



## **THE BLESSED WOMAN**

in the face of protestant attacks

or

**Irrefutable answers to protestant objections against the  
cult of Sma. Virgin Mary**

fur

**Fr. Júlio MARIA**

**Missionary of Our Lady of Smo. sacrament**

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—1936—

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To the distinguished and zealous diocesan Bishop His  
Excellency. Res.

D. José Maria Parreira Lara

I dedicate this work as an expression of veneration and  
filial love.

THE AUTHOR.

# **imprimatur**

Caratinga, 20 December 1935

t+ Josephus Mary

## **approving letter**

of His Excellency. Res.

**D. José Maria Parreira Lara**

DD Bishop of Caratinga

Caratinga, January 10, 1936.

My dear Father Julio Maria,

I read with immense satisfaction your new book: Blessed Woman, in the face of Protestant attacks, and I have edified a lot with these beautiful and glowing pages that constitute a true monument in honor of the Sma. Virgin Mary.

The lack of a Marian theology book was felt among us, but of a popular theology, available to all, without however losing the depth and security of the doctrine.

Your Honor produced this desired work.

Your book is admirable, both in terms of its background and form:

The basis is a solid doctrine, clear, well proven and an irrefutable argumentation.

The form is alert, enthusiastic, with a communicative expression and an irresistible vigor.

The two combine to form a work of first value. It is the complete, fulminating refutation of everything Protestants object to the cult of Maria Sma.

The subjects are dealt with by the hand of a master, and I believe that in Brazil nothing comparable has been written about the worship and prerogatives of God.

Your book is one of those who never die, because they rise above the vulgarities, the commonplaces, and draw from their life and their success in the elevation of doctrine, in the sublimity of their ideas and in the living way of presenting truths.

I wholeheartedly impart to you the imprimatur of the new book, which enriches the already large collection of the works of your tireless apostolate,

and I pray to God that this beautiful book may penetrate all families, to clarify and extend the Mother's worship everywhere Of Jesus...

I am with all the esteem of Your Reverend.

Humble Servant

**+ Jose Maria**

Bishop of Caratinga

# Introduction

## **that it is necessary to read**

Defending the honor of a dear mother is duty and happiness for a loving child.

It is the *raison d'être* of this book. I wouldn't need another introduction.

Every day they are attacked by the blasphemies, sometimes ignorant, sometimes malicious, of the Protestant sects, the dignity, the glory, the prerogatives, the power of the Blessed Virgin.

How can a child remain silent in the face of continual attacks directed at his Mother?

It is urgent, therefore, to give them a complete, fulminating answer, without a reply.

There may undoubtedly be among these Protestants people of good faith, owing to the religious ignorance in which they live, seduced also, as they are, by the free interpretation of the Bible; but on the part of your pastors, there is much treachery and bad faith, or else phenomenal ignorance.

Among these pastors there are many traffickers, very sad diggers of life, making their trade not an instrument to make God love, but rather an instrument of hatred, slander against the Catholic Church, selling souls in exchange for the money that goes to them. providing your slanderer life.

It is necessary to unmask these merchants of the souls of others, and refute the errors they spread, not only in the souls of their followers, but in the minds of incautious Catholics.

## **I. The Source of Protestant Errors**

Hidden in the creeping grass of the road, the error's poisonous snake seeks to bite the careless passerby, whoever he may be.

It is necessary to point out the presence of the serpent, to avoid contact with the traveler and to avoid being bitten.

The hatred of these unfortunate sectarians, excited by the serpent that had already seduced our first parents, is particularly concentrated on the Blessed

Virgin, because they know that, in the words of the saints, a true devotee of Mary cannot be lost.

Satan, who wants to lose souls, no matter what it costs, seeks to wrest this guarantee of salvation from the hands of Christians and, for this reason, raises bands of explorers that he calls and calls themselves by the name of shepherds, but who are nothing but devouring wolves, as the divine Master says.

These pastors first of all want to make a living, and since you can't be a good Protestant without attacking the Catholic Church, here they are repeating the dozen silly objections they learned from the sect's lecterns, not wanting to understand the Catholic response.

The need to earn a living is followed by fanaticism; fanaticism is followed by gross materialism, and materialism is followed by complete atheism.

At a general meeting of pastors in Germany, newspapers say that out of 1000 pastors present there were 800 who no longer believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ, nor in the inspiration of Holy Scripture.

Under such conditions, one can understand the hatred that such men vote for the Catholic Church, where all are united in faith, morals and worship.

This outburst of hatred focuses on the Immaculate Virgin, under the pretext that her worship is pagan, idolatry, abuse, excess, etc.

Poor blind people! Unhappy slanderers!

## **II. The special feature of this book**

It is therefore absolutely necessary to show the Mother of Jesus, in the halo of her greatness, her power, her love and her mercy, and to show her not only by pious, enthusiastic considerations, but by authentic proofs, drawn directly from the Holy Scripture.

It is the special feature of this book.

It is a book of doctrine.

An evangelical book.



A book of exegesis, showing the foundations of the cult of Maria Sma., the evangelical foundations of her greatness and the fragility of adverse objections.

No thesis, no principle, no conclusion, no title will be admitted in this book that does not have its basis in Holy Scripture.

It must be a revealing book...indicating...illuminating... and all this can only be done by the word of God contained in Sacred Scripture and in the unbroken tradition of apostolic doctrines.

### **III - The seven-headed dragon**

The serpent, the same serpent of the earthly paradise, seeking to bite and lose souls, is reincarnated in Protestant hatred.

It is necessary, in front of this serpent, to show the Blessed Woman, who already for the first time crushed his head, at the foot of the cross, on the top of Calvary, and who continues to crush it wherever the serpent crawls.

The Blessed woman crushed the serpent's head, as God foretold in paradise: It will crush your head (Gen 3:15); but such a serpent has innumerable other heads; it is a seven-headed dragon, as the Seer of Patmos saw. Here is the dragon... having seven heads (Rev11,3).

And not only does it have seven heads, but each one of them has proliferated, producing hundreds of other heads.

When Luther launched into the world his cry of revolt against the Church, it was only a blesser, but soon Calvinism, Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, Baptistism, etc... grew around Lutheranism until the number of about 900 sects (ne: in 1936!).

It is the same dragon... but with a multiform head, there is only common among these heads: the hatred of the Catholic Church, the blasphemies against the Holy Virgin and the calumnies against the Priests.

Hatred, blasphemy and slander are the threefold foundation of Protestantism in general, and of each sect in particular.

#### **IV. the blessed woman**

In other volumes I have already responded to the sectarian hatred of the Church (1), of priests (2), of Catholic doctrine (3); in the present I want to respond to the blasphemies thrown at the most pure Virgin, the Blessed Woman among all women.

I will invent nothing... I will collect attacks on Protestant books and views, always giving preference to works signed by the sect's top figures.

The reader should not be surprised to see me insist, in a particular way, on the great privilege of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, since it is the preparation for the incomparable dignity of Mother of God and the summation of all her prerogatives.

Once this first privilege is admitted, all the others must be admitted, for they spring from that one, as the fruit springs from a flower.

The divine motherhood of Maria Sma. it is the beginning of all your greatness.

The Immaculate Conception is the preparation for this greatness.

The Assumption into Heaven is its indispensable corollary.

*(1) Christ, the Pope and the Church.*

*(2) Light in darkness, or irrefutable answers to Protestant objections.*

*(3) Protestant attacks.*

#### **V. Who is this book for?**

For whom?

For all.

Those who want to know the Mother of Jesus well and love her very much should read this book.

These pages will open up new horizons for you in Marian devotion, and will show you a Mary that you may not know.

As for the unhappy Protestants... these, yes, should read it; and reading it, I am sure they would recognize the error in which they labor... but they are afraid of the light, they will not read it, except for very few exceptions... the pastors will not let it read!... poor and unhappy Protestants! ... pray for them ... they are so unhappy!

Above all, read this legion of Sons and Daughters of Mary, flower and hope of the Catholic Youth, which today constitutes the vanguard of the regeneration of a future Brazil, and this reading will be for them a beacon and a standard.

Sincere Catholics and Protestants read it, and you will see all the nooks and crannies of error and ignorance light up to show you the beautiful and incomparable face of the Mother of Jesus and Mother of men.

Fr. Julio Maria

Ne serivam vanum, Due, pia Virgo, manum.

+

# CHAPTER I

## The cult of Mary Most Holy

It is well known that Protestantism concentrated its hatred on the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God.

Why this hate?

So that its adherents can protest against the Catholic Church.

It's the big one, and maybe the only reason.

The Catholic Church, in perfect unity and in the granitic firmness of its teaching, attributes to each person the cult that belongs to him.

**He** only and exclusively worships God, because He alone is the Supreme Lord, He alone is God, and He alone has the right to the supreme cult of worship.

Dominus Deus noster, Dominus unus est. (Dt6,4).

**It venerates** the Virgin Mary, for being the Mother of Jesus Christ and, as such, clothed with a dignity above all dignities, having the right to a worship above the worship attributed to the saints.

— Super modum, Mater mirabilis (2Mc7,20).

**Honor** the Saints, for being friends of God and for enjoying, as such, close to God, a power of intercession above all creatures in this world.

Mirabilis Deus in sanctis suis (Ps 67,36).

In this way, we have a triple cult, essentially distinct from each other, in a harmonious and logical gradation.

1. The **worship service** (latria) due to God.
2. The cult of **super veneration** (hyper-dulia) due to Maria Sma.
3. The worship of **veneration** (dulia) due to the saints.

Such is the basis of Catholic worship, and it is enough to understand these notions to understand the injustice and ridicule of Protestant objections, accusing Catholics of Mariolatras, of worshiping the Mother of Jesus.

We will examine these objections in this first chapter, giving them the answer they deserve.

## I. Mariolatry

I don't want to make up any objections; Protestant friends are in charge of fabrication and propaganda.

I will literally remove such objections from their writings so that they cannot accuse me of exaggeration or misinterpretation.

Here is the charge of Mariolatry, as I transcribe it from a Protestant newspaper.

The adoration of Maria Sma is called Mariolatry.

Says the columnist:

*Arguably, and there is no one who dares deny it, in Catholicism Mary occupies a prominent place, she is the "fact totum" of the heavenly court. All invocations, all adorations are directed only and solely to her. It represents in Catholicism everything, substance and essence. Mary is given sermons and gifts, the faithful are invited to rely almost exclusively on her and on her absolute power.*

*All this adoration, this idolatry, created what is called Mariolatry, which is nothing more than a late creation, long after the foundations of Catholicism were laid.*

*Mary began to emerge from the silence in which the New Testament writers had enveloped her in the middle of the fourth century. It was the work of a sect, composed almost entirely of women, which appeared in Thrace and Upper Scisia, which began to spread the divinity of Mary to the four winds, making her worthy of adoration and worship.*

*These sectarians were called "Colliridians" for offering the Mother of Jesus some torches called Kohhúga in Greek.*

*In the first centuries we did not find any cult of Mary. All are in unison and agree to preach worthy of worship only God and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ.*

*Neither Justin Martyr, nor Irenæus, nor Tertullian, nor Cyprian, nor Laitancio, can be invoked as supporters and propagators of the cult of the great "mother of God", because they, like Saint Peter, Saint Paul and Saint John, do not allude to the other mediation but that of God and Jesus Christ.*

*Let's go back to the past, that is, to the first centuries and let us go through them with attention.*

**1st century.** *Clement Romano, the supposed successor of St. Peter, writes in his Apostolic Constitutions: "It is not permissible to draw near to Almighty God, who through Jesus Christ his son." (Const. Apost. Book 2 and 33)*

**Second century.** *Ignatius, disciple of the apostle John, writes from Rome to the Philadelphs:*

*"In your prayers you must have before your eyes only Jesus Christ and the Father of Jesus Christ."*

**S éculo III.** *Origen clearly said: "Let us not have the disguise of calling upon any other, but the one who is God above all things, sufficient for everything through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

**fourth century.** *Athanasius preached and wrote: "We are truly God's worshipers, for we invoke neither creatures nor men; we invoke the Son, who by birth proceeds from God, and who is the true God, who was born a man, it is true, but nevertheless is God and Savior."*

**5th century.** *João Capistrano opposes those who wanted to introduce mediators other than Christ.*

*In these first five centuries, no other adoration was conceived, no veneration other than God and Jesus Christ. How, then, can "Catholicism sponge the blackboard of the past, and assert in every point of view the opinion of the sect of Coliridians?*

*How then?*

*Leaving Jesus Christ in the background? But why? Do they admit the immaculate conception of Mary?*

## **II. the fact-totum of the heavenly court**

Such is the objection in all its brutality, ignorance and nakedness.

In short, they accuse the Catholic Church of playing Maria Sma.:

1. The fact -**totum** of the heavenly court;
2. An object of **worship** ;
3. The object of a **new cult** ;
4. A novelty unknown in the **Gospel** and in the early days of Christianity.

Let us take all the objections one by one and give them a clear and succinct answer, which dispels all errors and makes the only Catholic truth shine forth.

Holy Mary is not, and cannot be, the "fact totum". It is a heresy, which the meaning of the terms themselves refutes.

The fact totum is God; and for this reason alone all honor and glory are owed in the ages and in the ages, as the Apostle says (1Tm 1, 17).

The term **worship** expresses the worship of this supreme honor; and this term is exclusively reserved for the worship of God.

The term — **super-veneration** — expresses the worship we render to the Mother of God; and it has nothing in common with worship, so that in this worship excess is impossible; for there to be an excess, it would be necessary that, surpassing the super-veneration cult, someone slipped into prayer, which no Catholic does or can do.

So what exactly is Maria Sma's place? in the divine hierarchy of religion?

It's simple, it's beautiful. It is St. Paul who will provide us with the description, in his figurative theological language. He writes: Just as in one body we have many members, and not all members have the same function, so, even though many, we are one body in Christ, and each one of us members of one another (Rom 12:4-5 )

Now you are the body of Christ, and members joined to a member (1Ch 12,27).

And he is the head of the body of the Church, and he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; so that He has the primacy in all things, because it was the Father's pleasure, that all fullness should dwell in Him, and that by Him all things should be reconciled to Himself. (Chs 1,18-19).

Here is a splendid figure of the Church.

The Church is the **mystical body** of Jesus Christ.

A body necessarily has three parts:

The head, the neck, the lower limbs.

It is a figure often employed by the Apostle.

The **head** is the Christ.

The **members** are us.

And how are the members of this body connected to the head?

Through the neck.

The neck is therefore the middle part, which is a member of the body, but with this particularity, which is a member that touches the head and limbs at the same time.

And among the different members of this body, which is the creature that touches God and creatures at the same time?

It's the Virgin Mary.

By its nature it is a simple **creature** ; by her dignity, she is the **Mother of God**

.

And what more intimate union can exist between two creatures than the union of Mother and child?

This is why Maria Sma. it is called by the saints: **the neck** of the mystical body of Jesus Christ.

This figure admirably expresses the place that Maria Sma. occupies in the Church and in Catholic worship.

She is not the head; she is a member.

It is not a simple member, but among all the members it enjoys the unique and incommunicable privilege of being directly **attached to the head** , while all the other members are **through** the neck.

This is how the first Protestant objection, accusing the Church of making Maria Sma, the fact totum of religion, collapses.

The **fac totum** and the head is Jesus Christ.

The **intermediary** , the connecting member between Jesus Christ and men, is Maria Sma.

Now who is capable of confusing the neck with the head?

Who does not see that in no way and never can the neck replace the head, or be placed on top of the head?

The comparison of São Paulo is therefore typical, profound, expressive, and indicates for each part of the mystical body of the Savior its proper place.



Jesus Christ,  
Maria Sma.,  
Men.

### III. an object of worship

Let us quickly pass over such a musty objection.

It is sad to be forced to respond to such nonsense.

Will **idolatry** still come to the fore in the twentieth century ?

It is to say that all over the world, the vast majority of the population, these thousands and thousands of educated and educated men adore images, like vulgar fetishists, giving life to a stick, begging for favors from a stump, asking for health and life from a block of cement... prostrating his forehead in the dust of the path in front of a cardboard. Does the Protestant not see that all this is exceedingly ridiculous, and that if such a thing could formerly be practiced by a wild Zulu, it can never penetrate the mind of a civilized man,

If we asked any child, if such or such saint is a living saint, who eats, drinks and sleeps, the child would answer no. but that it is just a **portrait** , a representation.

“ What is the man, even illiterate, who ignores that “it is not the image or the portrait that he venerates or invokes, but the **person represented** by the image?

Nobody loves images; but the image being the representation of Jesus Christ, one can worship Jesus Christ, represented by the image.

No one worships the Virgin Mary, who is neither God nor God, but a simple creature, elevated, by the grace and favor of God, to the highest dignity that a creature can be clothed in: divine motherhood... and as such it deserves to be honored, venerated: — as the Mother of God — and not worshiped as God.

All of this is so clear that only obsessed blindness can reproduce such accusations.

Worship is not kissing or leaning... Parents kiss their children; the inferiors bow down to their superiors, not worshipping them.

Worship is not just the outward act, but the spirit that intends to bestow divine honors on anyone.

Not wanting someone to love, not love.

And no Catholic has ever had the idea of worshiping anyone other than God.

And they themselves must know better what they intend to do than their detractors.

#### **IV. a new cult**

The good Protestant accuses us of having created a new cult, which he calls Mariolatry.

We don't create anything. Only God can create people and things; and Protestant friends may object.

Luther created Bibliolatry and Odiolatry, as he created libertinolatry, worshiping the Bible and despising its content; worshiping hatred, in order to better vilify the Church; worshiping the flesh for dissolute and sacrilegious life.

The columnist says that the cult of Mary began to emerge from the silence in which the New Testament writers had enveloped her, in the middle of the fourth century.

It's a lot of ignorance of the Gospel, my dear friend!... It takes a lot of ingenuity to come up with such an assertion.

The cult of Maria Sma. it is all indicated, outlined and developed in the Gospel itself.

Read the Gospel, dear Protestants... but read it in its **entirety** , and not simply the passages chosen by you... that more or less seem to favor your wrong opinions by the free interpretation of the texts.

The cult of Maria Sma. it is essentially an **evangelical cult** , all evangelical... and despite all the homage we pay to the Mother of Jesus, we will never come close to matching the homage paid to her by the Gospel.

Outside the Gospel, the cult of the Mother of Jesus would be an incomplete, stunted, rickety cult...

In the Gospel he takes on a divine expansion, and rises to heights that cause vertigo to those who know how to reflect.

To say that the cult of Mary is a novelty is to affirm the novelty of the **Gospel** , the novelty of the **catcombs** of the first centuries, where at every step is found the expression of the veneration and love with which the first faithful surrounded the Immaculate Virgin... it would be to extinguish with a single stroke the loving accents of the Fathers of the first centuries, who exalted the Holy Virgin with an enthusiasm never equaled in later centuries.

No, no! such documents are not destroyed; such accents are not muffled; such cries are not extinguished; and as long as the Gospel is the Gospel, we can and should say that the cult of the Mother of God is a cult **instituted by God** , transmitted by the Gospel and practiced throughout the centuries.

They will perhaps say that Jesus Christ did not exalt his Mother.

But why exalt with words the one who is exalted above all creatures, for her holiness, for her dignity, for her prerogatives, which make Mary the Blessed woman among all women.

Why continually repeat a palpable, indisputable truth, accepted by everyone in the first centuries?

Mary is the mother of Jesus.

Jesus and God.

Mary is therefore **Mother of God** .

What more can you say?

Doesn't such a title exhaust all other titles?

Are there still honors higher than these?

It's impossible!

Mary is Mother of God; as such she is necessarily the holiest and most glorious of all creatures.

Did Jesus Christ speak little of his Mother?

Perfectly... and so it should be.

Jesus came, as He claimed, not for the righteous, but for sinners. Non veni vocare just, sed peccatores (Lc5,32).

He came to restore health to the sick and not to those who do not need a doctor—Non egent, qui sani sunt, medico. (Lc5.31).

To whom should you then radiate the tenderness of your heart?

Isn't it for the unfortunate, for the sinners?

From Peter He will make head of his Church.

De Matthew the tax collector will make his Evangelist.

From Saul, the persecutor, he will make the Apostle to the nations.

From Magdalene, the sinner, she will make a static lover.

From a crucified thief he will make the first conquest of his death.

From poor fishermen He will make his apostles.

Have the dear Protestants thought of it?

Could the Heart of Jesus, tender, loving and zealous for his mother's honor associate the Immaculate Virgin with all these converted sinners?

Could He place the same crown of praise upon His Mother's head?

No!... That would be to demean the Holy Virgin instead of exalting her.

To Peter He said: You are blessed (Mt 16,17).

Matthew said; Follow me (Mt 9,9).

To Paul he said: I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting (Acts 9,5).

Magdalena said: Your sins are forgiven (Lc7,48).

To the thief he said: Today you will be with me in paradise (Lk21,43).

To the apostles he said: You are my friends (Jn 15:15).

But to Mary He said: **You are my Mother** (Mt 2,11).

What could He say more?...

Jesus Christ ran out of this one word.

## **V. Mary's obscurity**

Says the Protestant friend that the Holy Writers enveloped Mary in complete silence.

What a strange assertion!

What a slander!

How ignorant of the Gospel!

If Jesus Christ spoke little of his Blessed Mother, the angels spoke, the evangelists spoke, the people spoke, heaven and earth spoke...

Even Luther spoke...

Will it be necessary to collect everything they said?

It would be writing a book. So let's summarize.

I said above that the cult of Mary is essentially an evangelical cult, and proving this, everything is proven.

What a more **evangelical service** than the one that begins in the Gospel with this homage from heaven: Ave, gratia plena. Hail Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with you; Blessed are you among women!

What more **evangelical** worship than the one that shows us Mary cooperating, by the free consent of her faith, her virginity, her humility, to the initial mystery of Christianity, covered by the shadow of the Most High, clothed in the Holy Spirit, and conceiving in her bosom virginal the very Son of God!

What more evangelical worship than the one that represents Mary, Mother of God, breathing with Him the same breath, living with Him of the same blood, carrying Him in her bowels, communicating it, through her voice, to John the Baptist and to Isabel!

What more **evangelical** worship than that which Elizabeth and John pay her: the former acclaiming her the Mother of her Lord; the second exulting in his mother's womb, receiving the sanctification that Mary's voice transmits to him!

Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, exclaims in a loud voice, repeating and completing the angel's words: Blessed are you among women; and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

And under this impression of the Holy Spirit Elizabeth renders to the Mother of God a service of unparalleled veneration: Whence comes this saying that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? fulfill the things that have been told you from the Lord. (Lc1,43)

What more **evangelical** worship than that which, on the occasion of these words of Isabel, as if to approve and apply them, God himself makes the

inspired soul of Mary exude, saying: From now on all generations will call me well - blessed, because He who is Almighty has done great things in me (Lk 1,48).

What more **evangelical** worship than that which, after Elizabeth, the inspired one, the shepherds and magicians continue to render to Mary, adoring the child God, in the traits of Mary, his Mother. (Mt1,11)

The holy old Simeon, in his prophecy, associates the Virgin Mother with all the contradictions to which her Son was subject, and in a particular way with that gladio of pain that will have to unite them in the great torment. (Lc2,34)

What more **evangelical** worship than this filial homage of trust, tenderness, and abandonment that the child God paid to his Mother, making her Virginal womb his throne, his refuge, his food!

What could be more admirable than this homage of submission that Jesus pays to him, living until the age of thirty in the obscurity of Nazareth, in the intimacy of his Mother... showing himself to be submissive to her in everything? (Lc2,51)

What more **evangelical** worship than the one that shows us the divine attention of the Son of God to his Mother's request, at the Wedding of Cana, where, to satisfy Maria Sma. wine, performing his first miracle and confirming the faith of his apostles! (Jo2,1-11).

What a more **evangelical service** than the one you render to Maria Sma. that woman of the Gospel, exclaiming at the height of her enthusiasm for the divine word: Blessed are the entrails that brought you and the breast that suckled you! (Lc9,28).

What more **evangelical** worship than the one solemnly inaugurated at the foot of the cross, when the divine Victim gives to Maria Sma. as mother to all humanity, in the person of the beloved apostle, the one who will best describe the divinity of Jesus Christ and the tenderness of his heart!

Here is the cult of Mary, **founded on the Gospel** , and flowing from the Gospel as its divine source, throughout the centuries.

Here is the cult of Maria Sma. not hidden in darkness, nor shrouded in silence, but divinely proclaimed in the face of the universe.

The centuries will hear and understand these examples and these evangelical lessons, and it is to respond to them that Christians of all times will prostrate themselves at the feet of Mary, imploring her help and intercession.

Let us limit ourselves to these quotes. They are all direct, literal, addressing the Mother of Jesus directly.

To establish and prove the evangelical cult of Maria Sma. it is not necessary to resort to mystical, metaphorical applications of Sacred Scripture; it is enough to collect the passages that narrate his union with Jesus, his action and the praises that the evangelists address to him.

This alone is a true **Marian theology** ... just as it is an **evangelical theology** .

Reflect on this, dear Protestants, and listen to your common sense, your heart and the Gospel, instead of reproducing lying objections, invented by spite and hatred.

Reflect and you will be forced to confess that, in fact, the cult of Maria Sma. it is not an invention of the Catholic Church, but rather a **divine institution** , expressed at every step in the pages of the Gospel.

### **SAW. Mary in the early Church**

The aforementioned columnist also claims that in the first centuries there was no worship of Mary.

Excuse me, dear Protestant; such an assertion is completely false, as false as the preceding one, invoking the silence of the evangelists about the same worship.

I want to show you the opposite here.

The most solid evidence is, without a doubt, the **archæological** monuments and these monuments abound and are of irrefutable expression.

In the first two centuries, the uninterrupted persecutions of the Roman emperors and paganism shaken by the new doctrine forced Christians to take refuge in the heart of the catacombs.

These catacombs were immense underground where there were churches, meeting rooms, cemeteries, etc...

It was there in the bosom of the earth, in the darkness of night and underground, that the life and activity of the first Christians developed.

It was there that the monuments to the dead, the martyrs, the conquerors of the century, the passions and the devil were raised.

It was there that they perpetuated in stone and canvas, with hammer, chisel and brush, their fought but triumphant belief.

And this is why the catacombs are imperishable and expressive monuments of the faith of the first centuries.

They are books, in which you can read what, in the time of the Apostles and their first successors, was believed, venerated and implored.

Let us open this **sublime book for** a moment and read in it the feelings of the first Christians towards the Mother of Jesus.

Here is what Father Marchi writes in his Monument of Christian Art in Rome. It is about the crypt of Mary of the baby Jesus, in the Santa Inês catacomb.

\* \* \*

Above the small altar of this crypt, he writes, there is a representation of the Virgin in half body; sitting with the baby Jesus on her knees.

The Virgin stretches out her arms in an attitude of prayer.

The child does not make this gesture, as if to indicate the infinite distance between Mother and Son.

This painting belongs to the second century.

It can be seen that it was customary to unite the Virgin Sma. to his divine Son, to represent and invoke them together.

In the same catacomb there were several other paintings of the Virgin, always with her arms outstretched in an attitude of prayer. It is the same physiognomy, the same virginal expression, lacking only the baby Jesus, which made them call them prayers.

Such prayers are true images of Maria Sma., as several of them bear the name written below: Mara, et al. Maria.

What completes the assertion is that, in several places, such a **prayer** is beside an image of Our Lord, making the symmetrical pair.



Underneath one of them is written: Maria Virgo, Minister of the Cerosale temple.

From the comparison of the different paintings, archæological science concluded that such prayers, which are numerous in the catacombs, really represent the Mother of Jesus, standing like so many witnesses to the extension of her worship among the first Christians.

Here is what another illustrious sage (Carlos Lenormant) writes after having visited the catacombs of Santa Domitilia:

Visiting the first hall of the catacomb, I found there a painting of the Good Shepherd, which certainly dated from the end of the first century.

It looked like the same layout and coloring as the paintings found in the sepulchral room of the pyramid of Caius Ceslius, which he had visited just before.

Alongside the Good Shepherd there were other figures of Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

All were from the same time.

Mr. de Rossi took me to another room, where there was the Virgin Mary with her Son on her knees, receiving gifts from the Three Wise Men.

O sweet and pious comparison! Rafæl must have seen several paintings of the catacombs and took advantage of them.

His Adam and Eve, from the vault of the Sala della Signatura in the Vatican, is found almost identical in the cemetery of Domitilla.

In turn, the Virgin of the same catacomb possesses the chaste grace and slender form of a Madonna of Raphæl.

The Catholic's faith is exalted, recognizing with undoubted proof the cult of the Mother of God, established in the most remote times of the primitive Church.

These paintings are venerable and certain guarantees of the apostolic antiquity of the cult of the Virgin Sma.

If we were dealing with unbelievers, we could still cite, as proof of this cult in the early times, the apocryphal Gospels, composed in the first centuries, which are more concerned with Maria Sma. than to the Savior.

Another proof is found in the various liturgies which, by all experts, are reputed to be of apostolic origin and which devote part of their prayers and glorifications to the worship of the Mother of God.

The witnesses quoted and the catacombs seem to me to be sufficient for a sincere heart, desirous of knowing the truth. The cult of the Mother of God existed during the life of Maria Sma among the Apostles; and it was transmitted by them to their successors and to the churches they founded, to the point that everywhere, where divine worship of the Saviour penetrated, the tender and gentle worship of the Mother of Jesus penetrated with him and beside him,

## **VII. saints of the first centuries**

The columnist ends his attack with quotes from early saints who say absolutely nothing about or contradict what he intends to make them say.

He says, for example, that neither Justin the martyr, nor Irenæus, nor Tertullian, nor Cyprian, etc. they said nothing about the cult of the Mother of Jesus.

This assertion is absolutely false. The holy Fathers mentioned spoke as we speak today, as I will prove it; but if they hadn't said anything about it, would that prove that such a cult didn't exist?

It writes mainly on subjects discussed and not accepted by everyone.

The columnist, for example, writes nothing about the sun, moon and planets, limiting himself to attacking the cult of Mary Most Holy. Would this prove that the sun and moon do not exist?

Not all the Saints wrote about the cult of the Mother of Jesus, for the simple reason that many are writers, or have no occasion to write on this subject, because being out of all discussion, it needed no defense, nor refutation of errors. opposites.

To prove the columnist's error, without prolonging the discussion, I will quote here just a few passages from the saints of the early Church.

which I patiently and conscientiously gleaned from their works.

Listen to the friend well, and examine, to see there between the language of the saints of the first centuries and of modern times there is any discrepancy in doctrine or thought!

After the first Christians, tradition is constant.

Since the first century, St. Dionysius the Areopagite declares that he would have taken Mary as a divinity if faith had not taught him that omnipotence could only form such a perfect image of his divinity.

St. Dionysius, a martyr, writes: Mary shows herself more and more in love with those who love her.

In the second century St. Irenæus proclaimed Maria Sma. our **Mediatrix** , and says: the ties by which Eve allowed herself to be shackled by her credulity, Mary broke them by her faith.

Tertullian—Eve believed the devil, transformed into a serpent, Mary believed the word of the angel Gabriel; the fault that the first committed by her credulity, the second erased by her faith.

Origen consecrates her pages, the most eloquent of her talent, proclaiming her “our **advocate** ” and the **Immaculate** Mary, **Immaculate** Mother, he says, of him who is holy and without blemish.

And again: one can say to Mary of a perfect Christian: Here is your son!

In the third century, St. Cyprian exalted her as a worthy and glorious Mother of God, deserving of the homage of all creatures.

— Mary, he says, like the others, participated in human nature, but not in original sin.

In the fourth century, St. Basil, in his liturgy, orders the deacon, preceding the Bishop, to say to the people in a loud voice: Let us remember the Most Holy **Immaculate** Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our Sovereign Lady!

Mary, after God, he writes, is our **only hope** .

And again: Mary so much surpasses all other creatures, as the sun surpasses the other stars; and beyond: God opened a house of public health for us in Mary.

And again: I followed and invocation of Mary in everything, because God wants her to help us in everything.

Alongside St. Basil there is a legion of apostles of the Virgin Mary, whose word and whose pen spread the love of the Mother of Jesus everywhere. They are the Saints: Cyril, Efrem, Epiphanius, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine etc...etc.

Henceforth, it is no longer possible to enumerate the Apostles of Mary... they are: a **legion** , and with an ever more sublime eloquence, they all exalt the glorious Mother of Jesus.

Since there can be no discussion of the following centuries, I limit myself to quoting a few short passages from the Holy Fathers of the fourth century; the others can be found in my book: "Because I Love Mary".

SAINT CIRILO was the soul of the Council of Ephesus, where he admirably exalted the Mother of God.

This is what he said on this occasion before the great assembly of Bishops gathered in Ephesus.

“ We must behave in such a way that we deserve the grace to die well. Above all, it is necessary to know what it takes to have a firm hope of entering heaven.

You all know that it is easy for those whom the queen favors with her protection to enter the court and achieve what is desired.

And we will achieve whatever we want by having the Sma. Virgo for **helper** , **mediator** and **protector** near the king; for we know that she will plead for us..

O you who reign with the blessed in the resplendent abode of light and of every kind of beauty, heed us!

Obtain mercy for those who conjure you, and open the gates of heaven to them!

Et nos retique quodcumque volumus obtinemus, sanctissimam Deiparam inhabentes auriliatricem, mediatricem et patronam apud Regem (Or. in V. dom.)

SAINT EPHREM says:—Mary is the glorious **mediator** between God and men.

— The Lord will not let the one who, as a tender Mother, dried his tears in her crib, beg for us for long.

— Mary is the wonderful vessel chosen by God.

— Mary is the **door to heaven** , she is the ladder offered to everyone to go up there,

— Mary is the **key** to heaven and the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

— Mary is the medicine of souls and a resplendent light that illuminates the world.

SAINT EPIPHANIO says in turn: Mary is like a divine table providing the world with divine life.

— Mary is the mysterious book that gave the law to the world, the divine Word.

— Mary is in Christ and with Christ.

— Blessed Mary, when the child Jesus was playing around this tender Mother!

— Mary is the temple and throne of divinity.

— Mary diligently seeks the salvation of men.

SAINT ATHANASIUS exclaims: — Let us, without ceasing, proclaim the Blessed Virgin Mary in every way.

" Mary is this **ladder** that Jacob saw rise to heaven."

— Maria, new Eva, is the **mother of life** .

— Mary, in heaven, stands beside her Son, as Queen and as Sovereign.

SAINT GREGÓRIO says that Mary is the firm support of those who believe and the victory of pious souls.

Mary is the sweetest and most forgiving of all mothers.

SANTO AMBROSIO has sublime pages about the cult of Mary: — Mary, he says, is the mirror and model of all justice.

" Like purity and glory, there is no virtue that does not shine in it."

— Maria was such that her life would serve as the rule for all of us.

— Mary was this miraculous virgin, at once freed from the knot of original sin and the shell of venial sin.

— Mary is the **standard bearer** of the Virgins, she is the Lady of Virginité.

St. Chrysostom says:— It is a worthy and just thing to exalt Mary, always proclaiming her Most Holy and without blemish.

“ Maria is an **anchor** and a safe haven for those who are beaten by storms.

SAINT AUGUSTINE is inexhaustible in speaking of the Blessed Virgin: — What will I say in your praise, O blessed Virgin, I endowed with such a mediocre Spirit, for all that I can say about you will be infinitely below your excellence and your merit .

— We cannot exalt Maria enough!

— Let us all implore Mary's protection on earth, so that she may deign to recommend us to her Son in heaven by an assiduous prayer.

— Mary hurries to help the humble.

— Mary is the **celestial ladder** , by which God descended to us.

— Mary was so holy that the Holy Spirit deigned to descend upon her.

— Mary is the **repairer** of mankind.

— Mary is the repairer of life and the **gateway** to paradise.

“ She is the mother of the living... wounded by Eva, we have been healed by Maria.

— God gave the name of sea to all the waters and Mary to the group of **graces** .

— O Mary, you are full of the grace you found before the Lord, and you deserved to spread it over the entire universe.

Woe to us poor creatures, who can we say to be worthy of it, even if all the limbs of our body turn into tongues, for it is higher than the sky and lower than the depths of the abysses? (Orat. 35 of Sanctia)

Here are just a few short quotes among thousands of others.

Oh! Tell me, dear Protestant, comparing these accents of love and trust towards the Mother of Jesus with the invocations that the Church still addresses to her today, what is the difference that the friend finds.

None!

The acclamations of the faithful today are just a repetition of the acclamations of the saints of the first centuries.

Faith doesn't change.

Trust doesn't change.

The cult doesn't change.

This is why Maria Sma. it is today in the Catholic Church what she has always been and what she will always be: the powerful and loving protector, the mediator, the gate to heaven, the celestial ladder of Jacob.

## VIII Conclusion

It seems to me to have clearly and solidly proved the thesis opposed to the Protestant columnist, showing that Catholics do not **adore** Sma. Virgin, rendering her a worship that befits only and exclusively God, but they **honor** , **praise** and **invoke her** , for being Mother of Jesus Christ, or **Mother of God** , and as such being in a separate hierarchy, above all holy and under God.

I then showed that the worship of veneration is an essentially **evangelical** worship , having in Sacred Scripture not simply its basis, but its manifestation, its irradiation in souls and in the world.

All this is clear and unmistakable.

Being an evangelical service, it must have always been practiced in the Church.

And in fact it was...

From the first century until today the cult of Maria Sma. it was always the **same** , not in intensity and extension, but in substance and even in the way of manifesting it.

Through the centuries one could follow, step by step, a host of saints who wrote or preached, teaching the same doctrine.

Where Jesus Christ reigns, there Sma reigns. Virgin... and where Jesus Christ is disowned, there also his divine Mother is rejected.

The cult of Jesus and Mary are inseparable, just as the little son and the mother are inseparable.

Their essentially distinct cults develop side by side... and when souls ascend to God through adoration, they are as if carried by the love of the Mother of Jesus.

In the passages of the saints of the early Church it can be clearly seen that their expressions are our expressions, and that their doctrine is absolutely the same as that which the Church still professes.

already in the 3rd and 4th century, the Holy Fathers acclaim her as Immaculate, Lawyer, Mediatrix, Intercessor, Gate of Heaven, etc etc... titles that the Church still applies to the Holy Virgin today and that so exasperate the poor and unhappy Protestants .

And because they find such titles novelty, inventions, when right after the apostles such titles are given to Maria Sma. by early Christian preachers and early writers.

And where had they received these titles?

Of course, from the Apostles themselves.

It is the cult of Maria Sma. as if going back in a straight and luminous line to the Apostles..., its first proclamation and manifestation being in the **Gospel** itself .

Dear Protestants, let your heart and your common sense speak a little, and instead of listening to the hatred your reformers bequeathed to you as a terrible legacy, read the Gospel, listen to your conscience, and you will see that the truth, the only truth is in the teaching of Catholicism,

Be children of Maria Sma. as the Savior wills; respect and love the one whom Jesus Christ loved so much, and who he left us, on the top of Calvary, to be **our Mother** .

Hate was never a virtue.

Hate towards a mother is a crime.

Hatred towards the Mother of Jesus is heresy, it is blasphemy.



O sweet and affectionate Mother, you who are the beacon that shows us the way of Jesus, light up the poor Protestants, show that you are their Mother, and make the light of goodness and love that so savagely hides from them shine before their eyes. Protestant error, and which so horribly deforms sectarian prejudice.

## CHAPTER II

The Immaculate Conception

ACCORDING TO THEOLOGY

Not wanting to admit the cult of Mary Sma., Protestants naturally reject every prerogative that God adorned the soul of the Mother of Jesus.

To admit any prerogative, any special gift, would be to distinguish it from other creatures, and to exalt it above other dignities; and this they cannot accept, for every exaltation in one creature presupposes a right, and every **right** requires a **duty** in another creature.

Right and duty are correlative and one does not exist without the other.

Not wanting to accept any **duty** to the Mother of Jesus, Protestants admit no rights on her part.

The conclusion is logical, although the principle is one of tangible falsehood.

The Catholic Church, based on the **Bible** , on **reason** and on the apostolic **tradition** handed down through the centuries, as a universal belief, declared that the Mother of Jesus was conceived free from original sin, preserved from the stain of this sin by the anticipated merits of the Savior.

Such a truth, glorious for the Mother of Jesus and the basis of her greatness, cannot please Protestant friends, whom the cult of Mary Sma is extremely repugnant to.

Let us examine the contrary reasons cited by them, as well as the evidence in favor adduced by the Catholic Church.

### I. The Protestant Objections

What are the great objections of Protestants against the Immaculate Conception of Maria Sma.

The first (negative) is: "the Immaculate Conception does not figure in the **Bible** ."

The second (positive) is from St. Paul who said: all men have sinned in one (Rom 5:12).

Let us examine the value of these two objections.

The columnist says that such dogma does not figure in the Bible.

I will show later how it is false and that it appears there in several places. not for the **name** , but for the **truth** . It matters little that the name is not found there. The name of a thing is made to manifest the existence of that thing; and before it has a name, the thing must already exist.

The name doesn't matter and can be changed.

The word syphilis is newly adopted, and doctors today see syphilis everywhere, although there is no more than in times past.

It is what was once called "blood impurity". In the Bible there are no diseases: ophthalmia, chlorosis, lumbago, meningitis, coryza, epistaxis, etc., etc. though disease existed at this time as it is today; the difference is that in the past such illnesses were called: pain in the eyes, weakness, pain in the kidneys, cerebral fever, cold, nosebleed, etc.

Relying on this principle, Protestants pronounce their own death sentence, since not even the name of their sect appears in Bilia.

Where to find, for example, Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, Methodists, Anabaptists, Baptists, Huguenots, Hussists, Quakers, Adventists etc? stopping here so as not to review the 880 Protestant sects (in 1936!), each claiming to be a representative of the Bible and authentic truth.

It's all in the Bible, they say, and they don't even figure there.

The bottom line is that they themselves are forced to confess that there are real things that do not figure in the Bible.

Not admitting this, they are forced to admit that they themselves are not a real thing, but simply imagined.

Who knows if they wouldn't be right?

In any case, the **negative** argument loses all its value and proves nothing.

As for the positive argument, let's take a closer look.

St. Paul says that all men have sinned in one (Rom. 5:12).

We are in full agreement: It is original sin.

Notice well the Protestant friend that it is a **transmission** sin . It is only one who sinned: Adam; and this sin was transmitted to everyone.

But **sinning** and receiving the **transmission** of sin are two different things.

Maria Sma. sinned in Adam.

But Adam's sin, which was to be transmitted to him according to the law, was not, by divine **preservation** .

Maria Sma. it is from the blood of Adam and Eve: As such sin in Adam, but as such sin in Adam is transmitted by the blood, it is perfectly possible for God to prevent this transmission.

Such preservation is made by virtue of **anticipating** the Saviour's merits.

In this way, Mary is the first rescued and the Redeemer's most sublime trophy of victory.

It's the miracle that God did.

The sinful blood of Adam and Eve had to reach Maria Sma., but before participating in her being, in this almost imperceptible moment, in which the soul created by God had to unite with the blood formed by the parents, to form the person of Mary Sma., God removed sin and the Virgin was born from the regenerated blood, purified from Adam and Eve, and she, Mary, preserved from all contact with sin.

Such is the privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

My dear Protestant sees that the general law, drawn up by St. Paul, was not violated in any way, but it is enough to know how to interpret it.

We can, therefore, repeat with the Apostle.

All sinned in Adam.

But: all did not receive the sinful blood of Adam.

Jesus Christ could not receive him, because He was **God** .

Maria Sma. I could not receive it, for being the **Mother of God** .

Christ was exempt from original sin by nature.

Maria Sma. it was by preservation, St. John the Baptist was it by purification.

This is how the positive argument against the Immaculate Conception fits.

Of these two arguments, none can be sustained without falling into the most flagrant contradiction.

Therefore, the two Protestant arguments, against the Immaculate Conception, are of no value, and prove nothing against the doctrine taught by the Catholic Church.

