine life received through thy all-powerful Mediation I may truly become, in imitation of thy divine Son, ANOTHER JESUS.

Thou art His Mother and also mine: render my heart more childlike, more kind, more loving, more strong. Briefly, make my heart like unto His. Make me resemble Him more and more. Make me a true BROTHER OF JESUS.

I know, holy Mother, that this resemblance can be wrought only by means of the cross, but the cross will be sweet and the burden light when I carry it in union with thee. Thou art my strength, my hope, my joy, my assurance, my light on the way. **THOU ART MY SALVATION.** All my hope is in thee. Do with me whatsoever pleases thee, only grant to thy child the grace never to cease loving thee, thee and thy Son Jesus. And finally grant me the grace to make thee loved by others. Amen.

## 2. PLEDGE OF THE LEGION OF MARY.

In this promise which the members of the Legion of Mary make on the day of their official reception we may readily sense the fiery love, the absolute confidence and trust, the virile energy wholly characteristic of the Legionary.

Most Holy Spirit, I . . . . . desiring to be enrolled this day in the Legion of Mary but knowing that of myself I am incapable of rendering Thee worthy service, beg of Thee to come down upon me and to replenish my heart with Thyself, so that my poor efforts will be strengthened with Thy power and become the instrument of Thy potent designs.

But I know that Thou who hast come to regenerate the world in Jesus Christ hast wished to come to us only through Mary; I know that without her it is impossible for us to know Thee or to love Thee as we



ought; that Thy gifts are distributed to us only through her: all Thy virtues, all Thy graces, to whom she wishes and as much as she wishes and in the manner she wishes.

And I see very clearly that the secret of successful service for the Legionary consists in uniting himself entirely to her who was so completely united to Thee.

It is for this reason that, taking the Vexillum, the Banner of the Legion, which symbolizes all these truths, I stand before Thee as her soldier and her child, and thus proclaim my entire dependence upon her.

She is the Mother of my soul. Her heart and mine make but one heart. From the depths of her most tender heart she repeats the words spoken long ago: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." And once again Thou wilt accomplish great things through her.

Let Thy power overshadow me and enter into my soul to enkindle it with the fire of Thy love. Let the love in my soul be united with the love in Mary and let my will be united to hers. Let me become pure in her whom Thou hast created Immaculate.

O Holy Spirit, grant that Christ, my Lord, may also grow in me. That with her, His Mother, I may be allowed to carry Him into the world and to souls that have such great need of Him. And that after



victory has been won, together with those souls we may all reign eternally with Mary in the glory of the Holy Trinity.

O Holy Spirit, assured that Thou wilt kindly accept me, that Thou wilt deign to make use of my service, that Thou wilt change my weakness into strength, I take my place in the ranks of the Legion and I dare to promise Thee faithful service.

I will completely submit to the discipline of the rule which binds me to my brethren, which constitutes us an army and directs our ranks in the offensive we take under the leadership of Mary, to fulfill her will, to bring about Thy marvels of grace which will renew the face of the earth and will establish, Most Holy Spirit, Thy reign over all things.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### 3. SALUTATION OF MARY.

This salutation, which we reproduce with a few changes, was originally composed by Saint John Eudes, the apostle of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The Blessed Virgin promised the Saint to bestow special graces upon all who recite it, assuring him that if the soul that recited it be in the state of sin, at each salutation she would knock on the door of his heart and urge him to open that door to divine grace.

This Salutation was propagated in the 19th century by Father Paul de Moll, a Belgian Benedictine who died in the odor of sanctity, Feb. 24, 1896, in the Abbey of Tremonde, Belgium. "You will live for the consolation of a great number of people," our blessed Lord told him in an apparition during which He cured him of a mortal malady whilst the Blessed Virgin held the priest maternally by the hand. Father Moll's mission proved to be a veritable chain of miracles, which he continues to work even now in heaven. One day, whilst still living here below, he said to one of his friends: "Ask me for anything you wish. I will obtain it for you. And when I am in heaven, keep on asking. I will have more time then to occupy myself with you and there my power will be still greater." Numerous favors have been obtained through his intercession. Any one who obtains graces through him is invited to make them known to the Rt. Rev. Father Abbot of the Abbey of Tremonde, Belgium.

SALUTATION TO THE MOST BLESSED  
VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

I greet thee, O Mary  
Daughter of God the Father.

I greet thee, O Mary  
Mother of God the Son.



