

# On Devotion to Our Blessed Lady in General

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## Excellence and Necessity of Devotion to Our Blessed Lady

I avow, with all the Church, that Mary, being but a mere creature that has come from the hands of the Most High, is, in comparison with his Infinite Majesty, less than an atom—or rather she is nothing at all, because he only is “He Who Is” and thus by consequence that grand Lord, always independent and sufficient to himself, never had and has not now any absolute need of the Holy Virgin for the accomplishment of his will and for the manifestation of his glory. He has but to will, in order to do every thing. Nevertheless I say that, things being supposed as they are now, God having willed to commence and to complete his greatest works by the most holy Virgin, since he created her, we may well think he will not change his conduct in the eternal ages—for he is God, and he changes not either in his sentiments or in his conduct.

God the Father has not given his Only-begotten to the world except by Mary. Whatever sighs the patriarchs may have sent forth—whatever prayers the prophets and the saints of the ancient law may have offered up to obtain that treasure for full four thousand years—it was but Mary that merited it; it was but Mary who found grace before God by the force of her prayers and the eminence of her virtues. The world was unworthy, says St. Augustine, to receive the Son of God immediately

from the Father's hands. He has given him to Mary in order that the world might receive him through her. The Son of God has made himself Man, but it was *in* Mary and *by* Mary. God the Holy Spirit has formed Jesus Christ in Mary, but it was only after having asked her consent by one of the first ministers of his court.

God the Father has communicated to Mary his fruitfulness, as far as a mere creature was capable of it, in order that he might give her the power to produce his Son, and all the members of his mystical Body. God the Son has descended into her virginal womb, as the new Adam into the terrestrial paradise, to take his pleasure there, and to work in secret the marvels of his grace.

God made Man has found his liberty in seeing himself imprisoned in her womb. He has made his omnipotence shine forth in letting himself be carried by that blessed Virgin. He has found his glory and his Father's in hiding his splendors from all creatures here below and revealing them to Mary only. He has glorified his independence and his Majesty in depending on that sweet Virgin, in his conception, in his birth, in his presentation in the temple, in his hidden life of thirty years, and even in his death, where she was to be present in order that he might make with her but one same sacrifice, and be immolated to the Eternal Father by her consent—just as Isaac of old was offered by Abraham's consent to the Will of God. It is she who has suckled him, nourished him, supported him, brought him up, and then sacrificed him for us.

O admirable and incomprehensible dependence of a God, which the Holy Spirit could not pass in silence in the Gospel, although he has hidden from us nearly all the admirable things which that Incarnate Wisdom did in his hidden life, as if he would enable us, by his revelation of that at least, to understand something of its price! Jesus Christ gave more glory to God the Father by submission to his Mother during those thirty years than he would have given him in converting the whole world by the working of the most stupendous miracles. Oh, how highly we glorify God, when, to please him, we submit ourselves to Mary, after the example of Jesus Christ, our Sole Exemplar!

If we examine narrowly the rest of our Blessed Lord's life, we shall see that it was his will to begin his miracles by Mary. He sanctified St. John in the womb of St. Elizabeth his mother, but it was by Mary's word. No sooner had she spoken than John was sanctified. And this was his first and greatest miracle of grace. At the marriage at Cana he changed the water into wine, but it was at Mary's humble prayer. And this was his first miracle of nature. He has begun and continued his miracles by Mary, and he will continue them to the end of ages by Mary also.

God the Holy Spirit being barren in God—that is to say, not producing another Divine Person—is become fruitful by Mary, whom he has espoused. It is with her, in her, and of her that he has produced his Masterpiece, which is a God made Man, and whom he goes on producing in the persons of his members daily to the end of the world. The predestinate are the members of that Adorable Head. This is the reason why he, the Holy Spirit, the more he finds Mary, his dear and indissoluble spouse, in any soul, becomes the more active and mighty in producing Jesus Christ in that soul, and that soul in Jesus Christ.

It is not that we may say that our Blessed Lady gives the Holy Spirit his fruitfulness, as if he had it not himself. For inasmuch as he is God, he has the same fruitfulness or capacity of producing as the Father and the Son, only that he does not bring it into action, as he does not produce another Divine Person. But what we want to say is that the Holy Spirit chose to make use of our Blessed Lady, though he had no absolute need of her, to bring his fruitfulness into action, by producing in her and by her Jesus Christ in his members—a mystery of grace unknown to even the wisest and most spiritual among Christians.