## II. what is original sin

For a clear understanding of the Immaculate Conception, it is necessary to have an exact notion of original sin.

Having a wrong notion of evil, wrong must also be the notion of reparation as that of preserving this evil.

It is the unhappiness of our Protestant contradictors, who cling to the text of the Bible, limiting themselves to words, without penetrating the core of the truths that words signify.

Original sin is the sin committed by give and Eve, disobeying God.

This sin, in Adam, was **actual** , and God removed it as a supernatural end.

In us it is a **race** sin . Mankind forms a single body, whose natural head is moral is Adam, so that the head sinning, all members participate in this sin.

When God created our first parents, He established them in the state of innocence, original justice, and holiness, bestowing on them gifts of three qualities: natural, supernatural, and preternatural.

The **natural gifts** are the properties of body and soul, required by his human nature, to reach its natural end.

The **supernatural gifts** are: sanctifying grace that made them adoptive children of God and predestination to the beatific vision.

The **preternatural gifts** consist of suffering immunity death, lust and ignorance.

Thus filled with all sorts of benefits, without any right to such goods, Adam and Eve disobeyed God, committed a mortal sin, eating the fruit of the tree of good and evil. (Gen 2,17)

Sin, as St. Paul says, entered the world by one man. (Rm 5.12)

The consequences of this sin were disastrous.

Soon, Adam and Eve lost all gifts that exceeded the requirements of human nature.

As we saw above, they had received three kinds of gifts: they soon lost the supernatural and preternatural gifts, retaining only, and still very weakened, the natural gifts, proper to their condition of rational creatures.

Deprived of free gifts, says S Bede, the venerable, sinful Adam, was vulnerable in his own nature.

Gratuitis spoliatus, vulneratus in naturalibus.

As said above, Adam's sin was a **personal** sin in him, but also a sin of **race**, or of nature, while he was the **head** of mankind, so that all those who share this nature, or belong to the human race, they had to share in this sin, causing in all humanity: The **loss** of supernatural and preternatural gifts and the **weakening** of natural gifts.

The supernatural gifts were recovered through the Savior's Incarnation and Redemption, which require our cooperation; but we are deprived of the preternatural gifts, which are the permanent effect of the fall of our first parents.

Man is subject to suffering, death, lust and ignorance.

Against suffering and death there is no other remedy than conformity to the divine will; against concupiscence and ignorance there is a struggle to master them and free themselves from their yoke.

As for the natural gifts, they are not withdrawn in their intrinsic constitution, but in their exercise, in their use, because passions bewilder the judgment and weaken the will.

Such is original sin in its source and in its consequences; once these truths are understood, it will be easy for us to understand the exceptions to this general law.

### III. The conception of Maria Sma.

The fundamental error of Protestants is the idea that we attribute to Maria Sma. a divine conception, as not having been born like other creatures.

It is a mistake to attribute to Catholic doctrine what it does not teach. The Church doesn't teach that.

The conception of Maria Sma. it is **human** , completely human, and has nothing divine about it. It was conceived by the ordinary ways of nature; only the conception of Jesus Christ is **divine** , operated by the power of the Holy Spirit, without the participation of man.

Maria Sma. had father and mother: São Joaquim and Sant'Anna. There was nothing extraordinary, nor miraculous in the **act** of her conception, nor in her birth: She is a daughter of the human race... participating in the blood of this race, and as such, despite not having original sin. as I will explain below, she sinned in Adam, according to the general law already mentioned by St. Paul: All men sinned in one (Rm5,12)

So far everything is natural, here the supernatural is presented: the miracle.

If the conception of Maria Sma. it is not divine, it is however miraculous **in fact** .

It is the Gospel itself that attests to the miracle.

As proof of the miracle that was going to be performed in Maria Sma., the Archangel cites a miracle already performed in Santa Isabel:

Behold, Elizabeth, your kinswoman, also conceived a son in her old age. (Lc1,36)

And not only did he conceive in his old age, which is already a miracle, but he conceived, being barren, which constitutes a second miracle: "They had no children, because Elizabeth was barren and both were in an advanced age." (Lc1.7)

Sant'Anna conceived, despite her sterility and her old age, and after having conceived the holiest of children, she fell back into her sterility.

The conception of Mary is thus **miraculous** , in fact, but it is not divine.

If it were divine, Maria Sma. would not need redemption; being human, though miraculous, she needed to be rescued, like any other descendant of Adam.

Redemption supposes a fall, at least in Adam.

In order to be redeemed, one must be, in any case, a slave to sin.

Maria Sma. she was not a slave to sin, as a **person** , but as a member of the human race.

Jesus Christ is the Savior of the entire human race, according to the doctrine so emphasized by Paul; and nothing authorizes an exception, not even in favor of the Mother of Jesus.

Such an exception would be useless in his glory; for not only is the Virgin Mother not belittled or humiliated, for being indebted of her glory to the Saviour's merits, but more exalted, as the Redeemer himself is more exalted, in counting his own Mother as the first trophy of his death.

To prove this redemption, Suarez uses the following argument:

St. Paul says that if only one died for all, it is because all were dead. (2Co5.14)

Now, Jesus Christ also died for Mary, so she was dead in Adam.

It is understood by: dead in Adam, the fact that Mary, by virtue of her conception, was subject to original sin, by right, which she would have contracted without divine intervention, but was not subject to sin, in fact because a singular grace of the Redeemer preserved it, driving away the hard need for the original stain.

#### **IV. Mary's preservation**

Redemption is twofold: liberating and preserving.

**Liberating** redemption repairs the ruins made by sin, restoring to man what took away his sin, making him pass from a state of sin to a state of grace.

It is the redemption common to all men.

**Preservative** redemption consists, not in repairing the ruins, but in preventing those ruins. It does not lift fallen nature, but prevents it from falling. She did not cleanse the Mother of Jesus, but prevented her from contracting the original stain.

In summary, we must say that: Jesus Christ, dying on the cross and saving mankind, therefore also saved the Blessed Virgin, as part of humanity.

The quality of Redeemer is therefore perfectly suited to Jesus Christ, with regard to his own Mother.

It is in this way that Mary participated in the merits of her divine Son, not like us, but in a way that is unique to her, **preserving her** from a stain that she had to contract and did not contract.

St. Francis de Sales expresses this truth so simply, how graciously! "The torrent of original iniquity (1) came to cast its impure waves upon the conception of the Holy Virgin, with the same impetuosity as upon the conception of the other sons of Adam; but arriving there, they passed no further, but stopped, as before Jordan in Joshua's time.

*(1) Treatise on the love of God.*

The torrent stopped its waters, out of respect for the ark of the covenant, and original sin withdrew its waves, out of respect for the Tabernacle of the true covenant, which is the Virgin Mary."

I cannot fail to quote a passage from the illustrious Bossuet which speaks so admirably of the great mysteries, and above all of the Immaculate Conception.

This conception, he says, has this in common with all the faithful, that Jesus gives him **his blood** ; but she has this in particular, that she first received this blood **from Mary** .

She has this in common with us, that this blood falls on her, to sanctify her; but in this in particular, that Mary is its source.

In such a way that we can say that the conception of Mary is like the first origin of the blood of Jesus.

It is from there that this beautiful stream begins to spread these waves of graces that circulate through our veins through the sacraments, and that carry the Spirit of life to the whole body of the Church.

So do not look for the name of Mary in the sentence of death, which was pronounced against all men.

It's not there anymore! It's been deleted!

It is like ?



Because of this blood that has been drawn from her chaste bosom, she must use in her favor all that it contains, against this disastrous law that kills us from the beginning. (1)

*(1) Bossuet: 2 Bermon pour la Conception—1 point.*

## V. The transmission of sin

before this Catholic doctrine, sure and clear, Protestant objections dissipate, like darkness before the morning sun.

His great argument is to want to oppose the dogma of the Immaculate Conception the text of St. Paul: all men have sinned in one.

Such a law is certain, and as I have just proved it, it does not find the slightest contradiction in the fact of the Immaculate Conception.

Protestant friends must understand the essential difference between sinning in Adam and sinning personally, as between belonging to a sinful race and being a sinner.

And this distinction is enough to understand the possibility of the Immaculate Conception.

It remains for us to elucidate yet a point that will show how the Virgin Sma. was preserved from this sin.

How do we contract original sin?

Such transmission cannot be done through the Creation of the soul, otherwise God would be the author of sin, which is impossible.

It is not transmitted by the parents either, since the children's soul does not take the origin of the parents' soul, but is created by God.

It is made for the **generation** .

The soul is created by God in perfect innocence, but it contracts the blemish, uniting itself with a body formed from a corrupted germ, just as the soul would suffer if united with a wounded body.

It is the opinion of St. Thomas.

St. Augustine says apropos: "Children, born of baptized parents, are born with original sin, as from immunized wheat is born an ear, in which the grain is mixed with the chaff."

To fully understand this doctrine, it is necessary to distinguish, as St Bonaventure and Pope Benedict XV do, a double concept:

The **active** , which is nothing other than the procreation of the body.

The **passive** , which takes place when God unites a soul to the body that has just been generated.

The active conception of Mary in no way differs from the conception of other children, as she was generated by S. Joaquim and Sant'Anna, according to the laws of nature.

The passive conception, on the contrary, is completely different.

Our soul, at the moment of uniting itself with the body that it must revive, as soon as it comes into contact with this body, to form a **human person** , is contaminated by original sin.

Sin does not reside in the soul, nor in the body, but in the substantial union of soul and body to constitute man.

It is **man** who is defiled by sin — man as such, so that in death, the soul separating from the body, would regain, as it were, the privileges of innocence and original justice, if, though separated, he did not retain the fitness. and the disposition of one day being reunited with this body, so that, even separated from the body, the soul always remains human soul

It was at this almost imperceptible moment that God preserved the person of Maria Sma. of original sin.

He created his soul, as he creates our souls.

Maria Sma's parents. they formed his body, as our parents formed ours. So far everything is natural; the miracle of **preservation** is limited to the moment when he joined the soul to the body.

This union was to result in the transmission of sin. God stopped the course of this transmission; so that the union was made, as it had been done in the person of Adam, when God, after having made his body, breathed the Spirit into him, forming a man in the perfection of innocence and original justice.

Mary is a second Eve... but Eve before her fall.

Such is the sublime doctrine of the Church.

### **SAW. The exception to this law**

And is it possible to object that God cannot derogate from general laws, constituted by Himself?

It would be to deny the divine omnipotence, to set limits to the One who has no limits.

It is a general law that all have sinned in one. Such a law, in fact, is universal, and does not hold any exception among creatures.

It is another general law, that sin is passed on to all of Adam's children.

This second law, however, is less rigorous than the first, for the simple reason that the first fact is antecedent while the second is consequent.

And original sin was committed at the beginning of the world, at the origin of the human race; while the transmission was not made, but only decreed, in the beginning; and it takes place at the time of the union of the soul with the body.

Therefore, nothing prevents God from intervening before this union takes place and suspending **one of the effects of** this union, which is precisely original sin.

The Bible is full of these waivers.

The movement of the sun and moon is mathematically fixed by the law of nature; however Joshua did not hesitate to make him stop: Sun stops thee in Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Hadjalon. And the sun stopped and the moon stopped (Jos10, 13).

— It is a law that waters follow the current of their course; however Moses stretched out his hand... and the sea became dry, and the waters were divided... like a wall on his right and on his left (Ex 14,21-22).

It is a law that a dead man remains dead until the general resurrection, however Christ-God himself, before the rotting corpse of Lazarus, exclaimed: Lazarus, come out... And immediately the one who was dead came out alive (Jn11,41.43) .

What is this proof, my dear Protestant? This proves that: Nothing is impossible with God (Lk18,27).

All men sinned in Adam and Eve, and are born with original sin: It is the general law.

God can derogate this law, as He can derogate many others, when He deems it necessary or convenient.

\* \* \*

Now it was absolutely **necessary** for Him to derogate from this law in favor of His own Son. The God of all purity could not come into contact with sin. These two terms are mutually exclusive. If Jesus was contaminated by sin, he would no longer be infinite purity... and no longer, he would cease to be God, because in God everything is infinite.

Listen up, dear protestant...

Now, the Christ, infinitely pure, would no longer be so, if he took a body formed by flesh and blood tainted with sin.

The child receives his body from his mother's body and blood—the child is a continuation of his parents.

The body of Jesus Christ is a body formed by the flesh and blood of the Blessed Virgin. He is the son of Mary: He who is to be born of you will be called the son of God, says St. Luke (1,35)

Since the body of Jesus is formed from the blood of Mary, and this body must be of infinite purity — for it is the body of God — it is absolutely required that the flesh and blood of Mary be of absolute purity, that is, without sin original.

\* \* \*

There were two ways to achieve this purity: **purification** or **exemption** from original sin.

Which of these two modes is most convenient?

Discussion is useless.

If Maria Sma. had she only been cleansed from sin, she would have been a slave, at least for a moment, to the devil, and later the devil would have been able to hurl this insult in the face of the Savior: "Your mother! She was mine before she was yours! I have tainted!"

Such an assumption is horrible!

Go, Satan, away from here!

Never... never... not for an instant... you will dominate the Blessed woman among all women! The Lord will be with her from the beginning, and where the Lord is, there cannot be Satan.

It will be full of grace... And if it were dominated by evil, if it were just an instant, it would no longer be full of grace; this plenitude would lack something... the initial grace would be lacking.

This is why the Mother of Jesus could not simply be **cleansed** from sin...she had to be **preserved** .

## VII. Conclusion

It is because they have not understood this doctrine that Protestant friends make a thousand objections against this dogma, proclaiming it in contradiction with the general law, impossible in its realization.

Dear Protestants, you are mistaken!

Study the Catholic doctrine better, and you will see how in everything it harmonizes with the Bible, and finds in this Bible its foundation and its proclamation.

Let us now see exactly what this privilege consists of: it will be the conclusion of this chapter.

Original sin is essentially a **deprivation** .

It is the deprivation of primordial grace bestowed on human nature in the person of Adam.

A comparison, however imperfect, will make us understand this deprivation.

In the intellectual and moral order, the difference between fallen man and man created in the state of pure nature is analogous to the difference that exists in the physical order between a civilized man stripped of the clothes he usually wears, and the savage who never wore clothes.

Our soul is **deprived** , at its origin, of the sanctifying grace which, in the decrees of Providence, it should have at the time of its creation.

In the purposes of God this grace was to adorn every man entering life and make his soul beautiful and pleasing to God.

That doesn't happen anymore.

God creates the pure and holy soul, in his own image, but when this soul is united with the body, which has just been formed by the parents, the **human person** , who results from this substantial union, is deprived of this sanctifying grace that he did. in Adam its beauty and its glory.

Instead of the magnificent treasures that this human soul should possess, it is poor, naked, miserable, when it comes into existence.

This nakedness is for her a stain, as is a stain for a sumptuous building the destruction of the marble, the silver, the gold, with which it was coated, leaving only the rough stones and walls to appear.

Applying these analogies to the Blessed Virgin, we will have the exact notion of her Immaculate Conception.

By saying that Mary is Immaculate, the Church means that she did not know this **deprivation** , but that her soul preserved the innocence, the justice that God adorned Adam and Eve at the time of Creation.

Mary is Eve restored to her former beauty, she is the ideal, perfect creature, just as she came out of the Creator's Hands, without sin casting its shadow over her.

And the **preservation of** this deprivation was made by an anticipated application of the Saviour's merits,

Freed from the mysterious solidarity by which we are all born sinners and children of perdition, Mary came out of the Creator's hands, so perfect, and so rich, so pure and so beautiful, that the Archangel's words on the day of the Incarnation were fulfilled ever since: Ave , full gratia: Hail, O Mary, full of grace!

Dear Protestants, reflect for a moment on this doctrine of the Church!

She is divinely beautiful and harmonious!

She is sovereignly worthy of God!

She is gloriously honorable to Mary!

She is humanly gentle to us!

It is a rational, logical doctrine, and if there were no proof in Sacred Scripture, no text that supported the Immaculate Conception of Mary, it would still be necessary to admit it, as it is the only doctrine that matches the dignity of

God and Mary Sma ., as is consistent with common sense and the universal aspiration of the Christian world.

I say: if there were no proofs in the Bible; but such proofs exist, clear and positive, as I want to show you in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III

To the Immaculate Conception

ACCORDING TO SACRED SCRIPTURE

To the theological proofs, in accordance with common sense, reasoning and the tradition of the Christian world, it is necessary to add biblical proofs.

Protestants only believe in the Bible.

Without refuting what is irrational in this assertion, it can be said that, according to the testimony of the Bible itself, all truths are not contained in the Bible.

It is to refute the future Protestants in advance that St. John ends his Gospel with these words: There are many other things that Jesus did, which, if they were written one by one, I believe that not the whole world could fit the books that would be needed. write. (St. John 21.23)

It is just hyperbole used by the evangelist to show that, in addition to what is written, Jesus did and taught many things.

And these unwritten things were collected and transmitted by the Apostles to their successors, and were later written by the first Doctors of the Church, in an uninspired character, by private initiative.

This is what São Paulo calls **tradition** .

Preserve the traditions you learned either by our words or our letter (2Tl.2,14).

Such a tradition is unanimous in affirming the Immaculate Conception, as I will show below, limiting myself here to seeking its **basis** in Sacred Scripture, which Protestant friends will accept more easily than theological proofs.

### XI. Biblical proofs

A truth can be revealed in the Bible in two ways: explicitly and implicitly.

A truth is **explicitly** in Sacred Scripture, when, without reasoning, such truth clearly presents to the Spirit, for example: Mary from whom Jesus was born: — is the explicit revelation of the divine motherhood of the Holy Virgin.

At first glance, anyone understands that such an expression means that Mary is the mother of God.

A truth can also be revealed **implicitly** , when it is contained in another clearly revealed truth, and one can, by reasoning, deduce it from this truth.

For example: Mary is the Mother of Jesus.

Now a Mother is a born Mediatrix close to the Son.

Therefore, Mary is a Mediatrix between Jesus Christ and men.

The universal mediation of the Immaculate Virgin is thus a truth **implicitly** contained in the quoted text of the Gospel.

The Immaculate Conception is not revealed explicitly, but it is **implicitly** , as a consequence of explicitly revealed truths.

It is these truths that we must study here, then complete them by the **explicit** testimony of the tradition of the first centuries.

Let us look for solid proof of the Immaculate Conception in the work of the Incarnation itself.

The work of the Incarnation, in the divine plan, includes Mary and includes her soul, her person and therefore her Conception.

Maria Sma. she is the Mother of Jesus Christ; and is **Virgin Mother** .

The angel Gabriel was sent... to a Virgin (Lk1,26)

Behold, I do not know a man (Ibid.34).

The Holy Spirit will descend on you (ib.35).

The virtue of the highest will cover you with its shadow.

Mary's virginal motherhood is an explicitly revealed truth.

Now, the same reason that gave birth to Jesus of a **Virgin Mother** , must cause him to be born of an **Immaculate Mother** . The Immaculate Conception is thus a truth implicitly revealed in the explicit revelation of her Virgin Motherhood.

Let us examine this argument closely.



Why did God want to be born of a Virgin Mother?

So that the holiness that should adorn his person would come from an equally pure source, from the part of the body as from the part of the soul.

The soul of Jesus Christ was created by God and inseparably united with divinity.

It was a most holy soul, a masterpiece of the infinite God.

The body of Jesus Christ was supplied to him from the blood of Mary, and this body was inseparably united with the divinity, as was his soul.

This body was therefore to be most holy, at the height of the most holy soul, to which it had to be **substantially** united , in order to constitute the divine person of Christ.

The **body** must be worthy of the **soul** and both must be worthy of the **divinity** .

This body must, therefore, be formed of a most pure blood, of a blood immaculate in its origin, as in its present state.

Therefore, **virgindade** Mary was like the condition of your **maternity** .

We see from the Gospel that God reserved this virginity, which Mary had consecrated to him, even in the bonds of marriage, as the habitation of the Holy of Holies.

The angel Gabriel was sent... to a Virgin... betrothed, not knowing a man... And for this very reason the Holy One, who must be born of her, will be called the Son of God (Lc1,35).

From that time, Mary was full of grace, she was Blessed among women... and the Lord was with her (Lk 1,28).

This virginity, this fullness of grace, this blessing were the **prior** and preparatory **condition** of the Motherhood of Mary.

Now, such **precedence** must necessarily go back to her conception, so that, from a sinless Virgin, the one who came to erase sin would be born without sin, as St. Bernard admirably says. (1)

*(1) Voluit itaque esse Virginem de qua immaculatus procedet, omnium maculas purgaturus (S. Missus est, Hom. 2).*

In fact, what reason would God have had in demanding in Mary this virginal holiness before the Conception of Jesus Christ, which was not strong enough, to trace it back to the very conception of Mary?

The holiness of the Son, being the **reason** for the previous holiness of Mary, could not be satisfied completely, but possessing Mary whole from her origin.

What Mary was when she conceived Jesus Christ, she must have been from the time she was conceived.

The **personality** of the Sma. Virgo is identified with her virginity, with her Immaculate purity.

She is clothed in this purity like a sun; and the prodigy, which enabled him to preserve this virginity at the conception and birth of his Son, guarantees us the purity of his own conception.

As can be seen, the **explicit** revelation of the Holy Virgin's divine motherhood includes the **implicit** revelation of her Immaculate Conception.

It is a first Biblical test and that would be enough to convince a man without prejudice and desirous of knowing the truth, instead of wanting to defend his erroneous ideas.

Let's go ahead; we will find many other passages of the same evidential value.

### III. The divine Tabernacle

A text from São Paulo casts a soft and strong light on the preceding argument.

The Apostle writes: Christ, coming as Pontiff of future goods, (passed through) a more excellent and perfect Tabernacle, not made by men's hands, that is, not by this creation. (Hb9,11)

Let us analyze this passage and find in it, beautiful and resplendent, the implicit revelation of the Immaculate Conception.

The Apostle here compares the Pontiff of the old law with that of the new law, showing that the former entered the Tabernacle, in the holy of holies once a year, to offer the blood of the burnt offerings, while Jesus Christ, the Pontiff of the new law, passes through a first Tabernacle, not made by men's hands, to

present itself in the second, by the effusion of its own blood (per proprium sanguinem, intravit semel in sancto).

Such is the opposition that the Apostle established between the two Pontiffs.

The Pontiff of the ancient law was a man like anyone else; sinner as he was, he entered the first Tabernacle, where everyone entered (the saint) and only entered the second Tabernacle once a year (sancta sanctorum).

The passage of St. Paul can be translated in this way: Christ passed through a more excellent and perfect Tabernacle, not made by the hand of men and not of this creation.

And this Tabernacle, adorned with such qualities, can only be the **immaculate bosom of Mary** .

This argument refers directly to the Saviour's holy humanity and indirectly to Mary's original holiness.

If there was any stain in the formation of Mary, there would be in the formation of Jesus as well, for the child is formed by the blood of the mother.

But St. Paul points out that this Tabernacle, through which the Christ passed, was not made by the hand of men; Jesus Christ formed it with his own hand. God formed his own mother.

By this title, Mary is **doubly** immaculate, as a work done immediately by God, as her mother, from whom he himself must receive his humanity.

To Protestants who consider this privilege of the Immaculate Conception to be excessive exaggerated, one can reply that he who does the greater must do the lesser, since the whole includes the parts.

God raised her, by divine motherhood, to an infinite honor, (1) far above angels, while by the Immaculate Conception he raised her only above sinful men.

*(1) Beata Virgo ex hoc, quod est Mater Dei, habet quamdam infiniatem, ex bono infinity quod est Deus (Tom. 7p. q. 25 to 6).*

What is, in fact, the angel that can say to God: You are my Son?

And thus elevating Mary above all angels, how could God not elevate her above fallen human nature?

If he didn't, it would be a contradiction in God's works. Would he make the greatest and refuse the least... would he elevate a creature above the angels and cast it at the same time among the sinful race of men?

It would be as if a mighty monarch were to rise to the throne and choose as queen a poor daughter of the people, and at the same time take her as a slave, to serve at his table.

It would be ridiculous... unworthy of a king; how much more unworthy of God!

No, no... it's impossible!

If God can preserve Mary from original sin, and wanted to preserve her... he did!

Now, to deny that he **can do this** would be as absurd as it is blasphemous against his power.

To say that he **did not want to** do this would be to hurt his kindness and his filial love.

Finally, to say that he neither could nor wanted to do it, when he could and wanted to do infinitely more, making her his mother, would be to exclude from the notion of God all wisdom, all reason, as well as all goodness and all power.

The word of São Paulo is therefore an implicit revelation of the great dogma of the Immaculate Conception!

Jesus Christ himself made his Tabernacle, and made it, more excellent and perfect, not being of this creation, but of a separate creation, the only one being that of a Tabernacle destined for the very Son of God.

Now such a Tabernacle, made immediately by the hand of God and for God, must have all the beauty, all the purity that God Himself could bestow on a creature.

And this perfect, ideal purity is called the Immaculate Conception!

#### **IV. the oldest dogma**

Protestant friends call the dogma of the Immaculate Conception new.

It's lack of reflection.

It is the oldest of the dogmas revealed to the world.

He is older than the Church; older than the Gospel. He was with Jesus Christ before Abraham was: It is from him that the Holy Scriptures begin.

The Immaculate Conception of Mary is implicitly revealed again in this oracle of God which brings chapter III of Genesis, and which He addressed to the devil after the fall of our first parents:

Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius: ipsa continet caput tuum (Gn3,15).

The literal translation is: I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed: she will crush your head.

I ask intelligent Protestants: is it possible to limit this text to Eve?

It's impossible! If such a text was limited to Eve, God should have said: I will put enmities between you and Eve; she will crush your head.

Saying that it is the woman who must crush Satan's head, and enlarging this word saying that she is his seed, it is immediately seen that Eve is here only the representation of a woman.

And what is this woman?

It is the same person whom the Savior always calls in the Gospel "Woman" instead of: my mother.

— Woman, here is your son (Jn19,26)

" Woman, what do we care?" (Jo2,4)

Such is the woman predicted in Paradise and fulfilling the prophecy by her Immaculate Conception, crushing the serpent's head.

To crush the serpent's head is to escape its domination, it is to be exempt from its bite and to dominate it for holiness.

Now, all this is clearly what constitutes the privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

This prophecy is not limited to Eve, Protestants must find any other woman who has this privilege, as she must exist in any creature, otherwise it would be a prophecy without an object, which cannot be admitted.

And what is this woman crushing the serpent's head? Will it be Rachel, Rebekah, Sarah, Deborah, Judith, Abigail the Shulamith, Esther, Naomi, Resfa, the mother of the Maccabees, a few figures of the Hand of God?

Or, in the New Testament, will it be Marie Magdalene, or any other of the holy women?

Dear Protestants, reflect for a moment and you will understand that the **only woman**, full of grace, Blessed among all women, is Mary, the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God.

She being the chosen one, the prophesied woman, for she who, being of the seed of the first woman Eve, escaped the devil's domination, being exempt from his bite, crushing the serpent's head, in a word; she is **Immaculate** in her Conception.

Like it or not, by the text of the Bible as by common sense, it has to reach Maria Sma. and recognize that she is what was prophesied in the quoted text.

In this way it is again an **implicit revelation** of the Immaculate Conception.

## V. The race of women

Let us not stop here, but let us study every sentence in this prophetic passage of Mary's glory.

Having proved that this text applies to the Mother of Jesus, let us analyze its various aspects to better highlight its central object: the **Virgin Mary**.

I will put enmity between you and the woman.

Let us note well that it is not simply between Eve and the serpent, but between the blessed woman and the serpent's seed.

Nothing could be more formal!

Because of original sin, Eve, Adam and all their posterity are subject to the devil.

There is not simply warfare, but Satan's dominion over the human race.

And behold, God, announcing the woman—the Virgin Mary, whose seed is the Christ, says: I will put enmity between thee and the woman.

What does that mean?

It is a forceful way of saying that Satan will not extend his **dominion** over this woman... that between them there will be a radical opposition, a race enmity.

It is the reason why God completes the idea, saying: between your posterity and her posterity (Gen 3:15).

It necessarily follows from this addition that the enmities which must exist between the serpent and the woman, Mary, are the same as those which will exist between the serpent and the woman's posterity.

This seed is Jesus Christ.

There must be, therefore, between the serpent and Mary, the same enmity that exists between the same serpent and Jesus Christ.

Now, such fundamental enmity between the serpent and Jesus Christ is the complete absence in Jesus of any and all sin, sin being the figure and representation of Satan.

Therefore, this same total absence of any and all sin must exist in Maria Sma.

She will have to **be conceived** in the same state in which she will **conceive** : in the enmity of evil, or in the **Immaculate** Conception.

We can and must apply to both: to woman and her posterity, to Mary and to Jesus, the end of the prophecy: she will crush your head, and you will set betrayals at her heel (Gen 3:15).

Mary crushed the serpent's head for her Immaculate Conception, as has already been said, although the devil was setting up betrayals at her heel.

Such betrayals are physical and moral sufferings, persecutions, barbarities, crimes, the annihilation of Jesus during his Passion and death, which would be for anyone other than Mary temptations to despair, distrust, or at least fear , of doubt as they were for the Apostles.

In this way, the devil sought to weaken courage, diminish confidence, cool the Virgin Mary's love, without achieving anything, since Mary's faith, her hope and her love were far above human hesitations.

The devil ignored the secret of the Immaculate Conception; that's why he tried, tortured her, under the weight of his persecutions, but in vain: he could only reach the heel, that is, the body of the Holy Virgin, continuing his elevated soul in the region of pure faith and divine love .

He set up betrayals, but was crushed under the weight of this virginal heel, which had the weight of the holiness of his divine Son.

Here is the clear meaning of this beautiful prophecy.

It is not necessary to bend or adapt the sacred text to the thesis defended here; is its obvious meaning, always accepted in the Church and defended for all centuries.

Beautiful and sublime **Implicit** revelation of the Immaculate Conception.

### **SAW. the big discussion**

The beautiful prophecy, which we have just analyzed, due to its glorious extension in honor of the Mother of Jesus, must necessarily be contested and discussed by Protestants, giving it a meaning different from the Catholic Interpretation.

And what happened.

In the different versions of the Bible they found a variant.

The Vulgate text and three Greek versions say:

The woman will crush your head ( **ipsa** ) auté

The Hebrew versions say:

The seed of the woman will crush your head ( **ipsum** ).

Other Greek versions say:

The Son (Christ) will crush your head. ( **ipse** ) records

An Egyptian version says:

They (Jesus and Mary) will crush your head ( **ipsi** ).

Here is a precious find for Protestants to be able to protest...

Let there be discussion! no objections! to exclude the Blessed Virgin from this first Biblical page.

And in the midst of the uproar the Protestant friends did not notice that such a change of pronoun ipsa, ipse, ipsum, ipst, has only a secondary value, which does not change the probative value of the text or the extent of its meaning at all.



Whichever version is adopted, the text always proves the triumph of the woman, who is the Immaculate Virgin.

What is essential is that there is an eternal enmity between the woman and the devil. I will put enmity between you and the woman.

The contested text is as follows:

It should read:

Ipsa, ipsum, ipse conteret caput tuum.

or: Ipsi conterent caput tuum.

Ipsa, it is clearly the Blessed Virgin.

Iipse, it's Jesus Christ.

Ipsum, is the seed, or Jesus Christ.

Ipsi, it's Jesus and Mary.

The Church never intended to directly grant the Virgin the privilege of crushing the serpent's head, exclusively by herself, but united with her Son, through the action of her Son, as Mother of God.

One can therefore adopt any of these versions: ipsa, ipse, ipsum, ipsi, saying that it is Maria Sma., or Jesus Christ, or both, or the seed of the woman who crushes the serpent's head.

Who crushes it is **God-Man** , because Jesus Christ is both God and man.

As such, He is necessarily united with His Mother; and the latter, together with Him, crushes the serpent's head.

Jesus Christ does it directly in any case.

Maria Sma. it does so indirectly, becoming inseparably associated with this work of crushing.

Adopting with the Vulgate the ipsa version, saying it's Maria Sma. who crushed the serpent's head, it is not she alone, but united to the Son, by the Son, as the Mother of God, who does it.

And Jesus, by his Incarnation and redemption that destroyed the kingdom of Satan, crushing him and his head by the virginal foot of his Mother.

This is so logical and so simple. that, in the Egyptian versions, the woman and the child are united in a single pronoun: ipsi: they will crush your head.

And this expression is still the clearest and the most logical, expressive, thus indicating in a single term, the **principle** and the **instrument**, the son and the mother. (1)

*(1) The version: ipsa is older than St. Jerome, and it was the Seventy who, the first, adopted this pronoun, instead of the neuter: ipsum. The old italics, a verbal translation from the Greek, says ipse-autos.*

*In Hebrew, the pronoun refers to race and not to woman, and the verb conteret is in the masculine, having as subject the masculine word zéra (race) in the same way that the complement ejus de insidiaberis is in the masculine, in Hebrew; he will crush you, not she—yes: you will crush him, not him.*

*Examining the text grammatically, the pronoun ipse seems to be preferable; it is because of the great value of the seventy and the erudition of St. Jerome, adopting ipsa*

*that the authentic text of the Church, which kept this name, prevailed.*

*Even admitting that it was a copyist's error, what is certain is that such a version is in accordance with the spirit of the text.*

*Mary, crushing the infernal dragon under her feet, can be represented precisely because she does it as the Mother of God, through the power of her son.*

Here is the tremendous discussion raised by Protestants, with the intention of excluding from this text the cooperative action of the Virgin Sma. and to diminish a quotation that implicitly expresses and reveals his Immaculate Conception.

Such discussion, as we can see, in no way harms the glory of Maria Sma., so that, through human discussions, the divine word continues resplendent, fulminating, showing us, from the dawn of humanity, the luminous, symbolic figure, of hope and mercy of the Immaculate Virgin.

Such is, in fact, the opinion of St. Jerome himself, who chose among the four versions that of the Seventy, reproduced in the other Hebrews that bring ipsa, which is clearer if not for the grammatical accuracy, but for the spiritual sense, he himself gives the reason of this preference:

"The seed of the woman cannot be any other, he writes, than that which the Apostle says was made of the woman, that is, Jesus Christ (factum ex muliere) (Gl4,4). The Christ is truly the seed of the woman, having been born without the cooperation of man".

## **VII. Conclusion**

As we have just seen, the sublime dogma of the Immaculate Conception is not explicitly revealed in the Old Testament, and there is no reason for God to

openly and publicly manifest a truth far beyond the understanding of the Jews.

God acted in the same way with the revelation of the mystery of the SS. Trinity. It revealed it implicitly, in terms and veiled comparisons, which do not allow the mystery to appear immediately, but allow the centuries to come, at the right time, to deduce these truths, as a conclusion, from other truths, explicitly revealed.

This is how he acted with the Immaculate Conception. There are indications, there are indications, but in such a confused way that only after other truths are well understood, it is possible to deduce the Immaculate Conception from them.

What dominates in the Old Testament is the Virginity of Mary. This is clear and positive: The Lord will give you a sign, Isaiah said to Ahaz, Behold, the Virgin will conceive and bear a son, and they will call his name Immanuel, that is, God with us (Is7,14).

The Savior must be born of a Virgin: It is a basic truth, which must serve as a principle for the other truths.

But God reserved the time and manner for the proclamation of other truths, included in this first one.

A sublime though still hidden thought dominates the first man's fall: it is reparation—it is the promised Savior and this Savior's restorative action.

It is a parallel that God timidly draws between Adam and Christ, and at the same time between Eve and Mary.

São Paulo provides the basis for this parallel, saying:

The first man, coming from the earth, was earthly. The second, coming from heaven, is heavenly (1 Cor 15:47).

Beside the first Adam is the woman, whom Adam named **Eve** , because she was supposed to be the Mother of the living (Gen.3,20).

Beside the second Adam, of Jesus Christ, is another woman, Mary, whose figure Eve was, who was to be the Mother of the living, in Christ, by grace.

Eva Evæ contradicts, says St. John Chrysostom.

Let us end this chapter by comparing Eve and Mary, because from this parallelism the Immaculate Conception of Mary stands out admirably.

Eve is a figure of Mary, and Mary must have at least all the gifts and privileges of the first mother of the living.

Eve was directly created by God, in the state of perfect, pure innocence, and adorned with the gifts of nature and grace, in other suits, straight out of the hands of God, she was **immaculate** .

Mary, the restorer of order disturbed by Eve, must therefore also be **immaculate** .

It is the only point of equality; at all other points Mary is contrary to Eve.

Eve brought us death: Mary brings us life.

The fruit of Eve was deadly: the fruit of Mary is **life-giving** .

Eve was a cause of tears: Mary is a cause of **joy** .

Eve separated God from man: Mary **unites them** .

Eve attracted us to the curse: Mary obtains for us the divine **blessing** .

Eve imposed the yoke of evil on us: Mary leads us to **good** .

Eve aroused the hatred: Mary makes **peace** reign .

Eve launched us into the bonds of death: Mary in the bosom of **life** .

Eve was the cause of the fall: Mary is the cause of the **uprising** .

And so on.

The holy fathers made innumerable approximations of Eve and Mary, to emphasize their regenerating role, and to show that by her we are elevated higher than the lack of Eve lowered us.

Innocent Eve was the symbol of Mary.

Fallen Eve is Mary's opposition.

Formed by the hands of God, Eve was immaculate before the fall.

Mary, having to repair this fall, must be in the same state as Eve before this fall, must be **Immaculate** . (1)

*(1) Eve contradicts Eve: Eva enim facit Indian Indian son Dei; Maria us pacificavit Deo. Iliam mater cunctorum viventium, spiritualis interfetrrix; hac cunciorum Mater, spiritualis vivificatri ilia maledicta multiplicatur a Deo: æc benedicta in Matris utero (S. Antoninus in sum. parte. 4 t. 51 c. 13).*

As we saw the divine word in the prophetic text, of course. showing us the Blessed Woman crushing the serpent's gourd, as associated with the Redeemer. whose victory over evil was to be shared by his own Mother.

Maris is **Immaculate** because this prerogative satisfies the demands of the role that Mary must play as mother of God.

Everything requires it. everything imposes it, and God himself, to prepare the minds of men, allows us to glimpse, through the sacred pages, the existence of this privilege, which we shall see shining out clearly and positively, although still veiled, in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER IV

The Immaculate Conception

ACCORDING TO THE ARCHANGEL'S WORDS

We have already understood the convenience and necessity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, proved by reason and common sense, and we have seen this mystery outlined, announced in the Old Testament, such a **dawn** that precedes the appearance of the shining sun.

God manifests the great truths according to the needs of souls.

Such truths exist; but, there is a providential hour when they must be manifested to the world.

Christianity differs from religions or human conceptions in terms of its promulgation:

Human systems immediately manifest all that they are and that they possess, in invariable formulas, incapable of development and expansion.

The Christian doctrine, since its revelation, forms a set perfectly connected in all its parts, but in such a coordinated way that the Holy Spirit, through the Church, can manifest to the world the points that it is necessary to highlight, to respond to the attacks of enemies and preserve the integrity of the divine deposit.

This is what we are going to study here, and what we will find admirably in the basis, development and manifestation of the Immaculate Conception.

Let us first seek, in the Gospel, the revelation of this dogma, this time **explicit**, as a whole, although still veiled, as if to leave to the Church the initiative of discovering in these texts, in the light of tradition, the luminous and certain truth.

Let us highlight the following almost explicit revelations in this regard:

1. The fullness of grace in Mary.
2. Mary's predestination.
3. Mary's union with God.
4. Bodily and spiritual integrity.
5. Precedence over all women.
6. Grace lost and found.

## **1. The Virgin Mary**

The most explicit, most luminous and most decisive proof of the Immaculate Conception are the words, with which, in the name of God, the Archangel came to communicate to Maria Sma. the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation, asking her to consent to be the Mother of Jesus.

Everything there is divinely beautiful and divinely profound, showing what the Holy Virgin was already at this time, and revealing what was to be in the future.

Let us briefly retrace this sublime scene, highlighting only what refers to her Immaculate Conception and what proves the existence of this privilege in the humble Virgin of Nazareth.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man, whose name was Joseph, of the House of David, and the Virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel entering where she was, said to her, Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women.

Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God. (Lc1,26-31)

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God: we therefore have a true divine mission, in such a way that the words of the Archangel, as a messenger, specially sent by God, are divine words. It is not he who speaks, it is God who speaks through his lips.

It is sent to a Virgin. It can be seen from the context that it is not a simple virginity here, but a higher purity, as the words of the Angel will show.

God points out that this Virgin was married, as if to better emphasize her virginity, since virginity under the veil of matrimony denotes more virtue and more heroism than that of a simple young woman, still a virgin due to her unmarried condition.

And this Virgin was called Mary. The very name of the Virgin must have a divine meaning, as it is a well-founded tradition that such a name was revealed by God to Mary's parents.

Maria, in Aramaic: Mariam; in Hebrew: Miriam, means:

Starfish (meirjam)

Beloved of God (mritjam)

Lady—Princess (marjam)

Three meanings that are like three titles expressing, in a metaphorical way, the great prerogatives of the Holy Virgin.

She is a luminous **star** for her consummate holiness, for her sublime virtues, which illuminates all who sail on the waves of the tumultuous sea, which is the world.

She is the **beloved of God** , through her Immaculate Conception, which places her above all creatures, and makes her enter into the intimacy of God, like our first parents before the original fall.

She is the **Lady** , or princess, by her divine Maternity, which associates her forever with her Son, united with her royalty, reigning by grace and privilege, wherever her Son reigns, by justice.

The world calls Jesus: Our Lord.

We must call Mary: Our Lady.

Jesus is the **King** of heaven and earth.

Mary is the **Queen** of heaven and earth.

All this is expressed in the name that the Most High gave to the Virgin of Nazareth, **Mary** .

The Gospel notes that the Virgin was betrothed.

So it must be, in fact, because the miraculous birth of J. Christ being an unknown mystery, which neither the world nor the devil should know, before the appointed time, it was necessary to give this birth all the appearances of a natural birth. , and to chaste spouses, the appearances of a married life.

The reasons for this marriage can be reduced to five:

1. So that neither Jesus nor Mary would be exposed to dishonor.
2. That Mary would have an unsuspected witness of her virginity.
3. So that Jesus would be sustained and nurtured in his childhood, like other children.
4. That Mary would honor marriage, that the state of most men, and could serve as a model for virgins, wives, and widows.

These solemn and significant preliminaries already give a glimpse of the glorious scene that we are about to witness.

## **II. the angel's greeting**

And the angel entering where she was, said to her: Hail, full of grace (Lc 1,28).

How simple everything is in this sentence... No foreplay, no emphasis... no superfluous words.

Tradition shows us the luminous Archangel, In human form, suddenly entering the humble hermitage of Nazareth, where the humble Virgin was engrossed in contemplation and bowing respectfully to the greeting used in Palestine: Hail ( Klairé — rejoice, save, peace be with you — God save you! Ave means all this.

Such a greeting in use among ancient people, clothed with dignity, had never fit from the lips of an angel to salute a creature.

When, in the Old Testament, an angel appeared to someone, he stood on foot, grave and majestic, while the privileged one of the apparition prostrated with his forehead to the ground.



In fact, as St. Thomas points out, man must bow down to the angel, because he is inferior to him in three things: in dignity, in union with God and in grace.

But here the roles are intervened. The Virgin Mary is superior to the angel in these three points.

Angels are God's messengers; Mary was chosen to be your **mother** .

Angels surround the throne of God; Mary would soon **carry** her own God.

Angels receive graces according to their hierarchy and mission; Mary is full of grace for the **dignity** that the Most High comes to reveal to her.

It is therefore necessary for the Virgin to remain on her knees, and for the Archangel to bow down to her.

Ave, full of grace (Kekharitômené) which has the double meaning of full of grace and pulcherrima in grace.

