

Mary, Mother of God and of the Church

Our Mother, the Woman Whom Satan Fears

At the instant of the Incarnation of the Word...all hell felt the power of the right arm of the Almighty which hurled them to the deepest of infernal caverns. There they remained overwhelmed for some days, until the Lord in His admirable providence allowed them to come forth from this captivity, the cause of which they did not know.

(Venerable Mary of Agreda, THE MYSTICAL CITY OF GOD, The Divine History and Life of the Virgin Mother of God, Tan Books and Publishers. Rockford, IL, Pg. 258.)



Venerable Mary of Agreda goes on to describe how Satan and the demons scoured the earth to locate the cause of this unforeseen captivity. In finding none, Satan returned to hell where he held a conference with all the demons expressing his rage to avenge the Creator Who had cast them out of heaven and now afflicted this new defeat upon them. When first cast out from God's Presence Satan had spared no time in extending his dominion over the lower creatures whom God so loved that He chose to become one of them. Satan detests this favor to the inferior human race and works continually to seduce individuals and nations with false teachings and lies to ensnare them into the same damnation he himself knows. He wants no one to enjoy what he has lost forever, to live in the Presence of God Who also dwells within. Unable to attack the Creator Himself, he turns his vengeance against the creatures with a new level of fury, especially against the Woman whom he had first seen in Heaven and recognized as a threat to his power. Satan tells the demons:

I have scoured the whole earth, observed all its inhabitants with great care, and yet I have found nothing notable. I have watched and persecuted all the virtuous and perfect women who are of the race of Her whom we saw in heaven, and whom I expected to meet among them. But I find no sign of her having as yet been born; for I do not find one who possesses the marks of Her who is to be the Mother of the Messias. A Maiden whom I feared on account of her great virtues; and whom I persecuted in the temple, is already married; and therefore She can not be the one we look for, since Isaiah says She is to be a Virgin. (Is 7:14.) (Agreda, Pgs. 259-260.)



Although this is private revelation, there is much in Sacred Scripture that addresses the truth of Satan's torment of the just, even of Jesus and of His Mother, in his demonic efforts to control the world and to extinguish the Light of Christ from it. The early Church Fathers suggest that the test given to the angels was that of the Incarnation of the Son of God-become-man to dwell among us, and included a vision of the Woman who would be Mother of the Messiah and would be given power to crush his head, that ancient serpent and deceiver of men. This Woman is to be feared above all others. Herein is manifest God's eternal and providential plan to give Mary a husband in order to conceal the sacred mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption from both demons and men until

the appointed time to reveal them. These sacred mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption of the world include the mysteries of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the miraculous conception and miraculous birth of Jesus, Mary's divine motherhood and perpetual virginity before, during and after the birth of her divine Son, the virginity of Joseph and his true, legal fatherhood over Jesus, and the divinity of Jesus Himself. Mary is Theotokos, one who gives birth to God historically in our world and spiritually in our souls, for as Mother of the Mystical Christ, the Church, she delivers to us His awesome treasures of sacramental grace. Joseph's role as Virgin-Spouse of Mary and Virgin-Father of Jesus was not accidental, nor insignificant, but was an essential part of God's plan for our salvation. These three persons, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, inseparably bound together by eternal decree, formed the Hypostatic Order of Grace by which our redemption would be accomplished. This Holy Family, by its utter humility and obedience to the Will of God, would restore the first human family that lost its sanctifying grace and life in the Presence of God by its terrible pride and disobedience to God's Holy Will.

On this account the Lord concealed from these enemies the dignity of the most holy Mary and the wonderful manner of her pregnancy, as well as her virginal integrity before and after the birth; and He concealed it still more effectively by giving her a husband. Likewise, they were uncertain of the Divinity of Christ our Lord until the moment of his Death; only then they saw that they had been deceived and misled in regard to many mysteries of the Redemption. ... Others judged that She could not possibly be the Mother of the Messiah, for whom men were waiting; for besides having a husband, She with her husband belonged to the poorest, humblest, and the most insignificant people in this world: they had wrought no public miracles or prodigies, nor had they attracted the esteem or reverence of any of their fellowmen. As Lucifer and his associates are so proud, they could not persuade themselves that such extreme humility and self-debasement can consort with the dignity of Mother of God. Lucifer thought that God in his power would not choose for Himself what the devil had considered unworthy of his own dignity, which he knew was beneath that of the Almighty. In short, he was deceived by his own arrogance and giddy pride, for these are the vices which are so apt to darken the intellect and to drag the will to ruin. (Agreda, Pg. 262-263.)