- I greet thee, O Mary  
Spouse of the Holy Ghost.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Temple of the Most Holy Trinity.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
White lily of the resplendent and ever Immutable  
Trinity.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Red Rose of Paradise.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Virgin full of tenderness and humility, of whom  
the King of Heaven willed to be born, by whom  
He willed to be nourished with thy mother milk.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Virgin of virgins.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Queen of martyrs whose soul was pierced with  
sorrows.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Lady and Mistress to whom has been given all  
power in Heaven and on earth.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Queen of my heart, my sweetness, my life and  
entire hope.
- I greet thee, O Mary  
Mother most amiable.



I greet thee, O Mary  
Mother most admirable.

I greet thee, O Mary  
Mother of fair love.

I greet thee, O Mary  
Mother of mercy.

I greet thee, O Mary  
conceived without sin.

Thou art full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Blessed be thy spouse  
Saint Joseph.

Blessed be thy father  
Saint Joachim.

Blessed be thy mother  
Saint Ann.

Blessed be thy adopted son  
Saint John.

Blessed be thy angel  
Saint Gabriel.

Blessed be the eternal Father  
who has chosen thee.

Blessed be thy Son  
who has loved thee.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit

who has espoused thee.

And blessed forever all those

who love thee and bless thee.

O Everlasting Virgin, bless us all

in the name of thy dear Son. Amen.

#### 4. MARY'S CANTICLE.

The holy Gospel contains very few of the words spoken by Mary during her life here below on earth. It has however handed down to us one of her songs. For lack of a better comparison let us call it a most precious jewel. I refer to the **MAGNIFICAT**. Gushing forth from the heart of Mary under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Himself, this hymn of praise and thanksgiving should frequently, very frequently, be echoed in our hearts as an expression of the most perfect conformity of our sentiments with those of our divine Mother.

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior,

because He has regarded the lowliness of His  
handmaid;

“For behold, henceforth all generations shall call  
me blessed;

because He who is mighty hath done great things  
to me,

and holy is His name;

And for generation upon generation is His mercy,  
to those who fear Him.

“He hath shown might with His arm,  
He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their  
heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their throne  
and exalted the lowly.

He hath filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich He hath sent away empty.

“He has given help to Israel, His servant,  
mindful of His mercy—  
even as He spoke to our fathers—  
to Abraham and to his posterity forever.”

(Luke 1: 37-49)

##### 5. PRAYER OF SAINT BERNARD.

The writings of Saint Bernard are replete with admirable pages regarding the blessed Virgin Mary. It would indeed be difficult to speak more beautifully of Mary than he did. Witness the following prayer which we borrow from his second sermon for Advent.

“Through thee, O most blessed Virgin, thou who hast found grace, Mother of life, Mother of salvation, through thee let us have access to thy Son, that we may receive through thee, Him who has been given to us through thee. Let thy integrity excuse be-



fore Him the guilt of our corruption; let thy abounding charity cover the multitude of our sins; let thy humility so pleasing to God make amends and obtain pardon for our pride; let thy glorious fecundity supply in our behalf for our lack of merit. O thou who art our Lady, our Mediatrix, and our Advocate, reconcile us to thy Son, commend us to thy Son, present us to thy Son. Grant, O most blessed Virgin, by the grace thou hast found, by the prerogative thou hast merited, by the mercy thou hast obtained, that He who vouchsafed to make Himself, by thy consent and cooperation, a partaker of our poverty and infirmity, may make us by thy intercession partakers of His own glory and happiness, Jesus Christ, thy Son our Lord, who is over all things God blessed forever. Amen.”

(St. Bernard's Sermons—Mount Melleray—Vol. 1. p. 21—Brone and Noble, Ltd., Dublin.)

## 6. RENDEZVOUS.

Every afternoon, at three o'clock, let all souls devoted to Mary go in spirit to Calvary and recite the following prayer.

“Most sweet Savior Jesus, who at this last hour didst die for the salvation of all mankind, we beseech Thee to renew to the world the gift which Thou didst bestow upon us all from the height of the Cross, the gift of Thy most holy Mother.

“We thank Thee for having given her to us, that Mother all-good, that Mediatrix all-powerful through her intercession, and we accept her as the most precious pledge among all the pledges we have received from Thy Sacred Heart.”

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the success of any business and for the protection of the interests of all parties involved. The text also mentions the need for regular audits and the importance of having a clear system in place for handling disputes.

In addition, the document highlights the role of the law in resolving conflicts and the importance of seeking legal advice when necessary. It notes that the law provides a framework for resolving disputes and ensuring that all parties are treated fairly. The text also mentions the importance of having a clear understanding of the law and the consequences of non-compliance.

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