Let's immediately notice the way of greeting, at first glance it seems that the angel should have said: Ave Maria, full of grace.

It shouldn't be; the meaning would have been different and greatly diminished.

What the angel salutes is not simply the person of Maria Sma., as he would have done, saying: Ave Maria; no, he replaces the person with the **prerogative** that gives **rise** to this greeting.

What he welcomes is: the full of grace!

It is in this sense that the Scripture calls Solomon: Sapiens, as it calls Jesus Christ: The Just, as it calls St. Paul: the Apostle.

Mary is: the full of grace — the fullness of grace in a creature.

It's your own qualifier.

It's your unique name.

She is the Virgin Mary before men. Before God, she is: full of grace!

Hail, full of grace!

Such is its divine name.

And this name is identical to what she herself proclaimed at the apparition of Lourdes: I am the Immaculate Conception!

**Full of grace** and Immaculate Conception, “two parallel names, identical, and expressing the same truth.

Let's look at this expression.

To say that a container is full is to declare that it can contain nothing more than what is already inside.

I ask Protestant friends to say whether the Immaculate Conception is or is not a prerogative, a gift, a perfection.

If so, and assuming that Maria Sma. does not have it, it must be said that there is a quality that it could have that it does not have; therefore, she is no longer full of grace, and the Holy Spirit lied, giving her this title.

One thing or another:

Either Saint Gabriel told the truth or he lied!

If you have told the truth, since Mary is full of grace, you must admit the Immaculate Conception.

If S. Gabriel lied, ah! so Protestants are right against the angels themselves.

And it's not just that!,... there's more to it.

### **III. all beautiful**

Protestants dislike the Catholic translation of: Full of Grace—*Gratia plena*.

Prefer to translate the Greek text: *Kekharitômené* for all beautiful in grace, or equivalent.

Such a translation is not wrong, because although the Latin version: *gratia plena*, is not suitable for this translation except from a distance, the Hebrew text allows it without difficulty.

In fact, the meaning is the same. It's just another way of looking at the same truth.

What is sanctifying grace?

It is a divine gift that makes us holy and righteous, children of God and heirs to heaven.

It can be said simply that grace is what makes us pleasing to God.

Being nice is a quality.

Every quality belongs to a substance.

Being pleasant is a quality of the soul.

To say that Mary was all beautiful is therefore to express that she pleased God as much as a creature can please, in other words, that "she was full of pleasure" or "full of grace", because pleasure or grace can be taken as synonyms.

Full of delight, or beauty, it means that the measure of pleasing God has run out.

Well, if there was a quality, that Maria Sma would do it. to please God more, she would not be filled with this pleasure; something would be missing, and again the Archangel's word would be a lie.

Mary's soul was thus adorned with all the qualities it could possess at this time, and among these qualities is the Immaculate Conception.

Soon, Maria Sma. it was Immaculate!... it had to be stamped, for its state to correspond to the divine greeting of St. Gabriel.

This does not mean that Maria Sma. ran out of grace; no, she always grew, from day to day, until the last hour of her life.

She was full at her Immaculate Conception—full at the Annunciation, full at the Saviour's birth, full at her death; but these diverse fullnesses, though different, form a single fullness; in the sense that as the Virgin's soul was expanded by grace, she became capable of increasing its fullness.

A full stream is different from a full river, as the latter is different from a full sea.

They are fullnesses, but different fullnesses, depending on the size of the container.

The Holy Virgin was always full of grace, full, from her Conception until her death, although her soul was always expanded more by virtue, the contact of Jesus, the Sacraments and the love of God.

This sense is obvious, natural and logical.

At the time the Archangel spoke these words, Maria Ssma. she was simply the Virgin of Nazareth, not yet the mother of God.

The latter was to incarnate in her immaculate womb, after she had given her consent, saying: Let it be done to me according to your word (Lk1,88)

The Archangel calls her; full of grace, not because of her divine motherhood, which had not yet been realized; but because of her Immaculate Conception, which made her, from the beginning, the Blessed woman among all women... the only woman, chosen, having preserved, for preservation, her innocence and original justice.

What a clearer, more positive and more explicit manifestation of the Immaculate Conception could one wish.

It is an **explicit** revelation , although still veiled, that will receive its last expansion, its last irradiation of the luminous dogma, in the affirmations of the universal Church, as being a truth transmitted from apostolic times until today, by the unanimous tradition of the Christian centuries.

#### **IV. new protestant objection**

As can be seen, the step in question is one of the most decisive and explicit in the Gospel, which most clearly reveals the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of Jesus.

It is the reason why Protestant friends sought to misrepresent it, divert it from its true meaning, and even oppose similar texts to it, to prove that the term — **full of** — does not have such an extensive meaning.

In proof of this objection, they quote, for example: Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit (Lk1,41) Zechariah... was filled with the Holy Spirit (1,67) And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit (Lk1,15)

From these texts, Protestants conclude: If Mary is Immaculate because she is full of grace, then Elizabeth, Zechariah, and John the Baptist are also immaculate because they are filled with the Holy Spirit?

Nice argument... of a child.

If dear believers read the entire text, they would immediately see the radical difference between these two expressions.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit, in biblical language, means to have the gift of **prophecy** , so that it is not such a person who speaks, but it is good God who

speaks through his lips — Sicut locutus est per os sanctorum, et prophetarum ejus (Lc1.70).

Therefore, after each of these expressions, it is found that this fullness of the Holy Spirit consisted in prophesying.

Of St. Elizabeth the Gospel then says: Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and exclaimed in a loud voice: Blessed are you among women! (Lc1,42)

Of Zechariah, he says: He was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying: Blessed be the God of Israël (Lk1,67)

Of St. John the Baptist he says: And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit... to prepare a perfect people for the Lord (Lk 1:17).

Of Mary Sm<sup>o</sup>, the Archangel says: Ave, gratia plena — Ave, full of grace, or; all beautiful in grace.

This term does not simply mean a transitory gift, as prophecy is, but rather a permanent gift, adherent to the soul, which can only be taken away by sin.

As shown above, the Greek Keharétômené, past participle of Kharitoo, and charis is used in the Bible to express a complete and permanent plenitude, in the theological sense of being a divine gift adherent to the soul.

The second interpretation: — all beautiful in grace, or even: all gracious through grace — omnino graciosissima reddita, has even meaning Fully gracious, or beautiful through grace is, in fact, the same thing as full of grace.

Omnino plena celesti gratia, as the interpreters say.

Such an objection not only does not weaken, but on the contrary, it strengthens the Catholic interpretation, limiting such expression to the Immaculate Conception which is the fullness of the beauty of a virginal soul, which was only granted, by privilege, to the mother of Jesus, and which Jesus possessed, by right and as being the perfect and supreme **fullness**, the source of divine grace.

\* \* \*

Theologians cite yet another argument in proof of the Immaculate Conception. (1)

(1) Lepecier: *Tract. of BV M, C. 1.n. 11.*

*Ita gratia tuit in BV vtillam simpliciter invenerit apud Deum. Hitherto gratam simpliciter apud Deum invenissa, est illa nunquam caruisse.*

The grace was in the Ssma. Virgo, just as she is in God.

Now, the characteristic of grace in God is that he never lacked.

Therefore, it can never have been lacking in the Holy Virgin.

Let us note the strength of this theological argument.

To understand it well, it is necessary to remember that the works of God are eternal, and he only performs, in time, what he decreed from eternity.

From eternity God had decided to make Maria Ssma. the mother of her incarnate Son. He prepared her for that purpose.

The Virgin was associated with God, since her Conception, for the realization of the sublime mystery of the Incarnation.

He must, therefore, by virtue of this choice, preserve her from original sin and make her be born immaculate from the first moment of her existence.

If this were not so, the Holy Virgin, infested by sin, as a sinner, being virtually united with God, would enter the decrees of the Eternal, as a sinner, would be associated, being a sinner, with the divine mystery of the Incarnation, which already existed, from eternity , in God, before receiving his execution, in time.

Now this is impossible! It is unworthy of God! It is contrary to common sense, contrary to all logic, as it is contrary to the Gospel texts.

Mary is therefore Immaculate, because she is full of grace, and she is full of grace, because the **Mother must be the Son of God** .

The fullness of grace and divine motherhood are two mutually complementary and mutually demanding prerogatives!

## V. God with Mary

One more proof of the Immaculate Conception.

The Archangel completes the greeting with an expression that is like the corollary, the explanation of the first sentence, which sums it all up: Hail, full of action, the Lord is with you.

This expression has, in its voice, an extension that is not quite understood, which we must look into here.

The term: "The Lord is with you" is used in Sacred Scripture in a double sense: imprecative and affirmative.

We find this imprecative term in several places.

God be with you. (Jd6.18)

The Lord is with you. (Jz6.12)

The Lord be with you (Rt2,4)

It was the way of greeting among the Jews, of showing kindness and benevolence, as we say today: Praise be to Jesus Christ!

The affirmative mode has another meaning: And here, the lips of the Archangel, is the **affirmation** of a reality.

God is with Maria Sma. and there it is in a unique, very special way.

God is everywhere, filling everything with His immensity, without being circumscribed anywhere.

It is in **heaven** , where He manifests His glory.

It is on **earth** , where it manifests its Providence.

It is in **hell** , where it manifests its Justice.

It is in our **tabernacles** , where he manifests his love.

It is in our **souls** , by grace, where he manifests his mercy.

But there is a soul, a true temple prepared by God to receive it, to host it, a soul that surpasses all that is most beautiful in this world.

This soul is **God's heaven** on earth.

This heaven is the heart of the **Holy Virgin** .

"Sanctificavit tabernaculum suum Altissimus. (Ps 45:5) Let us note the Angel's way of saying. It does not say: Dominus sit tecum—May the Lord be with you! nor: Dominus est tecum—The Lord is with you!, but it says in an absolute way! : Dominus tecum— **The Lord with you** , as if he wanted to unite in a single term: God and Mary, unite them inseparably, from eternity to the end.

And such is the meaning of his words!

It does not join the term: with you, as a simple qualifier is joined to a noun, but it links the two terms, as if they are an integral part of the other. The Lord is not without Mary, Mary is never without the Lord: "The Lord is with you".

In this way, the Immaculate Conception once again appears luminous and resplendent.

In fact, where sin is, there is not the Lord.

If the Holy Virgin had had, for just an instant, the original sin, during this instant the Lord would not have been with her.

Having always been with her from the beginning is a proof that sin was never with Mary, in other words it is a proof that she is Immaculate.

Such, incidentally, is the interpretation of the Holy Fathers. Sto. Augustine says very well: "Dominus tecum!" The Lord is with you; with you in my heart, with you in my bosom, with you to sustain you. (1)

Elsewhere he completes this thought: "The Lord is with you," more than with me; it is in your Heart, it is in your bowels, it fills your soul, it fills your bosom. (two)

" St. Cyprian has an almost bold expression in this regard: "Among all distinguished, he says, by the perfect integrity of her flesh and soul, she deserved to possess Christ fully, in her flesh and in her soul, and to enjoy his presence outside". (3)

*(1) Ave gratia plena, Dominus tecum: tecum Dominus in corde, tecum in utero, tecum in auxillo. (S. Aug. Serm. of Ann.)*

*(2) Inse enim in tuo est corde, in tuo est utero; adimplet maniem, adimplet ventrem. (S. Aug. of Nat.)*

*(3) Quæ carnis et mentis integritate insignis spirituali, et corpoi intus, et extra Christi.*

St. Cyprian draws this admirable conclusion and shows the belief in the Immaculate Conception in the first centuries: he asserts that God does not simply honor Mary's **flesh** , for her divine presence, but also her soul, from which he concludes that the integrity of "her soul it must perfectly equal the integrity of her virgin flesh."

"The Virgin's flesh was all pure; there was nothing in her that resembled the corruption that sows original sin in her; likewise there could be nothing in her soul that resembled sin."



"It was necessary for Mary to be full of grace, free from all faults and imperfections".

This sublime and profound argument has not been sufficiently stressed by theologians who look to the Gospel for the **explicit** revelation of the Immaculate Conception; however, he seems irrefutable.

God performed a miracle, unique of its kind, to preserve the virginal purity of Mary's body.

It would behoove him to perform a similar miracle to preserve the purity of his soul.

The first is the miracle of the **Conception** and the Virgin Birth: The virtue of the Most High will cover you with its shadow (Lc1,35).

The second is the miracle of **preservation** from original sin.

Here is how we logically arrive at the Immaculate Conception, revealed in this second sentence of the angel's greeting: "The Lord with you—Dominus tecum.

Yes, exclaims St Bonaventure, the Lord is with you, O Mary; he was already with you; He stays with you; he will always be with you!

The Immaculate Conception was the **basis of** this union, motherhood is its **consecration** , the Assumption will be its **coronation** .

St. Gregory of Nyssa confirms this doctrine by the following reasoning: "In other creatures the perfectly pure soul is only worthy of the presence of the Holy Spirit, while here the flesh itself becomes the receptacle of the Holy Spirit."

If, then, in the words of St. Gregory, Mary's own flesh at this point surpasses even our souls, what are we to think of her soul, whose holiness must necessarily be proportionate to the holiness of her body?

If such was the purity of your body, what would be the purity of your soul?

If the gaze of God found no stain on this virgin flesh, how could the soul be tainted and dishonored by the stain of sin.

Let us not forget that it is from the soul that the body receives its purity; the holiness of the Spirit redounds on the body.

It was therefore necessary that the purity of Mary's soul was very great, to give her body such a perfect holiness, that it would attract God Himself, to make her abode in this blessed Tabernacle.

### **SAW. the blessed woman**

The third sentence of the Salutation is another manifestation of the great privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

It is like the conclusion of the two preceding greetings.

Mary is **full of grace** : It is her great privilege.

Grace, being a communication of the divine nature: divine consorts nature (2Pd1,4), whœver possesses grace, possesses God with him.

A person is the more closely united with God the more his grace increases.

Maria Sma. having the **fullness** of the square, it has in fact the fullness of the presence of God.

God is with her fully as much as he can be with a creature; because Mary contains all the grace that a creature can contain.

As a result of these two privileges, she is the Blessed woman among all women.

It's the logical consequence.

It's more than a consequence; it is a new **beginning** of greatness, a new proof of his Immaculate Conception.

Let us note well that at the moment that St. Gabriel addresses these words to Mary, she is not yet Mother of God, she is still in the preludes of negotiation.

She is not, therefore, Blessed for being the Mother of God.

Why is it then?

It can only be because it has been **preserved** from original sin.

It is the only title that elevates her above all women.

I say: above all, and in this set is included Eve herself, the first woman, the woman who came out of the Creator's hands, in innocence and original justice, Immaculate, adorned, from the gifts of grace and intimacy with God.

Eva was beautiful at this time... the most beautiful, the most powerful of women.

However, even in her innocence, even in the runaway days of her royalty, she was only a figure of Mary.

Eva is not the Blessed woman....

The only one to whom God directs this exaltation is the Holy Virgin. She alone is the blessed woman among all women, for not only is she Immaculate in her conception, as Eve was in her creation, but she has preserved and will forever preserve this Immaculate purity.

Unfaithful to the original blessing, Eve was subjected to the curse.

Maria Sma., not having participated in the absence of our first parents, was not subject to the weight of the miseries with which this lack is punished.

"The human race, says St. Thomas, was aggravated by a triple curse: Mary, innocent and pure, will receive as a counterweight a triple blessing".

She, the Immaculate One, will give birth, without pain and as if wrapped in the enchantment of her virginity.

She will live only for God, and will not know. the putrefaction of the grave.

The only remembrance, and not punishment, that Mary will retain from original sin is that of being **able to suffer** .

Eva was not subject to pain; Mary wants to preserve, and must preserve the faculty of suffering, in order to be better united with her Son and associated with redemption, as co-redeemer of the human race.

In this way, Mary replaces Eve, to be the Queen and Mother of humanity. Therefore, it was fitting that the proclamation, as it were, of Mary, was the counterpart of the proclamation of Eve.

An angel **of light** had to announce the Word Mary, as an angel **of darkness had** announced false knowledge and disobedience to Eve.

On both sides there are:

- 1) The proposition of an angel to the woman.
- 2) A colloquium.
- 3) A consent.

4) A fruit received and transmitted to mankind.

Mary is the **Blessed** woman , as the fruit of her womb is **blessed** .

Benedicta-tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui: Jesus (Lc1,24)

## VII. Lost and found!

Let us continue to meditate on the expressive words of the angelic greeting.

As divine words, each of them has a meaning that a simple reading does not discover at first sight.

The word of God is an unfathomable abyss... and the more it is meditated upon, the more luminous the truths it conveys appear.

The entire greeting refers to the two fundamental truths of Mary's greatness: to her **Immaculate** Conception, and to her divine **motherhood** .

It is the subject of this entire divine colloquy.

The first part, as shown above, is the Immaculate Conception. Each expression is an implied revelation, taken separately; but **explicit** on the whole.

There are six revelations, each one more luminous than the other, and we need to meditate on the sixth, no less profound than the preceding ones.

And the Gospel continues, after quoting words from the greeting itself:

"And she, having heard these things, was troubled by their words, and thoughtfully discussed what this greeting would be. And the angel said to her, Fear not, Mary, **for thou hast found favor with God** ."

Here ends the revelation of the Immaculate Conception, to begin that of divine motherhood.

"Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." (Lc1,28).

By simply reading, one can feel the close connection of these two truths: "Mary will be the Mother of Jesus, because she found grace before God".

It is a sine qua non, indispensable condition.

Without this condition the fact would not take place.

Such a condition is therefore of paramount importance in the plans of God.

Maria Sma. she can only receive Jesus into her bosom, because she found favor with the Lord.

So far we are all in agreement: Catholics and Protestants.

But what does it mean: amusing?

This is what dear Protestants did not understand. One can only find what is lost. In order for someone to find an object, that object must be lost.

Mary therefore **found** something that was **lost** . And what was this thing?

The fun; but what grace?

It cannot be sanctifying grace, nor present grace, for it existed in many righteous souls.

A single lost grace that had never existed since the fall of Adam and Eve in paradise, the **original grace** ; this was completely and irretrievably lost.

Saying then that: Mary found grace, is to say that she found the original grace.

Now the **original grace** is the **Immaculate Conception** . It is one and the same thing.

The angel telling Mary that she found grace, says: Mary, you are Immaculate, and for this you will be the Mother of Jesus Christ.

Indeed, if God was to be born in this world; he must be born of an Immaculate Virgin.

And if an Immaculate Virgin was to give birth to a child, that child must be God Himself!

This word is, therefore, a new revelation of the Immaculate Conception. and an even more expressive revelation than the preceding ones.

This is how the Holy Fathers understood it and what the Apostolic tradition transmitted to us.

This is what a writer of the first centuries says, who hides under the pseudonym "The Idiot".

"You have found heavenly grace, O Mary, because the preservation of the original stain, the greeting of the Angel, the coming of the Holy Spirit and the Conception of the Son of God, were your sharing.

But, O most happy Virgin, how did you receive such graces?

Oh! Virgin a thousand times blessed! Eve had lost grace because of her pride... you found her, and you never lost her, because you ought to be the most humble."

It is seen that the pious author speaks here of the original grace that was lost by Eve, which Mary found and never lost, which is to say that she was Immaculate in her conception and was immaculate to the end. (1)

*1) Invenisti, Maria, gratia celestem: quia fuerunt in te ab originali labe conservatio, angelica salutatio, Spiritus Sancti superventio, et Filii Dei Conceptio. (Idiotus)*

Saint Andrew, Bishop of Jerusalem, expresses himself in almost identical terms: "Fear not Mary, for you have found before the Lord the grace that Eve had lost, a grace that no one has ever been able to find before" (1)

*1) Ne timeas, Mary: nacta es enim gratiam apud Deum, quam Eve perdiderat... gratiam qualem non nactus est quiquam ab eternal, sicut te.*

Here are clear and positive texts from the Holy Fathers, which it would be possible to multiply almost without end, proving that the grace that Maria Sma. found was the original grace, lost by Eve.

She found it... and didn't lose it... she has it, then, and that grace is the original innocence, or Immaculate Conception.

You are therefore all pure, O Mary, and there is no original stain in you: *Tota pulchra es, et macula originalis non est in te*, the Catholic Church rightly sings.

## **VII. Conclusion**

In addition to the six proofs mentioned above, many others could be adduced, perhaps of less explicit value, but expressing, at least in a metaphorical sense, the great mystery of the Immaculate Conception.

Every phrase of the Archangel's divine colloquy with the Holy Virgin, the words of St. Elizabeth, the Magnificat, the woman's exclamation proclaiming blessed the entrails that contained the Saviour, the woman clothed with the

sun and the head crowned with stars, of the Revelation, all those passages refer more or less directly to the Immaculate Conception.

Let us limit ourselves to the most expressive ones explained above.

They are still implicit revelations, taken separately, but which become **explicit** as a whole, interpreted and illuminated by the voice of the unanimous tradition of the Church.

Let's go over the six arguments studied separately for a moment, in order to better highlight the probative force that emanates from their union.

Each term used by the Angel is an implicit revelation, but in synthesis and interpreted by the tradition of the centuries, these terms form the great **explicit** revelation, on which the Church relied to proclaim the Immaculate Conception of Mary's dogma of faith.

### ***first argument***

*Ave, full of grace, said S. Gabriel.*

*Mary is full, she is full of grace.*

*What is full can't fit any more.*

*Well, if Mary were not Immaculate, she could be; she would not be full of grace, lacking the grace of the Immaculate Conception.*

Logo: Holy Mary is Immaculate!

This argument is irrefutable, for we must necessarily admit that the Holy Spirit, who dictated these words, knows the meaning and extent of the terms used and speaks as clearly as possible in order to be understood.

This text would suffice, but lest there be any doubt about the obvious meaning, The Holy Spirit continues to repeat the same truth, in other words, corroborating one text for another.

The second translation of this term gives the same result:

*Hail, all beautiful by grace.*

*Grace is what makes God pleasing.*

*Mary is, therefore, all pleasing to God.*

*Now, if she were not immaculate, she would become more pleasing to God, being so; and it would no longer be all beautiful.*

Logo: Holy Mary is Immaculate!

### ***second argument***

From eternity Maria Sma. she was chosen to be the Mother of Jesus and as such associated with the work of the Incarnation, so that the grace of the Incarnation should be in God and in the Sma in the same way. Virgin.

Now, the characteristic of original grace in God is that it never lacked.

Therefore, he could never have spoken to Sma. Virgin, which constitutes her Immaculate Conception.

### **third argument**

The Archangel continues: The Lord is with you.

It is a positive affirmation indicating the perpetuity of this union, and so it says: The Lord is with you. It's absolute.

Of other creatures it can be said: God is with you.

From Mary Sma. is: God with you.

God has always been with Mary, since her choice in eternity, to be the Mother of Jesus Christ.

Now where God is, sin cannot be.

Soon, Maria Sma. never been subject to the dominion of any sin; she is therefore Immaculate.

### **fourth argument**

Another argument from an irreducible force.

It is the person of Maria Sma who is the Mother of God.

This person results from the union of soul and body.

God performed an unprecedented miracle to preserve the unblemished purity of Mary's body.



Should he not perform a similar miracle to preserve his soul in the unblemished purity of primordial innocence?

The first miracle is the conception of Jesus and the virgin birth of Mary.

The second must be the preservation of original sin for your soul.

In summary, it can be said:

The integrity of Mary's soul must equal the integrity of her virgin flesh.

Now such integrity of his soul is the absence of original sin.

Therefore, Mary did not have this sin: — she is Immaculate.

### **fifth argument**

The Archangel St. Gabriel completes and summarizes his revelations, saying: Blessed are you among women. — It's a new proof of the Immaculate Conception.

In fact, in this term - women - all women in the world, past, present and future are included together, and therefore Eve herself, the first, woman.

Eve came out Immaculate from the hands of the Creator.

If Maria Sma. were it not Immaculate, she would be inferior to Eve herself and would no longer be Blessed among all women.

We can say: Maria Sma. Blessed above all women, Why, Eve was Immaculate in her creation.

Soon, Marta Sma. he owed a seal, at least equal if not superior to Eve: she is therefore Immaculate.

### **sixth argument**

To reassure the Holy Virgin, disturbed by the sublime greeting, the Archangel says to her: Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God (Lk 1,30).

But like Maria Sma. could you find the grace?

What is lost is found...

Grace was not lost, for St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, St. Elizabeth, and so many other holy souls lived in the grace of God.

It is not, therefore, a question of sanctifying grace, which exists in many souls. What is the grace that Maria Sma, found... that was lost, and that no one had found?

This grace is the original grace, lost since Eve's sin, and never found by anyone else.

We can summarize this argument by saying:

The only grace lost since Eve and never found by creatures is the original grace.

Well, Maria Sma. he found this grace lost, being clothed with it.

Therefore, she is Immaculate.

\* \* \*

Here are six implicit arguments, when taken separately, but made **explicit** by the connection and explanation that one argument gives to the other. Bringing them together, and projecting on them the luminous reflection of the Christian tradition, these arguments form the solid, irrefutable, infallible basis of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

I ask sincere Protestants, desirous of knowing the whole truth, the biblical truth, to meditate on these arguments, and say, if it is possible for God to speak clearly, and to propose a truth more accurately than when he does, speaking of his Mother's Immaculate Conception ?

It's impossible; and under the weight of these arguments they must recognize that the Catholic Church did not invent the dogma of the Immaculate Conception but found it, whole, perfect and luminous in the pages of the inspired word of God.

Let us say, therefore, convinced and sincere, with the Catholic Church, exalting the Mother of God, through the words of the Song of Songs:

— You are all beautiful, O Mary, and the original stain is not found in you!

— You are tota pulchra, Maria!...

## CHAPTER V

### The Immaculate Conception

#### ACCORDING TO TRADITION

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception seems to be quite proven. Theology with its irreducible reasoning, the Old Testament with its expressive figures, the Gospel with its clear and positive teaching, irrefutably showed the necessity, existence and glory of the ineffable privilege which is the **Immaculate** Conception of the Mother of God .

It seems, however, opportune to go to the end, and show that this truth has always been accepted in the Catholic world, professed by everyone, from the apostles to our days.

Going for a moment through the 19 centuries that separate us from the mystery of the Incarnation, will be one more proof, or rather, it will be like the synthesis of all the proofs of the Immaculate Conception and, at the same time, the refutation of this other protestant objection that affirms than the cult of Maria Sma. was introduced into the Church in 660.

We will finish by quoting the above doctrine from the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and we will refute the objection of novelty to the cult of Mary Sma., although this has already been done in the first chapter.

For complete clarity, let us first see what tradition is, how it was formed, preserved, and handed down to the centuries to come.

#### I. The divine tradition

Protestants admit the divine word, as written in the Bible, by divine inspiration.

The Catholic Church is in agreement on this point, and equally admits the Bible as the divine written word.

Where the Church disagrees with Protestant error is that it, in addition to the Bible, admits certain truths, not written in the Bible, or written not literally but spiritually or figuratively.

And Protestants admit only the Bible, saying that all the truths revealed by God are in the Bible.

Now this is in contradiction with the Bible itself.

St. John, at the end of his Gospel, expressly says: Many other things did Jesus, which if they were written, one by one, I believe that not in the whole world could the books that would have to be written could fit (Jn 21,25)

It is therefore certain that Jesus said things that are not written; and what he said and was not written has **the same value** and **the same** authority as what is written in the Bible.

No sincere Protestant can deny this.

And what is this divine, unwritten word called?

It is St. Paul who reveals the name of these truths to us, writing to the Thessalonians: Remain steadfast, brethren, and keep the traditions which you have learned, either by our words or by our letter. (2Thes 2,14)

Here before us is the **tradition** , so attacked by the poor Protestants... and so misunderstood.

So what is tradition?

It is the divine word, having the same authority as the Bible, not written, but transmitted orally by the Apostles and later written, by private initiative, by the first popes, bishops, priests and even simple faithful educated in their religion. '

The difference between **Sacred Scripture** and **tradition** is that the first divine word was written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit who preserved it from all error; while the second divine word was written by private individuals, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and without the preservation of personal error on the part of the writer.

Tradition is therefore the word of God, since it is found to be of apostolic origin, but as error can more easily infiltrate into the spoken word than into the written word, three conditions are set for a doctrine, concerning faith or to morals, may claim for itself the authority of divine tradition.

1—Must go back to the first centuries and be universally known as such.

2-Must agree with the written word of God, or at least not contradict it.

3-It must be declared authentic by a competent authority.

Covered with this security, a doctrine is considered a divine tradition; lacking one of these requirements, it is devoid of all authority.

**The Integrity** of traditions is as certain as Scripture itself; for both are entrusted to the guard of the infallible Church, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Now, the gates of hell would prevail against the Church if she did not keep the truth that was entrusted to her integral.

And how is the transmission of the divine tradition done?

In nine ways:

1. By the decisions of the Holy See and the decrees of the General Councils.
2. By the symbols, which are those of the Apostles, Nicæa and St. Athanasius.
- 3 By the Holy Fathers, who are like the mouthpiece of tradition.
4. By the unanimous consent of theologians.
5. By the Holy Liturgy.
6. For the acts of the martyrs.
7. By the writings of certain heretics fighting Church doctrine.
8. By ecclesiastical writers.
9. For the monuments, altars, temples, tombs of the martyrs and inscriptions that express the faith of the first centuries.

Knowing exactly what **tradition is** , its value, its authority, we can now turn to it to prove the **Immaculate** Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

For this, it is enough to consult the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church, following their doctrine from the Apostles until today, to find out that the Immaculate Conception, proclaimed dogma by the Church in 1854, dates back to the Apostles, by a universal and uninterrupted tradition.

This tradition, confirming what is **implicitly** revealed in the Gospel, it is a revelation **expl e quotes** and right of a divine truth.

It is this constant tradition that I want to demonstrate here, through authentic texts, collected from the works of the Holy Fathers of all centuries, from the apostles until the proclamation of the dogma in 1854.

## II. in the first century

What do we find in the first century about the cult of Sma. Virgin?

Everything: the foundation, the radiance, the prophetic voice of the Mother of God herself who must cross all centuries.

1920 years ago, more or less, in a small village in Judah called Hebron, after a long absence, two cousins met, one an elderly lady, wife of Zechariah; another a young maiden of about seventeen.

They greet each other affectionately.

The eldest, in a transport of admiration, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, exclaims: Where does the saying come from, that the Mother of my Lord has to have me? (Lc1,43).

The seventeen-year-old girl, raising her hands and eyes to the sky, in a static gesture, answers:

Behold, from now on, all generations will call me blessed! (Lc1,48).

Here is the prophecy of the **cult** , the **glory** , the **power** of the Immaculate Virgin!

And this prophecy must come true.

And it takes place daily... Catholics and Protestants exalt the Holy Virgin:

Catholics, for their love, their enthusiasm, their confidence.

Protestants, by their protests, indirectly becoming the Mother God's panegyrists.

There is no action, no reaction.

The Protestant action is to demean the Holy Virgin,

The Catholic reaction is to exalt it more and more.

Here is the fact.

**Here is the cradle** of Mary's glory.

Let us now follow its development through the centuries.

In order not to excessively prolong the quotes, I want to choose them, short, from several well-known authors, authoritative and responsible:

In the first century, in addition to many others, we have a document, beyond all suspicion, and above all contradictions, it is the **Liturgy** of St. James.

The Apostles were, little by little, establishing disciplinary rules, to regularize and standardize the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, writing and having written or approving the way of celebrating the Holy Mass, the prayers to recite, as well as the ceremonies to observe in the administration of the sacraments .

Jesus Christ had directly instituted the Seven Sacraments, leaving it to the Apostles to determine certain accidental points that would better express the sacramental effect on souls.

After the Ascension, the Apostles celebrated the Holy Sacrifice, but as the Savior had given only the essential part of the Sacrifice, which is the change from the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, it was up to them to surround the words sacramentals, prayers, ceremonies, which would express and manifest, as best as possible, the effects of this Sacrifice.

That's what they did; and the book in use, having such prescriptions, is called: **Apostolic Liturgy** .

Among other liturgies, we have one of St. James, the lesser, which is like the outline, the bone of Holy Mass, as it is celebrated to this day.

This Missal expressively highlights the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, and does so in terms so luminous that they seem to be dictated recently, after the proclamation of this dogma, eight centuries later.

Let us collect some admirable excerpts in this regard.

After reading a few steps from the Old and New Testaments and praying, St. James adds: We commemorate our Most Holy, Immaculate, and Most Glorious Lady Mary, Mother of God, and Ever Virgin Mary (1)

*1) The very beautiful, luminous and convincing texts of the liturgies and writings of the Holy Fathers of the first centuries, which I scrupulously copied from their works, appear here in Latin, to irrefutably show the fidelity and authenticity of the quotations.*

*I will leave behind the Latin texts of the following centuries in order not to overload a book, which must above all be popular, while preserving the security of doctrine and complete fidelity in the citation of documents.*

*Commemorants sanctissimam, immaculatam, gloriosissiman Dominam nostram, Matrem Dei et semper Virginem Mariam (S. Jac. in his Liturgy)*

And a little further:

Let us remember Our Lady, the most holy, immaculate, most glorious and blessed Mother of God, and always Virgin Mary (2)

Such terms in favor of Mary's immaculate purity are of a lucidity that admits no doubt; however, the Holy Apostle does not limit himself to this, and makes his faith even more expressive.

After the consecration and a few prayers, he said to the Celebrant: Let us pay homage especially to Our Lady, the most holy, immaculate, blessed above all creatures, the most glorious Mother of God, ever Virgin Mary (3)

And the singers answer: It is truly worthy that we proclaim you blessed, O Mother of God, always blessed in every way beyond reproach, Mother of our God, more worthy of honor than the cherubim, more worthy of glory than the Seraphim, you who have given birth to the divine Word, without losing your perfect integrity, we glorify you as Mother of God. (4)

*2) Commemorationem agamus Sanctissimæ, immaculatæ, gloriosissimæ, benedictæ Dominæ nostræ Matris Dei, et semper Virginis Mariæ. (ibid.)*

*8) Precipue Sanctissimæ, immaculatæ, super omnes benedictæ, gloriosa and Dominæ nostræ Deiparæ, always Virginis Mariæ (ibid.)*

*4) Dignum est, ut te vere beatam dicamus Deiparam semper beatam, et omnibus modis irreprehensam, et Matrem Dei nostri honorabiliorem quam Cherubim, et gloriosorem quam Seraphim, quæ sine corruptione Deum Verbum peperisti, te revera Deiparam magnificamus (ibid.)*

Glorious hymn of praise in honor of the Mother of Jesus.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception had not yet been proclaimed, but behold, St. James especially exalts it, and he recalls this singular prerogative of Mary several times, in the most sublime act of religion, in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

\* \* \*

The Evangelist St. Mark, in the Liturgy, which he left in the Churches of Egypt, uses almost identical expressions: Let us remember, above all, the Most Holy, intrepid and Blessed Our Lady, the Mother of God and always Virgin Mary. (5)

\* \* \*

In the Liturgy of the Ethiopians, whose author is unknown, but whose composition dates back to the first century, we find several explicit mentions of the Immaculate Conception.



One of the prayers begins in these terms:

Rejoice, truly immaculate Queen, rejoice, glory of our fathers. (6)

Further, it is through the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary that the Priest invokes God: in favor of the faithful: Through the prayers and intercession that Our Lady, the Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, makes in our behalf. (7)

*5) Imprimis Sanctissimæ, intemeratæ et benedictæ Dominæ nostræ Dei Genitricis, et semper Virginis Mariæ (S. Marcus, Evang. in Liturgia sua)*

*6) Lætare Immaculata vere Regina; lætare glory postrorum Parentum. (Liturgie Ethiopum)*

*7) Per prayers ac intercessionem, quam pro nobis facit Domina nostra, Sancta et immaculata Virgo Maria. (ibid.)*

The title of Immaculate, given to Mary, is found again in the prayer that immediately follows the elevation of the Holy Species: This is the body and this is the blood of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, which he took from Our Lady, the holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary (8) In the same Ethiopian Liturgy we find in the prayers that accompany Baptism the following ending of one of them: Through the intercession of the Virgin, full of grace, Mary, Mother of God, who is holy in everything (9)

\* \* \*

Let us end the first century with a passage from St. Andrew, Apostolo, exposing Christian doctrine to the proconsul Ægeus, a passage that figures in the acts of the Martyrdom of the Holy Apostle, and dates from the first century.

The first man, having been formed from an immaculate land, it was necessary that the perfect man be born of an equally Immaculate Virgin, so that the Son of God, who before formed man, would repair the eternal life that men had lost (10)

*8) Hoc est corpus et hic est Sanguis Domini et Servatoris nostri, Jesu Christi, quod, et anyone assuming ex Domina nostra, Sancta et Immaculata Virgine Maria. (ibid)*

*9) Intercession plenary gratiæ Virginis Genitricis Dei Mariæ, quæ in omnibus est Sancta. (Ibid.)*

*10) Et propterea quod ex immaculata terra creatus. fuerit primus homo, necesse erat ut ex immaculata Virgine birtetu perfectus homo, quo Filius Dei, qui antea condiderat hominom, vitam æternam quam perdiderant homines, per Adamum repa aret. (Letters from the Fathers of Achaia)*

\* \* \*

There are, no doubt, other witnesses from the first century; however, it seems that the most positive and supportive ones are the ones that precede.

What more can be said than these apostolic liturgies of St. James, St. Mark and St. Andrew?

Impossible to say more and say better.

Such Liturgies are not works directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, but have the value of apostolic authority, having been approved and used by the Apostles themselves.

There are several other documents of prime value, in terms of doctrine, but whose authenticity is disputed, so that, due to doubt, they lose their evidential value.

The martyr St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was, according to tradition, the child that the Savior placed before the Apostles, saying that whœver humbles himself like this child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, St. Ignatius left some letters in the which are two passages affirming the **Immaculate** Conception of Mary, but having discussed the authenticity of these letters, I do not want to quote them here.

It is true that all the Holy Fathers do not expressly speak of the Immaculate Conception, but they all explain Chapter III of Genesis and the Hail Mary, so as to exclude the Sma. Virgin of Original Sin.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was known in the first century, and was accepted by all; so that no dispute arose in this respect in the early Church.

### **III. in the second century**

The doctrine of the Apostles, established in their Liturgies, was adopted in all the Churches, so that everywhere. the Immaculate Conception of Mary was known.

There being no discussion of this, there was no need to deal expressly with this truth.

The writings of the Holy Fathers of the second century speak of this privilege as an indisputable fact, without seeking to prove or explain it.

They use phrases, comparisons, antitheses that attest in Sma. Virgin a superabundant fullness of grace, which necessarily presupposes the entire preservation of all sin.

Among the writers and orators of this century we count above all: **St. Justin** , apologist and martyr, **Tertullian** and **St. Irenæus** .

Let us quote only a few brief passages from these three illustrious representatives of the second century.

**St. Justin** , explaining the text of St. Matthew (12:48): Who is my mother and who are my brothers, writes: "Jesus Christ speaking in this way of others, did not intend to deprive his mother of the honor that her it is due, but I wanted to show what motherhood is by which the Blessed Virgin Mary must be proclaimed Blessed.

In fact, if the one who hears and keeps the divine word becomes the brother, the sister, the mother of Jesus Christ, it is evident that by virtue of this double title, Mary must be called Blessed.

Hearing and keeping the word of God is an act of virtue; it is the work of a pure soul, who seeks only God.

Now, God did not choose any woman among women, but one who incomparably surpassed all others, by virtue of her virtues.

"Jesus Christ therefore wanted Mary to be called his Mother, because of this excellency, which made her choose to give birth to him and to become his Mother, without ceasing to be a virgin."

**Tertullian** in several parts makes the parallel between Eve and Mary, and concludes: Eve believed in the devil, transformed into a serpent, Mary believed the word of the angel Gabriel; the fault that the first committed by her credulity, the second erased it by her faith.

**St. Irenæus** repeats the same parallel between Mary and Eve, which was a popular argument at this time, bringing out the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Without this privilege, in fact, far from being superior to Eve, Mary would be profoundly inferior to her, just at the point where her destiny demands superiority, or at least an indisputable equality. (12)

Such is the doctrine of St. Irenæus, which he had learned in the school of the first disciples, the apostles, and such was the general belief of second-century Christians concerning the Immaculate purity of Mary.

*11) Non quam libet fœminam elegit Deus, sed omnium fœminarum virtutibus excelentissimam, propterea volebat ob hanc virtutem prædicari Matrem suam, per quam virtutem illa id asserta fuisset, ut Virgo Mater fieret (S. Just. Q. 135 ad Orthodoxos).*

*12) Sicut Eva inobediens facta est, et sibi et universe generi humani causa facta est mortis: sic et Maria habens prædestinatum virum, tamen Virgo obaudiens, et sibi, et universe generi humani, causa facta est salutis.*

The word Immaculate is less often explicitly pronounced by the Holy Fathers of the second century, but the doctrine is the same, and it always expresses the virginal and Immaculate purity of Mary.

#### IV. in the third century

The third century, richer in eminent figures, is however less abundant in expressive testimonies about the Immaculate Conception.

In this century we find the saints Hippolytus, Gregory of Neo-Cesarea, Cyprian and the great Origen, all luminous stars in the firmament of the Church, still persecuted but triumphant in every country.

**St. Hippolytus**, Bishop of Porto and martyr, wrote in 220: "Christ was conceived and took his growth from Mary, the Mother of God, all pure... when the Lord Jesus Christ will have come among us, according to the flesh, for the birth of the holy and Immaculate Virgin". (13)

Further on he says: "As the Savior of the world had decreed to save mankind, He was born of the Immaculate Virgin Mary." (14)

*13) Christus, qui eximpolluta, ac Deipara Maria ortu sumpsit, atque incrementum... Cum Dominus Jesus Christus secundum carnem advenerit ex Sancta et Immaculata, Virgine. (S. Hipol.; Orat. in Cons. mundi)*

*14) Cum Salvator mundi genus humanum salvæ decrevisset, ex immaculata Maria Virgine natus est. (Ibid.)*

**St. Gregory** is no less explicit, although he does not use the term Immaculate, but rather an equivalent term,

We have from this Saint five sermons on the Annunciation of Mary.

We've collected a few short quotes from this precious casket:

"It was fitting that grace should choose Mary alone, among all the generations, he says, for she was prudent and instructed in everything, and among the descendants of Adam it was impossible to find another like her."  
(15)

A little further on the holy speaker continues:

First of all, the Angel officially addresses these words to the Holy Virgin: Hail, full of grace, because the entire treasure of grace was deposited in her; because only this Virgin was perfectly Holy in body and spirit; she only carried the one who sustains all things through his Word. (16)

*15) Convenienter igitur Sanctam Mariam, ex omnibus generationibus, soiam gratam elegit: nam prudens revera, ac sapiens in cunctis erat, nec similis ei ex omnibus generationibus ulla unquam est reperta. (S. Greg. in Annun)*

*16) Angelus Sanctæ primo omnium illud: Ave gratia plena, præsignifies vit quoniam cum ipsa totius, gratiæ thesaurus reconditus erat: ex omnibus enim generationibus, hæc sola Virgo Sancta corpore et spiritu extitit, solaque feri eum qui Verb omnia portat. (S.Gr.: in Annunt.)*

There are here three express indications of the Immaculate Conception.

How would the entire treasure of grace be deposited in Mary if she lacked the first and most important grace: original justice?

How would she be just perfectly holy, if she were no more than other saints, and just as they are?

The virginity of Mary's soul, that is, her Immaculate holiness, could not be inferior to the virginity of her body, and St. Gregory does not separate one from the other.

I would need to quote these sermons in their entirety: they are flames of the most ardent love for the Holy Virgin and a public and doctrinal profession of her Immaculate Conception.

Let us quote just a few short sentences taken here and there in these speeches.

"Hail, full of grace, Immaculate flower of life!"

"Jesus Christ was born of the pure, chaste and Immaculate Virgin Mary..."