Joseph became the true and legal father of Jesus when, at the Jewish ritual of circumcision, he gave Jesus the name the angel had commanded him to give to this



Child Who would save His people from their sins. Equally important, he became the "putative" father of Jesus, which means to all external appearances, Joseph was the "natural" father of Jesus so that the truth of Jesus' divinity should remain hidden. Thus Joseph fulfilled his eternal role as co-redeemer with Jesus and Mary in the work of our Redemption as Virgin-Spouse of the Mother of the Redeemer and Virgin-Father of the Redeemer, guarding the honor of both persons entrusted to him in this marvelous work and mystery of our redemption.

"It is true, my daughter, that *immediately* after my conception, I was, through the future merits of Jesus and because of my exceptional role of future Virgin-Father,

cleansed from the stain of original sin. I was from that moment confirmed in grace and never had the slightest stain on my soul. This is my unique privilege among men.”

“My pure heart also was from the first moment of existence inflamed with love for God. *Immediately*, at the moment when my soul was cleansed from original sin, grace was infused into it in such abundance that, excluding my holy spouse, I surpassed the holiness of the highest angel in the angelic choir. My heart suffered with the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Mine was a silent suffering, for it was my special vocation to hide and shield, as long as God willed, the Virgin Mother and Son from the malice and hatred of men.”

“The most painful of my sorrows was that I knew beforehand of their passion, yet would not be there to console them. Their future suffering was ever present to me and became my daily cross. I became, in union with my holy spouse, co-redemptor of the human race. Through compassion for the *sufferings of Jesus and Mary* I co-operated, as no other, in the salvation of the world.”

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, *The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA*, Pg.13.)

The City of God was written by Mother Mary of Agreda already in the 17th century. She spoke to the same reality then of Joseph’s share in God’s plan of salvation as St. Joseph spoke himself now in his words to Sister Mildred Neuzil. In **THE LIFE AND GLORIES OF ST. JOSEPH**, Edward Healy Thompson addresses the same role of the fatherhood of Joseph, standing in place of the heavenly Father over Jesus, when he references the Presentation of Jesus in the temple in which Joseph performs the ritual offering of Jesus to the Father, then redeems Him with two turtle doves, one as a holocaust and the other as a sin offering, taking Jesus back into his home to rear Him in the ways of God. In a footnote, Thompson says: **“For this reason, the Doctors of the Church agree in giving to Joseph, in a certain sense, the title of “redeemer of the Redeemer.”** While St. Paul tells us we are all called through our Baptism into the Paschal Mystery to be co-redeemers with Christ, surely no one can surpass the share that Mary



and Joseph have in Christ’s work of redemption. As so many things with God, there are hierarchies and degrees of co-operation. Mary was first to co-operate with God’s plan of salvation when, at the Annunciation, she said “fiat” to the will of God that made her Mother of the Redeemer and hence, Co-Redemptrix with her divine Son. Joseph was second to co-operate with God’s plan when at his own annunciation, his “fiat” was immediate obedience in taking his wife into his home and naming her Son Jesus as the angel had commanded, making Jesus his Son, too, and thereby concealing the great mysteries of our Redemption, the hidden truths about Jesus and Mary, which God had not yet chosen to reveal. The Virgin-Mother, the Virgin-Father, Virgin-Spouses, the divine Son—were all part of God’s eternal plan. In God’s order of grace,

headship in the family belongs to the father. Though Mary is greater than Joseph because of her greater proximity to Jesus in giving Him her flesh, Joseph is always respected as head of the Holy Family and as much father and protector of the Church as Mary is its mother.

In 431 AD the Council of Ephesus defined Mary's role in salvation as Mother of God and sanctioned the use of the term Theotokos, which means "God bearer," for the Son she bore according to the flesh, Jesus, is truly the second person of the most Holy Trinity. This Marian title is really a Christological statement, which affirms that the second person of the Trinity, who was born into history as fully human, is also fully divine, is really 'God with us', Emmanuel. The Church declared that both Divine and human natures were united in the person of Jesus, the son of Mary, in the hypostatic union. Hence, Mary is truly *Theotokos*, the bearer of God into the salvation history of God's new chosen people.
<https://udayton.edu/imri/mary/t/theotokos-meaning-of.php>



Consecration to the Holy Family

O Jesus, our most loving Redeemer, who having come to enlighten the world with Thy teaching and example, didst will to pass the greater part of Thy life in humility and subjection to Mary and Joseph in the poor home of Nazareth, thus sanctifying the Family that was to be an example for all Christian families, graciously receive our family as it dedicates and consecrates itself to Thee this day. Do Thou protect us, guard us and establish amongst us Thy holy fear, true peace and concord in Christian love: in order that by living according to the divine pattern of Thy family we may be able, all of us without exception, to attain to eternal happiness.

Mary, dear Mother of Jesus and Mother of us, by the kindly intercession make this our humble offering acceptable in the sight of Jesus, and obtain for us His graces and blessings.

O Saint Joseph, most holy Guardian of Jesus and Mary, help us by thy prayers in all our spiritual and temporal needs; that so we may be enabled to praise our divine Savior Jesus, together with Mary and thee, for all eternity.



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