

Behold Thy Mother!



The Most Important Person

on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral—a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body. . . The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature. God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation. . . What on God's good earth is more glorious than this: to be a mother?

(Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty)

Not only do mothers share in such a special way in the creative work of God in giving their flesh to a new life formed in their very own bodies until it is mature enough to exist on its own, but mothers share an intimacy with that life that no man can ever begin to fathom. The child growing within a mother's womb is influenced by everything the mother does—her activity, what she eats, her waking and sleeping, even the state of her mind. The mother's every heartbeat is like the rhythmic beat of a drum that softly lulls the unborn child to sleep or awakens the child to the start of a new day. The mother's womb becomes a sanctuary of blessed protection and repose. Her body is a temple in which sacrificial offerings are made and rise to heaven as so much of the mother's life and love, comfort and freedom, are surrendered to the needs of the child within. In that temple the nuptials of her mother's flesh and God's Spirit are celebrated as that Spirit breathes an immortal soul into that tiny new person that is a unique manifestation of the profundity of God's life shared with us. Every mother lives with an intense and pervading consciousness throughout the day of that very real presence within her. How could a mother forget the child growing and moving about within her own body? How that mother rejoices when she first hears her baby's heart beat or feels that first hard kick against the wall of her womb. As the baby grows, so does the mother's sense of wonder and longing to see what marvelous thing has taken place inside her. Once the baby is born both mother and child can enjoy an even greater communion as each gazes into the other's eyes and says "hello" as flesh touches flesh

in a personal encounter. It has been said that the angels dance in heaven whenever a new baby is born, for it is a potential new member to the choirs of Heaven that sing endless songs of praise to the glory of God. Oh how sacred and precious is every human life, no matter how small or fragile, for it is a share in the life that flows from the Author of all life Himself and mirrors His goodness and His love. In every creature the Creator buries a hunger for Himself so we shall never be satisfied with anything less and will long to be reunited with the Source of our life in the beatific vision of His glory. God's Heart is our true motherland.

Mary, our Blessed Mother, is the Mother par excellence whom God Himself fashioned from all eternity to be the Mother of His Son, adorning her with every grace and blessing possible to make her the splendor of all creation, stretching her life to a magnitude beyond all human imagination and comprehension. The child she bore within her was born of the Spirit of God, at the will of the Father, and is the Son of God, making her the Mother of God, the Immaculate Tabernacle of the Indwelling Triune God. As mother of the physical Christ, she is also mother of the Mystical Christ, His Body that is His Church, all of us. In paradise, when Adam sinned with the seduction of Eve, mother of all the living in the order of nature, and brought sin's penalty to bear upon all mankind, God promised a new Eve who would bring us a new Adam, who would identify with us in His Sacred Humanity, making His mother our mother, mother of all the living in this redeeming grace. The Woman of Genesis spoken of in Paradise is the Mother of the Redeemer given to us on Calvary when Jesus Himself, in His own words spoken to His beloved disciple John,--"Son, behold thy Mother!" -- gave her personally to us to be our own, for John is our representative as the Church, the Body of Christ living on throughout time. No greater gift could God give us, after His own Beloved Son, than this most holy and blessed Mother. Can ever a mother by nature suffer so much for her children as she who is called Mother of Sorrows, co-redeemer and Mediatrix of Grace? Can any human mother plead as dearly for our welfare as does our heavenly Mother? What mother can press her child to her heart and feel as much love for her child as does our Blessed Mother? So great is her favor before God that God seems to bend His will to hers when she intercedes for her children. At Cana, Jesus said His hour had not yet come, but at His Mother's bidding, He did what she commanded and Heaven consented to her request as well. Thus Jesus' hour began.

In the **Mystical City of God**, private revelations that are not binding upon the faithful but certainly can feed the devotional life of Mary's spiritual children, Venerable Mary of Agreda speaks of Our Lady's revelation of her intimate knowledge of God from the moment of her creation, and how she adored her Lord and Creator in the silence she kept to conceal this knowledge from those around her. She reserved her speech for conversation with God and with the angels who were given charge over her because of her great mission in the work of redemption, her predestination in grace to be the Mother of God, Mother of that Sacred Humanity and Redeemer of all mankind. Our

Lady bids us imitate the morning exercise she did each day, even as an infant, an exercise we can't even imagine could be possible, but Mary herself is testimony to that divine truth that what is impossible to men is possible to God. He Who is the Author of the laws of our nature can just as easily dispense with them for His own glory and magnification.

...strive with all thy powers to imitate me in an exercise in which I persevered during my life from the very first moment of my birth, omitting it on not a single day, however full of cares and labors it might have been. This exercise was the following: every day at beginning of dawn, I prostrated myself in the presence of the Most High and gave Him thanks and praise for his immutable Being, his infinite perfections, and for having created me out of nothing; acknowledging myself as his creature and the work of his hands. I blessed Him and adored Him, giving Him honor, magnificence and Divinity, as the supreme Lord and Creator of all that exists. I raised up my spirit to place it in his hands, offering myself with profound humility and resignation to Him and asking Him to dispose of me according to his will during that day and during all the days of my life, and to teach me to fulfill whatever would be his greatest pleasure. This I repeated many times during the external works of the day; and in the internal ones I first consulted his Majesty, asking his advice, permission and benediction for all my actions.

(Venerable Mary of Agreda, THE MYSTICAL CITY OF GOD, Volume 1, chapter 21, #343, pg. 276-277.)