"Hail, full of grace, for thou art clothed in an Immaculate garment."

"The incorporeal messenger was sent to a Virgin without blemish and Immaculate; He is sent, free from all sin, to the Virgin without blemish and corruption." (17)

17) — *Ave, gratia plena, flos vitæ immaculatus.*

— *Jesus Christus ex pura, et casta, et impolluta, ac Sancta Maria Virgine progresstur...*

" *Ave, gratia plena ... quoniam immaculatam induta es ventem.*"

— *Missus est Servus incorporeus ad Virginem Inviolatam, until immaculate: missus est a peccato liber, ad corruptionis, seu labis expertem.*

**Saint Cyprian** , bishop of Carthage, in 250, is no less explicit. In a sermon on the Christmas feast, he says: "Divine justice can rebuke nothing in Mary. She was a vessel of choice; she differed from all other children of Adam; her nature was certainly the same, but she did not share her guilt. She had a privilege that no other woman, before or after her, deserved to obtain: the honors of motherhood, together with those of virginity."

"Therefore the fullness of grace was due to the Holy Virgin, and a more abundant glory, for she was endowed with the spiritual integrity of the flesh and the Spirit, and enjoyed, within and without the bodily presence of Christ." (18)

**Origins** . Let us finish off these beautiful, expressive and loving quotes with a final work by Origen, who lived in 226, and which seems to summarize the doctrine and traditions of his time.

He writes: "Mary, the Virgin Mother of the only Son of God, is proclaimed the worthy Mother of this worthy Son, the Immaculate Mother of the Holy and Immaculate One, as the only one is her own Son". (19)

This text recognizes in Mary a holiness and purity corresponding, as far as possible, to the holiness and purity of her only Son; she is therefore **immaculate** as her Son is immaculate... What Jesus is by nature, she is by a particular grace.

18) *Nihil in hoc repetiit ultro.. Plurimum a cæteris differens; natura communicata, non culpa.*

*Erat ei Proprium Privilegium, quod nulla mulierum nec ante, nec deinceps meruit obtinere, quod erat sinui Mater et Virgo Singulis titulis insignita. Unde et Matri plenitudo gratiæ delebatur, et Virgini abundantior gloria, quæ carnis et meatis integritate insignis spirituall et corporal latus, et extra, Christi presentia fruebatur (S. Cipr. Serm. in Nativ.)*

19) *Hujus itaque unigeniti Dei dicitur basc Mater Virgo Maria, worthy digni, immaculata Sancti et immaculati, una unius, unica unici. (Orig. Hom. 1 in Mat)*

Origen put the following words on the angel's lips, addressing St. Joseph: "Receive, Mary, as the treasure of heaven, entrusted to your care, as the riches of divinity, "as the fullness of Holiness, as justice perfect.

"Receive it as the abode of the only Son of God, as a temple worthy of all honor, as the house of God, as the Creator's property, the spotless palace of the King and the Celestial Spouse." (20)

In another Sermon, Origen still has the Heavenly Messenger say to St. Joseph: "This child does not need a father on earth, because he has an incorruptible father in heaven; he does not need a Mother in heaven, because he has an **Immaculate** and chaste Mother on earth , this Blessed Virgin, Mary". (21)

Let us quote another passage from Origen, of beauty and logic, worthy of this extraordinary genius; we extract the passage from an ancient Roman Breviary: "The blessed Virgin Mary was not deceived by the serpent's persuasive words, nor poisoned by her deadly breath." Which clearly means that it was exempt from the original guilt, the fruit of the serpent's words that excited our first parents to disobedience against God.

It is plainly seen that the doctrine, so clearly expounded by the Apostles in their Liturgy, continues to be professed as an undoubted, certain, divine truth; they are even identical expressions and comparisons, and often it is the repetition of the same terms.

20) *Accipe ergo Mariam, sicut commendatum celeste; thesaurum, Deitatis divitias, sicut plenissimam sanctitatem sicut perfectam justitiam.*

*Accipe eam sicut Unigeniti mansionem, sicut honorabile templum, sicut domum Dei, sicut creatoris omnium propria, sicut Regis Cœlestis Sponsi domum immaculatam. (Orig.: Hom. 1 in Mat.)*

21) *Hic puer non indiget patre super terram: incorruptibilem enim habet Patrem in excelsis. Non indiget Matre in cœlis: immaculatam et castam habet matrem in terra, bane finem Beatam Virginem Mariam. (Orig.: S. 3 in Mat)*

## V. in the fourth century

From the third, let us enter the fourth century, more fruitful and even more luminous than the third, affirming the great privilege of the Mother of Jesus.

We have before us the incomparable figures of St. Athanasius, St. Ephren, St. Basil the Great, St. Epiphanes, St. Gregory of Nisse, St. Jerome, Timothy, St. Sophronius, and St. John Chrysostom.

It is the glorious host of great Apostles of the cult of the Blessed Virgin, and in particular of her Immaculate Conception.

I must limit myself to short quotations, otherwise there would be a subject for an entire book.

**St. Athanasius** , the invincible pioneer of the Mother of God's glory against the heretics of the East, exclaims with communicative enthusiasm: "It is right that we praise you to our Mother, our Regenerator, our Sovereign, our Master, because the supreme King, the Lord, Our God has gone out from you, You are sitting by his side, For us he is fearful, but for you he is only sweet and gives you all grace.

*Therefore, the angel proclaimed to you, full of grace, to you who have all grace to the full." (22)*

*22) Decet te matrem, regeneratricem, Dominam atque heram cognominari, ex eo quod ex te prodiit Rex, Dominus et Deus noster, assistant illi, nobis quidem terribili, tibi solum dulci omnemque gratiam largienti: qua de causa factum est ut gratia plena appellata sis, utpote quæ omni gratia abundes. (St. Athan. Serm. of Sma. Deipara)*

**Saint Ephrem** , the Syrian, addressing Mary, says: "You are Immaculate, you are without blemish and without blemish, you are prudishness itself, no stain, no shadow of sin can approach you, O Virgin Spouse of God and our Sovereign". (23)

**St. Basil the Great** , a few years later, introduced in the Liturgy, which retains his name, the following words, which the Deacon must sing: "We commemorate our most Holy, intrepid Lady, Mary, Mother of God and of all the Saints" .

And the Deacon replies: "Guard us, O God, by your grace, we who commemorate our Most Holy and Immaculate Lady, the Mother of God with all the Saints."

St. Epiphanes is no less enthusiastic about announcing the glories of the Mother of God: "You are full of grace, he says in a sermon, O Blessed Virgin. Outside of God, you are superior to all that exists. You are more beautiful by your nature. , that the cherubim and Seraphim themselves and the whole army of Angels... You are an immaculate lily... you are the Immaculate sheep that gave birth to the Lamb of God, which is the Christ." (25)

*23) Immaculata, intemerata, incorrupta et prorsus pudica until ab omni sorde, et labe peccati alienissima, Virgo Dei Sponsa ac Domina nostra (St. Ephrem: Serm. 2 de laud. VM)*

*24) Sanctissimæ, intemeratæ, Dominatricis nostræ, Deique Genitricis Mariæ, cum omnibu Sanctis Commemoræ es. Custodi nos, Deus, gratia tua, Sanc tissimæ, ec. Basil. M. Liturgy.*



25) *Gratia full es Beata Virgo, solo Deo except, cunctis superior es; natura formosior es ipsis Cherubim, Seraphim, et omni exercitu Angelico,*

*Lilium Immaculatam, ovem immaculatam, quæ peperit Agnum Christum (S. Epiph.: Serm. de laud. BV)*

**Santo Ambrose**, Bishop of Milan, is so expressive and positive that the other Doctors of this century, says: "Mary was this miraculous Virgin, at the same time free from the knot of original sin and the bark of venial sin."

And again: "Out of this flock came Mary, the holy sheep, Immaculate and without blemish". (26)

**St. Gregory of Nysse** follows St. Ambrose (380) and makes a gracious comparison between the Incarnation of the Word and the nuptials of the sons of men.

Divinity wants to unite with humanity:

The bosom of the Virgin Mary was chosen, because of its incomparable purity, as the bridal room, in which the great mystery is to take place. It was necessary that there should be no stain on this Tabernacle, illuminated by the splendors of the Holy Spirit; it was necessary that Mary's purity be incorruptible." (27)

**St. Jerome**, the great exegetical luminary of the fourth century, equally professes the universally admitted truth of the Immaculate Conception.

In one of his letters, he writes that "the Blessed Virgin was spotless and oblivious to all contagion of sin.

26) *Virgam in qua nec nodus originalis, nec cortex venialis culpæ fuit — De hoc grege Sancta et immaculata et intacta illa ovis processit, Sancta Maria. (S. Ambr.: Superior Hom. Cain et Abel)*

27) *Solus ex universis hominum myriadibus, by puritate Virginea electus est, cujus Conceptio sine duerum conjunction perfecta, partus minime inquinatus, parturigo loloris expers. Cujus thalamus Altissimi potestæ, which have nubes virginitatem ipsam inumbrans, tax nuptialilis Spiritus Sancta splendor, cabile vitiorum expers, conditio nuptiæ puritas incorrupta. (Greg. Naz.: Hom. 19 in Cant)*

Explaining the words of the Canticle: *Veni Columba mea, immaculata mea*, he writes: Mary presents in everything the simplicity of the dove because there is nothing in her that was not all purity, all simplicity, all truth and all grace. She is therefore Immaculate, because she has no trace of corruption. (28)

**Timothy**, priest of Constantinople and one of the great orators of this time, is more positive and clearer than his contemporaries: Let us cite only the following passage, of unparalleled beauty: "The Virgin Mary, more immaculate

than all creatures, and holier than all the saints, by the grace of him who deigned to dwell in her, she enjoys immortality".

And again: The Virgin is more Immaculate than can be expressed, and holy in every way. (29)

**Saint Sophronius** , Patriarch of Constantinople, repeats and spreads the same doctrine: "O Gabriel, he exclaims, addressing the Archangel, who by your word, announcing salvation, you have flooded with joy the blessed and most innocent soul of Most Holy and Purest Mother of God, our Sovereign..."

*28) Impollutam et alienam the contagion peccatí. Simpliciter columbæ in omnibus repræsentans, quoniam quidquid in ea gestum est, totum puritas et simplicitæ, totum veritas et ratia fult: et ideo immaculata quidquid in nullo corrupta (Jeron.: Epist. do Assump.)*

*29) Unde etiam supra omnes inculpatam, et omnibus modis Sancta Virgo, per illum, qui domicilium habuit in ea usque adhuc immortalis est.*

— *Virginem supra quam dici potest inculpatam, omnibusque modis Sanctam. (Timot. im Orat, from Stmeo nc).*

And further, he says: "O you who long to do good to us, place me in the number of your righteous, and make us share your joy; I pray you, through the intercession of your ever-innocent Mother. .." He says: "Mary was holy and admirable; she delighted in the things of God; her body, her soul and her intelligence were free from all stains".

The Holy Virgin was chosen in this way, and her body and soul were sanctified, in such a way that the Incarnation took place, leaving her pure, chaste and Immaculate.

The Word was truly incarnated from the inviolable and virginal blood of the Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary.(30)

**St. John Chrysostom** . The fourth century ends with the luminous figure of Saint John, Chrysostom, which the centuries have dubbed mouth of gold.

His admirable homilies are full of quotes about the Immaculate Conception.

*30) Gabriel, qui beatissimam, inculpatisimam, Sacratissimæ, purissima eque Dominæ nostræ Genitricis Dei Mariæ animam, læta salutareque annuntiatione ingenti gaudio imbuisti...*

*Inculpatæ Matris tuæ intercessor...*

*Mariæ Sanctæ, preciaræque, et quæ Dei sunt sapientis, ab omni contagione iiberæ, et corporis, et anima, et intellectus...*

*Ex Inviolabili et virginali sanguine Sanctæ until Imacula Virginis Mariæ, Verbum vere factum est incarnatum, (S. Sofron.: Epist, ad Sergium)*

In the Liturgy he wrote, this prerogative of the Mother of Jesus is found several times.

"Making memory of the Most Holy, uncontaminated, Blessed above all, of our glorious Lady, Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary..."

And a little further:

"Above all in honor of Our Lady, Most Holy, Immaculate, above all Blessed and Mother of God."

"It is truly worthy and just that we glorify you, Mother of God, ever blessed, wholly without blemish, Mother of our God, incomparably more worthy of honor than the Cherubim, and more worthy of glory than the Seraphim." (31)

a Sermon on the Annunciation, the Saint says that "Mary is Immaculate, that the Virgin given to St. Joseph as wife, is a closed lily, a Virgin without blemish." (32)

*31) Memoriam agents Santissimæ, incontatæ, super omnes benedictæ, gloriosæ Dominæ nostræ Deiparæ et semper Virginis Mariæ.*

*Præcipue pro Sanctissima, Immaculata, super omnes benedicta Domina nostra Deiparæ.*

*Vere dignum e justum est, glorificare te Deiparam, semper beatissimam, penitus incontaminatam Matrem nostri, honoratiorem Cherubim et gloriosiore incompariiliter Seraphim (S.; Chryos.: in Liturgy).*

*32) Maria desponsata Joseph: dabitur hic liber ob signatus viro scienti litteras, id est Virgo plane immaculata fabro Joseph. (Chrys.: Serm of Annunt).*

Here are texts that dazzle and exalt the Catholic's faith, seeing the same accents of faith, trust and love spring from the soul of the first Doctors of the Church, with which, even today, the Catholic Church acclaims the Blessed Virgin, calling her to Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, Sovereign of Heaven and Earth, and our dear Mother.

These proofs would suffice to show the inviolable fidelity of Catholic worship to the teaching of the Bible and to apostolic traditions, spread throughout the world and through all generations.

If poor Protestants read and wanted to understand these accents of the early Christians, this tradition so faithfully preserved, by the word and writings of the first Church authorities, they would be fully convinced that the Church did not invent, change nothing, add nothing, but only preserved in integrity the divine word and apostolic institutions.

I could go on and multiply the quotes, more and more numerous from other centuries; however, in order not to prolong this exposition too much, I will cite from now on only a few short texts by representatives of each century, until arriving at the definitive and official proclamation by the Church of a **dogma** implicitly contained in Sacred Scripture and **explicitly** transmitted by the tradition of the Apostles and first Christians.

These two sources of truth: the Bible and tradition, receiving their full confirmation and expansion from the Church's infallible authority, make this beautiful, gentle and luminous privilege of the Immaculate Conception of Mary shine in the world today.

### **SAW. in the fifth century**

In this century we find the radiant figures of Saints Augustine and Cyril, Proclus, St. Basil, Theodoret, St. Leo the Great and St. Peter Chrysologus, in addition to many others of lesser importance.

**St. Augustine** , the noble spiritual son of St. Ambrose and Doctor of Doctors, opens the fifth century! Let's just quote from him the following passage:

"Who can say: I was born without sin?

Who can boast of being pure from all iniquity, if not this most prudent Virgin, this living temple of God, whom God himself chose and predestined, before the creation of the world, to be the Holy and Immaculate Mother of God, that she may be the daughter preserved from all corruption and from every stain of sin?

**St. Cyril of Alexandria** , the generous defender of Mary's glory against Nestorius' attacks, writes: "It is rash to say that Mary was guilty of any fault, or of any sin."

**Proclus** , Bishop of Cizico, said at the Council of Ephesus and explained that there was no inconvenience for divine holiness in making his abode in Mary's bosom, because he himself had created her pure and without blemish.

"Mary's flesh is perfectly pure, for the reason that she wasn't affected by the original stain,

**Saint Basil** , Bishop of Seleucia, exclaimed, at the end of a speech: "O Blessed Virgin, whœver speaks of you the greatest wonders and exalts your glory to

the highest. must not fear to exceed the limits of truth, for her words will never be able to equal the sublimity of your greatness, Mary is thrice holy, because she was pure from original sin, from mortal sin and from venial sin".

**Theodoret** , another glory of this seal, writes: "Among so many human souls that are saved, there appears alone and only, like a chosen dove, the Virgin from whom Christ was born, Mary, Virgin and Mother, Mary, whose purity surpasses that of the Cherubim and of the Seraphim.

**St. Leo the Great** , who lived in 440, writes: "A royal Virgin was chosen from the race of David; she conceives a son in her soul, before she conceives him in her flesh.

Mary's soul must be no less virginal, less protected from every stain, than her flesh, for she must conceive of the Lord with the flesh."

**St. Peter Chrysologus** ends the series of fifth-century doctors, and writes: "It was right that everything was preserved intact in Mary, who gave life to the Savior of all.

## VII. in the sixth and seventh century

As we move away from the Apostles, the number of doctors grows, and the citations can be more numerous; however, for the sake of brevity, I choose only the most prominent figures, and those who dealt more specifically with the Immaculate Conception.

In this century we find the saints Fulgentius, Anastasius, Andrew of Jerusalem, Hesychio, Ildefonso, Eloi, and the great enemy of the Christians: Muhammad.

**St. Fulgentius** said in a sermon: "The malice of the devil corrupted the seduced soul of the first man; but the grace of God preserved, in all its integrity, the flesh and soul of the Mother of the second Adam."

**Anastasius** , the Sinaite, wrote in 544, in his contemplations: "Tell me, who among men or demons would dare to claim that She, whose flesh is of the same essence as the flesh of the Son of God, was not made in the image and likeness of God 'The one who was born of her?

How would she be the Mother of such a Son, if she did not bear in herself, in all her integrity, the image of her Son?

**Andrew of Jerusalem** , in a homily on the death of Maria Sma, said: Mary was Immaculate, without blemish; the fullness of chastity surpassed in her everything that existed: That: cum esset immaculata,... impolluta...»

**Hesyehlo** of Jerusalem lived at the beginning: 7th century. He left several speeches about the Virgin Mary in which he calls Mary: Immaculate Dove, all pure, Virgin chosen among the Virgins, glory of the earth, adornment of nature, and ends by addressing Mary. "Mary, for ye are pure from every blemish, because ye are preserved, such an incorruptible temple, such an unblemished Tabernacle, the Eternal Father comes to dwell in you, the Holy Spirit covers you with his shadow, and the only Son of God puts on your flesh and is born from you!"

**Saint Eloi** , Bishop of Noyon, speaking of the Purification, says: One must regard as having contacted no stain that which the Holy Spirit covered with his shadow and who gave birth to the author of all purity and all holiness."

**Saint Ildefonso** says in turn: It is constant that this Virgin was exempt from all original fault, by which the curse of Eve was not only portrayed, but by which the blessing was given to all." Constat illam ab omni peccato originali fuisse immunem.

This century is closed by an unsuspected witness, of the great enemy of the Christians of this time, **Mohammed** , the founder of Islam.

This enemy of the Christian name writes these curious lines in his Qur'an: "No one among the children of Adam is born untouched by Satan, and this touch of Satan causes weeping and screaming. Only Mary and her Son were exempt, —"Mary , you are more illustrious than all men and all women. O Mary, God has chosen you, God has purified you, God has made you more glorious than women of all ages."

## **VIII. in the eighth and ninth centuries**

**S. Germano** opens the eighth century with the beautiful homilies on the Immaculate Conception, so beautiful that the Church chose them to appear in the 3rd, Nocturnal of the feast.

In another book he says: "The Pontifice, by the garment on which it is clothed, represents the flesh of Jesus Christ, this red and bloody garment, which clothe

the immaterial God, such a garment dyed purple by the immaculate blood of its mother. (1)

In the proceedings of the Sixth **General Council** under the pontificate of St. Agathon, we read a categorical affirmation of the Immaculate Conception.

*1) Ut purpuram tinctam ex immaculato sanguine Deipare (In Theoria rerum ecci.)*

We read in chapter VIII of the Acts: "Let us confess that NSJ Christ became incarnate through the operation of the Holy Spirit, of the Holy and Immaculate Mary, Our Lady, Mother of God and always Virgin." (two)

*2) Confiteamur Dominum nostrum J. Chr. incarnatum esse de Espiritu Sancto, et sancta, immaculataque Domin nostra, Dei Genitrice, always Virgine Maria (VI Syn. gen: act, 8).*

And in chapter XVIII. we read further: Christ dwelt in the womb of the Virgin, Mother of God, taking flesh from her holy and immaculate flesh, father making her his own substance. (3)

Then comes the admirable St. John Damascene, the great defender of the Immaculate Conception: "O Most Holy daughter of Joachim and Anna, he exclaims, you were preserved Immaculate to be the Spouse of God." (4)

In another place the Saint says that the blood of Mary, being the raw material of the blood and flesh of the Savior, must be an absolutely pure and immaculate blood. (5)

This term—Immaculate—is found on every page of the Saint's works.

Speaking of Mary, he calls her at every step: Sacred and all Immaculate—*Sacra, prorsus immaculata.*

A Council of 760 expressly says that Jesus Christ became the man of a lively and immaculate land. (6)

*3) Ex sancta et immaculata. carne ejus inpropria substantia carnem assumpsisse (Idem,; Act. 18).*

*4) Atque Immaculata conservata in Dei Sponsam (Serm.in Nat.MV)*

*5) Cujus natura primitiæ, ex purissimis etilibatis, ac prorsus immaculatis Sanctæ Virginis sanguinibus suscipiens, etc. (Orat. S. of Nat. M.)*

*6) Melaore quidem terra animata, et immacuiata (Council of Frankfurt: Epist. ad Episc.)*

\* \* \*

In the ninth century there are fewer surviving works on the cult of the Sma, the Virgin, but the same tradition continues and manifests itself in the writings of the Saints of this time.

**St. Nicephorus** , Patriarch of Constantinople, in 811 sent Pope Leo III a letter which reads as follows: "The Son of God inhabited the womb of the Most Holy and Purest Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in her soul and in her flesh which the Holy Spirit had cleansed beforehand."

The same letter ends: "Through the intercession of your Immaculate and Most Pure Mother (7).

**The Greek Theophanus** left a hymn about the Annunciation, in which we read this expressive stanza: "You have found grace in the sight of the Lord, a grace that none other has found but you, O Immaculate One." (8)

And beyond this beautiful and enthusiastic glorification: "Grace has been given you, O divine Mother of God. Every creature cries for you, O nymph of God, for you alone are the predestined and Immaculate Mother of the Son. Hail! Virgin, our Sovereign Hail, oh most immaculate!

Hail, God's receptacle." (9)

Identical passages can be found in **Strabo's** writings and in **Aleula's** homilies —two high-profile figures from this century.

*7) Intercessionibus Immaculatas et incontaminatas ejus Matris, et omnium Sanctorum (Epist. ad Leo. P.)*

*8) Invenisti gratiam apud Dominum, quam invenit nunquam alia quæpiam, the Immaculatissima (Hymn)*

*9) Tu enim sole Mater filli prælecta es Immaculata...*

*Ave Immaculatissima, Ave Receptaculum Dei. (id: Hymn)*

## **IX. tenth and eleventh century**

The tenth century shines through the institution of a public feast in honor of the Immaculate Virgin, at the request of the Emperor Leo - the Philosopher.

This century saw the admirable **Raimundo Jordão** , regular Canon of St. Augustine, who hid under the nickname "Idiot".

**The Idiot** has admirable passages on Sma. Virgin.

"O Mary, you are all beautiful in your Conception, he says, for you were formed only to be the Temple of the Most High!

Never the slightest stain, the slightest breath: of vice or sin, has touched your glorious soul! Beauty, grace, virtue of your soul never lacked anything!...



You are all beautiful, O most glorious Virgin, not in one aspect or another, but entirely!

There is in you no blemish of sin, whether mortal, venial, or original: There never was and never will be." (10)

*10—Tota pulchra es in tua Conceptione... et macula peccati, sive mortalis, sive venialis, sive originalis, non est in te, nec unquam fuit, nec erit (Idiot: Contemp. of V. Deip. c3).*

**St. Fulbert of Chartres**, Bishop of Chartres, is no less explicit. In a Sermon on: the Nativity he says:

"The soul and flesh of Him whom the wisdom of God had chosen to dwell in her, were absolutely pure from all malice and from all blemish."

And again: "You were Immaculate from the first moment of your creation, because you were to give birth to the Creator of all Holiness." (11)

\* \* \*

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception, instituted in the tenth century, goes on and on and becomes almost universal.

From the East, it penetrates the West and spreads through Normandy, England, Italy and France.

Admirable saints, ardent apostles rise on all sides to spread the cult of the Immaculate Virgin.

**St. Peter Damian** is known for his sermons on the Mother of God.

Speaking of the Annunciation he says: "After God created all his works and made them good, he did something even better: a bed of rest, formed of the most pure gold, was consecrated in the person of Mary. After the rebellion of the Angels and of men, he wanted to find in her only rest and tranquility".

"Only Maria, he still says, Mother and Daughter of the creator never came down, never fell...

The flesh of the Virgin, which comes from Adam, unblemished by the want of Adam." (12)

*11) Electa insignis inter filias, quæ immaculata semper extitisti, ab exordio tuæ creationis, quia paritura eras Creatorem totius Sanctitatis (S. Fulbert.)*

*12—Dear enim Virgins, ex Adam Su pia, maculas Adæ non admisit (SP Dom.)*

**St. Anselm of Cantorbery** is another Apostle of Maria Sma. he: wrote a book about the Immaculate Conception, from which we highlight this small excerpt:

"Because Jesus Christ was born, according to his divinity, of the Eternal Father, who is just; it was necessary, if we can put it this way, that he should be born of a just mother, according to human nature.

"It may therefore be said, in all truth, that she possessed the original justice, instead of the injustice which all the descendants of Adam receive from her origin."

And again: "If in the Conception of the Mother of God one finds anything of original sin, it is not in her that it was conceived, but in the person of her parents that it is necessary to look for it.

"God who makes the chestnuts feed and ripen among the thorns, while being separated from them, could he not then do the same thing with his Mother?

Surely He could and He wanted it; and if he wanted it, he did it! *Plane potuit et Voluit, quod si voluit, et fecit* (lib of Concep.)

Saint Ivo of Chartres lived at the same time (1088). He is another defender of the Immaculate Conception, whose writings have come down to us.

"Let us learn, he says, how the Son of God sanctified his mother's flesh, that the Catholic might rejoice, and the impure heretic confused.

"God blotted out in her every stain of original sin and present sin, and took Mary's flesh to form his own flesh, to which he communicated the purity of God himself." (13)

*13) Omnem quippe nævum, tam originalis, quam actualis culpa in ea, delevit, sicque carnem de carne and jus sumens, samdem in divinis munditiam transformavit (Ivo: char: Serm.de Nat.).*

## **X. Conclusion**

Let's stop for a moment on the threshold of the twelfth century to see how in these most remote centuries the unmistakable truth of the Immaculate Conception shines like a star.

No opposition is raised even by the heretics and other enemies of religion.

All Catholic writers dealing with the subject express their full and integral conviction to a truth considered to be of apostolic tradition.

No dissenting voices, no struggles among theologians, no reservations about it.

With the proper term — Immaculate — or by equivalent wilds, we always find Mary: all beautiful, free from all sin, free from the original stain, preserved from all blemish.

It is the Immaculate One, as centuries later the Church will proclaim her in dogmatic definition, which she will use forever as a truth implicitly revealed in the Gospel, and explicitly confirmed by the universal faith of Catholicity.

Let us note well this firmness and this teaching unit, both to prepare our Spirit for the final emergence of the dogma that must blossom on this stem, as well as to understand and appreciate in their fair value the hesitations that we will encounter in the next two centuries, hesitations allowed by God, and even necessary, to oblige theologians to study to the bottom this glorious prerogative of Mary, and define all its consequences.

As a doctrinal conclusion, which summarizes everything we have just seen and synthesizes in a light beam the various aspects of the Immaculate Conception, I reproduce here a sonnet made by the devil himself, in 1823, through an illiterate 12-year-old boy, possessed and exorcised by two Dominican Peers, in the city of Ariano, from Apulia. (Italy)

The two Priests imposed on the possessed person the obligation to prove theologically with a sonnet with indicated rhymes; Son and Mother, the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of Jesus.

The little illiterate possessed, in an urge, composed the following Sonnet, which is, by the way of speaking and the depth of the doctrine, an inimitable work, beyond the intellectual capacity of any person, however illustrated.

It is the summary of the entire doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and the perfect and faithful echo of the tradition of the first twelve centuries of Christianity:

Son,

True mother I am, of a God who is

And I am His daughter, as well as His Mother;

Ab æterno, he was born, but he is my Son,

Well I was born in time, I'm your Mother

He is my Creator, but he is my Son,  
I am your creature, and your Mother;  
Prodigy was divine, to be my Son,  
An eternal God and I am his Mother.

Common is almost being, to Mother and Son,  
Because of the Son, the Mother had to be,  
And from the Mother the Son also had to be.

Now, if the Son's being had the Mother;  
Or will it be said that the Son was stained,  
Or without a labour if the Mother must be told.

The most subtle theologian would be unable to surpass, in firmness and doctrinal depth, the succinct exposition of the divine Motherhood, virginal purity and the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Pope Pius IX, knowing this sonnet, read it, weeping with emotion, and proclaiming it a perfect exposition of the Immaculate Conception.

The devil became the obligated panegyrist of the deepest dogma, which concerns the Mother of Jesus.

It is a forced confession, allowed by God, to reveal to the world the great prerogative of his Most Holy Mother, showing at the same time the intimate, sacred, inseparable union that exists between the Son and the Mother.

## CHAPTER VI

To the Immaculate Conception

ACCORDING TO THE Catholic DOGMA

Before exposing the full radiance of the Immaculate Conception, an observation is needed regarding the development of dogmas.

Catholic dogmas, although **objectively** immutable , change **subjectively** , according to the degree of intelligence and penetration of the person who studies them.

There is in the immutable dogmas "simpliciter" a true growth "secundum quid".

And how is such growth done?

All supernatural truths, by divine disposition, pass, as if through **three states** .

1st. The simple truth, often implicitly contained in any universal principle.

2nd. Challenges, objections, attacks from enemies of religion, or doubts from theologians themselves.

3rd. The refined study or polemics in the refutation of errors, or in the clarification of doubts, which highlights the various aspects of the contested truth.

This is how Jesus Christ proceeded, teaching his apostles.

I have many things to tell you, he says, but you cannot understand them now (Jn 16:13).

The Immaculate Conception had to go through this triple phase of development.

In the preceding chapter we saw the first phase: **the simple truth** .

We are now going to attend the second phase: the **impugnation** , and we will finish with the third: **an accurate study** that will give this truth all the brilliance of faith and intelligence.

## I. First hesitations

In the first eleven centuries, history conveys no challenge to the Catholic truth about the Immaculate Conception.

Each of the Doctors simply followed the lights of faith and the attraction of his piety towards the Sma. A virgin and did not seek to penetrate further into an issue which did not touch the essential foundations of religion, and which no heretic attacked.

At the beginning of this century, the issue changes its aspect... There is an intense development of philosophical studies that open new horizons.

Theologians scrutinize the doctrine, and penetrate the mysteries, wanting to know the religion in depth.

It was remarkable progress, necessary, but not without its dangers.

The study of religion is the most sublime of studies, but it must be directed by a **competent** authority.

In uncertain and undefined questions, Rome opens the field to scholars and only, when there is danger of deviation or error, does it intervene with its infallible magisterium.

It was therefore allowed to discuss the foundations of the Immaculate Conception... to examine the pros and cons, in order to better support Catholic teaching.

This is what happened, and what opened the door to the first doubts, hesitations, and even certain, but very rare denials.

Some declared themselves openly in favor, others hesitated, or found such a privilege useless for the glory of the Mother of Jesus.

An admirable thing, however, where the finger of God is seen: — all those who spoke out against the traditional truth, or later retracted their opinion, or left in their own writings arguments and weapons to destroy what they had asserted.

The celebrated Abbot Rupert is the first ecclesiastical writer we meet on the threshold of the twelfth century as being among those who at first denied belief in the Immaculate Conception, and adopted it later, becoming its ardent supporters.

He wrote in his Commentary on the Song of Songs, that Mary could, like any other creature, apply these words of the psalmist: Behold, I was conceived in iniquity, and that being part of the descendants of Adam, she had inherited, like the rest men, original sin.

Shortly thereafter, and in the same book, he completely recants and defends the ancient tradition.

"The serpent, he says in book VI, bit the handmaid's heel; but you, O daughter of the Prince, have bruised the serpent's head... Only you are free among all the daughters of men...you are singularly free from the yoke of all sin!" (1)

Such is the beginning of the hesitations and retractions that we will find in the two centuries that follow, that it will be the preparation of the full light that we will soon witness.

**São Bernardo** is, without a doubt, the luminous beacon of this century.

At the same time, he is a lover of the Blessed Virgin.

And despite this the great Doctor does not escape the hesitation of his contemporaries.

He wrote fiery pages, full of doctrine and love for the one he entitled: Rapiroz cordiums, the seductress of hearts, but about the Immaculate Conception he wrote little, and in this little he appears almost hostile to the great privilege of Mary, as the demonstrate several excerpts from his writings.

Later S. Bernardo recanted and defended what he seemed to almost want to fight at the beginning.

In his sermons on the "Hail the Queen" we find his profession of faith clear and expressed on this point. He writes:

"The ark was built of the wood of Sethum, for Mary was chosen beforehand, by the Holy Spirit, and wholly preserved from all blemish, though her fathers' nature was vitiated by sin." (two)

1) *Ideirco ancillæ calcaneum Serpens momordit. Thou autem, O filia Principis, singularis libera es a omni jugo ti. (Rup. lib. 6 in cant).*

2) *Maria, from patrum natura per peccatum vitiaia, duncert originem, prælocia tamen est per Spiritu Sanctum et præservata ad purum (BVM Serm.)*

Here is an even more explicit passage: you are innocent of the original stain and current faults. No one shares such a privilege with you! (3)

And in another sermon the saint says: "Among the children of men there is none, neither great nor small, who was not conceived in sin, apart from the Mother of the Immaculate, who did not sin, but blots out the sins of the world. When it comes to sin, I don't want any mention of it at all!"

"Mary's flesh comes from Adam, but the lack of Adam in her did not cling." (4)

Two other important figures from this period are: **Hugo** and **Ricardo de S. Victor** . Let's just quote an excerpt from the second.

"Mary is all beautiful, because grace possessed all of her, and there was no place in her for sin.

The stars are covered with darkness, the saints are hampered by the guilt common to all men.

The Blessed Virgin, however, was all beautiful; the sun of justice illuminated it all and penetrated it with its rays. There is no stain on it, no shadow of sin"! (5)

*3) Innocens fuisti ab originatibus et actualibus peccatis. Nemo ita prater te. (Serm. 4 in Save Reg.)*

*4) Non est in filiis hominum magnus vel parvus, quin nom in peccati fuerit conceptus, præter Matreim Immaculati!*

*(Sermo 3 of Cæna Dom.)*

*Dear Mariæ ex Adam assumes, maculas Adæ do not admit. (Serm. of Nat.)*

*5) Beata Virgo tota puichra fuit. (Ric.S. Vic).*

## II. thirteenth century

It is the century of the great doctors: St. Alberto the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, Alexander of Halas, St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, and others, each rivaling the others in wisdom, in holiness and in love for the Mother of Jesus.

And, providential fact, almost all of them shared more or less, at the beginning of their theological career, the doubts, the hesitations transmitted by the doctors and writers of the previous century.



They do not want to deny the Immaculate Conception, but hesitate to defend it; or timidly denying it, they affirm it, in the end, as Abbot Ruperto and São Bernardo had done before.

However, let us not think that the hesitation was universal: far from it. Many keep intact and without hesitation the precious deposit of tradition.

The Bishops of England even instituted a feast in honor of the Immaculate Conception.

**Saint Dominic** never hesitated in his ardent faith, and in a treatise he wrote on the Eucharist against the Albigenses he quotes and explains the words of Sto. Andrew, already quoted above (p. 120): "As the first Adam was formed from the virgin earth, which was never cursed, so it was fitting that it be so with the second Adam, whose earth, that is, the Mother, was it a Virgin, that the curse had not reached her".

The **Seraphim of Assisi** did not write about the Immaculate Conception, but preached it everywhere and consecrated his Order to the Immaculate Virgin.

**Sto. Antonio** preached the same truth, without writing anything about it.

**Alexandre de Haiés** taught, at the beginning, that the Augusta Virgin was not exempt from original sin, but prostrated by a mortal illness, in which he thought he saw a punishment from God, he recanted and wrote a book in defense of the Immaculate Conception.

His historian says that at the end of his life he always repeated these words: O Mary, she is my Sovereign, you are all beautiful, all enchanting, and there has never been any original or actual stain on you. (6)

The **Card and al Hugo** , Dominican, defends the same doctrine, and explaining the Angel's words: grace Achastes before the Lord, he says: Achastes what Eve had lost. Eve had lost the original grace, and Mary regained it—And further on, it says: The first privilege and Mary is immunity from sin. (7)

6) *Maria, Domina mea, tota pulhrra es, et formosa, et macula originalis aut actualis in te nurquam fait.*

7) *Invenisti quidquid Eva amiserat Primem Mariæ privilegium immunitas a peccato. (in Chap.1 fac.)*

Alongside these great theologians who never strayed from the ancient tradition and who never wavered in their faith, we unfortunately find great and sublime geniuses, who let themselves be carried away by current ideas, and issued opinions that, fortunately, they later portrayed, to adhere to fully

to the one truth always firm and always luminous in the Church and among the Christian people.

The same hesitation penetrated the Spirit of **St. Albert the Great** and **St. Thomas**, two geniuses, two eagles of learning and two devotees of the Mother of Jesus, but let's say: they only hesitated a moment, retracted themselves and fully adhered to the great and sublime privilege.

In its "Sentences," St. Alberto the Great hesitates, but in his book Praises to Mary the hesitation disappears and he positively declares the unblemished purity of the Holy Virgin.

"The Virgin alone, he writes, was exempt from this general law: All sinned in Adam." (8)

**Sto. Thomas Aquinas**, the sublime disciple of Alberto the Great, perhaps because of the influence of his Master, fell into the same hesitation in his Theological Summa, (S. Tom. II. pg 27. art. 2) but he completely recants later, in the exhibition of the Angelic Salute, saying that the Virgin Augusta was perfectly Holy in the sight of God, and that sin never abided in her: "Mary was perfectly pure from every stain; she contacted neither original sin nor any mortal or venial sin." (9)

And again: "Except the Blessed Virgin, who was entirely free from sin, whether original or venial." (10)

8) *Hico enim Virgo sola a cemmuni ilia regula excipitur: Omnes peceaverunt in Adam.*

9) *Maria purissima fuit quantum ad omnem culpa, quia nee originate, nec mortale, nec veniale peccatum incurrit. (Opusc, 8)*

10) *Except B. Virginito ceum omnium a peccato immunit fuit originaliaē veniale (Cit. by Henríguez)*

Elsewhere and in a text that no one disputes, St. Thomas is equally positive: he explains what purity consists of, and says that there can be a created being, so pure, that no one else can be purer than he, so that among created beings, such a being is absolutely foreign to the contagion of sin and the Holy Doctor adds: "Such was the purity of the Blessed Virgin, that she was exempt from original sin and present sin. However, her purity was lowered from God, because, strictly speaking, sin is impossible for him." (11)

**St Bonaventure** himself did not escape the same hesitation; but he portrayed himself as his worthy emulators.

Let's just quote this excerpt, taken from his second Sermon on the Sma. Virgin:

"I say in the first place that Our Lady was filled with preventive grace, a grace designed to preserve her against the stain of the original fault, which she would have contracted, owing to the corruption of nature, had it not been preserved and prevented by a special help. For the Son of the Virgin was, he alone, exempt from the original fault, and with him the Virgin his Mother.

"We must believe, in fact, that, in the first instant of her Conception, the Holy Spirit, through a new mode of sanctification, (preserved her from original sin, not destroying what would have existed, but preserving her, by a special grace, that sin might not exist in her." (12)

*11) Et talis fuit B. Virginis, quæ a peccato originali, et actuali immunis fuit. (S. Th, in 1 d 15 q 1 to 3)*

*12) Dico primo-quod Domina nostra fuit full gratia præniante in your sanctificatione; gratia scilicet præservativa contra fœditatem originalis culpæ quam contraxisset ex corruptione naturæ, nisi speciali gratia præservata, preventaque fuisset. Solus eaim Filius Virginis fuit ub originali culpa immunis, et ipsa Mater ejus Virgo.*

*Credendum est enim, quod new sanctificationis genere in ejus conceptiotis primordial Spiritus Sanctus eam a peccato Originali, non quod infuit, Sed quod intuisset redemi, until singulari gratia præservavit. (S. Bonav. Sermon. 2 of BMV)*

*1) John Duns, called Scol, after his country of origin Scotland - died in 1808.*

### III. The accurate study

This was the second phase of the Immaculate Conception:

The challenge. An acute phase, in which the greatest geniuses were shipwrecked, for an instant, but only to rise, later, with more strength and more zeal, in defense of the great privilege of Mary.

It was God who allowed it, so that the subject could be further studied, more explained, so that, through study, theologians could shed on this privilege the effulgent light of the Bible, tradition and reasoning, a triple focus of light that should illuminate the Immaculate Conception, and preparing the elements of a future dogmatic proclamation.

And what happened. It is this luminous radiance that will present itself to our eyes since the beginning of the fourteenth century, beginning with Dr. Subtil, **Duns Scot** (1), and ending with the proclamation of the truth, as a dogma of the Catholic faith.

It will be the third and last phase of the great dogma.

It will be the glory of the 14th century.

And this triumph will be due above all to the penetrating spirit of the great Franciscan Duns Scot, who will at once refute all objections against, and will make the ancient apostolic tradition shine in all its splendor, preparing it for the definitive dogmatic proclamation.

The theology adopted by Duns Scot takes a different and new direction in the way of explaining the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Not only did Duns Scot accept in the Franciscan or Scotist School a general faith in this dogma, not only did he determine its order, to boast of this belief, but it caused a real revolution in other schools, realizing **the agreement** between theology and the Church custom that preserved the ancient tradition, and the sensus fidelium or general belief of the people.

This complete agreement is the great work of genius that immortalized the Franciscan theologian, **Duns Scot** .

São Boaventura, in the discussion of the opinion opposed to the Immaculate Conception, had admitted the **possibility** (potuit) of this Conception, but declared himself against its **convenience** (deuit), while Duns Scot defended the possibility and the convenience.

He summarizes the possibility in three main reasons:

1. Mary could be exempt from original sin.
2. She could have contracted original sin for a single moment and then been cleansed.
3. she could have had the original stain, a certain time, being purified later.

The first assertion is the only convenient one, and it is this convenience that Duns Scot wants to demonstrate, putting himself from several different points of view.

Let us follow for a moment the beautiful and profound reasoning of the defender of the Immaculate Conception.

## **IV. Duns Scot Arguments**

You can reduce them to four.

### **1. The universality of redemption.**

Far from denying the necessity of redemption for all men or from denying the Savior the exclusive privilege of elevation above all creatures, the Immaculate Conception of Mary makes the Savior's mercy shine even more, preserving a member of the human race from all want.

Mary is this privileged member, being able to be so much more easily freed from the original stain, since this sin does not come from a personal fault, which would be the necessary cause of this stain, but only from a strange fault: the fault of Adam.

### **2. The power of the Redeemer.**

The power and efficacy of redemption are all the better manifest, as they open the gates of heaven to all men and preserve at least one member of the human species from the wrath or enmity of God.

The enmity of God is a greater evil than the loss of heaven, for it is the cause of this loss.

Through the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the power of redemption is clearly shown, for, in addition to the general redemption, it preserved a creature from every fault.

### **3. Reciprocity of love**

It was fitting that such a particular grace should be granted to the Mother of God, and that this exception be made in her favor, that love might form the most intimate bonds of her union with her Son.

The reciprocity of affection grows as a direct result of the benefits received, so that greater benefits must be matched by a more ardent love..

Now, redemption could not bestow on Mary a greater grace than exempting her from original sin, for such exemption elevates her above all men.

Therefore, God must exempt her.