The conduct which the Three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity have deigned to pursue in the incarnation and first coming of Jesus Christ, they still pursue daily in an invisible manner throughout the whole Church, and they will still pursue it even to the consummation of ages in the last coming of Jesus Christ.

God the Father made an assemblage of all the waters, and he named it the sea (*mare*). He has made an assemblage of all his graces, and he has called it Mary (*Maria*). This great God has a most rich treasury

in which he has laid up all that he has of beauty, of splendor, of rarity, and of preciousness, even to his own Son. And this immense treasury is none other than Mary, whom the saints have named the Treasure of the Lord, out of whose plenitude all men are made rich.

God the Son has communicated to his Mother all that he has acquired by his life and by his death, his infinite merits and his admirable virtues; and he has made her the treasurers of all that his Father has given him for his inheritance. It is by her that he applies his merits to his members, and that he communicates his virtues and distributes his graces. She is his mysterious canal; she is his aqueduct, through which he makes his mercies flow gently and abundantly.

To Mary, his faithful spouse, God the Holy Spirit has communicated his unspeakable gifts; and he has chosen her to be the dispensatrix of all he possesses, in such sort that she distributes to whom she wills, as much as she wills, as she wills, and when she wills, all his gifts and graces. The Holy Spirit gives no heavenly gift to men which he does not pass through her virginal hands. Such has been the Will of God, who has willed that we should have everything in Mary, so that she who impoverished, humbled, and hid herself even to the abyss of nothingness by her profound humility her whole life long should now be enriched and exalted by the Most High. Such are the sentiments of the Church and the Holy Fathers.

If I were speaking to the freethinkers of these times, I would prove what I have said so simply, drawing it out more at length, and confirming it by the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers, quoting the original passages, and adducing various solid reasons, which maybe seen at length in the book of Fr. Poiré (*La Triple Couronne de la Sainte Vierge*). But as I speak particularly to the poor and simple, who being of goodwill and having more faith than the common run of scholars believe more simply and so more meritoriously, I content myself with putting out the truth quite simply, without stopping to quote the original passages, which they would not understand. Nevertheless, without making much research, I shall not fail from time to time to bring forward some of them. But let us now go on with our subject.

Inasmuch as grace perfects nature, and glory perfects grace, it is certain that our Lord is still, in heaven, as much the Son of Mary as he was on earth, and that consequently he has preserved the most perfect obedience and submission of all children toward the best of all mothers. But we must take great pains not to conceive of this dependence as any abasement or imperfection in Jesus Christ. For Mary is infinitely below her Son, who is God, and therefore she does not command him as a mother here below would command her child, who is below her. Mary, being altogether transformed into God by grace, and by the glory which transforms all the saints into him, asks nothing, wishes nothing, does nothing which is contrary to the Eternal and Immutable Will of God. When we read, then, in the writings of Saints Bernard, Bernardine, Bonaventure, and others, that in heaven and on earth every thing, even to God himself, is subject to the Blessed Virgin, they mean to say that the authority which God has been well pleased to give her is so great that it seems as if she has the same power as God, and that her prayers and petitions are so powerful with God that they always pass for commandments with his Majesty, who never resists the prayer of his dear Mother, because she is always humble and conformed to his will.

If Moses, by the force of his prayer, arrested the anger of God against the Israelites in a manner so powerful that the Most High and infinitely merciful Lord, being unable to resist him, told him to let him alone, that he might be angry with and punish that rebellious people, what must we not with much greater reason think of the prayer of the humble Mary, that worthy Mother of God, which is more powerful with his Majesty than the prayers and intercessions of all the angels and saints both in heaven and on earth?

Mary commands in the heavens the angels and the blessed. As a recompense for her profound humility, God has given her the power and permission to fill with saints the empty thrones from which the apostate angels fell by pride. Such has been the will of the Most High, who exalts the humble, that heaven, earth, and hell bend with good will or bad will to the commandments of the humble Mary, whom he has