Mary's divine motherhood is **her greatest privilege** upon which all her other privileges depend. Her spiritual motherhood of all mankind is **our greatest treasure** and on that Mother's love we should truly depend. What fools we would be not to rest our heads in the lap of this Mother whom the angels obey and the demons fear and even God Himself takes pleasure in pleasing. Mary of Agreda records what the Three Divine Persons of the Trinity revealed to her, that which the Church already believes about Mary but has not yet defined as a dogma, that she is the Mediatrix of all the grace Jesus has won for us, and that heaven itself deigns never to refuse her anything, for she would never ask for anything that would not be the will of God. Mary of Agreda sees Our Lady being crowned in heaven while a voice from the throne addresses her:

My Beloved, chosen among the creatures, our kingdom is Thine; Thou shalt be the Lady and the Sovereign of the seraphim, of all the ministering spirits, the angels and of the entire universe of creatures. ... Being filled with grace beyond all the rest, Thou hast humiliated Thyself in thy own estimation to the lowest place; receive now the supreme dignity deserved by Thee and, as a participation in our Divinity, the

dominion over all the creatures of our Omnipotence. ...and by the power We now give thee thou shalt subject hell with all its demons and inhabitants. ... In thy hands and at thy pleasure We place the influences and forces of the heavens, the moisture of the clouds, the growths of the earth; and all of them do Thou distribute according to thy will, and our own shall be at thy disposal for the execution of thy wishes. Thou shalt be the Empress and Mistress of the militant Church, its Protectress, its Advocate, its Mother and Teacher. Thou shalt be the special Patroness of the Catholic countries; and whenever they, or the faithful, or any of the children of Adam call upon Thee from their heart, serve or oblige Thee, Thou shalt relieve and help them in their labors and necessities. Thou shalt be the Friend, the Defender and the Chieftainess of all the just and of our friends; all of them Thou shalt comfort, console and fill with blessings according to their devotion to Thee. In view of all this we make Thee the Depository of our riches, the Treasurer of our goods; we place into thy hands the helps and blessings of our grace for distribution; nothing do We wish to be given to the world, which does not pass through thy hands; and nothing do We deny, which Thou wishest to concede to men. Grace shall be diffused in thy lips for obtaining all that Thou wishest and ordainest in heaven and on earth, and everywhere shall angels and men obey Thee; because whatever is ours shall be thine, just as Thou hast always been ours; and Thou shalt reign with Us forever.

(The Mystical City, Vol. IV, chapter XXII, #779, pg. 657.)

This dear Mother of ours with so much favor in heaven has come to her children all around the world, visiting nation after nation with her favor and giving each a mission to help her save souls. In 1956 she came to her children in America through visionary Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil and called herself "Our Lady of America®," asking us to honor her by the purity of our lives.

My child, I entrust you with this message that you must make known to my children in America. I wish it to be the country dedicated to my purity. The wonders I will work will be the wonders of the soul. They must have faith and believe firmly in my love for them. I desire that they be the children of my Pure Heart. I desire, through my children of America, to further the cause of faith and purity among peoples and nations. Let them come to me with confidence and simplicity, and I, their Mother, will teach them to become pure like to my Heart that their own hearts may be more pleasing to the Heart of my Son. ...

Behold, O my children, the tears of your Mother! Shall I weep in vain? Assuage the sorrow of my Heart over the ingratitude of sinful men

by the love and chasteness of your lives. Will you do this for me, beloved children, or will you allow your Mother to weep in vain? I come to you, O children of America, as a last resort. I plead with you to listen to my voice. Cleanse your souls in the Precious Blood of My Son. Live in His Heart, and take me in that I may teach you to live in great purity of heart which is so pleasing to God. Be my army of chaste soldiers, ready to fight to the death to preserve the purity of your souls. I am the Immaculate One, Patroness of your land. Be my faithful children as I have been your faithful Mother. ...

I desire to make the whole of America my shrine by making every heart accessible to the love of my Son. ...My heart, my Immaculate Heart, is the channel through which the graces of the Sacred Heart are given to men. ... I wish to gather about me, my tender child, soldier and valiant bearer of the torch, an army of brave lovers, who as my torchbearers will enkindle the fire of Divine Love in the souls of men. Only those who are strong in love can become my soldiers to bear aloft, not the sword of destruction, but the sword of fire, the flaming torch of Divine Charity. ...I am pleased, my child, with the love and honor my children in America give to me, especially through my glorious and unique privilege of the Immaculate Conception. I promise to reward their love by working through the power of my Son's Heart and my Immaculate Heart miracles of grace among them. *I do not promise miracles of the body, but of the soul. ...*

O child of my Pure Heart, tell my children to come to me and learn this true love of my Son, which is so necessary for their peace of soul. ... Come to me, my children, come to me and learn. There is much I would teach you. ... Has ever a mother shown more love and interest in her children's welfare than I have done?

(Sister Mildred (Mary Ephrem) Neuzil, Diary, "Our Lady of America©," Fostoria, OH, pg. 10-17.)

Ah then, let us revere this dear Mother God has given us to ensure that, under her guidance, we find our way home to Him. Let us give ourselves to her safe keeping and hide beneath her mantle of mercy that shields us from all harm, even the righteous justice of God. Let this nation reclaim her as its Patroness, its Shield against all the forces of evil that are focused on it, and may she ask and obtain for us the grace to remake this Nation as one nation under God, acknowledging and honoring God's supreme authority over us all. May she obtain the grace for us to renew our Church, renew the priesthood and consecrated life, preserve Christian marriage and family life, and bring about a change in the laws of our land that deny the sacredness of every life, at every stage, and to its right to protection under the law.

O Mary, dearest Mother, we claim you as our own! We promise to honor you by the purity of our lives!

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