### **4. The thrones in heaven.**

The great number of the redeemed must fill the thrones, left empty by the prevarication of the rebellious angels.

A place would have been empty if no member of the human species, preserved from sin, had not represented angelic purity in heaven.

This place, which the fallen angels should occupy but lost, was reserved for men.

The devil prevented Adam and Eve from reaching him.

This place was occupied by the second Eve, by Mary, representing, in angelic purity, the exemption from all blemish.

The devil, seducing Adam and Eve, ran counter to God's plans.

And The children of men, indeed, according to the divine order, were to fill the voids made in the heavenly court by the rebellion of the angels.

The second Adam and the second Eve re-established the divine plan, surpassing the angels themselves in purity and in grace.

Therefore, beside the Immaculate Christ must be his Immaculate Mother, as in the real paradise, beside the immaculate Adam, was the immaculate Eve.

\* \* \*

In front of these considerations, the arguments of Saint Thomas, against the convenience of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, are without force...

In fact, Jesus Christ is and remains the Redeemer of all men and he grants to his Mother the most sublime and perfect grace of his redemption.

The Holy Virgin, though conceived in the natural way and under the influence of carnal lust, does not follow from this that the stain of the flesh brought with it sin.

Inordinate lust persists in the baptized without sin. (13)

*13) Tamen infectio carnis manens post baptismum, non est necessaria causa quare maneat peccatum originale delectum per gratiam collatam. (D, Scot: In Senten. 3 d.3q1.)*

*14) Si auctoritati ecclesiae vel auctoritati scripturae non repugnat, videtur probabile, quod excellentius cet attribuere Mariae, videlicet quod non est in originali concepta. (ibd.)*

It is said that Mary had been subjected to the temporal penalties of original sin, particularly death, and that for this reason she must have been indebted, at least for a time, to the punishment of sin.

This proves nothing, since it is certain that temporal punishments can remain after the remission of sin, if not as vindicative, at least medicinal ones.

This is why Duns Scot concludes: "If you repudiate neither the authority of the Church nor the authority of Holy Scripture, it seems likely more excellent to attribute to Mary that she was not conceived in original sin. (14)

The intervention of Duns Scot, in favor of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, was the death blow to the opposite error, and it reestablished the old apostolic tradition, an instant fought, by divine permission, so that the question could be more accurately studied, and placed in full light on the great privilege of the Mother of God.

The University of Paris, being divided in its opinion, calls Duns Scot to hear its evidence in its favour.

Scot publicly resolved two hundred arguments and with so much doctrine, memory and such visible assistance from God that he convinced everyone, definitively established the teaching of the University and on this occasion received the title of Victorious.

The conclusion of his two hundred arguments was always: No! Mary could not contract original sin, just as she could not commit actual sin; for if she had been tainted with sin, there would have been a moment when the Mother of God was God's enemy.

And on this occasion the University forbade its members to attack the Immaculate Conception, and forty years later it forced all doctorates to take an oath to always defend this privilege.

The Universities of Colônia, Mayença, Valença and others imitated that of Paris.

The Order of Franciscans took the lead in defending the glory of Maria Sma., and decreed in 1823 the solemn celebration in all its churches of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This feast was introduced into Rome under Pope Nicholas III.

E Discussions continued and provoked long and deep studies on the subject; the opposition gave in, defeated by the weight of positive evidence.

## V. The Triumph of Truth

Now we can summarize. After the apostolic tradition, or **simple truth** , certain and undisputed, came the time of **challenge** , and this gave rise to the most beautiful and the most profound studies on the subject.

These studies have brought into full light, and with the brilliance of an undeniable truth, the privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

It is the time of triumph that begins and must be sealed by the official, infallible proclamation of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

From time to time, one or the other can still fight it, but everywhere the great theologians and the great saints embrace it and defend it with enthusiasm.

The councils do not yet proclaim the dogma of faith, but they clearly say that it is a truth that a child of the Church **cannot deny** .

At the beginning of the 15th century, Pope **Alexander V** , without defining it as the truth of faith, approved the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

St. Brigida and St. Izabel of Hungary became ardent propagandists for the great privilege of Mary,

In 1410 **St. Vincent Ferrer** , the great preacher of penance, became the fervent preacher of this truth, saying that Mary was not like us in her Conception, but that she was created, pure and holy, from the first moment, and then the angels celebrated the feast of the Conception. (15)

*15) Non creatur quia fuerit sicut in nobis, qui in peccatis concipimur, sed statim atque anima fuit creata, fuit sanctificata, et statem angeli in Caelo fecerunt festum Conceptionis, (S. Vic.: Serm. de Na.)*

**S. Bernardino de Senna** , S. João Capistrano, the poet Pedro Apolinário, Sto. Antoninus, Dominican, St. Lawrence Justinian, the great Carmelite Pedro Tomás and many other first-rate theologians became propagandists of the same doctrine.

**St. Leonardo** composed an office of the Immaculate Conception, approved by Pope Sixtus IV.

A few years later a legion of preachers were propagating the same privilege. Let us cite, just because they are better known: Nicolau da Cusa, Dionísio, the cartridge, Ambrose, the camaldulo, Tiago de Valença, Cardinal Cajetano, etc.



As for Catholic writers, defenders of this truth, it is impossible to cite the list. Suffice it to say that **Luther** himself, who was to become the great enemy of the Church, was one of the most ardent defenders of the Immaculate Conception.

Let's just quote the following passage, which is by Luther, before his intelligence was perverted by addiction:

"It is piously believed that the Conception of Mary was without original sin.

The Virgin Mary is like in the middle between Christ and other men. Christ, when he was conceived and began to live, was filled with grace from the very first moment.

Other men are deprived of grace in the first and second Conception, Now the Virgin Mary, though not full of grace in the first Conception, was in the second: Conception, that is, in the infusion of the soul into the already prepared corpuscle, and this not without merit.

She was in the middle between all the nativities. In fact, she was born of a father and a mother; and she conceived without the intervention of a father, so that she had become the Mother of her child, partly carnal and partly spiritual; for Christ was conceived in part of his flesh and part of the Holy Spirit.

Christ, on the contrary, is the father of many children, but without a carnal father and mother.

In this way the Virgin Mary is between the carnal and spiritual nativity; where the carnal ends, then the spiritual begins; as she is in the very middle of these two conceptions.

Other men are conceived in sin, both body and soul.

Christ was conceived without sin in body and soul. The Virgin Mary is conceived without grace, according to the body; but according to the soul it is full of grace.

That is what these words meant by The Archangel Gabriel to him: "Blessed are you among women". (16)

*16) Mariæ conceptio pie creditur sine originali peccato facta esse... Sic Virgo Maria quodammodo inter Christum et alios homines medium tenet. Sequidem Christus cum conciperetur et viveet, and the ipso articulo temporis gratiæ plenus fuit. Cæteris homines sine gratia sunt, tum in priori quam posteriori Conceptione. Thus Virgo Maria, quamvis juxta priorem Conceptionem non full gratiæ erat, ta men juxta*

*alter conceptionem (infusion in seildet animæ in corpusculo jam preparato) full gratia crat, tatque hoc non immerito, etc. (Citatus to Canisio)*

What a distance between the doctrine of Luther, the father of Protestants, and his children and grandchildren today, who almost all harbor a true hatred for the Immaculate Virgin!

Writing the lines above, Luther was not yet overcome by the low carnal passion that had dragged him to perdition, but he judged things with the upright sense of a free and dispassionate Spirit.

Now, we all know that only such a judgment enchants and manifests the truth, while passions bewilder and throw the Spirit into the most extreme errors.

At the **Council of Trent**, from 1545 to 1563, the bishops did not yet find the opportune time for the dogmatic definition, and to avoid the opposition's discontent, they limited themselves, in the fifth session, to defining the universality of original sin, saying that they did not understand to include to Her, Virgin in this general decree, Here are her words: "This Holy Council declares that it is not its intention to include in this decree, in what concerns original sin, the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, but that it is necessary to observe the Constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, of Holy Memory, under the penalties contained in these Constitutions, which the Council renews". (17) It is clear from this decree that the Holy Council almost entirely admits the truth of the Immaculate Conception, with only disunity with regard to the "opportunity" of dogmatic proclamation.

*17) Declarat tamen hæc ipsa Sancta Synodus, non esse suæ intentionis comprehendere in hoc decree, ubi de peccato originali agitur, Beatam et Immaculatam Virginem Mariam Dei Genitricem, sed observing esse Constitutiones felicis Recordationis Sixti Papæ IV, sub pœnis in eis "Constitution, quæ innovat. (Conc. Trid. Ses. 5)*

The Constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, which the Council of Trent renews, said that the Pope exhorted all the faithful to worthily celebrate the Feast of the Conception of Mary, and that he opened the treasures of Indulgences in favor of those who did. In 1483, the same Pope imposed silence on the discussions of some theologians, claiming that this Constitution did not refer directly to the Conception of Mary, but to her sanctification after the Conception. The Pope rectified the idea and declared that it was directly about the Conception and Mary herself.

The Bishops of the Council of Trent, not wanting to define the Conception of Mary yet, in order to allow ideas and opinions to mature further, nevertheless called the Mother of Jesus "the Blessed and **Immaculate** Virgin Mary, which demonstrates that everyone believed in this glorious privilege of Mary.

As can be seen, the faith of Catholicity is firm on this point. '

The tradition of the Apostles of the first centuries, opposed for a moment, continues unaltered, firm, luminous.

Faith in the Immaculate Conception is the universal belief of the Church.

The magnificent flowering flower which should one day adorn Mary's diadem by the solemn proclamation of this truth has not yet blossomed. It will take another three centuries to bring it to its ultimate perfection; however, the bud is formed... and at the time appointed by God, it will blossom, manifesting to the world the richness of its colors and the perfume of its Immaculate petals.

### **SAW. the universal belief**

This is where the pious conviction of the Immaculate Conception was, when Pope Pius IX decided to proclaim this truth as a **dogma of faith** .

Our separated Brothers, the poor and unhappy Protestants accuse the Church of having invented this dogma.

And tell me the reader, after having traversed the tradition faithfully transcribed here, from the time of the Apostles to our time, whether this is a novelty, an invention, or simply the **proclamation** of an always existing, always believed truth and only discussed for a couple of centuries!

Common sense and sincerity are obliged to confess that the Immaculate Conception is **implicitly** expressed in the Old Testament, almost explicitly revealed in the New Testament, and **formally** transmitted by the apostolic tradition, through the ages and the nations.

What is the sincere and loyal Protestant who, were he the head of the Church, would hesitate to accept a truth so luminous and so well proven, and hesitate to proclaim it a certain, irrefutable, divine truth?

None; for against the evidence there is no resistance.

This is what Pope Pius IX did.

Protestantism invaded the Church, ripping from its bosom thousands of its children, deluded and reduced by the fanaticism of Luther's sectarians.

The Church, at the Council of Trent, took the necessary measures to preserve the unity and integrity of the faith, through the composition of its admirable "Catechism".

The Church triumphed, as she always does.

But despite being triumphant, she mourned the departure of thousands of her children.

It was necessary to bring them back to the bosom of the truth.

And how to operate this reappointment?

By the Virgin Mary, by the Mother of Jesus and of men.

Is she not the Hand of all?

And how Mother can she be disinterested in Protestant workers?

Ah! they blaspheme his name, and reject his kingdom, it is true; but it matters little; a mother looks higher and farther than the rebellious child's offense.

She sees the salvation of this child.

This is why one day the Holy Roman Pontiff, Pius IX, by divine inspiration, understood that the time had come to exalt the radiant, sweet, attractive figure of the Blessed Virgin, placing a new diadem on her virginal forehead that would call the attention of the world, and forced men, as it were, to turn their eyes to her.

And this diadem, which Sacred Scripture had manifested to men, and which the centuries had polished, polished by faith, study and devotion, is the **Immaculate Conception** .

Oh! speak, Peter, speak! The world waits, heaven listens, angels rejoice, men cheer.

Say a word, the word of your infallible authority, and the glorious dogma of the Immaculate Conception will be accepted by all, and the Holy Virgin will manifest herself to the eyes of the entire universe, as Mother of the righteous, Mother of sinners, as she is the Mother of the Divine Just, of the Victim of sins, of Jesus.

Pius IX, by private letters, officially and solemnly consulted the universal Church, in the person of its bishops, on the belief of peoples in the: Immaculate Conception.

The Episcopate responded, and the Pope received 543 letters from Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops from all over the world.

The Holy Father took note of everything, and on February 2, 1849, from his exile in Gæta, he addressed an encyclical to all the Bishops, in which he attested to the requests that came to him from all sides and communicated to them the results of the queries.

Of the 543 prelates who responded to his invitation, 484 attest to their firm faith and that of their diocesans in the Immaculate Conception, and they urgently ask for a pure and simple definition.

Ten ask for an indirect definition.

Twenty-two express doubts about the timing of the definition, or fears about the consequences.

Four don't speak of the definition.

Eighteen declare themselves against the expediency of definition, and among them only six against the definition of pious tradition.

No Bishop, however, even among the six opposites, claims that such a belief does not exist in his diocese, and even that it is not commonly accepted.

Sixteen of them assert that such a belief is so deeply ingrained that they would not have the courage to command prayers or consult with the people, fearing to scandalize them into believing there may be doubt about it.

The time had come. St. Peter's successor can speak... and his voice, an echo of the divine voice, will also be the echo of the world's universal belief.

## **VII. The proclamation of dogma**

To conclude the doctrinal and historical exposition of the great dogma, just pick up one of the words of the beautiful and luminous Bull of the Holy Father Pius IX, proclaiming the dogma of faith the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

On December 8, 1854, Pius IX, surrounded by 53 Cardinals, 43 Archbishops, 100 bishops and more than 50,000 pilgrims from all over the world, rose from his throne in St. Peter's Basilica, of Rome, in the fullness of her infallible authority, pronounced and defined that: the doctrine which professes that the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first moment of her Conception, was, by a special grace and privilege of Almighty God, seen from the the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of mankind, preserved and exempt from all stain of original sin, is revealed by God and, therefore, must be formally believed by all the faithful. (18) A religious silence made it possible to even hear every word of the Holy Father, who was so moved that he was forced, several times, to interrupt himself to give free rein to his tears.

*18) Declaramus pronunciamus et definimus, doctrinam, quæ tenet, Beatissimam Virginem Mariam in primo instanti suæ Conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuita meritorum Christi Jesus Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpæ labe præservatam, this immunem atque ideirco, ab omnibus fidelibus firmiter, constarque Credendam. —PIUS PP. IX.*

It is noteworthy that Pius IX, in this circumstance, took only the consultative notice of the Bishops, dispensing with their deliberative voices, deciding alone, for his personal authority, both of the opportunity and the terms of the definition.

In this way he prepared the definition of pontifical infallibility which the Vatican Council was to proclaim in July 1870.

He thus preluded, by an act of unique solemnity, the exercise of an authority, which was soon to be proclaimed as a dogma of faith.

It is therefore a truth of faith that Mary is Immaculate in her Conception, and that the devil never had the slightest influence on the blessed woman.

The arguments ceased, the world accepted with immense joy the voice of Jesus Christ, speaking through Peter's lips; and from that day, apart from the poor and unhappy Protestants, the world has girded the pure forehead of the Mother of the Savior with the Sacred Diadem of the Immaculate Conception.

\* \* \*

But it's not enough!

Heaven wanted to confirm the voice of the earth.

The Mother of God herself wanted to proclaim the existence of the privilege that the Church had just defined.

Just three years after this solemn proclamation, on February 11, 1858, Mary deigned to appear miraculously, a fortnight later, near the small town of Lourdes in France, to a poor 13-year-old girl named Bernadette.

Having gone to collect firewood on the riverbank and, near Lourdes, arriving in front of a natural cave, dug in the rock of the Pyrenees, the girl suddenly hears a violent noise of wind, and raising her head, she fell to her knees, as if overshadowed, crushed by what is in front of her eyes.

At the bottom and on top of the cave, in a kind of excavation in the rock, there is standing, in the midst of a superhuman glare, a woman of incomparable beauty.

This glow was as soft as it was resplendent, and it was nothing like the light of this world.

The vision was not indecisive; it was a real human body, a living person, which differed in no way from an ordinary person, except for the halo of light and its divine beauty.

He was of medium height; he looked very young, bringing together the candor of the child, the purity of the Virgin, the tender gravity of the mother, and the majesty of age and sovereignty.

His admirable countenance exuded an infinite grace.

His blue eyes had a softness that seemed to melt your heart.

His lips had an expression of kindness and sweetness.

The apparition's dresses, of a cloth unknown on earth, were whiter and more resplendent than the snow on the mountains.

This long, floating dress showed the feet, which rested on the rock.

On each of her feet, of virginal purity, shone a golden rose.

A sash, sky blue, hung in two straps to accompany the dress down to the bottom.

A white veil hung from her head, wrapping her shoulders.

A rosary, whose beads were white as drops of milk, whose golden chain seemed luminous, hung from the folded hands of the mysterious apparition.

She remained silent.

On March 25th Bernadette begged me to tell her her name.

The apparition smiled slightly but did not respond.

Bernadette insisted.

The apparition looked more resplendent but did not respond yet.

Bernadette insists for the third time.

The apparition glowed more. she had, as always, her hands clasped with fervor: her countenance seemed to radiate the bliss of heaven.

He separated his hands, letting the rosary slide over his right arm; then he opened his arms, gently bending them to the earth, as if to show the world his virgin hands, full of divine blessings. Then raising them to heaven, she spoke, in a clear and charming voice, these words: I am the Immaculate Conception!

Having said these words, the Blessed Virgin disappeared, and Bernadette was in front of a deserted rock.

The Immaculate Virgin, the glorious Mother of Jesus, whom the Pope had just shown to the world, haløed with the grandeur and radiance of the new dogma, came to ratify the words of the successor and St. Peter.

The Pope had said: she is Immaculate in her Conception.

The Blessed Virgin replies: I am Immaculate Conception.

It is the golden key, which forever closes the uninterrupted tradition of the Apostles, which closes all opposition and opens the doors of heaven, so that we can admire the unique glory of the Immaculate Mother of God and our Mother.

## **VIII. Conclusion**

Here is the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, ancient as the world, in divine privilege; 1950 year old, in the person of the Blessed Virgin.

It's nothing new: it's a basic truth of Jesus' religion.

The truth existed... shines in the Old and New Testaments.

The Apostles proclaimed it with all the authority of their divine mission, and transmitted it to posterity as the sacred source of the greatness of the



Mother of Jesus, leaving to the Church, or rather the Holy Spirit who directs the Church, the care to choose the opportune time to manifest to the world the dogma implicitly revealed in Sacred Scripture and explicitly expressed in the apostolic traditions.

It's one thing: to reveal news, and another use is: to proclaim existing truths.

There is no one who does not see the difference between proclaiming a truth and the existence of this truth.

What already exists is proclaimed.

When Denis Papin proclaimed, in 1710, the law of steam pressure, such pressure has existed since there was steam.

When Fathers Lona and Becaria proclaimed the laws of electricity in 1100, such electricity had existed since the beginning of time.

When Father Procopio Divisch (and not Franklin) proclaimed, in 1759, the attraction of the lightning rod, such attraction already existed, but it went unnoticed.

When Father Bede proclaimed the laws of the tides... the tides, like the laws that govern them, existed from the beginning.

When Father Alberto proclaimed the laws of air navigation, such laws existed and were only applied by his successors.

When Father Nollet proclaimed electricity from clouds, such electricity had been there since there had been clouds in the firmament.

When Father Copernicus proclaimed the double movement of the planets on themselves and around the sun... such a movement had already been taking place since the creation of the world.

It can be seen, therefore, that to proclaim a truth is not to invent it, to manufacture it, but simply to manifest it publicly.

So it was with the **proclamation** of the Immaculate Conception.

The Pope did not make the Virgin Immaculate, nor did he invent a novelty, but only manifested to the world and imposed a truth on Catholic belief, implicitly contained in the Bible and explicitly transmitted by the apostolic tradition.

The proofs I have given of this fact are irrefutable.

The fact of the Immaculate Conception is therefore a revealed, certain, indisputable truth.

Protestantism intended to deny this truth, lowering the Mother of Jesus to the level of other women.

It was therefore necessary and opportune for the voice of the Head of the Church to be raised, to refute error and **proclaim** the truth.

A truth becomes a Catholic **dogma once** it is proclaimed as such by the supreme authority of the Head of the Church.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception thus passed through the triple phase, which develops and forms all dogmas.

1. The simple universal belief,
2. The apposition of contradictors.
3. The solemn proclamation.

I have developed at length the truth of the Immaculate Conception, because the fundamental basis of this dogma has been proven, Protestants must admit the consequences of this truth, which are like the consequences of this first principle. Since she is immaculate, one must admit her perfect holiness, her peerless grandeur, her incomparable power, her glorious assumption into heaven, her universal mediation, etc.

Everything connects, everything ties together like the rings of a chain.

Assuming the existence of a chain, and having in hand the first ring of this chain, the existence of all other rings must be admitted.

There is no objection that does not dissipate in the face of the evidence cited, and the most rebellious, being sincere, must admit a **dogma as** luminous and resplendent as the sun in broad daylight.

Oh! poor dear Protestant! Isn't all this sublime?

Isn't it feeling God's finger, God's love, God's design in all this?

Oh! please do not close your heart to the love of such a dear mother.

Despising your mother is a crime.

To despise the Mother of Jesus is blasphemy.

Open your heart and let the light, strength and love of the Blessed Virgin radiate in it.

She is the smile of religion.

She is the smile of heaven.

She is the smile of our life!

## CHAPTER VII

### The Perpetual Virginité of Mary

A teacher of Hebrew and NT exegesis at the Baptist Seminary in Rio, sought to refute the Catholic dogma of the perpetual virginité of Mary Most Holy, wanting at all costs to prove that the Mother of Jesus had more children.

The distinguished professor did not honor his title, making a clumsy defense and a rebuttal without arguments. It proved nothing and refuted nothing. It just wove cobwebs around a luminous truth, which the Church upholds and which, in order to protest, Protestants deny.

There is in the defense of the worthy professor a titanic effort to prove what is impossible to prove and deny what is undeniable.

I believe there is sincerity in the aforementioned argument, but there is neither penetration nor logic.

The Baptist teacher mixes up texts and interpretations.

Now, it is not citing texts that we refute or prove a thesis. There needs to be a bit of logic, reasoning in these quotes, not deviating the texts from their natural sense, but giving them the hermeneutical interpretation that the context demands and the parallel places impose.

After reading this article, the reader no longer knows who he should believe in, he doubts everything and instead of strengthening his faith, he feels everything falter and lose himself in the accumulated sophistry.

I will try to shed a ray of light on the Protestant professor's labyrinthine exposition, through a clear and unmistakable exegesis.

Let's do it by steps.

## I - **Virginity and Marriage**

Here is the first part of the Baptist teacher's argument:

“ The Holy Scriptures in no way can demean the Blessed One among women, nor deny her any honor that belongs to her.

On the contrary, the true teaching of the New Testament about Mary's virginity, in the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit (Mat.1,20); on her marriage afterwards, and the conception of other children by her rightful husband, Joseph, instead of dishonoring her, he honors her, in the glorification of motherhood as such, in the sacred plan of God. The false Romanist clerical theory that celibacy (with all its evils) is a purer act than marriage is responsible for the dogma, by the invented Catholic Church, of Mary's perpetual virginity.”

It's a little indigestible piece. Let us try to analyze it clearly and sincerely.

The teacher wants to say:

1 — That Sacred Scripture cannot debase the Virgin Mary.

Very well! We agree; but why then look for mr. to demean it by denying it a title that Scripture itself confers on it?

2 — The birth of other children would glorify Maria Sma's motherhood.

This is sad and phenomenal and assumes no understanding of the dignity of Mother of God.

Maria Sma. she is the Mother of Jesus.

Now what more glorious motherhood can there be than this one?

Which would be more worthy: to be the Mother of God, or to be the Mother of all humanity?

All men together are not worth one Jesus Christ.

What an honor I could bring Maria Sma. the birth of other children, if the Son of God has already been born from her?

Maria Sma. she has all the glory in her divine motherhood... What can a human motherhood bring her?

Can't you see, dear professor, that even common sense revolts against such an assertion?...

It's as if you were saying: Santa Monica was the mother of Saint Augustine, but to emphasize her motherhood, she was also the mother of several poor farmers.

What highlight would Santa Monica receive from this?

The honor of being the mother of St. Augustine is enough for her, who surpasses, by genius, virtue and popularity, these others who would be farmers.

Legitimate motherhood is always honorable, and it is all the more honorable the more dignified the child is.

Now the son of Mary is God.

What glow would the birth of a James, Joseph, Judas and Simon bring to you?...

So, dear professor, your argument is worthless!

\* \* \*

This false principle denotes in my opponent an unusual ignorance of the Catholic religion or an obsessed and preconceived idea.

To compare anything, dear professor, it is necessary to know the two terms of the comparison. It's a simple rule of all logic.

To compare Protestantism with Catholicism, you need to know both.

Now you show that you are completely ignorant of Catholic teaching... because you attribute to him what he rejects, and you deny what he does not profess.

Either ignorance or malice!... Choose, dear Hebrew teacher!

It speaks of the "false Roman theory that celibacy is a purer state than marriage."

This is ignorance that is unforgivable in an exegesis teacher.

Yes, celibacy is a holier state than marriage; this is the teaching of the Church, and it is the Church's, because it is from Sacred Scripture.

Is it possible that you have not yet read chapter VII of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians?

For a New Testament exegesis teacher to ignore this... it's colossal!...

Read it, dear professor, and draw the conclusion it entails.

The premises are right, as they are divine; the conclusion must be right too.

São Paulo writes:

"I say to the unmarried and to the widows that it is good for them if they remain, just as I do. (2Cor.7,8)

But as for virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord; but I give counsel, as one who has obtained the Lord's mercy to be faithful.

I understand, therefore, that this is good for the man to be like this (single).

Are you connected to a woman? do not seek to disconnect yourself. are you free from women? do not seek a woman.

But if you take a woman, you have not sinned. And if a virgin married, she didn't sin; yet these will have tribulations of the flesh. And I would like to spare you them... (Ibid. 25). He who is without a wife is careful of things that belong to the Lord, as he will please God!... But he who is married is careful of things that are of the world, as he will please his wife; and is divided.

And the unmarried woman and the virgin take care of the things that are the Lord's; to be holy in body and in Spirit...

He who marries his virgin (daughter) does well, and he who does not marries her does better" (ibid.38).

What should be concluded from the passage quoted?...

Two essential things:

1st. Getting married is allowed, it's **good** .

2nd. Not getting married is not only allowed, it's **better** .

Do what you like, twist or deviate from the quoted verses, and my Hebrew teacher, if he is sincere, shall either **grant** or **deny** the quote; the middle ground is impossible.

**If he refuses** , he says that São Paulo is a liar, because he said: Whoever marries his virgin, does well, and what does not marries her, does better.

**If you grant** , oh! then. my dear professor collapses his entire castle built with sophistry.

Celibacy is no longer a Romanist invention, a clerical theory; it is a divine institution, a positive counsel from the Bible.

It is not a law, as St. Paul says: "I have no commandment from the Lord; but it is counsel, 'but I give counsel,' continues the Apostle.

Now, is the counsel inspired by God of any value or not?...

If they have, celibacy is because a **sant thing to** and **more pleasing** to God than marriage.

If they don't, then there's no point in having exegesis teachers... it's better to interpret in this case Virgilio, Horacio or Cicero.

What vine you got into, my dear teacher! It even makes you doubt your exegetical science!...

Exegesis is not just quoting biblical passages; it is above all to understand them, confront them, to discover their obvious meaning.

## **II. proof of the gospel**

From the false premises, from the adulterated texts of São Paulo, the professor will now draw an even more false conclusion.

In fact, it's logical.

Pejorem sequitur semper conclusion departs, says the eighth law of the syllogism.

The conclusion always follows the worst part.

The false clerical theory, continues the professor, is responsible for the dogma, invented by the Catholic Church, of Mary's perpetual virginity.

Loud there, my teacher, VS is again talking about what he doesn't understand.

1 — I have already shown above that such a clerical theory is the positive, clear, indisputable teaching of S. Paulo. The truth is that St. Paul was clerical.

2 — The Catholic Church does not invent any dogma. All Catholic dogmas figure clearly in the Bible, all without exception.

Dogma is a divine truth, taught by God, not invented by men.

I would like my teacher to quote me a single Catholic dogma that is not mentioned in Holy Scripture.

I don't know if it's bad, but I think my teacher doesn't even know what dogma is, what it takes for a truth to be dogma and how many dogmas there are in the Catholic Church.

3 — The dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity was not invented by the Church, since it appears in full letters, and even in luminous letters, in the Gospel.

Read the Gospel better!

The truth of Maria Sma's perpetual virginity. holds a triple test:

1st Mary was a virgin before giving birth.

2. Mary was a virgin during childbirth.

3rd Became a Virgin after childbirth.

Three assertions that I'm going to prove to you here, with the Bible in my hand, and a little logic in my head.

The first without the second is not **safe** .

The second without the first is **powerless** .

The above triple assertion is **of faith** , the universal teaching of the supreme magisterium of the Church.

Let's do it by steps.

The first assertion is admitted by the Protestants themselves, as it is positively in the Gospel.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God... to a betrothed virgin... and the virgin's name was Mary (Luke 1.26).

Even more positive is the witness of the Virgin herself; objecting to the angel: How shall this be done, for I know no man?

No doubt exists: Maria Sma. it was Virgo.

The second assertion, showing that the Mother of Jesus became a virgin in childbirth, can be deduced from the same texts.

What is conceived by a miracle must be born by a miracle; birth is the consequence of conception; without this consequence the miracle would be incomplete.



The Gospel shows us that Mary, having reached the ordinary end of nature, gave birth to her son. And being there, the days in which she was to give birth happened to be completed. (Luc.1,6)

Mary therefore conceived the divine Word without harming her virginity. It is the Gospel that tells us. Therefore, he says that she would give birth without losing her virginity, since **conceiving** and **giving birth** are two terms of the **same action** .

The mother conceives, to give birth — it is a single action: to bear children.

Childbirth and conception are inseparably linked, the former being the painful price of the latter; since Mary Most Holy is freed from the second part, she must necessarily be freed from the first.

It is no more costly for God to make virginally **born** than to make virginally **conceive** ,

Being able to do it, God had to do it, to complete, by the action of the Holy Spirit, what he had begun.

The angel solving the doubt that Maria Sma. manifest to him, he answers: The Holy One, who is to be born of you, will be called the Son of God, because with God nothing is impossible (Luke 1.35).

Here are the two terms that complete each other and express a single miracle: Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. (Luc.1.35).

Conceiving Jesus and giving birth to him are here textually and literally a **single miracle** , the miracle of the Incarnation.

To separate these two terms, which the Evangelist purposely combined in a single sentence, is to visibly distort the text and the meaning of the word of God.

It is necessary to take the text in its entirety, or else reject it in its entirety.

One cannot reject it, as it is clear that the conception of the Virgin Sma. it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will descend upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. (Luke 1.35) And for this very reason, continues the

Evangelist, the saint who is to be born from you, will be called the Son of God. (Luc.1,35).

Here again the terms: **conception** and **birth** are united in a single proposition .

Not rejecting the first term of the proposition, one cannot reject the second, since the two terms form a single sentence, indivisible in construction and in meaning.

Logo: or Maria Sma. she wasn't a virgin before the birth, and then she won't be **at the birth** , which is heretical.

If she was a Virgin before, she must also be a Virgin during childbirth, as these are two terms that express the two operations of the Incarnation: to conceive and to be born.

And this is according to the prophecy: A virgin will conceive and give birth.

It is the Gospel itself that makes the application of this prophecy: Now, everything happened to fulfill what was said by the Lord, through the prophet. (Mat.1.22).

Let us say then with the Church, expressing the universal faith of the ages: Virgo prius et posterius,

So, my dear teacher, the Virgin Mary was a Virgin **before** giving birth and **during** childbirth.

It is a truth that cannot be denied, except by stepping with one's foot, all the rules of Logic and Hermeneutics.

### III. Jesus, only son of Mary

These two points proved: the Virginité of Maria Sma. **before** childbirth and **during** childbirth, it becomes easy to prove the perpetual Virginité of the Mother of Jesus, in other terms: her virginité **after** the birth of Jesus Christ.

It would be heresy to deny this truth.

In the Maria Sma Church. it has always been called in every century, both by the Latins and the Greeks: **always Virgin** : Aiepartenon.

What we have seen from the genealogy of Jesus already clearly shows that Maria Sma. he never had other children besides Jesus, and that the word brothers, used in the Gospel, simply means cousins.

To understand this truth — even I know it wasn't in the Gospel — simple common sense would suffice.

Common sense indicates to us, in fact, that the Mother of God has no more children, and this for the following reasons:

1. Because of the perfection of Jesus Christ, who should be the only-begotten of the **mother** , as he is the only-begotten of the **Father** .
2. Due to the dignity and holiness of the Mother of God, who would appear to be ungrateful, not paying attention to the honor of being the Mother of God, and would lose her virginity, miraculously preserved by God, as we have just seen.

\* \* \*

But let us examine the Gospel, to see if we find any evidence of such brothers of Jesus, children of Mary Most Holy.

The words of Mary Most Holy: How will this be done, since I do not know a man, has in its natural sense a general extension, encompassing the past and the future.

She does not say: I did not know a man, but yes: I know a man, thus showing that she has taken the decision never to meet a man.

Tradition tells us that Maria Sma. I had taken the vow of perpetual chastity, in the temple, and the Expression: I do not know a man, it is like the clear expression of this vow.

Asking any teetotaler if he would accept a glass of wine, he will answer: I don't drink wine, that is: I can't drink.

Likewise, Mary, always a virgin, said: I do not know a man, that is: I cannot, it is not allowed for me to know a man.

Asking someone if he knows Latin, and if he doesn't know it and doesn't intend to study it, he will answer: I don't know Latin.

If he intends to study it, he will say: For the time being I don't know Latin.

The Holy Virgin does not simply say that, for the time being, she did not know male, but she affirms positively: I do not know male, giving her thought a general extension. (Luc.1,34).

If it weren't so, why then Mary asks the Angel like this: How can this be done, if I don't know a man?...

Wouldn't such a question be completely unreasonable, inept?...

The Archangel could well retort to him: If you do not know a man at present, you will know him sooner; Isn't Joseph your husband?...

However, none of this he says. The Archangel respects and supports Mary's resolution, showing her clearly that what is to be born of her is not the fruit of man, but of God: The Holy Spirit will descend on you and the virtue of the highest will cover you with your shadow. (Luc.1,25).

\* \* \*

St. Mark calls Jesus, "The son of Mary"—the uiós Marias (Mk.6.3), and not one of Mary's sons, as if to emphasize that he was her only son.

If Maria Sma. had other children, how come such children never show up?

The Holy Family was made up of three members, and never more than three, as can be seen in the Gospel.

The Holy Family fled to Egypt and returned from there, settled in Nazareth and frequented the temple in Jerusalem; Mary and Joseph look for the baby Jesus, and everywhere we never see anyone appear in the company of Maria Sma. and St. Joseph.

During Jesus' public life, his mother appears from time to time; we never see such other children by his side.

During the passion we meet the Virgin Sma. in the company of Mary Magdalene, of the holy women, with St. John, and again we never see one of those children by her side, to console her, to comfort her.

Jesus is crucified and beside him is the Sorrowful Virgin, standing, crushed under the weight and her pain, and again none of those children appear there.

Jesus dies, and from his dying lips he drops these words of gentle tenderness — Here is your Mother — Here is your son (I am)!

He recommends his own mother to the care of St. John, (Eis ta idia), his cousin, without saying anything about such brothers, such children of Mary,

who should, of course, take care of their mother and not abandon her in the hands of strangers.

All of this is clear to anyone who wants to see it; and with a little common sense one must conclude that Mary was alone, only with her Jesus... and dead Jesus, she was in this world in the loneliness of her sadness, her resignation, her love, with no other person than John to console and care for her.

It is what makes the Gospel visible, and it is what common sense and logic dictate.

## **X. Protestants versus Protestants**

To end this important point, let us quote a passage from an educated and sincere Protestant, Mr. John Pearson, Protestant Bishop of Chester, who must be known by the professor of exegesis, as the name reveals himself to be an American.

The question, says this prominent figure in Protestantism, is not whether Jesus had other brothers, but rather whether Jesus Christ's mother, Mary, had other children besides Jesus.

In the Hebrew language, the word brothers includes not only the relationship of true brotherhood, but also that of more remote consanguinity.

Hence, the Blessed Virgin having remote consanguines, these were called brothers of the Lord.

We are brothers, Abraham told Lot.

However, Abraham was the son of Tareth, and Lot was the son of Aaron, the brother of Abraham.

Moses called Mishael and Elisafan, sons of Oziel, uncle of Aaron, and said to them, Go and bring your brethren out from before the Sanctuary. These so-called brothers, being Nadab and Abiu, sons of Aaron, were but remote kin of Misael and Elisafan.

Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother and Rebekah's son; however Rebekah was sister of Laban, father of Rachel.

Therefore, the Evangelists, conforming to the Jewish custom, to whose nation they belonged, called brothers of the Lord to the blood relatives of Mary.

Insisting on this argument will serve to elucidate more and more the solution of the question, because it must be seen that Mary, mother of James and Joseph, was not the Virgin Mary; and therefore it is clear that the so-called brothers of Our Lord were children of another mother.

We read in St. John that his mother, his mother's sister Mary, was at the cross of Jesus. "the wife of Cleopas and Martha Magdalene (Jo.19).

We also read in the other Evangelists: Mary Magdalene and Mary Mother of James and Joseph. (Mc.16)

Also in the tomb we find Mary Magdalene and another Mary. (Mt.28).

From the complex of these passages we infer that the other Mary was Cleopas' wife, and mother James and Joseph.

Saint Mark and Saint Luke expressly say so (Mc.16—Lc.24)

We deduce, therefore, that James, Joseph and other beloved brothers of the Lord were not sons of his mother, but of another Mary, being called brothers only by the aforementioned custom of the Jews, because the other Mary was a cousin of the mother of Jesus.

Here is a passage, dear professor, which is not from a Romanist, but from a sincere, fervent Protestant. of pure blood, of a man eminent for knowledge and position; and as a result, he defends with the Gospel itself, with the skill of a teacher, the perpetual virginity of Mary, after childbirth, as the Roman Church wants it. (John Pearson: Exposition of the Creed London, art. 3).

## **V. Conclusion**

It is useless to multiply the quotations, since the proofs of the Holy Virgin's perpetual virginity are not simply extrinsic, that is, supported by the authorities, but intrinsic, derived from the fact itself, from the divine word, interpreted by a loyal and conscientious exegesis.

He just doesn't understand those who don't want to understand.

Here is the refutation of the gross errors of the Baptist exegesis teacher.

Deep down, he will be convinced that he was wrong...

however, to say it, to confess it, would be to stop being a Protestant and even lose his chair of exegesis teacher, even though he had shown that he understood nothing in exegesis.

In fact, exegeting is not just aligning texts; it is to understand their meaning, and make them agree with other parallel texts.

And the teacher friend does none of this; he showed himself to be forewarned, with a fixed mind, not looking for the truth, but just wanting, with sophisms, to prove his error.

Error cannot be proved, dear professor... because it is the denial of the truth.

It is impossible to prove the truth of Holy Scripture to be false... and the truth of Mary's perpetual virginity is an **evangelical truth** .

It is therefore proven:

1st that getting married is **good** .

2nd that not getting married is **better** .

3rd that celibacy is a **holier** state than marriage, according to the teaching of St. Paul.

4th that Maria Sma. was a virgin **before** giving birth.

5th which was **during** childbirth.

6th who stayed **after** childbirth.

These are truths that prove the perpetual virginity of the Immaculate Mother of Jesus.

It is not, therefore, a clerical theory, a dogma invented by the Church, but a certain, positive, irrefutable truth, taught in the Gospel itself.

Since Mary's perpetual virginity has been proven, it is proven that she had no other children, besides Jesus, which such alleged brothers are simply relatives, cousins more or less remote, as can be seen from the family tree that I will mention further on.

This truth, which is of faith, has always been professed by the Catholic Church, as it has been by many sincere Protestant sages.

I quoted a passage from Pearson above; let's finish with another one from another protestant bishop dr. Bull, no less explicit:

Embracing Pearson's doctrine, dr. Bull clearly confesses Mary's perpetual virginity in the following passage:

"From the dignity of the Blessed Virgin it follows that she has always remained a Virgin, as the Catholic Church has always believed; it is in no way possible to even imagine that that **most holy vessel** , which was once consecrated to be the receptacle of the Godhead, was afterwards profaned." (Dr. Bull: of invocation of the BV Cath. Sat. V. II).

So speak other sincere Protestants whose works I have here before me, like Dr. Jeremiah Taylor, Protestant Bishop of Down, dr, John Bramhall, Roberto Owen, dr. Kicks, etc, etc. all of them superior to any suspicion, whether by knowledge or position.

Are these most respectable authorities worth nothing to my exegesis teacher?...

I don't want to quote Catholic authorities; these are by the thousands; I quote only these Protestants, to show my friend that their exegesis is disastrous, ignorant, and out of step with all the rules of science and common sense.

In a subsequent study I will analyze the rest of the blunders in your article, for fear of prolonging the discussion too much.

I could stop here, but I want to go through with it, and show the illustrious scribbler what he so solemnly denies, that Catholic Fathers have and study the Bible and have nothing to learn from modern Baptist teachers of Hebrew and exegesis.

Don't forget the friend of the thesis proved here: — "The perpetual virginity of Mary Most Holy".

## CHAPTER VIII

### the alleged brothers of Jesus

Let us continue with the refutation of the errors of the exegesis teacher, which we dealt with in the preceding chapter.

Proved the perpetual Virginity of Sma. Virgin, it is proven that she had no other children besides Jesus; and not having them, it must be concluded that such brothers, of which the Gospel speaks, are simply related.



I want to proceed, however, to destroy to the very foundations the arguments which the Protestants present, and which the Baptist professor of exegesis collected in his article.

There may be some repetitions, but these same ones will serve to better record the truth and show the nullity of contrary arguments.

## I. Marriage

Let us quote one more Baptist passage.

All Scriptures clearly and positively teach that marriage is a divine institution, established by God, and, consequently, is a state of holiness (Heb.18:4; Pr.31:10-28; Ps.128) It is an idea entirely foreign to the Scriptures, and false, that marriage constitutes a kind of impurity. The man and woman in the Garden of Eden, before they sinned, were commanded by God: "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth."

Three points to distinguish in this excerpt.

1. Marriage is a holy state.
2. Marriage is an impurity.
3. Everyone must marry.

None other than the Church teaches and defends the sanctity of marriage... Protestants pervert it, contenting themselves exclusively with the civil contract.

Now, a civil contract is not a religious marriage, and NS in the Gospel does not speak of civil law, but of **divine law** . They are therefore two different things.

Catholics adapt to the Civil Contract as citizens; but they never dispense with religious marriage like Christians.

As for the second point, it is absurd.

Who is it, dear teacher, who teaches that marriage is a kind of impurity?

Just being at the Baptist Seminary.

In which Catholic book did you find such an assertion?

Naturally in a communist book. Open any small Catechism and there you will find the following:

What is marriage?

It is a Sacrament that NSJ Christ instituted to establish a holy and indissoluble union between man and woman, to give them the grace to love each other, and to Christianly educate their children.

Here is Catholic doctrine in all its simplicity and charm.

The Church considers and venerates marriage as a Sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ... Now, how can a Sacrament, which produces grace, be an impurity?

Attributing such absurdities to the Church cannot be ignorance, it is slander, it is spite, it is baseness!...

And this is unworthy of an educated man who calls himself a pastor and professor of exegesis.

If the friend ignores these fundamental points of the Catholic Religion, it is better to remain silent, because in order to **discuss it**, it is necessary to know the subject under discussion, and to **refute it** is necessary to know the error that one wants to refute.

Here you want to refute what does not exist, and to discuss doctrines that you ignore or pretend to ignore altogether.

What the teacher cannot ignore is that among holy things one can be holier than another.

Giving a poor person a new suit is better than simply giving him a glass of water.

Getting married is good, says São Paulo, but he continues: Not getting married, to keep chastity, is better (Cor.7,38.)

Maria Sma. married St. Joseph: He did well.

At the wedding she kept her virginity: She did better!

Jesus Christ did not marry: Did he do well or badly?

If you've **done well** , your friend should shut up and imitate you.

If he **did wrong** , then his friend would be so kind as to rebuke him and do better than him.

Fun fact: Protestant pastors want to marry all priests.

So there is no more freedom?

The priest does not marry, because he wants to imitate Jesus Christ and the apostles.

Pastors marry because they don't have the courage to master nature to please Jesus Christ.

Shepherds marry: you do well.

Priests don't marry: they **do better!**

Here is the doctrine of St. Paul, the Catholic Church and all men of common sense.

## II. lightning and lightning

The illustrious professor, after an impenetrable uproar, to prove that such cousins of Jesus are children of Mary, concludes.

In Acts 1:13-14, Jesus' brothers are clearly, unmistakably, distinguished from Jesus' Apostles. Here is what it says: "And having entered a certain house, they went out to the upper room, where Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Zealous were staying, and Judas, brother of James. All these persevered in prayer with the women and with Mary, mother of Jesus and with his brothers." (See Fig).

This passage strikes the argument of rev. and the theory of his Church. But another fact still reduces to wreckage anything that still stands. It's the following: Thiago and Judas were already Apostles, when Jesus' brothers, James, Judas, Joseph and Simon were still unbelievers! On the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, just six months before the crucifixion, John (7:5) says of Jesus' brothers: "For even his brethren did not believe in him." What else will be needed for the total destruction of Catholic theory?

Absolutely nothing.

What a clumsy package, dear Professor!

This text strikes nothing, but it illuminates Catholic doctrine with a new glow.

It's lightning and lightning.

The lightning illuminates the truth of the Virgin Mary's perpetual purity, and the lightning strikes the Protestant error that blasphemes this purity.

Let's take a good look at the passage: quoted:

We find there: James the son of Alphæus, with James the son of Zebedee.

Very well!

And what proof of this?

You say that this proves that James, brother of the Lord, is distinguished from the Apostles... And where did you see that?

Knowing how to read between the lines can be good sometimes; however reading outside the text is a falsification.

We met two **Tiagos** , James, the youngest son of Alpheus, and James the greater the son of Zebedee.

Both are second cousins of Jesus Christ, but Thiago, the youngest, is twice Jesus' cousin: once as a son of Cleopas, who was a first cousin of Maria Sma!; a second time, he is cousin by affinity, to his uncle St. Joseph, married to the Virgin Mary.

It is this double kinship that makes him give the name "brother of the Lord", while St. James the Elder, St. John and St. John the Baptist are simply called brothers-kin.

Please, the Professor consult the family tree that I reproduce here, to dispel all doubts.

This genealogy was composed by Jewish and Catholic exegetes, after detailed research and studies of ancient documents.

In this tree the Teacher will clearly see that St. James, as a brother of the Lord (that is: second cousin) is not the son of Mary Sma., but the son of Cleopas or Alphæus and Mary Salome.

Instead of being Maria Sma's son, he is simply her nephew and **cousin-brother** of Jesus.

**MARY          UP          MATAN          JACOB**

**(Anna's  
father)**

Mother of Salome (Wife of Zebedee)	Mother of Saint Elizabeth  (woman of Zechariah)	Mother of the Virgin Mary	Father of Cleopas or Alphaeus and (husband of Maria Salomé)	Joseph's father  Mary's husband
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Mother of St. James, the greatest, St. John the Evangelist	Mother of St. John the Baptist (precursor )	Mother of Jesus Christ	Father of St. James the Younger, Joseph, Judas, Simon, Salome and Mary
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**III. A third Thiago**

To get in the way, the Baptist teacher creates a third James, who is not an Apostle.

Listen to what he writes:

James the brother of the Lord (Gal.1:19) is such a remarkable person, and so outstanding in the New Testament, that there is no reason why an attentive and sincere reader of the Bible should mistake him for any of the James who they were apostles of Jesus. It is mentioned in Mk 6:3; Gl.1:18,2:8,:1Cor.15:7; Acts 15:13,21:8 and in several other places. It appears from 1Cor.15:7 that he was converted at the time when Jesus appeared to him after the resurrection.

It is the conclusion of the quoted text in which Acts shows us apostles persevering in prayer with the holy women, with Mary and with his brothers.

From this the Professor concludes: there are the apostles, the holy women, the Mother of Jesus and his brothers.

The two holy James were apostles.

Therefore, these brothers of his are other characters and must be Maria Sma's children.

What a horrible syllogism, or rather an amphibological sophistry!

Let's take a good look at the components of the aforementioned meeting: the text says: They went up to the upper room, where Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphæus, Simon the caretaker, Judas brother of James, remained. the holy women, Mary, Mother of Jesus, with his brothers. (At.1,12-16.

Here, then, we have the 11 Apostles, with Matthias not yet being chosen to replace Judas. (At.1,26.

Among these apostles are five relatives of Jesus.

James, the eldest, and St. John, sons of Zebedee.

James the younger, Judas and Simon, sons of Alphæus.

Only: Saint John the Baptist, son of Saint Elizabeth, and Joseph, another son of Cleopas, are missing, as are the two sisters of Joseph: Salome and Mary, daughters of Cleopas.

Here are three characters that don't seem to be included in the list.

In the ascending line Jesus was related to uncle Zebedee, and a direct uncle Cleopas.

It must be supposed that these uncles followed their children and wives and also accompanied Jesus.

They too, being Jesus' relatives, deserve the name of **brothers** .

In this way we would have under the title of his brothers, not mentioned among the apostles, nor among the holy women: 5 characters, being: Zebedee, Cleopas, Joseph and his sisters Salome and Mary.

All of this is so natural... so logical, that one is surprised the professor of Exegesis has not noticed the existence of these other brothers of Jesus.

Since the name of brothers is a generic term that applies to relatives, as has been proved, it must be applied to the latter, as it is to the Apostles, relatives of Jesus.

And behold, all the difficulty is dispelled, without there being a need to create a third Saint James, who does not figure anywhere in Scripture and whose genealogy is unknown.

We have no right to add a comma to the Scriptures, any more than we have the right to suppress a dot.

#### **IV. By force of texts**

All texts cited by the Professor prove nothing contrary to what is said here; they even positively prove Catholic doctrine.

Let's run through these texts for a moment to shed light on the Protestant turmoil.

St. Mark 4,3 — Is this not the carpenter, son of Mary, brother of James and Joseph and of Judas and Simon? Your sisters are not here among us either.

Proof text of Catholic doctrine.

Take a good look at the family tree... All 5 are cousin-brothers of Jesus, by blood and by affinity.

\* \* \*

Gal. 1.19 — And of the other Apostles, I saw none, except Thiago, brother of the Lord.

Same supporting text. James is the Lord's first brother, and nothing more can be concluded from this text.

Gal, 2,9 — And having recognized the grace given me, James and Cephas and John, who were considered the pillars of the Church, joined hands with me and Barnabas.

What proof is that? Nothing but the existence of James and his apostolic zeal. Well, we already know that.

\* \* \*

Gal. 2:12—Before some arrived from James, he ate with the Gentiles.

Again. such text only proves the existence of St. James, which no one doubts.

1Color. 15.7 — Then it was seen by James and then by all the apostles.

Another text that proves only the existence of St. James, and nothing else.

\* \* \*

Acts 15:13 - And after they were silent, James spoke.

Why these texts?... To prove that St. James was not mute, but knew how to speak. Well, no one disputes it.

\* \* \*

Acts 21:18—And the next day Paul went with us to James' house, where all the elders had gathered.

Again, why this text?... Is it to prove that St. James had a house? It wasn't worth it!

\* \* \*

Here are the texts with which the Baptist teacher intends to prove that there are 3 James...

It makes you want to laugh and cry!

It would be simpler to say that each text is a different James; in this way we will soon have 8 James. This will be enough to satisfy the 886\* Protestant sects, and Catholics themselves should be satisfied. \*(Editor's note: 85 years ago.)

Imagine: 8 Saint James!!!

The detailed quote from each text shows the childishness of the Protestant system.

They present themselves immediately with about twenty texts, which say nothing about the discussion and intend to prove by the **number** of texts, what logic, common sense and the Bible disapprove of.

It is not the number of texts that proves a truth, but the probative value of the text.

This is the case here.

Just understand the family tree, which shows all these would-be brothers to be simply **cousin-brothers** , by consanguinity or affinity, and everything is resolved. The texts of Sacred Scripture are clear, luminous, understandable to everyone.



But the good Protestants don't want **light** , they want **protests** , and they protest... they shuffle, they distort until they arrive at a semblance of truth to fight the Catholic Church.

Poor Protestants: Appearance is not reality.

Only the Catholic Church has **reality** .

## V. Another mess

Let us quote one more passage from the bumbling article by the Baptist exegetical professor.

The truth is already clearly proven, but it will not be useless to prove once more the perversity of the individual Protestant interpretation.

They say and repeat that Sacred Scripture is a clear book, available to all.

It is a mistake. No book needs more explanation and study than the Bible.

But even if it were true, because then they weave so many comments, invent so many hypotheses, even new Jameses, and with their comments they darken what is clear and luminous.

If that's what they do with clear texts... what about the obscure ones?

Here's one more bit, of course, that serves them as a dark protest.

On the Day of Pentecost, Jesus' cousins and Jesus' brothers were present (Acts 1:43-14). The brothers are positively distinguished from the apostles who had the same name.

John 7:2 states that on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, six months before the crucifixion, "even his brethren did not believe in him".

Here are **premises** from which the teacher will draw a phenomenal conclusion.

Unfortunately it seems to ignore the laws of syllogism, so that so far we have not found any viable deduction or induction; they are all proofs that prove nothing.

It's not enough to throw dust in people's eyes and shout that it's like that, but that we don't see anything because of the dust.

We want to see it up close.

Let's take the passage indicated there in St. John 7.5.

The feast of the Jews was at hand... Then his brothers said to him: Leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may also see the works you do... because even his brothers did not believe in him... You go to this party, I'm not going to this party (Jo 7,5-8)

Here is a simple passage that shows again those **cousin-brothers** and their lack of faith in Jesus' mission.

It's simple stuff. And it is from this simple thing that the teacher will draw the following conclusion:

These brothers were unbelievers.

Now the Apostles already had the faith.

Therefore, such brothers are distinct from the apostles.

The reasoning lacks the base, forming an amphibological sophistry.

Where did the teacher find the word **unbeliever** ?

Not to believe someone is not to be an unbeliever.

I don't believe in the exegesis of the Baptist teacher; however I am not an unbeliever.

The apostles were not unbelievers, but their faith, as we see everywhere, was still material, they believed in Jesus Christ, as thaumaturge, as prophet, as Messiah, but not as from God.

Saint Peter had given this cry of faith: You are Christ, the son of the living God! (Mt. 16,16) but in the depth of the Spirit the apostles, among them the relatives of Jesus, still believed in the restoration of the kingdom of Israël .

We have the proof of this disposition of the apostles in the question they made to the risen Jesus before the ascension: Lord, has the time come for you to restore the kingdom of Israël? (At.1,6).

Such was the disposition of the Spirit of the disciples, even after the resurrection; it must have been even more so, before the resurrection.

They were not, therefore, unbelievers, but they did not yet fully believe in **the divine mission** of Jesus Christ.

\* \* \*

Knowing the disposition of Jesus' relatives, let us now see the fact of going to Jerusalem.

The Feast of Tabernacles was near.

Now, it was a law for the Jews that, three times a year (at Passover, Pentecost and Feast of Tabernacles), all men went to Jerusalem to worship God (Ex.23,15;34,23).

This trip was made solemnly. like our religious pilgrimages today: men in one group, women in another, as we see on the occasion of the Holy Family's journey to Jerusalem, where they lost the child. (Lk. 2.41-53)

Jesus was in Galilee, having left Judea, where the Jews sought to arrest him.

Jesus was, of course, staying at the home of one of his relatives, Zebedee or Cleopas.

They organized the groups and naturally asked Jesus to take part in them, on the pretext that it was good for him to manifest himself publicly in Jerusalem, at a time when so many outsiders were going to gather there.

The relatives (such brothers) thought that Jesus would be sensitive to the esteem of men on this occasion, because they did not believe in him as the Son of God.

Jesus refuses, saying that the time had not yet come for him to manifest himself, that he would not go publicly now, but that he would follow after the caravan, secretly.

When his brothers had already left, then he also went to the party, not in secret, but in secret, says St. John. (Jn.7,10)

Here's what's simple, of course, of course.

How can the Baptist teacher conclude from this that Jesus' brothers (relatives) were unbelievers, while James and Judas were apostles? He wants to prove with this that the James of this passage is other than the James of the Gospel.

Poor fanaticism.

They are quite the same relatives — apostles, with their same ideas, still material; which did not prevent them from being apostles.

Judas was an unbeliever, an ungodly, a traitor; however he was an apostle: Judas, unus ex duodecim (Mt.10,4).

And James couldn't be an apostle, because he still had a materialistic idea of Jesus' kingdom?

and why did he not fully believe that he was a child of God?

How absurd!

The truth is—and the facts have proved it all too well—that all the apostles were vacillating, hesitant... and that only on the day of Pentecost did they receive from the Holy Spirit the gift of strength and steadfastness, which should characterize them next.

### **SAW. Exegetical internal evidence**

After we have refuted the error of the illustrious Baptist teacher, an error that he will recognize, if he is sincere, it is necessary to clearly establish the unique, certain, evangelical truth.

I want to do it briefly here, citing the various internal proofs of Sacred Scripture, interpreted by an obvious, logical exegesis. unanswerable.

As I have repeated at every step, the term brothers of Jesus — proves nothing against the perpetual Virginity of Mary Sma.

All historians agree in saying that the word — **brother** — did not have among the Hebrews and among the Hellenistic Jews, and consequently in the language of the sacred writers, the restricted meaning it has among us.

It was used to designate all members of the same family, or all descendants of the same father, almost indifferently.

"All of St. Scripture proves that **brothers** means cousins or relatives," says St. Jerome.

See Gen. 12,5 — Num. 17.10 — Jos. 15,17 - IV.Reg. 10.13 — II.Paral 27.8 — Ap. 12.10 — Mt. 12.46 — Mc. 3.31 - Lc. 8.19 - Job 2.12 — Acts 1.14 — 1Co. 9,5 — Gal. 1,19, etc., etc.

The reason for this generalization of the term brother, as mentioned above, is that the Hebrew language lacks the proper term to indicate the various kinship relationships.

The word **Ahh** in Hebrew is the equivalent of the word germanus in Latin, and the word relative in English.

The same thing must be said of the word: *Adelios* in the Seventy, as of the word *frater* in the Vulgate.

Our Professor wanted to find a stool, saying that the gospels were not written in Hebrew, nor in Aramaic.

Distingu: The Gospel of Matthew was written in Hebrew, or in Hebrew dialect, called by some Syro-Chaldulk by others Aramaic.

The three other Gospels were written in Greek, but it should be noted that they were written (apart from the Gospel of St. Mark) for the Jews and, as such, although written in Greek, they respected the way of speaking of the Jews.

There was in Greek the term **anepsios** for—to express the word cousin, it is true, but if the term existed in Greek, it was not used by the Hellenistic Hebrews who, through the Greek language they spoke, preserved the customs and expressions of their race.

This happens daily. A Frenchman writing in Portuguese may know that the word *saudade* exists, but he will easily say *nostalgia*, as it is both a French and a Portuguese term; it will also say: *bouquet* instead of *bouquet*, *soirée* instead of *soirée*, *detail* instead of *detail*, etc.

This is what the evangelists did in many places: they knew the term *anepsians*, but speaking of cousins, in general, including cousins of various degrees, uncles, etc., they retain the generic term *ahh, brother*.

On the other hand, because the evangelists would not have given the name of brothers to Jesus' relatives, who were not the children of Mary, when they call Saint Joseph **father of Jesus** on the same page where they have just said that he had nothing in the Conception of Mary .

The Gospel itself provides proof of this interpretation, explaining the value of the term: brothers of Jesus, by its application to Jesus' close and remote relatives.

Twelve times the New Testament speaks of such **brothers and sisters** of Jesus, but it never calls them sons of Mary, nor sons of Joseph, although they are named several times alongside Joseph and Mary. (Mt. 12, 46-47 — Mk. 3,31-32 — Lk. 7,19-20 — Jn. 2,12 At. 1.14).

Why such reticence?

Why not say right away that they are children of Mary and Joseph?

Why so much mystery?

If the Gospel clearly and expressly says that Mary is the mother of Jesus (Lk 1,43 —Jn 2, 1, 3 — Acts 1, 14) etc., why doesn't it also say that she is the mother of James, of St. John , Joseph, Judas, Simon etc.?

\* \* \*

Furthermore, Jesus is designated in Nazareth, as is commonly the case, the only son of a widowed woman, under the title of the son of Mary — the Uios Marias, (Mc.6.3) while the others are never more than brothers ( relatives) of Jesus.

If these cousins were truly Jesus' brothers, children of Maria Sma. and of St. Joseph, must necessarily be younger than Jesus, for they would have been born later, and Jesus is called the first-born; however, such brothers seem to be older than Jesus (cf. Mt.12,46-13,54.56—Mk.3,21.31—4,2.3—Lk. 8,19.21).

\* \* \*

Another proof is found in the last words of Jesus, addressed to St. John and Mary Sma.: — Ecce Mater tua... Here is your Mother, here is your son: Uios soul — words that evidently suppose that she is not the mother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon, and that Jesus is her **only child** .

If she had other children, why would Jesus say that from now on John will be her son?

Why should St. John consider her as his mother, and receive her as such in his house?

Here is the idea.

Such a procedure would evidently be an insult thrown in the face of Mary's other children!

The Professor objected that Jesus did so because his brothers did not believe in him.

It's another insult!

So, by being an unbeliever, does a child cease to be his mother's child?

Incidentally, it is a slander thrown in the face of the Apostles, which I have already sprayed above.

The Apostles were never unbelievers, but simply wavering in their supernatural faith due to their materialistic ideas of the Messiah.

Not even Jesus' term addressed to St. Thomas has this meaning: Be not incredulous, but faithful! (Jn. 20.27)

Thomas was not **an unbeliever** ; he was just unbelieving in the resurrection of Jesus.

\*\*\*

The degree of kinship of James, Joseph, Simon and Judas with Jesus clearly stands out from the various passages already cited.

In fact, he saw himself at the foot of the Cross of the Savior: — Mary, mother of James, and of Joseph (Mt. 27.56 — Mk. 15.40, 47 — Lk. 24.10).

Now, who is this Maria?

It cannot be the Mother of Jesus; she would not be so designated.

It is therefore another Mary that St. John places at the foot of the Cross, beside the Mother of Jesus, and who claims to be his sister, that is, his relative, and who is called Mary Cleopas, or wife of Cleopas (Alpheus ) and mother of Tiago and Simon.

Meanwhile, standing by the Cross of Jesus, his Mother and his Mother's sister, Mary, wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene (Jn 19,25).

Here, then, are two of Jesus' so-called brothers, who can only be his cousins, and who are not to a very close degree.

St. James, named several times son of Alphæus (Mt. 10,3 — Lk. 6,15 - Acts 1,13) synonymous with Cleopas (Klopas) from which he differs only by an accent, has for brother: Judas ( Lk 6,16).

According to Hegesippus (189) quoted by Eusebius, Simon, the last of the four brothers of Jesus indicated by Saint Mark, (Mc.6) was the successor of S, James. the Minor, at the seat of Jerusalem, because like his predecessor he was the son of Cleopas, who was Joseph's brother (cf. Mt. 13,55—Mc.5. 3—15,40).

It is thus seen that the four alleged brothers of Jesus are simply **his cousins** .

Here are the direct Biblical internal proofs, in addition to the indirect proofs, for the refutation of wrong interpretations.

## VII. Conclusion

Let's stop here. The professor is already abusing our patience, with his unfounded objections, which are only intended to darken what is clear, and mess up what is logical.

And now what is left standing of your false and sophistical argumentation?

Nothing! nothing! but the wreckage of a shameful defeat.

What else will it take, I say to the professor, for the total destruction of Protestant theory?

Absolutely nothing...

But what stands firm, unshakeable and luminous is the Catholic dogma of the **perpetual Virginity** of the Immaculate Virgin.

Let us summarize here in a few words what we have extensively developed and proved in these two articles.

It is a dogma of faith in the Catholic Church that the Mother of Jesus remained **Ever Virgin**.

It is the unanimous tradition of the centuries, as is the teaching of the Gospel.

This is the meaning of the title that the Church always applies to the Mother of Jesus: and Parthenus: The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son: God with us. (Mt.1,23)

It is like the love song of the Catholic liturgy, especially on the feast of the "Purity of the Blessed Virgin".

"You have generated, it reads in this office, the one by whom you were created, and you remain a Virgin forever.

Holy and Immaculate Virginity of Mary, I do not know how to praise you worthily!

O Blessed Mother of God, Mary, ever Virgin, after your birth you remained perfectly virgin.

Let us joyfully celebrate the Virginity of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin!

Genuisti qui te fecit et in cternum permanes Virgo!



Beautiful and consoling truth, which elevates the Mother of Jesus above all mothers, and makes her: the Blessed Woman among all women, the most pure Virgin among all virgins, the admirable Mother among all mothers.

How beautiful, harmonious, divine, such a doctrine, and rises above petty objections and cold ideas, how jealous of Protestant fanaticism!

Wanting to demean the Mother of God herself!

What a disgraceful task.

Wanting to rip from her virginal forehead the most radiant diadem of grandeur and love...

What a horrible role!

Wanting to prove by the Gospel the opposite of what it teaches, supports and affirms.

What a heretical work!

Poor Protestants, how unhappy you are!

You want to please Jesus and insult his mother.

You want to exalt the child and you debase the mother, thinking it pleases God and enlightens souls.

What blindness!

How can a human Spirit pass through the idea that the Immaculate Virgin, who did not want to accept the dignity of Mother of God except on the condition that she preserved her virginity, that she preserved it before and during childbirth, lost it afterwards, to have other children besides your divine child?

The simple assumption inspires horror.

Saint Thomaz says it very well: Such an idea derogates from the dignity and holiness of the Mother of God. It would be a nameless ingratitude on her part if, not recognizing the miracles that heaven multiplied for the preservation of her virginity, she had voluntarily renounced an integrity which God held dear.

The abandonment of such a prerogative would be without explanation and without excuse. (ST.III.pq28)

One cannot think without horror, says Bossuet, that this virginal womb, where the Holy Spirit had operated, from which Jesus Christ had made his tabernacle, could be profaned, neither that Joseph nor Mary could fail to respect it. .

Before her Conception and birth, Maria Sma. had said in general; I don't know a man. St. Joseph entered this plan; and would he have failed to respect her after the miraculous birth?

No, no; it can not be; it would have been a sacrilege unworthy of them and unworthy of Jesus Christ.

Let us say, then, very loudly, and with all the certainty of a dogma revealed by God: Holy Virgin, Mother of my God, in you the honor of motherhood does not destroy virginal integrity, and virginal integrity enhances maternal honor with a glow that nature refuses him.

You are a Mother, all the more admirable, as you are a Virgin, and you are a Virgin, all the more admirable, as you are a Mother!

Protestant objections, instead of taking the shine off your virginal crown, give it more splendor, for they give occasion to penetrate deeper into the sanctuary of your inviolable and perpetual Virginity.

## CHAPTER IX

### New Protestant Mistakes

The expressions until he is the firstborn

The great discussion about Mary's perpetual virginity is over, and I believe the two great theses are clearly proven:

1<sup>o</sup> The Protestant error attributing to Mary other children besides Jesus.

2<sup>nd</sup> The Virginity of Mary positively and clearly proven by the Bible.

It seems that the discussion should end, but it is impossible.

Protestants are less exegetes, philosophers, rationers, than plagiarists; They do not reason for themselves, but reproduce everything that in the past was written against the cult of Maria Sma. by the most ungodly or ignorant people.

They accumulate texts that prove nothing on the subject, trying to prove by quantity what they lack in quality.

They copy objections a thousand times pulverized, and it seems that each objection remains for them a formidable stone against Catholic truth.

Obedying this mania, our Professor of Baptist exegesis does not want to be content with simply defending a thesis, but wants to produce other objections against the cult of the Holy Virgin...

I have refuted such errors, and in several books, but I want to give you one more complete and decisive answer.

Here is how the Professor of Exegesis ends his article... I cite only two conclusions from this synthesis, the rest having been refuted in the preceding chapters: Here, finally, the irrefutable proofs of the New Testament, that Mary, mother of Jesus, had other children are summarized.

1. "Joseph, having awakened from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and received his wife, and did not know her until she bore a son, whom he named Jesus. (Mt.1,24) -25) We accept the teaching of Mary's virginity in the sense of the words: as long as she did not give birth to a son, to whom she gave the name of Jesus. The dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity is not taught in this language. that she, after the birth of her firstborn, consummated her matrimony with her husband Joseph.

2. Luke 2:7 positively states that Jesus was the firstborn (lon prolokon) of Mary. Why did the evangelist Luke not say (as Fr. Julio says) that Jesus was the only begotten son of Mary? Because he knew that Mary had had other children (Lk 8, 19-20).

Here are two passages that I will briefly refute here, developing the **truth contrary** to these falsehoods.

## I. Before and after

The first objection denotes much ignorance, both of the grammatical sense of the word, and of the exegetical sense of the Bible.

It seems to me impossible that a professor of exegesis should be able to present such a ridiculous argument, which does not even have a semblance of base.

Let us closely examine this phrase from the Gospel:

And waking Joseph from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and received (Mary as) his wife; and did not know her until she gave birth to her firstborn son (Mt. 1:24-25).

What does such a text prove? It directly proves that Maria Sma. she was a virgin until the birth of Jesus Christ: nothing more... nothing less.

The grammatical and exegetical sense is clear:

Donec peperit-Donec, — until, — eõsou, indicates the persistence of a state until a certain time, but does not imply the cessation of this state after this time.

There is no proof there that Mary was not a virgin afterwards.

Such is the obvious interpretation, followed by the Catholic Church and by educated and sincere Protestants, this truth being only fought by the ignorant: and by the plagiarists, who are content to copy what others have written, without any reflection on the adopted interpretation.

I quote here only a few interpretations beyond dispute, those of some Protestant leaders: Grocio, Calvino and Pearson, Owen, Dr. Hickes and Dr. Branhal, all of them Protestant and of position.

Here is what Grocio writes (Annot. in Mat. op. teol: t. IH p. 15).

"The denial that Joseph did not know Mary before she gave birth does not in any way include the assertion for the time that followed.

A multitude of examples demonstrate that this was among the Jews a notorious and usual way of expressing themselves...

The Evangelist's own intention obliges us to limit ourselves to the time of giving birth, which he speaks of, and it is not a question of anything other than to make known that Joseph had no part in this operation.

Nothing in the passage quoted refers to the later tense, but exclusively to the earlier tense."

Here is another one by Calvino, one of the founders of the sect. he writes: (Com. on harm. evang. p. 41)

"Relying on the text: I did not know her until she gave birth, Helvidius (the inventor of the gross objection -IV century), in his time aroused great

disturbances in the Church, wanting to maintain that Mary had only been a virgin in childbirth, and who later had other children from her husband.

St. Jerome upheld Mary's perpetual virginity and defended it strongly and widely. Suffice it to say that this is not the meaning of the Gospel, and that it is madness to want to collect from this passage what happened after the birth of Christ."

Here is also what is clear, and what is not said by a Catholic theologian but by one of the first leaders of Protestantism.

The Protestant bishop Pearson, (Expos. of the reed. p. 173) to whom competence cannot be denied, says in turn:

"The expression, he says, of this blissful language does not carry with it such deduction. Indeed, when God told Jacob that he would not leave him until he did what he had spoken of, it follows by chance, that God forsook Jacob afterward of having done it?

Logically, it must be concluded, as all serious exegetes conclude, that the fact that Joseph did not know his Wife until she gave birth to his first-born child does not have the necessary consequence that he knew her afterwards, and that therefore the Evangelist in The alleged passage just wanted to tell us what had not been done.

Let us quote one more testimony from another educated Protestant, Bishop Dr. Roberto Owen. (The dogme theol. p. 44. Oxiord).

"We gladly embrace the sentiment, which prevails among Christians, of being the Virgin Mary, pure from any human dealings with her husband, not only when the mystery of Christ's generation was completed in her, but also for the entire time of her life ."

" Yet another light of Protestantism, dr. Hickes, writes (On the due praise and h. of the MV p. 269).

"Mary was Virgin in soul as in body, in such a way that she never looked with voluptuous end to the creature; she was Virgin in everything, and was all purity, both inside and out, preserving her body as a sanctuary and holy place, and his soul as the Sancta Sanctorum, for being the receptacle of the Holy Spirit, the Tabernacle of the Son of God."

Let us finish with this admirable cry of a Protestant archbishop dr. Bramhall (Works vol. Ip. 53) confirming the aforementioned Catholic doctrine, and condemning the error of our modern Baptist exegetes:

"We admit genuine, universal apostolic traditions, such as the Symbol of the Apostles, and the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God."

Do such authorities, dear professor, being Protestants to the hilt, do they deserve or not, faith for you?

We Catholics agree with them on this point... how is it that you are not?

You are divided... and, as the Savior said, every house divided cannot subsist...

This is why Protestantism crumbles, falls, tattered under the teeth of its own adherents.

Today there is no more Protestantism, there are only pretenders... each one having their own idea, their religion, their creed, manufactured by themselves. It is the general doubt, the doubt of everything, apart from your individual interpretation.

In the Catholic Church, what one teaches, everyone teaches, because there is a central authority, there is a perfect unity; the truth being one, is indivisible.

## **II. Biblical Proofs**

To corroborate the sentiment of the Protestant authorities against our Professor's Baptist interpretation of exegesis, we quote some parallel texts from Scripture itself, in which the same phrase is used, and with the meaning attributed to it by Catholic doctrine.

God speaking to Jacob from the top of the stairs that he saw in his dreams, said to him:

I will not abandon you until I fulfill everything I have said (Gen.28,15).

Does this mean that after God had fulfilled his promise to Jacob, he would forsake him

It is impossible, God speaks of the present, without taking care of what he will do in the future.

In Deuteronomy the Holy Writer says of Moses: And Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab... and he buried him in the valley of Moab... and no man has known to this day the place of his tomb. (Dt.34.6)

Can it be inferred from this step that the said place was known later?

Impossible, as the tomb of Moses was never discovered.

The Holy Spirit indicates precedents so far, not to mention the future.

\* \* \*

The holy man Job, proclaiming his innocence, says:

As long as I live, I will not depart from my innocence (Job.26,5)

Does this mean that after he lives, that is, after he is dead, Job will depart from his innocence?

Such an interpretation would be the height of absurdity.

\* \* \*

Noah, to know the state of the earth, after the flood, released a raven, which came out, and did not return until the waters were dry on the earth (Gen.8,7)

Does this mean that the crow has returned after the disappearance of the waters?

Of course not. The raven did not come back, the Bible only says that it did not appear until the waters disappeared, without saying what happened afterwards.

It is more than likely that the crow, having found no place to land or food, died on this excursion.

\* \* \*

In the book of Kings (or Samuel) we read: And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death (Sm.15,35).

Does this mean that Samuel saw Saul after his death?

New nonsense!

Sacred Scripture speaks of the epoch preceding the day of Saul's death, and says nothing of what followed that death.

\* \* \*

Another passage from Samuel (II Kings)

For this reason Micol, daughter of Saul, had no children until the day of her death (2Sm.6,23).

So Micol having had no children until the day of his death, having them after death?

What priceless logic!

The text says what happened until death, without dealing with what would happen afterwards.

\* \* \*

Isaiah, in the vision against Jerusalem, hears the voice of the Lord crying out against the prevaricating city: No, this iniquity shall not be forgiven you until you die (Is.22,14)

Does this mean that such iniquity will be forgiven after the motto?

It cannot be, because after death there is no longer forgiveness; it's eternity.

\*\*\*

Jesus Christ said to the Apostles: Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world (Mt.28,20).

Is it to be concluded from this that after the consummation Jesus Christ will forever forsake his Apostles?

It's the opposite; it will be with them in heaven more closely united than here on earth.

\* \* \*

Before the Ascension, the Savior told his Apostles:

I will send upon you the Holy Spirit promised by my Father: yet remain in the city, until ye are clothed with virtue from on high. (Lk.24.49).

Does this mean that, after receiving the Holy Spirit, the Apostles had to flee from Jerusalem, and could no longer remain there?

It would be another nonsense, since we see the Apostles returning every moment to Jerusalem, meeting there, and one of them being the first Bishop of the ancient Holy City.

\* \* \*



One could pick up hundreds of other steps that prove that the biblical sense, as well as the grammatical, logical, popular sense, of such passages **up to , while** , always indicates what precedes and never what follows.

Putting these parallel texts next to the text under discussion, we immediately see that the meaning is identical, and expresses only and exclusively what preceded, and says nothing of what follows:

And he didn't know her until she gave birth to a son.

The Professor, examining these texts, will be obliged to confess the biblical truth, clearly indicated therein, and the certainty of the Catholic interpretation, like that of the Protestant leaders themselves, mentioned above.

### III. Common sense tests

It is useless to prolong the quotations, since Holy Scripture, being the word of God, a single text is as evident as fifty.

The Gospel, saying that Joseph did not know Mary until he gave birth to her firstborn son, (Mt.1,25) says what had not been done until the birth of the Savior; Nothing else; not wanting to talk about what would follow.

Not having met her until she gave birth to her son does not in any way result in him knowing her later.

The Protestant Grocio, already quoted, says with good sense: "The very intention of the sacred writer makes us a law to limit ourselves to the time of childbirth, of which he speaks, it being nothing else in his intention, but to do well know that Joseph was strange in him. So that what follows has nothing to do with what goes before." (Grot. Ann. in Mat, p. 15).

Simple common sense tells us the meaning of such phrases, and there is no need to resort to grammatical or exegetical interpretations.

In plain language we say:

This man was honored to death.

Did he cease to be after death?

Not; it says only that it was honored while alive.

So-and-so worked until he made a fortune... which is not to say that, once he was rich, he stopped working.

Sicrano lost in the game until the night; do you mean you stopped losing the next day?

Saying someone: I studied until I got my degree doesn't say that I didn't continue studying afterwards.

Catholic truth shines, therefore, with all the radiance of divine revelation, and shows us the Immaculate Virgin, all pure, in the aureole of her perpetual virginity.

The author of this heresy is not a Protestant.

These do not even have the merit of the invention!

They left the other interpretations clearly and positively favorable to the virginity of the Mother of Jesus, they welcomed it with applause, because it seems to contradict this glory... and then they cry out, and write that they honor and venerate the Mother of Jesus... they even say brothers of Mary, but they refuse her everything that can exalt her glory.

Poor Protestants, reflect well... and God give you the grace to recognize the lamentable error of your anti-Biblical and anti-rational doctrine.

The Church's faith has never changed in this regard.

The Church acclaims Mary Sma., not as a goddess, but as a Virgin of virgins:

Virgo **before** childbirth,

Virgo **in** childbirth,

Virgo **after** childbirth.

So speak the Councils... so speaks the Creed... so speaks the Gospel: How will this be done, because I don't know a man? Thus speak the very educated and sincere Protestants.

The contradictors of this truth only show that they did not reflect, but were plagiarizing musty objections, a thousand times pulverized.

#### **IV. the firstborn**

Here we are at our Professor's last objection.

Let's say it right away: it started badly, and it ended even worse.

The conclusion, which is the ultimate oppositional argument, is one of nameless **misery** .

The same passage, which I have just refuted, provides a double argument for the Professor's stubbornness.

The Gospel says that Joseph did not know Mary until he gave birth to her firstborn son (Mt.1,25).

Saint Luke repeats the same phrase: And she gave birth to her firstborn son. (Lc.2,7).

Now, say the Protestants: Mary had a first-born son.

Now there is no firstborn without a secondborn.

Soon, Maria had other children.

You can clap your hands for the invention and the syllogistic way...

It's a child's reasoning.

So there can't be a first without a second?

This is great!

In this case, and with such Protestant logic, the mother will only have a first child, after a second is born.

That there is not a second without first, that yes! but the first, from its birth, is the first and remains the first, regardless of the birth of the second.

The ordinal adjective **first** is completely independent of **second** , indicating the order from past to present, without dealing with what follows.

Saying, for example, that a student is the first in his/her course, it is known that no one precedes him, but one ignores how many follow him.

If such a student is left alone, he is first, just as well, as if he is followed by twenty others.

A man who builds a house can truly say: This is the first house I build, even if he does not intend to build any more houses.

When someone dies, it's the very **first** time they die, and they only die once.

See, dear Professor. how ridiculous is such an assertion that there is no first, no second, or that because there is a first or first-born, there must be other sons.

Protestants themselves, somewhat educated, reject such nonsense.

Here is a word from your father or uncle Calvin:

"The Christ, he says, is called the firstborn, to show us that he was born of a virgin mother, and that he had no other children."

Poor Calvin, why didn't you consult the exegetical professors of two centuries later?

Grocio, a light from the sect, writes:

"The expression first means that no one else preceded him, but not that another followed him."

Poor, Grocio... your grandchildren are of another mind.

The great Pearson, another light, writes still:

"The biblical notion of priority excludes an antecedent, but it does not express a consequent!"

Sanctify me, said God, all the firstborn!

"This was a fixed and obligatory law, which had to be fulfilled as soon as the boy was born; however, if the word firstborn had a necessary relationship with a secondborn, this obligation would not have been immediate, and the firstborn would not be sanctified by itself even, but the birth of the second-born would sanctify him..."

"Therefore this word firstborn cannot designate later births; it does not, therefore, prove that Mary had other children."

Such is the reasoning and interpretation of a Protestant bishop, known for his talent and sincerity.

As my Professor sees, such an interpretation is completely Catholic, because it is sincere and scientific, and it completely disagrees with the petty and perverse interpretation that Luther's modern grandchildren want to give to these passages.

Are Ubi veritas? Where will the truth be?

With the Catholic Church and with the Protestant theologians, or with a dozen men without doctrine and without faith?

## V. Biblical Proofs

Let us turn to the Bible that Protestant friends say is the rule of their faith, and show that the Bible completely approves the Catholic interpretation, rejecting the Protestant error entirely.

Citing parallel places will give us the exact meaning of the word firstborn.

In Exodus God said: All the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die (Ex.11,5).

And so it happened, There was no house where there was not a dead person (Ex.11.30).

There were necessarily, as in all countries, one-child couples; for example, everyone who had been married in the last two years...

There being only one child, that child was the firstborn and that is why he died.

\* \* \*

God also said: Every firstborn is mine (Num.3,13).

Then God sends to count all the first-born males of the children of Israël, from the age of one month and upwards (Num. 2,40).

Now, if there are first-born one-month-olds, how can it be demanded that, in order for there to be a first, there must be a second?

Could a mother having a first-born one month already have another second?

Therefore, the first born, whether there are others or not, is truly the firstborn.

\* \* \*

In Exodus, God gives the command to sanctify all the firstborn, who is born among the children of Israël (Ex.12,2).

Now, if the mother, in order to know if the first born is really the firstborn, had to wait for the birth of the second, how could she offer to God, from birth, that firstborn?

It would be impossible.

Such a text proves, therefore, that the firstborn in no way Supposes the second.

\* \* \*

In Exodus we still read, in chapter 22: Thou shalt give me the firstborn of thy children; seven days he will be with his mother, and on the eighth day you will give it to me (Ex.22,29-30).

The firstborn, according to the divine order, must be offered to him on the eighth day of birth,

Now, in eight days, such a son is quite the **only one** ; however God calls him: **firstborn** .

Therefore, there is a firstborn, without there being a second...

\* \* \*

The birthright was a title of dignity and honor among the Jews, and generally the first born retained this title of firstborn, being entitled to certain privileges, such as heir, etc., and being subject to certain obligations, as we see in the Bible ( Lk.2,23).

It is therefore on purpose and with reason that the Evangelist calls her Jesus: firstborn—Ton prototokon.

He thus designates him as David's heir, as having a privileged right to this inheritance. (cf. Gen.10,15;21,12).

Far from being an equivocal title, which presents any difficulty, such an expression becomes a sign of authenticity.

Though natural under the penalty of a Jew, such an expression would not have presented itself to the Spirit of a foreigner.

Such is the grammatical and logical sense of the word firstborn in the Old Testament and this sense, being the **only** admissible one, was preserved in the New Testament, as can be seen in the presentation of Jesus in the temple: After the days of the purification of Mary, according to the law were completed of Moses, they took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord: **Every firstborn male** shall be consecrated to the Lord (Lk.2,22)

Behold, St. Joseph and Mary Sma., in obedience to the law of Moses, take Jesus to offer him to the Lord as the firstborn.

Now, if an only child cannot be called the firstborn, why then are they subject to this law, and why do the priests, knowledgeable in the law, permit and accept such an offer, of an only child?

St. Joseph and Maria Sma., As taught in Scripture, as the priests of the temple, ignorant of the meaning of the law of Moses ... or else, the boy is first born and the **first - born** .

Jesus was the only child at this time, even for Baptists who want to give him several brothers, because Jesus was only 40 days old, not being able to have brothers yet.

The above passage is typical and resolves the entire discussion.

Only my Professor covers both eyes with his fists, so as not to see!

And seeing, you must confess that you are sorely mistaken; or else that he never studied the steps concerning the firstborn.

Is it ignorance or evil.

There can be no other solution.

### **SAW. archæological evidence**

In addition to the exegetical evidence, we have decisive archæological evidence, and perhaps unknown to the Baptist Professor.

In 1922, C. Edgard published in the "Annals of the Antiquities of Egypt" 14 new inscriptions, discovered in Tell and Yeharidich (formerly Leontopolis) where an important Jewish necropolis from the time of Emperor Augustus was found.

In one of them there is a Greek epitaph which, translated into our language, reads as follows:

Behold the tomb of Arsinoë, O passerby,  
She cries, considering how unhappy she was.  
At a young age, I was orphaned by my mother.  
And when the flower of youth adorned me  
for the hymeneus,  
My father Phabeiti gave me a husband.

But among the pains that accompanied  
the birth of my eldest **son** (protótokon teknou)

Luck brought me to the end of my life...

Epitaph of Arsinoë.

In the 25th year, second of the Mechir month.

Such year 25 must refer to the time of the reign of Augustus in Rome and of Ptolemy VII, king of Egypt at this time.

This date corresponds to January 28, the year 5 before Jesus Christ.

It was perhaps that same year that, in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to her firstborn son.

The intrinsic study of the inscription proves its Jewish origin.

that eldest son was the **first** and the **only one** (Kai monos pros), to answer the dilemma, of our Baptist Teacher.

The term (prototokos) means good: the former simply (before whom nullus) in an absolute sense, for the circumstances are such that further birth of brothers or sisters is positively excluded.

We can therefore categorically assert against the Protestants, and among them against the Professor of Baptist exegesis, as against all those who intend to combat the perpetual Virginity of the Sma. Virgo, we can therefore formulate the following conclusions:

1. It is false that the term prototokos (firstborn) is always used in a relative sense,

and it can only be used with respect to brothers born after the first.

2. It is false that a mother who had a first-born child should naturally be supposed to have had other children after that.

3. It is false that the term firstborn expressed reservation or the possibility of the birth of other children.

Arsinoë, who died at the time of the birth of her eldest son, was definitely unable to have other children.

4. It is false that the term firstborn compromises the future or implies the coming of subsequent progeny.



Arsinœ's family understood that such a firstborn was the first and the last (firstborn and onlyborn).

It is false that the term only-begotten (monogenes) is more appropriate than the term first-born, as it is a child whose birth should not be followed by others.

It is therefore proven, with complete certainty, that the Evangelist St. Luke can rightly call Jesus Christ the first-born son of Mary, instead of calling him an only son, knowing even with certainty that not only the fact, but also the fact, is excluded. possibility of further children of Mary.

## VII. Conclusion

This is where your sad objections end, dear Professor.

The Gospel text, interpreted by common sense, science and sincere exegesis, stands, as it has always been understood in the Catholic Church.

Joseph did not know Mary; until she gave birth to her firstborn son (Lk.1,25).

It has been proven that such an expression refers to what precedes and says nothing of what follows.

Both the Bible, grammar and the way we express it, give and confirm this meaning.

Maria Sma. she was therefore a virgin after the birth of Jesus, as she was before and during his birth, preserving her virginal purity intact.

As for the term **firstborn** , it is almost childish to discuss it.

It is a meridian light that only does not see blind fanaticism, or even hardened impiety, and against such a state of mind there is no remedy.

Firstborn is the first born, whether or not he is followed by others.

Since the first is born, it is very first from the time of its birth; and any mother, having only one child, being questioned about this child, will answer: This is my firstborn, or my first child, though she does not know whether or not she will have other children.

Only poor Protestants do not allow such mothers to be told that this child is the firstborn... which makes us believe that it does not exist, despite being born; it will only exist and will be the first, after the second is born.

It takes a lot of courage to sustain such absurdities.

It is, therefore, out of all honest discussion that the word firstborn does not mean only the eldest son among several siblings, but rather the son of every woman who has not been a mother before.

It is the expression of St. Jerome: Non Quem fraires sequuntur, sed qui prius omnium tatus est. (S. Jer. in Math. I. adv. Helv. X.)

This is clearly the meaning indicated by the Bible itself.

Everything that comes first from the bosom of any flesh... will belong to you by right: but on this condition that for the firstborn of man you receive the price. (Num. 18, 15).

Among the Jews, the term first-born also had a meaning of honor and dignities that made him enjoy certain privileges, as can be seen in the Bible, which speaks several times about the rights of birthright.

This is the first of his children, and to him belongs the **birthright** (Deut.21,17).

At the end of his article the Professor asks why the Evangelist did not use the term Only **Begotten** instead of **firstborn** .

The reason is simple.

The Holy Spirit is not Protestant, and knowing the meaning of the terms in depth, he thought that the term for firstborn (ton prototokon) was the proper word, to express what he meant.

\* \* \*

The term only begotten served to express the physical fact of the birth of Jesus Christ, but it was limited to this fact, while the term first-born refers to the physical fact and the spiritual fact.

Jesus Christ as **God** is the Only **Begotten** of the Eternal Father. Filium suum unigenitum misit eus in mundum (1Jo.4,9).

As **God-man** He is the **firstborn** of all creatures — Primogenitus omnis creaturæ (Col.1.15).

As a **man** he is the Only **Begotten** of the Virgin Sma. — Et paries filium (Lc.1,31).

But Jesus Christ came not only as God, nor only as man; he came as a **God-man** as such he must be the **firstborn** among many brothers.

It is St. Paul who explains it to us:

He writes to the Romans: Those whom God knew in his foreknowledge, he also predestined them to be the **firstborn** among many brothers (Rom.8,29).

Jesus Christ must be the firstborn among many brothers.

These brothers are the righteous men, they are the saints.

This is why Jesus Christ participated in our flesh and blood, having to be similar to his brothers, in order to be their Pontiff before God.

In this spiritual sense Maria Sma gave birth to a first-born... the first-born of all Christians, of whom she is the spiritual Mother.

In this way, says St. Paul, Jesus is the first-born of all creatures: primogenitus omnis creaturæ (Cl.1,15).

Sublime expression, how sublime the truth it manifests, involving the Virgin Sma. in the liveliest and most universal radiance.

All creatures, animate and inanimate, heavenly and terrestrial, regenerated, pacified, consecrated by the **first - born** son of Mary, greet in her the Mother and Lady of the universe.

And all this, in these simple words: she gave birth to her firstborn son. (Lc.2,7)

Let us not be surprised that such simple words reveal such a profound meaning, when the little child they show us reveals to us a God!

These words are not, therefore, a diminishing of the glory of the Mother of Jesus, but a shining halo that the Holy Spirit places on her Immaculate forehead.

And the poor Protestants, tampering with the meaning of these words, would want them to express the loss of the virginity of the Mother of Jesus.

No, no, poor Protestants! On the contrary, they express the spiritual motherhood of the Mother of God, who in this way also becomes the Mother of men.

## CHAPTER X

### Maria Mother of God!

Mary is the Mother of God!

It is such a logical truth that it seems almost impossible to discuss it.

And yet the discussion exists.

It is enough for the Catholic Church to acclaim Mary, as Mother of God, for the Protestant hatred, always in opposition to Catholic doctrine, to exclaim: She is not the Mother of God! Mary is simply the Mother of Christ... like any other mother is the mother of her son!!

And, in order to demean this divine motherhood, to remove from her Immaculate Mother's forehead the sublime halo of this unique motherhood, those unfortunate people come to want to give Maria Sma. several other children, as we have seen in the preceding chapters.

Renewing the error of the heretic Nestorius, and contrary to the teachings of their own founders and ancient theologians, ancient Protestants and modern Protestants do not admit that Maria Sma. be Mother of God; they just want her to be the mother of a man, united with God.

It is the greatest of absurdities, but when it comes to contradicting the Catholic Church, the absurdities are called science, exegesis, progress, etc., in the schools of Protestant pastors who, incidentally, no longer believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Let us study this sublime subject here, showing, clearly and irrefutably, Protestant error and Catholic truth, a truth taught by common sense, the Gospel and unanimous tradition, from the Apostles until today.

It is an interesting study, instructive, and of great benefit to sincere and willing souls.

#### **I. How Mary is Mother of God**

If I were to ask a Protestant, if he is truly his mother's son... and if his mother is truly his mother, surely he would look at me with great astonishment, astonished that a man in possession of his common sense, may doubt a son not to be his mother's son.

And you would be right! A lot of reason!

But how does he pretend that Jesus being the son of Mary... Mary is not the Mother of Jesus?

Your mother, dear Protestant, is only the mother of your body.

Now, man is composed of a **body** and a **soul** , the soul being the main part of man, as it is the soul that communicates life and movement to the body.

Your earth mother is not the author of your soul. The soul is created by God, for each particular body.

Your mother is therefore only the mother of the material part of your being. How do you say she is your mother?

If the Protestant friend had a little education, he would answer: It is true, my mother is only the mother of my body and not of my soul, but the union of this soul and this body forms my **person** ; and my mother my person's mother.

Since she is the mother of my person, who is made up of body and soul, she is truly my mother.

God created me a soul, but he did not create **my person** , which comes from the substantial union of body and soul.

My mother is the mother of this person, as it is in her womb that this union of body and soul took place.

My dear Protestant, reasoning and speaking in this way, would speak like a sensible man, showing that he is his mother's son, and that this mother is really his mother.

Well then, let us apply these common sense notions to the case of the divine motherhood of Mary Most Holy.

There are **two natures** in Jesus Christ : the divine nature and the human nature.

These two natures, together, constitute a **single person** : the Person of Jesus Christ.

Now Mary is the Mother of this **one person** who possesses both the divine nature and the human nature, just as our mother is the mother of our person.

Maria Sma. gave Jesus Christ human nature; but he did not give Him the divine nature, which comes only from the Eternal Father.

Mary gave the Person of Jesus Christ the lower part: human nature, as our mother gave us the lower part of our person: the body.

Despite this, our mother is the mother of **our person** , and Mary is the Mother of the person of Jesus Christ.

And let us note that in Jesus Christ there is only one person, and this person **is divine** , infinite, eternal: he is the person of the Word, the Son of God, equal in all things to the Eternal Father and the Holy Spirit.

And Maria Sma. it is the Mother of this divine person.

Therefore, she is the Mother of Jesus. the Mother of the Eternal Word, the Mother of the Son of God, the Mother of the Second Person of the Sma. Trinity, the Mother of God, for all this is the same and only person, born from her virginal womb.

Jesus Christ, Son of God and the Immaculate Virgin, is God made man; in other words: it is God clothed with a body and a soul.

The soul of Jesus Christ, created by God, is really the soul of the Son of God.

The humanity of Jesus Christ, composed of body and soul, is really the humanity of the Son of God.

And the Virgin Mary is truly the Mother of this God, clothed in this humanity: she is the **Mother of God** made man.

She is the Mother of God.

Mary, from which natus is Jesus.

Mary, from whom Jesus was born (Mt.1,16)

This is how, by an irrefutable logic, common sense proves to us that Mary is truly the Mother of God.

She is not the Mother of divinity, just as our mother is not the mother of our soul; but she is the Mother of the **person** of Jesus, as our mother is the mother of our person.

The person of Jesus is a divine Person, he is the Person of the Son of God.

Therefore, she is the Mother of God.

Our mother is the Mother of our person; this person is human, and is determined, calling himself: Pedro, Paulo, José Maria or Regina; the name doesn't matter.

So our mother, being the mother of our person, is truly our mother; or mother of Pedro, or of Paulo, or of José, or of Maria, or of Regina.

This reasoning is enough to show the absurdity of the unhappy Protestants, in wanting to deny Maria Sma a title, which is proper to her, which was given to her by God, and which is absolutely due to her, because she is the Mother of Jesus.

## II. The Errors of the Early Heresiarchs

It was not the Protestants, the first, to deny this title of Maria Sma...

The inventor of this absurd negation was Nestorius, the unworthy successor of St. John Chrysostom at the seat of Constantinople.

Greek subtlety had led to several errors concerning the person of Jesus Christ.

Sabellio wanted to annihilate the **personality** of the Word.

Arius sought to remove the halo of **divinity** from this personality .

The docets denied the reality of the **body** of Jesus Christ.

The Apollinarists rejected the human **soul** of Christ.

Everything had been attacked, by heresy, in the person of Jesus Christ; but with every heresy that arose, the infallible Church, under the inspired direction of the Pope of Rome, defended and proclaimed the one and imperishable truth:

of the **person** of the divine Word against Sabellio,

of this person's **divinity** , against Arius,

of the reality of **the** human **body** of Jesus, against the docets,

of the reality of the human **soul** of Jesus, against the Apollinarists.

There was only one point free from the part of the heretics attack: it was **union** of the two natures: divine and human in Jesus Christ.

It was up to Nestorius to raise this heresy, and to Luther's sons to continue to defend this grotesque error.

It was in 428 that the unworthy Patriarch Nestorius began to preach that there were in Jesus Christ two persons, one divine as the Son of God; another human, like Son of Mary.

Therefore, concludes the heresiarch, Mary cannot be called **Mother of God** , but simply Mother of Christ, or of man.

The importance of such a denial is conceived.

If the two natures, the divine and the human, are not hypostatically (personal union) united in Jesus Christ, so as to form a **single person** , the Incarnation and the Redemption disappear.

The Son of God, not having clothed himself in our nature, cannot be our Redeemer.

Only man suffered in it.

Now, man, as a finite being, can only do finite works.

Therefore, redemption is no more of an infinite value.

**Jesus Christ** can no longer be worshipped:

it's just a man.

The **Eucharist** is no longer the flesh and blood of a God; it's just a man's flesh.

**The Savior** is no longer the God-Man.

Such is the grotesque error that Nestorius, as Luther's predecessor, came to throw into the world.

And Protestants, not having the courage to sustain all these errors, continue to defend most of them.

It's illogical! Either they must accept everything or they must deny everything.

Nestorius was at least logical, in his deductions, that they were false, because they emanated from a false principle.

Protestants admit and profess the false principle of Nestorius, not daring to logically draw all conclusions from this principle.



They admit some conclusions and reject others.

Why this selectism?

They admit in Jesus Christ two natures and one person, but they reject the personal (hypostatic) union of the two natures in the one person of Christ.

They adore Jesus Christ, and deny his Immaculate Mother the title of motherhood of this divine person.

They admit the Savior as the Man-God and deny the presence of his divine person in the Eucharist.

But think about it, dear Protestants... it's absurd!

You admit that Jesus Christ is the Son of Mary, and you deny that Mary is the **Mother of God** .

You admit that Jesus Christ is God, born of Mary, and you deny that Mary is the Mother of this Jesus Christ.

But please learn to reason.

Either deny everything, or accept everything; in this way you will be at least logical.

Denying everything, you will be heretics, or heathen if you will; but you will be logical.

Admitting everything, you will be logical too; and in this case you will be Catholics, Roman Apostolics, since the Catholic Church admits everything: the principle and all the conclusions that flow from it.

Admitting that Jesus was born of Mary: — and you cannot deny it, for it is in the Gospel. (Mt.1,16) — you must admit that the person of this Jesus is divine.

That Mary is the Mother of this divine person.

That she is therefore **Mother of God!**

And a dead-end dilemma.

### III. The Council of Ephesus

When the heresiarch Arius launched his error into the world, denying the divinity of the person of Jesus Christ, divine Providence raised up the intrepid

Sto. Athanasius to confuse him, just as he raised Sto. Augustine to confuse the heretic Pelagius.

This same Providence raised up St. Cyril of Alexandria to refute Nestorius' mistakes.

The heresiarch's blasphemies sowed trouble and indignation in the East.

St. Cyril was the inspired and sublime interpreter of the indignation of the Catholic world, which wept, under the weight of blasphemy, with which the error intended to humiliate the mother of Jesus,

In 430, Pope Saint Celestine I, at a council in Rome, examined the doctrine of Nestorius which had been presented to him by Saint Cyril, and condemned it in its entirety as erroneous, anti-Catholic, heretical.

St. Cyril formulated the condemnation in twelve propositions called the twelve anathemas in which he summarized the entire Catholic doctrine in this regard.

They can be summarized in three points.

1. In Jesus Christ, the Son of man is not personally distinguished from the **Son of God** .

2 The Virgin Sma. it is truly **Mother God** , for being the Mother of Jesus Christ, who is God.

3. By virtue of the hypostatic union, there is **communication of languages** , that is: denominations, properties and actions of the two natures in Jesus Christ, which can be attributed to his person, so that one can say: God died for us, God saved the world, God is risen.

Nestorius did not accept the Pope's statements and continued in his heresies.

To completely exterminate error, and restore unity, of doctrine to the world, the Pope resolved to convene the Council of Ephesus (in Asia Minor) in 431, inviting all the bishops of the world.

Nearly 200 bishops from all over the world gathered in Ephesus.

St. Cyril presided over the assembly on behalf of the Pope.

Nestorius refused to appear before the assembled bishops

From the first session heresy was condemned.

On a throne, in the center of the assembly, the bishops placed the Holy Gospel, to represent and assist Jesus Christ, who promised to be with his Church until the end of time, a holy and imposing spectacle, which has since been adopted in all councils.

The bishops, surrounding the Gospel and the representative of the Pope, all pronounced unanimously and at the same time, the definition proclaiming that Mary is truly **Mother of God**, that Nestorius had blasphemed, and henceforth ceased to be bishop of Constantinople.

When the crowd of people surrounding the Church of St. Mary Major, in which the council had met, learned of the definition proclaiming Mary, Mother of God, the exclamation echoed in an immense cry: Long live Mary, Mother of God!

The enemy of the Virgin has been defeated! Long live the great, the august, the glorious Mother of God.

When, at night, the prelates left the temple, were accompanied and carried in triumph by the crowd, among thousands of torches and lanterns in the midst of fairy lighting, to the sound of the music, chants and enthusiastic cheers of the entire city, and; of the thousands of strangers, flocking to glorify the Mother of God with them.

In remembrance of this solemn definition, the council added to the angel's greeting these simple and expressive words: Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death.

Nestorius first tried to resist the Pope and the council, but the emperor who had protected him until then, informed of the truth, abandoned him, and, faced with the heretic's revolt, condemned him to exile.

He still lived for 8 years, with hate in his heart and blasphemy on his lips.

He died miserably, as do all heretics, his body rotting and the tongue that blasphemed the Holy Virgin devoured by worms, even before he exhaled his last breath.

It was the just punishment of a tongue that dared to blaspheme the name and dignity of the Mother of God.

Here is the Protestant error, refuted and condemned long before the children of Luther adopted it, wanting, by an inexplicable counter-good sense, to deny

Maria Sma. the dignity of Mother of God, recognizing, however, that Jesus, the Son of God, is her true son.

#### IV. Scripture Proofs

To illuminate this beautiful and fundamental truth with a divine ray, let us turn to Sacred Scripture, showing how everything proclaims there this title of the Immaculate Virgin.

Mary is truly Mother of God.

She actually generated a man, hypostatically united with God; and God was truly born of her, clothed in a mortal body, formed from the very pure blood of the Holy Virgin.

Although she is not expressly called in the Gospel, Mother of Christ, Mother of God, this dignity is rigorously deduced from the Sacred text.

\* \* \*

The Archangel Gabriel, saying to Mary: — "The Holy One who is to be born of you will be called the Son of God" (Lk.1,35) clearly expresses that she will be the **Mother of God** .

It is as if he said: The fruit of thy bowels shall be the Son of God, God and man, whose birth is both eternal and temporal.

\* \* \*

The Archangel says that **the Saint** who will be born of Mary will be called the **Son of God** .

If the Son of Mary is the Son of God, it is absolutely certain that Mary is the **Mother of God** .

\* \* \*

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth exclaims: From where does it come to me that the Mother of my Lord comes to visit me? (Lc.1,43)

What does that mean, if not that Mary is **the Mother of God** ? Mother of the Lord or Mother of God is the same expression.

\* \* \*

St. Paul says that God sent his Son, made of woman, made under the law (Gal. 4:4).

If, therefore, the Son of God is made of woman not as Eve was, from a rib of Adam, but by **generation** , for it is positively said in the Gospel that Mary gave birth to her firstborn son, this woman is truly the **Mother of God** .

\* \* \*

The prophet Isaiah predicted that the Virgin would conceive and give birth to a Son who would be called Immanuel or God with us (Is.7,14)

What is this God?

It is necessarily the one who, as the Angel says, is the Son of God.

He is the one who, according to Peter's testimony, is neither Jeremiah nor Elijah nor

any other Prophet, but Christ, the son of the living God.

It is the one who, according to the confession of the demons is: the Holy One of God.

Such is the Christ that Mary gave birth to.

She therefore generated a God-Man.

Therefore, she is the **Mother of God** .

\* \* \*

The woman of the Gospel exclaims: Blessed is the womb that brought you and the breasts in which you were suckled (Lk.11,27).

These entrails and these breasts would not be blessed if they had only brought one man; they can only be because it was the entrails that gave birth to a God and the breasts that fed him.

The son of Mary being God, Mary is therefore **Mother of God** .

## **V - Doctrine of the Holy Fathers**

Such is the doctrine clearly expressed in the Gospel and always followed in the Catholic Church.

The Holy Fathers, from Apostolic times until today, have always been unanimous in this regard, and it would be a sublime page if we could reproduce the numerous sentences they left us.

Let us quote at least a few texts from the main apostles, taken from their "Liturgies" and transmitted by writers of the first centuries.

**Saint Andrew** says: Mary is the Mother of God, resplendent with such purity, and radiant with such beauty, that below God, it is impossible to imagine greater, on earth or in heaven. (1)

*1) Mater Dei, so much puritate splendens, so much that pulchritudine fulgens, ut sub Dei pulchritudine nulla in terris in cœlis major cogitari possit (S. Andreas. Apost. in situ B.V. apud Amad.)*

**St. John** says: Mary is the true Mother of God, because she conceived God, begat a true God, gave birth, not a simple man like other mothers, but God united to human flesh. (two)

**St. James** says: Mary is the Most Holy, the Immaculate, the most glorious Mother of God. (3)

**Are Dionísio Areopagite** says: Mary is made Mother of God for the salvation of the unfortunate (4)

**Origen** (second century) writes: Mary is Mother of God, only begotten of the King and Creator of all that exists (5)

**St. Athanasius** says: Mary is Mother of God, completely intact and undefiled (6)

**Saint Efrem** : Mary is the blameless Mother of God (7)

**St. Jerome** : Mary is the true Mother of God (8)

**St. Augustine** : Mary is the MOTHER OF GOD, made by the hand of God. (9)

*2) Mater Dei vera; verum enim Deum concepit, verum Deum peperit, et quia non hominem purum, ut aliæ matres, sed Deum carni humanæ unitum genuit (St. John Apost. Poid)*

*3) Mater Dei Sanctíssima, Immaculata, gloriosíssima, (St. Jacob. Minor. in his liturgy.)*

*4) Mater Dei facta, propier miserorum salutem. (S. Dion. Areop. In revel. B. Brig t. C. 103).*

*5) Mater Dei unigeniti Domini et Regis omnium plasmatoris et creatoris cunctor a (Orig. Hom. 1 in divers).*

*6) Mater Dei intactíssima, impolutíssimaque (S. Ath Or. in pur. B.V).*

*7) Mater Dei inculpata (S. Ephr. in Thren. BV)*

*8) Mater Dei vera (S. Jeron: in Serm. Ass. B.V).*

*9) Mater Dei, Dei manu fabrica (St. Aug. inorat ad beress.)*

And so on!

All the Holy Fathers rivaled in love and veneration, proclaiming Mary: the Holy and Immaculate Hand of God.

Let us end these quotations, which we could extend into chapters, by quoting the argument with which St. Cyril refuted Nestorius.

Maria Sma., says the great polemicist, is the Mother of Christ and the **Mother of God** , because she conceived and gave birth to the One who, in a single divine person, was man and God at the same time.

At the time of his conception there was but one and the same person, with both divine and human nature. The Word flesh in the flesh and the Man-God in God.

"The flesh of Christ was not first conceived, then animated, and finally assumed by the Word; but at the same time it was conceived and united with the soul of the Word.

"There was, therefore, no interval of time between the instant of the Conception of the flesh, which would allow us to call Mary: Hand of a man, and the coming of the divine majesty.

At the same moment the flesh of Christ was conceived and united with the soul and the Word".

This is what made Saint John Damascene say: "Since it appeared, the flesh of the divine Word appeared animated with reason and endowed with intelligence". (10)

*10) Lib III. Orthod. fid. C.II.*

St. Thomas corroborates this Catholic truth with authoritative and peremptory reasons. "How, says he, could the Blessed Virgin be simply the mother of a man, seeing that Christ was never a mere man, but was, from the moment of man's Conception, the true God united with animate flesh?"

It can be seen from these quotations that no doubt, no hesitation exists in the Spirit of the Holy Fathers in this regard.

It is an evangelical, traditional, universal truth that everyone admits and professes.

## **SAW. greatness of Mary**

From her title of Mother of God all the **greatness** of the Blessed Virgin flows .

Everything that preceded her divine motherhood was the preparation for this dignity; and everything that follows it flows from this dignity, as from its inexhaustible source.

The dignity of Mother of God, in fact, comes from the dignity of her Son.

Now, the dignity of Jesus Christ infinitely surpasses all human or angelic dignity.

Therefore, the dignity of Mary surpasses the dignity of all other creatures.

Creatures can give nothing to God, for he has everything and needs nothing.

Only the Blessed Virgin gave him a body that he did not have and that he needed to bring about the redemption of the world.

The greatness of Maria Sma. it is so tall and so exalted that we are unable to fully understand it.

In a synthetic sentence, the sage Cornelius a Lapide gives an idea of this title.

"To be the Hand of God, he says, is to have conceived and given birth to a God.

"It's having given you human nature, your own substance, your body, your flesh, your blood.

"It is having the rights over him that a mother has over her child and over his race.

It is to see Him submissive as a child, to the point that He calls her the name of a mother, who respects her, honors her as a mother and obeys her in everything".

And there is all this between Jesus and his Mother.

From this fundamental truth of divine motherhood, let us draw four conclusions that are like the beginnings of all the greatness of the Mother of God.



### **First principle :**

The pure blood of Mary, which was the raw material of the Body of Jesus Christ, as well as the milk that fed it, after being changed into the substance of the Savior, were hypostatically united to the Eternal Word. (11)

*11) Hec Matris dignitas physice sumpta habet, quod B. Virgo vere ac proprie concurrerit ad fabricandum corpus, et aliqua Virginei corporis substantia, ex qua Christi corpus in principio constitutum, postea auctum ac deinde lacte nutritum et, Dei verb hypostatice adeor fuerit, that credi potest istam carnis substantiam which Christus ex Virgine assumes, never fuisse, omnino resign, aucontinua coloris naturalis actione resolutam, sed eadem semper fuisse mend Verbo unitam. (Suarez: from Incarn. p.2 d.1)*

### **Second principle:**

As a result of this intimate relationship between God and the Blessed Virgin, there is in the latter a real relationship of motherhood, which entitles her to all her Son's goods, such a close bond with God, the Eternal Father of this same Son, and such a covenant. closes with the august Trinity, which only God can understand the immense grandeur of the Mother of God.

It is the opinion of St. Augustine: "I say this without hesitation, he writes, Mary cannot fully explain what she cannot understand."

"Only God can worthily praise such dignity" says Saint Andrew of Crete.

### **Third principle:**

After the hypostatic union of the Word, there is no union more transcendent than that of divine motherhood, for this grace is of a completely different kind from other graces; highest, incomparable, which has never been communicated to another creature.

This dignity of Mother of God belongs, in any case, to the hypostatic union, intrinsically linked with it and having with it a necessary union.

In fact, the flesh of Christ, hypostatically united to the Word, is, by its origin, the flesh of Mary.

Saint Peter Damiano says it very well: "God is in all things in three ways, but he wanted to be in Mary in a fourth, very special way: through identity, because he is the same as she. Let every creature be silent and tremble, daring only to contemplate the immensity of such great dignity." (12)

*12) Cum Deus in alijs rebus sit tribus modis, in Virgine fuit Quarto speculi Modo, scilicet per identitatem, quia idem est quod ipsa. Hinc taceat et contremiscat omnis creatura, et vix audeat aspice tantæ dignitatis immensitatem: (S. Pet. Dam. Serm. of Ann.)*

The dignity of Mother of God, in fact, comes from the dignity of her Son.

Now, the dignity of Jesus Christ infinitely surpasses all human or angelic dignity.

Therefore, the dignity of Mary surpasses the dignity of all other creatures.

Creatures can give nothing to God, for he has everything and needs nothing.

Only the Blessed Virgin gave him a body that he did not have and that he needed to bring about the redemption of the world.

The greatness of Maria Sma. it's so tall

#### ***Fourth principle:***

Any other creature state is limited and finite; this one of divine motherhood, however, is like infinite, because of the very close connection with a purely infinite person.

"This union is not a personal union, says Saint Bernardo, but it approaches her so close, that the Virgin Mary seems to be as lost in divinity, being personally united to the flesh of her divine Son, who is formed from her own beef."

St. Thomas and the other Scholastics, with rigorous exactness, qualify Mary's motherhood as simply infinite dignity, or even: almost infinite. Suarez calls it: infinite in its species: in suo genere infinita.

#### ***Fifth principle:***

Mary's divine motherhood is the foundation of all her glory, as it is the root of all her other prerogatives.

From all eternity, in fact, Mary was predestined for this motherhood; and as a result of this predestination, God adorned her with so many graces, that in this masterpiece he revealed his limitless power, his limitless wisdom, his unparalleled goodness, his bottomless liberality, his charity, his justice united to his infinite mercy.

These are the five principles that flow from her divine Motherhood and form the pedestal of all her grandeur, a grandeur so exalted that neither men, nor Angels, nor the Holy Virgin herself, can fully understand it.

## VII. Conclusion

What a deep abyss!

What a dizzying height!

However, in all this there is no effort of imagination: it is the sure, theological consequence of her ineffable prerogative as Mother of God.

Mary is the Mother of God... It is absolutely right.

This dignity surpasses all other dignities: it is the last degree of elevation of a creature.

Now, every **dignity** presupposes a right; and there is no right, without there being a **duty** in another person.

If God has raised his Mother so high, it is because He wants her to be honored, exalted by us.

We are not quite convinced of this truth.

The cause of this lack of conviction is that we compare the Holy Virgin with other mothers, and in this comparison we represent the quality of Mother of God as external and accidental, while in reality she has its basis in her **own moral being** , hence it influences your **physical being** .

Mary conceived the divine Word in her womb, but this Conception was the effect of a fullness of grace and an operation of the Holy Spirit in her soul.

it may be said that a mother does not become more commendable in herself for having given birth to a great man, for this does not bring her any increase in virtue or perfection; but the dignity of Mother of God, in Mary, is the work of her sanctification, of the grace that raises her above the Angels themselves, of the grace to which she was predestined, in which she was conceived: to reach this sublime end of being Mother of God: It's your own person.

Faced with such a marvel, unique in the world and in heaven, I ask the poor Protestants:

It is not logical, it is not necessary, is it not imperative that men praise and exalt her whom God praised and exalted above all creatures?

The cult of Mary is not an ornament of religion; it is a constitutive piece, it is an integral part, so inextricably linked to all evangelical truths and mysteries, that, wanting to separate it from the whole of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, it is, at a single stroke, to kill the entire religion, to make it falling, no longer understanding anything of the soft embrace in which God comes to unite himself with creatures.

Mary is Mother of God.

Mary of qua natus is Jesus.

Everything is in this sentence:

It is Mary: simple creature.

It is Jesus: eternal God.

It is the Incarnation "de qua natus est".

It is the indissoluble **union** that produces birth, between the Son and the Mother.

Oh! instead of blaspheming, poor dear Protestants, kneel down on your knees, and with your forehead on the ground, worship this infinite God who became man in the bosom of this Blessed woman, who is Mary; and praise, exalt this unique creature that God has chosen to make his own Mother.

It is the great, incomparable Masterpiece of God. He can make worlds wider, heavens more splendid. but it cannot make a mother greater than the Mother of God! (13).

*13) Ipsæst qua mairen facere Deus non potest Majorem mundum potest Deus facere, majus cœlam, majorem matrem quam matrem Dri non potest facere. (S.Bern.Spec.BVc10).*

There he exhausted his power.

It is the last word of your power and your love.

Let us acclaim her, therefore, and let us confidently write the beautiful invocation that ends the Angelic Greeting:

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.

Amen!

## CHAPTER XI

### Mary, But of men!

Here is another title, which excites Protestant hatred. They call themselves "Brothers of Mary", but in no way do they want to be Children of Mary.

At this point they are logical.

If Maria Sma. she is not the Mother of God, nor is she the mother of men.

And even being the Mother of God, she should not be the Mother of poor heretics, who reject the positive teaching of Jesus Christ, in order to adhere to doctrines contrary to Sacred Scripture. I say: it shouldn't be, and yet it is.

She is not the mother of sin, nor of the heresy which she sovereignly detests, But she is the mother of poor sinners and unfortunate heretics, which she seeks to lead back to the bosom of truth and love.

Mary is the **Mother of God** ! we have proved it in the preceding chapter.

She is also the **Mother of men** : this is what we are going to prove here.

As Mother of God, the Holy Virgin has her forehead girded by the **power** of her child.

As the Mother of men, her heart is halœd by the **love** and mercy of Jesus.

It is one of the softest truths of Catholicism.

We so need a Mother!

Children are so unhappy that they lose their mother: They are poor little orphans.

And it's so sad to be an orphan.

Protestants are orphans: They expelled the mother from their temples, insult the mother... and intend to please the Father.

That's what I used to say to Bem-av. de Montfort: If someone says that he has God for his Father, not having Mary for his mother; this is a liar, who has no other father but Satan.

Let us travel, with love and affection, through the phases of this glorious title: Mary, Mother of Men.

## I. As Mary is our Mother

Many people, even pious ones, do not understand well how Mary is our mother, thinking that it is just a title of trust and love, but without any basis in reality.

It's a fundamental mistake.

The same reasoning that showed us the reality of Sma's **divine motherhood** .  
Virgin, she will show us the reality of her **spiritual motherhood** .

One of these maternity hospitals is related to the other.

There is in us the **soul and the body** , completely different from each other, and even of a radically opposite nature.

The body is material, visible, mortal.

The soul is spiritual, invisible, immortal.

These two substances, the body and the soul, each have a particular, distinct, opposite life.

The life of the body is a **material** , natural **life** .

The soul-life is a **spiritual** , supernatural **life** .

The life of the body is called: **human life** .

The life of the soul is called: **divine life** .

It is useful to distinguish these **two lives well** , in order to understand the consequences that flow from these principles.

Each of these two lives has a different origin.

The life of the **body** comes from the **union of body and soul** , so that when this union ceases, the life of the body also ceases, and the body ceases to be a human body, to become a corpse.

Death is the consequence of the **separation** of body and soul.

The soul-life also **comes** from a union; of the union of the **soul with God** , so that, ceasing this union, the life of the soul also ceases, and the soul ceases to be a deified soul, to become a corpse, a soul in a state of mortal sin.

It's supernatural death!

And this death is the consequence of the **separation** of the soul and God.

What unites our soul to God is called **grace** and what separates it from God is called mortal **sin** .

Our soul, by grace, possesses the supernatural life... Without this supernatural life, it is in spiritual death, it is a germ of hell.

Who gives us the life of the body?

It's our father and mother, both, both. From the union of the two results the transmission of natural life.

So it is with the supernatural life, the life of our soul.

This life comes from God, who is our Father, but it also comes from Mary, who is our Mother.

It comes from the two of them, it comes from the spiritual union of God and Maria Sma. God is the source of this supernatural life.

Maria is your broadcast channel.

We are therefore indebted for the life of our soul to Jesus and Mary.

Jesus being our Father, Mary is therefore our Mother.

A parent's thing is to give life.

Jesus gives us this life as a principle.

Mary gives us this life as a channel.

But both Jesus and Mary cooperate in our soul-life.

In the life of Saint Gertrude, one reads that the Blessed Virgin appeared to her one day, her face radiating a sweet majesty.

It was Christmas Day.

They sang the Gospel, in which it is said that Mary gave birth to her firstborn (Lk.1.7)

The Saint began to meditate on this expression: first-born, without understanding why the Evangelist wrote: first-born, not only-begotten, for it is certain that Maria Sma. never had other children.

The Holy Virgin immediately replied: No, Jesus is not my only-begotten son, but the first-born, because if he is the only-begotten in the material order, he is not in the spiritual order; I have spiritually generated all men, giving life to

their soul, so that they are all my children, the brothers of Jesus, the living members of my son Jesus.

The life of our soul is a life so real that the life of our body, being even much superior to it; it is by Maria Sma. that God gives us this soul-life, so that she becomes our mother, more than the one who gave us the body-life.

## **II. need for a mother in religion**

One day a little child, educated on the knees of a pious mother, was learning for the first time to make the sign of the Cross.

At the end of the invocation of the three divine Persons: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which he had been repeating, the child suddenly stops and fixes his clear gaze on his mother's gaze, he asks: Mom, there is not also a mother in the sky?

The instinct of Christian piety had spoken through the little child's lips.

God must have prepared an answer for him.

This answer is: Mary, Mother of men.

Mary is the Mother of God: and because she is the Mother of God, she must be the Mother of men.

Yes, there in the heights, with the forehead girded with all the greatness... the heart overflowing with the purest and most disinterested love... the radiant soul of all the virtues... the gaze fixed on our struggles... the hand always extended to bless...the smile always on the lips...always ready to console us...Mary, our Mother reigns, as mothers reign, solely concerned with the happiness of her children... she reigns in glory, close to her Jesus, and as softening the luminous diadem that encircles the Saviour's brow to show us her firstborn Son, making God look upon the earth, and making mercy radiate, where the thunders of his justice.

Oh! only a mother's heart can do that!

Like Mary, seen in this light, all of love, she seems great to us... and she appears tender and affectionate!

Here on earth, the first thing the newborn's eyes meet, in the mists of his first glance, is his mother's smile.



The poet said it very well:

Incipe, parve puer, risum cognoscere matrem.

If the little child had the full use of his reason, he would soon know his mother, through her smile.

Religion, which responds so divinely to all the needs and noble aspirations of man, could not exclude this relationship so soft and so profound.

Man needs a mother in heaven as he has one on earth.

A religion, in which there is no mother, cannot be the true religion... it is too cold... the heart does not flutter... it does not adapt to our feelings or satisfy our aspirations.

It is the condemnation of sad, frowning, hateful Protestantism... They lack a mother... they are poor orphans!...

God knows our needs so well that in the Old Testament he compares himself sometimes to a schoolmaster, sometimes to a mother.

I, as Ephraim's teacher, carried them in my arms (Hos.11.3).

As a mother caresses her little child, so I will comfort you (Is.66,13).

Mary's motherhood, both divine and human, appears to us to be such a bridge of mercy that allows us to go to God along the same path that He came to us.

It can be said that, in a way, the Holy Virgin involves the Sma. The entire trinity, in the immaculate veil of its Maternity; and God, thus clothed in the goodness and tenderness of this unique Mother, presents himself to us as father, mother, brother, friend.

Can a woman forget her little child, says He to each one of us, and not have compassion on the child of her womb? However, even if she forgot about him, I would not and would forget about you (Is.49,15).

God is father, brother, friend, benefactor; but through his Most Holy Mother, He becomes a mother.

God is mother, through the Holy Virgin.

We have already seen one of the reasons for this spiritual motherhood.

Let us summarize them all in summary, to show very clearly that it is not simply a title, but a reality, and that in all the rigor of the terms: Mary is our Mother.

### **III. reasons for spiritual motherhood**

There are, above all, five reasons that prove the spiritual motherhood of the Immaculate Virgin...

I have already developed the first reason at the beginning of this chapter; let's summarize it here for the full exposition.

#### ***First reason:***

First of all, no one is a Mother if he does not give life, since motherhood presupposes a communication of life: Mary is Mother, and she is Mother of God, because from her Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

The Gospel of St. Matthew tells us: she gave her life to the One who is the life of the world: "Ego sum...vita"!

She is therefore eminently the Mother of my life, since, as the Apostle says, my life is Christ: "Mila enim vivere Christus est".

Now, if Christ is my life, the Mother of this life is also my mother,

As can be seen, Scripture provides data on this proof, which, moreover, simple reasoning reveals to us.

#### ***Second reason:***

It is taken from the words of Our Lord.

Christ came to this world to be the head of the body, of which all the redeemed have become members.

And as he himself says: "He is the trunk; we are the branches."

Therefore, Mary, Mother of the trunk is also Mother of the branches.

Finally, says in this regard the. Welcome Grignon de Montfort, a Mother does not give birth to head without limbs, nor limbs without head; also in the order of grace, the head and members are born from the same Mother.

Mary, mother of our head, is therefore our Mother. (1)

1) *Mary, non solum spiritu, verum etiam corpore, et Mater est et Virgo. Et Mater quidem spiritu memberrum Capitis nostri, quod nos sumus, quia enoperata est caritate, ut fideles in Ecclesianascere, quæ ilius Capitis membra sunt: corpore vero ipsius Capitis Mater. (S. August.: De Sanct. Virg. C.5).*

**Third reason:**

It can be said that Jesus Christ, restoring our humanity to its primitive dignity that sin had caused it to decay, deserved us more graces than we had lost by the original fall, so that, according to the word of the prophet Isaiah: "He he became the father of our souls in the law of grace".

Therefore, if Jesus is the father of our souls, Mary is his mother: in fact, by giving us Jesus, she gave us true life.

**Fourth reason:**

We find it in St. Luke, when, speaking of the birth of the Savior, he says, "Mary gave birth to her firstborn Son." *Peperit filium suum primogenitum*".

The word firstborn does not presuppose subsequent children according to the flesh, but if there are spiritual children, it is necessarily related to them.

We are, therefore, according to the word of the Savior to St. John at Calvary, or as He said to St. Gertrude, the other children of Mary according to the Spirit.

It is in this ineffable radiance, in this divine mixture of power and humility, of greatness, tenderness, condescension and glory, that the Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, the new Eve, the sacred inheritance that we, appears to us, leave Jesus.

**Fifth reason:**

But it is above all on Calvary that we learn so formally and clearly that Mary is our Mother.

The Savior himself solemnly confirms this motherhood.

He includes it in his Will, or rather it is his own Testament that transmits it to his children: "Mulier, ecce filius tuus--Ecce Mater tua"-*Et ex illa hora accepit eam discipulus in sua.*

And from that hour, gathers the Evangelist, The disciple took it for all its good.

Taking Mary as all one's good is to let go of everything, to cling only to her, and through her, find Jesus, the fruit of her virginal womb.

#### IV. the triple sonship

There is another reasoning that allows us to establish the spiritual motherhood of the Virgin Mary, based on the different types of paternity and filiation that exist among men:

The Apostle Saint John says: Consider what love the Eternal Father has shown us, in wanting us to be called children of God, and that we are, in reality... Dear friends, now we are children of God; but what we will be one day has not yet manifested itself. (Jn.3,1-2).

Ut filii Dei nominemur et simus.

The Apostle clearly expresses that there is a sonship in **name** and another in **reality** , so that there are necessarily different kinds of sonship and, reciprocally, different degrees of fatherhood and motherhood.

It exists in the natural order; and this fact will help us to better understand the supernatural order.

There are 3 kinds of paternity and maternity.

There is adoption, covenant, and birth parenthood.

In other words, someone can be a father or a mother, by adoption, by alliance, or by generation.

In the strict sense of the term, those from whom life is received are called father and mother; however these two other paternity do not cease to have a true paternity or maternity character; for if they do not give life itself, they nevertheless give what is like a part of this life: the name, the goods, the condition.

God truly generated us to the supernatural life, making us partakers of his nature, of his own substance, giving us his Spirit, who substantially dwells in us, being a principle of life in us.

You become partakers of the divine nature, says St Peter (1,4).

You are the temple of God and the Holy Spirit dwells in you, adds St. Paul (1Co.2,16).

And this Spirit is a quickening Spirit, completes the symbol of Nicea - Spiritum vivificantem.

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God... you have received the spirit of adoption as children, says the Apostle again (Rom.8,14).

Sacred Scripture often repeats this sublime truth:

You were born of God... Everything that is born God...

He begot us by the Word of Truth... So that we may be called and be children of God.

No doubt this generation is infinitely below that by which God produces his Eternal Word, for he gives it, not a participation in the divine nature, but the divine nature itself.

Our generation of God is a participation of the generation of the Eternal Word, but it is a true generation, a production of life that makes literally true the word that we are born of God—Ez Deo nati sunt.

God, then, is our Father, and this not only by adoption, nor by covenant, but **by generation** .

God, has only one child, by nature, but has a multitude of children by adoption, and more than by adoption.

Indeed, out of a marvel of his love and power, God found the secret of bringing together, of identifying these three sonships into a **single sonship** .

In the natural order, these three sonships cannot exist in the same person, since no one can be at the same time a child of adoption, of covenant, and of birth.

But, in the supernatural order, we have the advantages of these three sonships.

The advantage of birth sonship consists in making us partake of the divine nature, by God's substantial indwelling in us, by grace.

The advantage of covenant membership is the communication of the merits, rights, and prerogatives of the firstborn of the human family.

The advantage of adoption sonship is that we are, on God's part, the object of a gratuitous love, which elevates us to Him, despite the lowliness of our natural condition, making us his heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

## V. Mary's Triple Maternity

It was fitting to remember in passing, our triple divine sonship, to better understand the **maternity** spiritual Maria Sma. about us.

We can, in fact, apply to the Immaculate Virgin everything I have just said about God.

What God is by nature, Mary is by participation. Mary is our Mother, in the order of grace, and for supernatural life, in the three degrees we have just seen, speaking of God as Father.

We are therefore your children, by **adoption** , by **covenant** and finally, truly by **birth** .

\* \* \*

The **adoption** , say the jurists and theologians, is the free assumption (assumption & the act by which one takes and raises you) of a stranger, to become daughter or heiress.

Mary is Mother of God; we are poor sinners: as such we are like strangers to Maria Sma. She takes us and elevates us, making us children and heirs; children of God and Mary, heirs to the kingdom of her Son.

And how did Mary adopt us?

By his consent to the Saviour's passion and death; completely gratuitous consent on her part, for she gave her Son to death for our Salvation.

We are therefore truly **adopted children** of Mary.

\* \* \*

We are also his children by **covenant** , in the sense that our souls are wives of his Son.

Such a covenant between the soul and Jesus Christ, though all spiritual, is nevertheless closer and more perfect than the covenant that exists in the natural order, between husband and wife.

Between the Incarnate Word and the soul there is a communication of goods, titles and rights, incomparably greater than between spouses, in human alliances.

Hence it follows that the Mother of Jesus, through the alliance of our souls with her Son, becomes more our mother than in the natural order.

And how is this alliance motherhood realized?

For consent to this maternity.

It is a law, in the natural order, that the child does not enter into an alliance with a wife, without the mother's consent.

Such a law is logical, because of the consequences of marriage, in relation to the mother herself, and she must become the mother of the one who makes one with her child.

Such a law, founded on the nature of natural things, must also exist for the supernatural covenant,

Jesus was not to contract with souls an alliance, in fact so disproportionate and which had to cause his death, without his mother's consent.

It is by this consent that she adopted us as her children, at the same time uniting our souls to her divine Son.

It is in this way that we are the children of Mary, by **adoption** and by **covenant** .

It would be enough, without a doubt, for us to be able to proclaim Maria Sma. our Mother,

\* \* \*

But it would not be enough, in a perfect sense, if we were not your children, by **birth** . It is this third and supreme degree that forms the perfect and proper sonship,

Perfect sonship, in fact, requires the reception of life, which does not strictly happen in adoption and covenant.

Now, I already proved in the first paragraph of this chapter that we are spiritually born of Maria Sma.

Not only did the Immaculate Virgin unite our souls to the soul of her Son, as wives, but she actually generated us to supernatural life.

In this way we are his children in the highest degree, in that which constitutes the perfect and proper sonship.

Saint Bernardino de Senna exclaims with all theological rigor: "O rescued people, applaud the life given to you by the Virgin Sma.... Through a woman (Eve) death entered this world, and through another woman, (Mary) Life came

to us... Mother of divine grace... she carried us all in her bowels, as a true mother carries her children.

It is a thought that is found in many holy fathers of the first centuries, that there was a double generation in Mary: one that was made in joy, giving birth to her **divine Son** ; another that was made in unspeakable pain, generating us at the foot of the Cross, her **spiritual children** .

She gave us the light of grace, the light of divine life. Having received life from her, we are her children, not only by adoption and covenant, but by **birth**.

### **SAW. incarnation and redemption**

The subject we have dealt with is too beautiful to leave it incomplete, all the more so as there are certain points of view which are rarely dealt with, to any extent, in the books of piety.

The fact of Maria Sma's motherhood, above all, is often treated very superficially, limiting itself to the words of Jesus Christ on the Cross "Behold your Mother!"

Such words are not the institution of the Holy Virgin's spiritual motherhood, but the **confirmation** of an already existing fact.

To prove this institution, it is necessary to consider not only the death of the Savior, but the Incarnation and redemption, in their two distinct phases.

The Son of God **became man** : it is the first phase or the Incarnation.

He became man to rescue and **save men** : it is the second phase, or Redemption.

There are thus two distinct things in the Incarnation: the Incarnation as such, and the Incarnation in view of the salvation of men.

I say they are two distinct and even separable things, in an absolute sense.

Absolutely speaking, in fact, the Son of God could have become man, without the intention of rescuing humanity, but only so that there would be a God-Man.

Such is indeed the beautiful doctrine of Duns Scot, who thinks that, even if Adam and Eve had not sinned, the divine Word would have been incarnated,



so as to elevate creation and bring it closer to God, uniting the human nature to the divine nature, in the one divine person of Jesus Christ.

As far as the Blessed Virgin is concerned, the incarnation was proposed to her, so that she would consent to it; but it is proposed to him, just as it must be carried out, that is, in view of the **redemption of men** .

Mary consents to the Incarnation, to the fullest extent that it is proposed to her.

There is, therefore, in reality, in the consent she gives, a double consent: consent to the **Incarnation** limited to her person, and consent to the Incarnation, effected in view **of the redemption** , including already, in principle, the **sacrifice** , by the what redemption would be accomplished.

They are two distinct consents, although united, but, absolutely speaking, even separable.

If the Son of God had simply become man, without the intention of saving humanity, or even if, by becoming man, with the intention of saving the world, He had hidden this end from his Mother, Mary would have had no need to consent to redemption, but simply to the Incarnation.

Now, the first of these two consents would produce nothing, at least directly, in relation to us.

Mary would simply consent to be Mother God, allowing the Son of God to incarnate in her virginal womb.

This first consent would have cost him nothing, for it did not include the acceptance of any sacrifice, of any immolation, but simply the acceptance of dignity and glory.

The consent to the second proposal is all different.

Through him, the Holy Virgin receives into her womb the Son of God, as he should be the Redeemer of men, through his passion and death.

And receiving him, by this title, into her pure bodily entrails, she receives into her heart entrails the passion and death of the Saviour, as the principle and germ of supernatural life in souls.

And that's not all: let's see well the consequences of this principle: Receiving the Savior, as agent of salvation, she jointly receives all the souls that must be made alive by redemption.

The Redeemer's death is thus deposited in his heart as a supernatural life **principle** , to bear its fruit of salvation, at the appointed hour for every soul.

Now what is this, if not a true **Conception** of all souls to the supernatural life?

Spiritual conception, it is true, but that is why it is no less than the natural conception, a true and perfect conception; and all the more perfect, as the supernatural life surpasses the natural life.

We must therefore conclude that Maria Sma. it carried us in its bowels and gave us the light of supernatural life.

We were born from it spiritually.

She is therefore our Mother... our true mother, because the one who gives life is a mother.

And we are your children, your true children.

## **VII. the teaching of the saints**

Let us elucidate this consoling doctrine, which proves that Maria Sma. she is truly the Mother of men, to quote from the Holy Doctors of the Church, eager to give the Mother of Jesus titles that adorn her immortal crown, without any exaggeration or exaltation.

There is only the difficulty of choosing, as they are all unanimous in proclaiming the Mother of God as Mother of men.

Here is a passage from Sto. Antoninus, written 15 centuries ago, which would be said to be uttered by any of our saints most devoted to the Immaculate Virgin in our times.

The Mother of Mercy, says the Holy One, was established as a co-worker of our Redeemer and of our spiritual birth.

It is of this double conception of the Virgin that the prophet says: Before she had the pain of childbirth she gave birth; before the time of delivery came, she gave birth to a male child.

Who has ever heard such?

Who saw anything like this?

Will the earth bring forth its fruit in a single day?

Or is an entire nation born at the same time? (Is.66,7).

The Blessed Virgin gave birth, without pain, first, her **first-born** Son , who she bandaged in cloths and reclined in a manger; (Lk.2,7) then she gave birth, at the foot of the Cross, in the midst of the anguished pains she shared with her Son, a **multitude** of children; all those who have been redeemed by the Lord (Ps. 106,2)

“ Mary gave birth to them all, all at the same time, in this sense, which is in a single act and in a single instant, that she gave what is the cause of life for everyone.

"She did not give birth to them all at once, in the sense of applying the fruits of passion to souls, an application that actually produces life in each soul, which is done in the course of time.

Who has never heard of such great joy, like that of the first birth?

But, who has ever seen such deep pain, like that of the second birth?» (Bib. Virg. Tom.II p.517)

As can be seen, the holy Doctor applies the words of the prophet Isaiah to the double birth of the Holy Virgin, giving as an unprecedented wonder that there is a birth before the pain of birth.

Note well that the wonder does not consist in the two successive births, as this is done daily in the natural order, but in the fact that the first birth is so different from the second, because **of the quality of people** and the nature **of the lives** that are its term, being the first childbirth a cause of joy, and the second a cause of pain.

But there is still another marvel, which I must not let go unnoticed, at least in passing.

**The object** of the two births, which take place at a different time, is composed of two parts of a **single whole** : the head and the limbs, the Christ in his fullness and in his development, the incarnate Word and his body which is the Church.

In this way the maternity of the Holy Virgin, although its object is the Son of God and men, has in reality only one

object, which is Christ, but the whole Christ, Christ himself and his mystical body.

After this expressive and luminous passage, by Saint Antonin, let us briefly quote some other sentences of the Holy Fathers, which we summarize as much as possible.

Sto. Augustine says: Mary is the Mother of the members of Christ, which we are, because she cooperated, by her love, in giving birth to the faithful in the Church, whose head is Christ. (1)

St. Peter Chrysologist: Mary is truly the Mother of the living, through grace. (two)

Sto. Ambrose: Mary is the Mother of the faithful, because she gave birth to Christ, who is the brother of the faithful. (3)

Sto. Anselmo: Mary is the Mother of all who believe in God. (4)

S. Ricardo de S. Lourenço: Mary is the Mother of the just, because she feeds them and adopts them as her children. (5)

Sto. Great Albert: Mary is the Mother of all the good, for the goodness of grace and glory: (6)

*1) By mistake, the text of St. Augustine, which we should reproduce here, was quoted on page 272.*

*2) Mary, Mater vere orientium pergratiam (Serm.140).*

*3) Mary, Mater credentium, quia Christum genuit credentium fraterni (In fest. Purif.)*

*4) Matia, Mater omnium in Deum credentium (in orat.BV)*

*5) Mary, Mater justarum, quia nutrit eos et adoptat ut filios (De taud. Virg. 1. 13).*

*6) Mater omnium bonorum, bonitate gratiae et gloriae (Sup. Missus est. c. 152).*

St. Brigida: Mary is the Mother of all sinners who wish to make amends and have the will to sin no more. (7)

Ven. Gerson: Mary is our Mother, for our generation after her Son. (8)

St. Lawrence Justinian: Mary is the common Mother of all who must be saved. (9)

Mary is the Mother of all men. (16)

St. Bernardino of Siena: Mary is the Mother of the elect, for her love. (11)

Sto. Antonino: Mary is our dear Mother.

Mary, Our Mother, for dignity and honor.

Our Mother, for your immense love.

Our Mother, from the beginning.

Our Mother, to heal us.

Our spiritual Mother, who gives life to those our first mother had killed.

Mary, Mother of all, because she is Mother of God, who is Father and Creator of all.

Mary, Mother of all, because she generated everyone through the affection of her love and gave birth to them, through the suffering and through the pains, in the passion of her Son. (12)

Let us end these quotations, which could be multiplied by thousands, with a passage from Bonaventure;

Do you think that the Virgin, who is in a unique way the Mother of the Savior, is not also the common Mother of all the faithful?

The truth teaches us that Mary had two children: the first God and man at the same time; the second, a simple man.

Of the first she is Mother by nature; of the second she is spiritual Mother.” (13)  
When God gave being to the first man, He gave it at the same time to the numberless multitude of his descendants.

*7) Mater omnium peccatorum se volentium amende, et habentium voluntatem in Deum amplius non peccare (Revel c. 138)*

*8) Mater nostra, ex nostra post Filium generatione (Tr. 6. sup. Magnificat).*

*9) Mater communis salvandorum (Serm. de purif B.V).*

*10) Mater cunctorum hominum (Serm. de verbis BV)*

*11) Mater electorum per dilectionem (Serm. 55)*

*12) Keep our face,*

*Mater nostra dignitate et honore,*

*Mater nostra ex maxima affectione,*

*Mater nostra ab antiquitate,*

*Mater nostra ob curam,*

*Mater nostra spiritualis quæ vivificat nos, quos prima mater occiderat,*

*Mater omnium, quia mater Dei, qui est pater et origo omnium.*

*Mater omnium qua omnes concepit per affectum dilectionis et peperit per labores et dolores in passione Filii. (St. Anton: in Summa pars. IV.15 C.2)*

*13) Sed numquid solius Christi mater est Maria? Imo certe, quod jucundissimum est, Maria non solum est Mater Christi singularis, sed etiam, mater omnium fidelium universalis. Due filii Mariæ sunt, homo Deus et homo purus, unius enim corporiter, alterius spiritualiter mater est Maria . Bonav: In spec. C.VIII).*

So it was with Mary. Giving birth to the son of God, she gave birth to the multitude of believers, called to live by the life of Jesus.

## VIII. Conclusion

Beautiful and comforting truths have passed before our Spirit in this chapter.

Mary is our dear Mother!

And giving it this title, we do not simply enunciate a term of tenderness, pity, glorification, but the expression of a **reality** , of a certain, undeniable truth, which every person of common sense must admit, to the same degree that he admits that your mother is really your mother.

How did the unhappy Protestants come to oppress their own hearts, not wanting the Mother of God to be their Mother too?

It is a mystery... but a mystery of darkness... perhaps unreflective on the part of many, but a traditional hatred of the Holy Church of God.

Protestantism is essentially the **denial** of the teaching of the Catholic Church, and as the Church, from the Apostles until today, honors and venerates the Immaculate Mother of Jesus, proclaiming her: the loving Mother of men, Protestantism protests and does not accept a title and a dignity, though they are entirely evangelical, professed by Catholicism.

And here is the unfortunate Protestant denying that Maria Sma. she is the Mother of God, although she is in full letters in the Gospel. And not satisfied with removing from the face of the Mother of Jesus the diadem with which the Eternal girded her, the unhappy Protestant plucks from his own heart the filial love he owes his Mother, not wanting to give her his love, because the Catholic Church love and invoke it.

Poor unhappy people, if they would reflect for a moment, calmly and without prejudice, on what we have exposed here, they should recognize, by simple common sense, that we need a Mother, that we need not only the light of the Gospel, for our Spirit , but a little of this love that the Gospel announces to us, of which Jesus Christ is the inexhaustible source, but whose channel is the Immaculate Virgin.

Poor unfortunates, stop blaspheming... leave prejudices... leave hatred and remember that it is impossible for this Catholic Church, so hated by you, to be in error, in idolatry.

It is impossible, I say, for she is the universal Church, the Church of Christ, built on Peter, with the promise never to faint in her teaching. Listen to these thousands of men extraordinary in virtues and in deeds, who we call the Saints, and all of them, unanimously, without a dissenting voice, proclaim Mary, our Mother, our hope, our life.

Oh yes, in the midst of the miseries of this life, let us look at Mary; and let us remember our title as children of this glorious Mother.

Let us invoke her as our dear Mother; let us have the same confidence in her as a child in its mother, and soon, we will experience how good it is, how sweet it is to be guided by the loving hand of a Mother.

Life is so sad... the exile is so long, the suffering is so intense in this world, that it would be barbaric, cruel on God's part if he didn't give us a Mother, to console us, to dry our tears, to take us in his arms, and point us to the heavenly homeland.

We need a Mother...

God gave us this Mother in the person of Maria Sma.

Let us love her with all the strength of our soul...

a bit how Jesus loved her, during her mortal life, and how he continues to love her in eternity. In her earthly life He made her His Mother; in heaven He made her Queen of glory, and in error He named her Queen of mercy.

## CHAPTER XII

### The Wedding of Cana

As a corollary of the two sublime dignities of Maria Sma, which we have just analyzed: that of Mother of God and that of Mother of Men, we must contemplate for a moment an enchanting scene from the Gospel, in which these two prerogatives stand out with an admirable sparkle: It is the scene of the Wedding at Cana.

Our Protestant friends, understanding the scope of this evangelical page in honor and glory of the Mother of Jesus, concentrated their heretical blows on it, seeking to diminish its brightness and even — their hatred reached this point — to make it revert against the Mother of Jesus what is one of the brightest pearls in his crown.

And, sad thing to confess, several translators of the Gospel, in the vernacular language, let themselves be dragged along by the Protestant current and adopted a version, which is not absolutely wrong, it is true, but which translates neither the words, nor the gestures, nor the thought of the divine Master.

It must be said right away, so that Protestants know, that everyone can translate the Bible, and can publish this translation, provided it has the authorization of the ecclesiastical authority.

The only sacred text recognized as authentic is the Latin Vulgate text.

Such ecclesiastical authorization, however, does not declare the authenticity of the translation, but simply that it does not contain errors of doctrine.

If this is well understood, the reader will excuse me from scrutinizing other parallel texts, in order to elucidate the difficulty raised by the passage of the scene at Cana, and to pulverize the protestants' objections against the Sma's power of intercession. Virgin who appears there so sparkling.

## **I. The Gospel Text**

And Let's start by quoting the Gospel text, of unparalleled beauty and enchanting simplicity.

After narrating the encounter of Jesus with his first five disciples: Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanaël and another one, the Evangelist continues:

Chapter 2.

- 1.— Three days later, a wedding was held at Cana in Galilee: the Mother of Jesus was there.
- 2.— And Jesus was also invited with his disciples to us for a wedding.
- 3.— And lacking the wine, the Mother of Jesus said to him: There is no wine.



4.— And Jesus said to her: **Let it be, Lady, I will take care of it, although my time has not come.**

5.— His Mother said to those who served: Do whatever He tells you.

6.— Now there were six stone jars there, prepared for Jewish purification, each bearing two or three measures.

7.— Jesus said to them: Fill them with water. And filled them to the top.

8.— Then Jesus said to them: Take it away now, and take it to the architravian. And they took it.

9.— And the architect, as soon as he tasted the water converted into wine, as he did not know where it came from (this wine), even though the servants knew, because they had taken the water, the architect, called her husband.

10.— And he said to him: Every man first presents the good wine: and when he (the guests) has drunk well, then he presents them with the inferior one: on the contrary, thou hast had the good wine kept until now.

41.— In this way Jesus gave beginning to (his) miracles in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

12.— After this he went to Capernaum, he and his Mother, and his brethren, and his disciples, but they did not linger there many days. (Jn.2.1-12)

Such is the narration in its charming simplicity.

It is a written word... Such a word has a great advantage: it is firmness; it also has a major drawback; its frozen coldness.

The words on paper have the value they have in the columns of a dictionary.

In spoken conversation, between people, who understand each other above all, the words are nuanced, graduated by the accent, the look, the gesture, the smile.

For lack of accent, which we cannot restore, we must use the context and circumstances of details to interpret the Gospel word.

The text quoted is from the current translation, apart from the 4th verse. which I translated, in my own way, but supported by authorities and historical facts that I want to explain here.

The Latin text of this verse is:

Quid mihi et tibi, mulier?

The Greek text says: *Ti emoi kai soi, juvai.*

The translation by P. Mattos Soares says: *Woman, what does it matter to you and me? And this translation is the best among the acceptable ones.*

Others translate: *What's between you and me, woman?*

Where do these variants come from? this kind of disagreement about a text that is, however, of first importance?

It is worth examining the question, in order to better repel the Protestant objection, which was so much more widely accepted, the more dissension one hears among Catholics about the right significance of this passage.

## **II. The origin of a misunderstanding**

It is not a mistake, it is a simple misunderstanding, but whose consequences harm the cult of the Mother of Jesus.

Most of the translators who adopt the version: "What is there between me and you", rely on St. Augustine.

This Saint had to combat the monstrous heresy of the Manicheans, whose fundamental error was to teach that matter was the work of the Devil. as the Spirit was the work of God, Wanting to prove that Jesus Christ had taken, not a true body, but an ærial and heavenly body, these heretics took advantage of this text from Jesus to his Mother, at the Wedding and at Cana: What is between me and you, who translated; What is there in common between you and me; as if Jesus wanted to say that his body was not the same nature as ours, and that, for this reason, he had no Mother, according to his humanity.

St. Augustine, in order to warn the faithful against this heresy, goes at length in proving that Jesus Christ was true God and true man, and that Mary Sma. gave birth only to the humanity of the Saviour; and that, consequently, speaking as God, he must say that as such he had no Mother, nor anything in common with Mary.

Reasoning in this way, St. Augustine did not intend to exclude the other interpretations of this work, but his intention was to reply to the heretics, who abused the text in question — *Quantum arbitrator, concludes the Saint, responsum est hereciicis.*

Anyone who is somewhat used to reading the Holy Fathers knows that, in order to warn the faithful against heresy, they often gave Sacred Scripture an accommodating sense, without intending to give the proper meaning to the quotation.

Bossuet, great admirer of St. Augustine, did not want to adopt this meaning, and translates: What does it matter to you and me?

This is what several other interpreters do, including Dionysius the Cartridge, who accuses Saint Augustine's translation of being quite obscure. (1)

*1) Quid mihi et tibi est, mulier? Exponitur autem iocus iste dupliciter, Secundum Augustinum hæc mode: Nihil cominune est mihi et tui, cujus virtute conveniat mihi facere miracula, nondum venit hora mea, Id est tempus persecutionis et passionis, in quo agam patiar quæ mihi oonventuræ et exut ratio tune ero sollicitus of you committendo te Disciple prædilecto... Sed æc exhibition videtur satis obscura (Dion. Cart. In Evang C. II to 7)*

The venerable Olier presents another interpretation that seems to me closer to the truth.

You and me, what can we do? What can we do about it?

Or again: What power is there in me that is not also in you?

"What is there in me that I can do for you that I don't?" however, my time has not yet come.

It's like telling Sma. Virgin: neither you, nor I as a man, we cannot give, nor work, by ourselves, the good you want me to do. Everything comes from God the Father, who wants to do everything through us, as through the organs and roots, which must draw their sap and life from Him. You can do nothing, except for me, I have my hands linked, until the moment is set by my Father. (Olier Mem. t.5)

St. John Chrysostom translates the same passage: What does it matter to you and me if the guests lack wine?

Dionysius the Cartridge prefers yet another translation: It is neither up to you nor to me to watch over these things.

It can be seen from these quotations that there has always been some disagreement about the obvious and exact meaning of this passage. And it is the reason that led the Protestants to adapt it to their meaning, changing it into an insulting expression, saying: Woman, what have I got to do with you?

— an expression that is sensitively insulting and unworthy of Jesus, as God and as the Son of Mary.

### III. parallel texts

Parallel texts are expressions used in the Bible, and whose meaning is more or less identical in different places.

The Latin expression: *Quid mihi et tibi*, or the Greek: *Ti emoi kai soi* is an expression used in Holy Scripture.

Let's look for one of these passages, to examine what is the general meaning that the sacred Writers attribute to them.

\* \* \*

1- In Joshua, 22:24, we read: The thought and plan we had was because it may happen that one day your children will say to ours, What have you with the LORD God of Israel? *Quid robis et Domino Israel ?*

This text expresses a relationship of friendship and participation between the children of Ruben and Israel.

The meaning is clear: we want to be united, to act accordingly, but we fear disunity on the part of your children.

\* \* \*

2- In the book of Judges we find the same expression (Jg.11,12)— Jephthah sent ambassadors to the king of the sons of Ammon, so that they would tell him for his part: *Quid mili et tibi est*— what have you with me, who have come against me to devastate my country.

There is a variant in this passage, which expresses, however, friendship and union, but adds a complaint that the other wants to break the existing union.

\* \* \*

3- King David, fleeing before Absalom, meets on the way Semei who insults and curses him.

So Abishai wants to avenge his King by killing the insulter, but David opposes him, replying: *Quid miki et tibi est?* What matters to you and me, son of Sarvia. Let him curse me as per the Lord's permission. (2R.116.10).

The meaning of this passage has only a slight variant, expressing again a relationship of friendship and combined action. This passage is very similar to the text of the Wedding at Cana.

\* \* \*

4- The Prophet Elijah in the house of the widow of Zarephath is in front of the corpse of the latter's son: The desolate mother, addressing the Prophet, says to him: Quid tibi et mihi est: what have I done to you, O man of God?

Again, this expression indicates the widow's complete trust in the prophet and already implicitly contains a request, a supplication, which is immediately answered.

What have I done to you, O man of God? Have you come to my house to stir up in me the memory of my sins, and to kill my son?

And Elijah said to him, Give me your son. And he took him in his lap and raised him up. (2R. 17.18).

This passage is one of those that most resembles the scene at Cana. The same expression on the part of the supplicant, and the same gesture as the act of the supplicant.

There is perfect parallelism between the two steps.

\* \* \*

5 - No 2<sup>th</sup>. In the book of Kings there is another similar expression, but this time more discordant: in the sense (2K. 3:13).

The King of Israël went to consult the prophet Elisha. The latter replied: Quid mihi et tibi est — What have I got to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and mother.

And the king of Israël said unto him, Why hath the LORD gathered these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab?

And Elisha said unto him, Long live the Lord of hosts, in whose presence I am, that were it not for respect for the person of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would doubtless heed thee.

This passage, always preserving the sense of union, expresses here a revulsion, because the request is made by a perverse king who does not

deserve an answer. However, in consideration of the godly Jehoshaphat, the prophet grants the request, and the miracle takes place.

\* \* \*

6- Another passage from the book of Paralipomenes, a Greek word that means, "things omitted", It is a kind of supplement to the books of the Kings (Paral. 35:21).

The godly King Josiah, going to meet Nechao, king of Egypt, to prevent him from taking the lands of Charcomes, he sent his messengers to him, saying: **Quid mihi et tibi est, rex Judah?** — Because thou art embarrassed with me, O King of Judah, I do not come against thee today, but against another house, against which God commanded me to march with all haste.

The meaning is again the expression of friendship and union, asking you not to break this union by making war without reason.

\* \* \*

7- In the New Testament, we find the same expression, and always with the same meaning (Mt.7,29).

Two demon-possessed, or possessed of the devil, went to meet Jesus, and cried out to Him: **quid nobis et tibi** , Jesu, Fili Dei? — What have you got with us, Jesus, Son of God? Did you come here to torment us before our time? (Greek:- Ti emin kai soi, vie toro theos?)

The same expression here is covered with a complete separation between Jesus and the devil.

It's a cry of terror... it's a request on the part of the demoniacs, a request that Jesus answers by allowing them to enter the body of a herd of pigs when they leave the body of these possessed ones.

\* \* \*

8- Another example is still found in S. Mateus (Mt.27,19). It is the message that Pilate's wife sends him, asking him not to condemn Jesus: **Nibil tibi et just uli.** — There is nothing between you and this righteous man: because I was much tormented in dreams today because of him. (Greek: Medên soi kai ton dikaio ckeinô).

Again, this expression here translates a request and a plea: not to condemn Jesus.

\* \* \*

9- Another example from the Gospel of Mark (1:24). Jesus, entering the Synagogue to teach the people, found there a man possessed of the devil who said to him: *Quid nobis et tibi Jesu Nazarene?* — What have you to do with us, O Jesus Nazarene? But Jesus threatened him, saying: Be silent and get out of this man. And the devil left him. (Greek: *Ti emin kái soi, Jeson Nazarené*).

The phrase here expresses a separation, a fear, without ceasing to be a plea, of not tormenting the possessed, expelling the devil.

\* \* \*

10- A last passage is from Saint Luke (Lc.4,34). Jesus was preaching in Capernaum, when he met in the Synagogue a man possessed of an unclean demon, who exclaimed in a loud voice, saying; **Q uid nobis et tibi Jesu Nazarene?** Leave us, what have you to do with us, O Jesus Nazarene? "Have you come to lose us?" I know who you are: The Holy One of God! (Greek: *Eati emin kái soi, Jeson Nazarené*)

Another cry of separation, of horror, from the devil, who fears the authority of Jesus, not wanting to leave the body of this possessed.

These are the ten main passages of the Bible, in which we find textually the same expression that Jesus used at the Wedding at Cana: *Quid mihi et tibi est!*

From the comparison of these different passages we must now find their right and unquestionable meaning.

#### **IV. the one way**

By carefully reading these ten passages, we immediately see that the authentic text of the Latin Vulgate always retains the same expression *quid mihi et tibi est*, as does the Greek text: **Ti emin kái soí..** while the vernacular translation changes the expression, to adapt it to the idea that the passage wants to express.

One can see the embarrassment of the translator, not finding an equivalent expression in our language to translate Latinism, or Hellenism, which, in change of words, adapts to each one of the circumstances in which it is used.

It is one of these generic terms that, depending on the intonation, or the gesture, mean up to two opposite, opposite things, as when we say: wait a minute, I'll go, which can be, depending on the occasion, an expression of **union** or **revenge** .

The translation of each passage is exact in accordance with the idea that dominates the narration, but there is the possibility of unifying the text, expressing, depending on the case, the variant of meaning, with a supplementary word that indicates intention and gesture.

The ten quotes can, depending on the meaning, fall into two categories:

### ***1. Sense of kindness***

1. What have you with the Lord God of Israël?
3. What does it matter to you and me, son of Sarvia?
4. What have I done to you, O man of God?
6. Why are you embarrassed with me, O King of Judah?
8. There is nothing centered on you and that fair!

### ***2. Sense of rigor***

2. What do you have with me, that you came against me?
5. What do I have with you?
- ?. What do you have with us. Jesus, son of God?
9. What have you to do with us, O Jesus Nazarene?
10. Leave us, what have you to do with us, O Jesus Nazarene?

By closely examining these ten locutions, we found that they express a single thought, however different, according to the **interlocutors** .

The Latin text of the Vulgate, like the Greek text, retained the unity of the formula, while the vernacular translation adapted to the dispositions of the questioners.



Deep down, one can see that this expression corresponds quite exactly to our locution: **Let it be** , I'll take care of it, that it can adapt to each of these expressions, giving it the tone of **goodness** or rigor that the case entails.

In fact, the same locution changes completely depending on the intonation.

Saying, for example, to a friend: Let it be, friend: it's making a commitment to do something.

Like saying to a wicked enemy: Deire to be: it's a threat of revenge.

The same phrase seems to correspond to *quid mihi et tibi*, in Latin and to **TI EMIN**

**KÁI SOI** in Greek.

1- The children of Reuben, saying to the children of Israel: It may happen that one day your children will say to ours: — **Let it be** , we too are children of the God of Israel, express their union and friendship with them, and fear separation.

3- David's words are even more expressive.

David speaks to his friend and defender Abishai: **let it be** , friend Abishai, it is God who allows this man to curse me!

4- The widow of Zarephath greatly venerated the prophet Elijah, and complained lovingly: Let it be, man of God, you will not allow my son to die.

6- King Nechao was not an enemy of Josiah, warn him that it is by order of God who wages war: **Let it be** , O king of Judah, I do not come against you today, but against another house.

8- Pilate's wife sends him a friendly message: **Let it be** , don't harm this righteous man.

These five phrases are the ones that combine in sense with that of Cana, while the others, spoken between enemies, between Jesus and the devil, express an idea of repulsion.

It seems that, for greater uniformity and greater fidelity to the Vulgate text, this phrase could be translated "*quid mihi ettibi est?*" by the expression: **Let it be** , an expression that perfectly elucidates the words of Jesus to Mary, without having to resort to long and complicated explanations.

Among these various steps, it is clearly seen that the term: *Quid mihi et tibi*, can be taken in a friendly sense and in a pejorative sense.

Between friends there is a friendly expression, between enemies it is a pejorative expression.

David, addressing his friend Abishai, or Pilate's wife addressing her husband, employ the friendly expression; while the devil addressing Jesus uses the pejorative expression.

Having to choose between these expressions, why did the Protestants choose the same meaning as that of the devil, addressing Jesus?

What do you have with us?

What do you have to do with us?

Poor Protestants do not understand that such an expression on the lips of a child, speaking to his mother, is most revolting.

Why didn't they take one of the expressions that have the same meaning, in a friendly sense?

There are 5 variants on each side.

Will it not prove that they seek first of all to demean the Mother of God, to insult her?

This not being your intention, then it must be the consequence of ignorance.

May they understand this truth so simple, so clear and so logical, and for this passage, as for others misinterpreted, they will once again see the drawbacks and even the absurdity of individual interpretation and the necessity of authentic interpretation by a legitimate authority .

## **V. Other translations**

The various current translations of this step each have their spiritual, expressive significance, one can only lament the lack of unity in the text.

A widely spread translation is that of St. Augustine: What's between you and me, woman?

Note that it is a question.

It is as if Jesus were asking: What is there between the child and the Mother?

What is there?

Respect, love, the most complete union.

Well then, my Mother, this exists between us, so that your will is my will.

What's between you and me?

Jesus knew the lack of wine, and perhaps he refused to perform the miracle, not wanting to advance the time set by his Father, without a plausible reason.

The Mother's request gives you this reason.

And Jesus, satisfied, seems to say: What's between me and you? so that the same thoughts and the same desires occupy us at the same time?

What is there? It is mutual love, it is the communication of the same kindness and the same concern.

What's between you and me?

Maria Sma. he had the power to work miracles, though it is not reported that he used it in public.

On this occasion she could perform the miracle without resorting to her divine Son.

Jesus reminds you of this power.

It is as if he were saying: Between the two of us, there is no separation; we are united as mother and child; why, then, ask me for a miracle, when you can do it, because my time has not yet come: what is there between you and me that you do not use the power you have?

What is there?

It is the profound humility of the Holy Virgin, who prefers to remain hidden, in order to better manifest the glory of Jesus.

As can be seen, St. Augustine did not adopt such a translation without strong reasons, without having in mind a profound homage to the glorious Mother of Jesus.

\* \* \*

The venerable Olier points out yet another meaning, perfectly in keeping with the literal and mystical text, and says that he received such an interpretation from Our Lord: *quid mihi et tibi*. — What is mine is also mine: yours, that is:

my power is at your disposal, O Lady, although my time to work miracles has not yet come.

This sense is beautiful, majestic and full of reverence for Maria Sma. Furthermore, it fits admirably with the continuation of the text.

It is true that this interpretation does not literally agree with the parallel places, but it certainly expresses the thought of Jesus on this occasion.

All these translations more or less agree with the translation I have indicated as preferable: Let it be... or leave it to me, although they are less clear and less simple.

The Protestants did not want to adopt any of these translations, preferring to invent a new version that would better express their traditional hatred of the Mother of Jesus.

All the expressions quoted above are respectful, calm, and even full of tenderness; that is why they do not serve, and behold, the Protestant friends invented the following: Woman, what have I got to do with you?

This one, yes, must be good, authentic, since it differs from all the Roman translations, and it puts on Jesus' lips a phrase insulting to his holy Mother, the same one that the devil addressed to Jesus when he threatened to expel him. it from the body of the possessed. This at least is Protestant: therefore, it must be adopted... and it has been adopted for a long time. It seems to have Calvin himself as author.

### **SAW. the enchanting scene**

Let us now reconstruct the total scene of the Wedding, to gather the profound lessons that emanate from it.

And a wedding scene with all the charm of ancient simplicity.

It is likely that the betrothed were related to Maria Sma. or from St. Joseph; and for this reason Jesus and Mary were invited.

It was at the beginning of his public life and Jesus had chosen only five or six disciples, and he attended the small feast with them, together with his Mother.

Suddenly, there is a lack of wine, which proves that the betrothed belonged to the poor class.

Maria Sma, understands the embarrassment of the betrothed and immediately wants to spare them, as well as the guests, a displeasure or an annoyance.

It is seen in this solicitude of Maria Sma. all the goodness of your heart. She is a woman, a mother, she knows, from experience, these unforeseen events of domestic life.

Full of faith in the divinity of Jesus, she does not ignore that, to work a miracle, this is enough to want.

She doesn't doubt that I will do it at her request.

Accustomed to her childlike gifts, her gentle submission, her divine attentions, she knows that it is enough to say a word to be answered.

To this day Jesus had not performed any outward miracle that would manifest him to the world; there was therefore reason to hesitate on the part of Maria Sma, knowing that such an hour was marked by the will of the Heavenly Father.

But there was a good work to be done there, there was help to be given to these newlyweds, who deserved, by their pity, this act of charitable intervention.

The Holy Virgin, with this look of a housewife, who penetrates the events, and this other look of a loving wife, who saw the need, understood the embarrassment of married people, and she did not hesitate.

He got up from his place and approaching Jesus, she leans to his ear and says to him: *Vinum non habent* — they have no more wine (Jn.2,3)

Nothing else!

And why say more?

This respectful prayer, as veiled in the shadow of a narration, is enough. Maria Sma., shows neither precipitation nor disquiet.

She exposes the fact with the full certainty of being attended to.

Jesus has listened and, turning his head slightly from his Mother's side: with a soft smile he replies: Let it be, Lady, I will take care of it, although my time has not yet come — *Quid mihi et tibi, mulier!*

Maria Sma, reciprocates the Son's gracious response and smile, and goes directly to the waiters. she tells them: I know there is no more wine, but my Son will provide, do whatever he tells you, and Maria Sma. resumes its place, together with the other invited ladies.

No one had noticed the little incident.

Then Jesus gets up and goes to the place of ablutions, where there were some water urns, orders the servants to fill them, and changes the water into wine.

The miracle is done!... **It is the first of Jesus ' miracles** , made at the request of his Holy Mother.

This miracle manifested his glory and that of the Son of God, and the disciples believed in Him.

Such is the beautiful, touching and significant scene of the Wedding at Cana.

Everything there is gentle, it is divine, and it shows us in its radiant union: the Son and the Mother, Jesus and Mary.

The kindness of the Heart of Mary, her compassionate vigilance and solicitude, her credit close to Jesus, and on the other hand, the love of Jesus for his Mother, and the prompt reference that he manifests to her, making at her request the first miracle, although not the time had yet come to manifest himself publicly.

\* \* \*

Cana's picture must be enlarged.

The generations of God's children will come to recognize and learn in the minutely preserved details of this feast, the role of **introducer** , initiator, **mediator** , of the Virgin Mary. close to his divine Son.

Jesus knew that there was a lack of wine at the Wedding at Cana. His gaze penetrates the future and knows everything. however, He wants to be implored.

It is the **right** of your omnipotence.

It is also the **duty** of our inferiority.

He waits for a prayer to spring from our hearts and for this prayer to be presented to him by his Blessed Mother.

It is enough for the Holy Virgin to say to him: Vinum non habent.

This soul has no strength, no joy, no mercy, no perseverance, and then Jesus answers: Quid mihi et tibi, mulier.

Let it be, my Mother, I will see to it!

And the miracle of divine mercy will be performed in our behalf.

God does not change... and having performed this first miracle through the intercession of his Blessed Mother, it is a kind **of law** , that all other miracles are obtained by the same intercessor.

This scene so beautiful that it gives so much emphasis to the intercession of the Holy Virgin, it could not fail to arouse the protests of the Protestants, and here they are exploring this fact, trying to destroy its meaning and divert the words, to the point of taking advantage of it. who exalts the Mother of God, to combat her worship and make her believe that Jesus had given her a harsh, disdainful and almost insulting answer.

Translating this text as they do, for lack of consulting the parallel texts, through the phrase, Woman, that I have with you, we truly have a word of repulsion, a rebuke, as we saw in the answers given by the devil to Jesus.

Now Jesus immediately performs the requested miracle; and Sma. Virgin, when hearing the answer of her Son, she understands perfectly that He is going to work the miracle. How to reconcile **denial** and **affirmation** , reproof and obedience, first harshness and subsequent kindness?

It would be a flagrant and irreconcilable opposition to the way of saying and doing of Jesus Christ.

It is enough to see that such an interpretation repugnates both common sense and the dignity of Jesus.

## **VII. another disagreement**

It remains to resolve one last Protestant objection, regarding the text studied;

In the quoted Gospel. Maria Sma. she is called several times "**Mother of Jesus**" and when the Savior addresses her, he calls her **Woman** , instead of calling her "my **Mother** ".

It is a Protestant objection that stems again from ignorance of eastern and ancient customs.

It is clear that a book written 1900 years ago disagrees, in certain points, with the customs and usages of our time.

Among Orientals, as indeed in certain Western countries, the word "**Woman**" is a title of nobility, of dignity, as the word **Man** expresses value. To say: So-and-so is a man is to say that he is worthy and honorable.

To say of a lady that she is a woman worthy of this name is to mean that she is worthy, affectionate, affectionate.

Our word and "my mother" was only used in intimacy, never in public.

Among the Arabs, Syrians, Jews and other Eastern peoples the son calls his mother "**Lady** or "Woman".

In Greek, the noun *gyne*, woman, is a completely honorable term.

Xenophon in his: *Cyropedia*, puts on the lips of one of Cyrus' officers this expression: "Take courage, O woman (the vocative *Gynai*, which is the same as in the Gospel).

Everyone knows that the value of certain expressions changes over time.

Camões calls a lady a lady, mother of children, as Inês de Castro Tal was, this dead and pale maiden — Maiden was at that time a lady still young.

In the same way the princes of Merce were once called, who today humiliates any butler.

In certain places, in the Portuguese language, it is called a girl, an honorable girl... and in other places it is a term of contempt.

In the time of Jesus Christ, the word **Woman** was a term of nobility. The Angel used it to exalt the Virgin Mary: "Blessed are you among women."

The Gospel does not mention a single example of Jesus calling Maria Sma. "My mother"; always called her "Woman".

Such a word no longer fits our modern customs; however in certain noble families, the children still say: Sir, my father!... Lady, my mother!... and in certain countries, in Germany, among others, the word **Woman** (*Frau*) continues to be a title of nobility .

Protestants can see in the Bible that this expression, instead of being insulting or cold, is instead a title of respect and veneration.



At the hour of death, as a last cry of solicitude and love for his holy Mother, Jesus will say the same word "Woman, behold your son". (Jo.19,28)

Accepting that the first expression involves disrespect to Sma. Virgin, it must be admitted that Jesus, dying, still despised his Mother.

And who would dare say it?

Far from it! The word: Woman, is a respectful and humble expression on the lips of children, and such a word can never be taken as insulting.

The great difficulty raised by Protestants against the veneration of Maria Sma is thus resolved. and the clear answer to the objection they raise against the intercession of the pure and holy Mother of Jesus.

They must be convinced that such an objection arises from ignorance of the meaning of the Bible, as well as the perfidious translation of the Gospel text, mistranslated, distorted, to make it say what it does not say, nor can it say.

The Protestant text "Woman, who I have with you, is false and perverse, and as I have proved, it translates neither the Hebrew nor the Greek nor the Latin text: Quid mihi et tibi est, mulier!

The most accurate sense is "Let it be... I'll take care of it.

This text is clear, logical and expressive.

It's as if Jesus said:

Your request is an order for me, what you ask will always be answered.

And to prove it, Jesus performed the miracle, although the time had not yet come to work miracles,

This is clear, unmistakable, consoling and honorable to Jesus and Mary.

### **VIII. Do whatever he tells you!**

We must not finish this exposition of the mystery of Cana without meditating on the last words that form the **golden key of** this delicious nuptial scene.

Addressing the servants, Maria Sma. tell them:

Do whatever He tells you!

How short and sublime this sentence is!

Mary repeats it to all of us, speaking of her Jesus: Do whatever He tells you...

It is the word that leads to Jesus, that makes Jesus heard.

Such is really the role of **introducer** of the Virgin Sma.

They noted that Maria Sma. spoke only four times in her lifetime, she who had given birth to the divine Word.

That's why she didn't have to speak.

She spoke inwardly with this Word, or Son that she had begotten, the one that came out of her bosom but remained in her soul.

These two words: Have no more wine and Do whatever He tells you, admirably expresses the character of Mary's intercession and the worship we pay her: character of **mediator** close to the **Mediator** — Ad Mediatorem mediatrix.

In the first word: they no longer have wine, she exposes our needs with a maternal interest and authority, being at the same time our Mother and the Mother of Jesus.

By the second word: Do whatever He tells you, she teaches us submission to Jesus, in return for the grace that reaches us. She only intercedes to deliver us to Jesus; and she herself gives us the example of this submission.

This is the meaning of this evangelical scene, in spirit and in truth.

And what divinely completes this story is the **way in** which this miracle was performed. In this way Jesus gave the beginning of his miracles at Cana in Galilee. (Jo. 1.11)

Let us note well the expression used by the Evangelist.

He does not say that it is Jesus' **first miracle** , considered in itself, but rather the **first of miracles** , or more literally still: the beginning, the opening of miracles: Initium signorum.

Such an expression indicates that the Gospel, as bringing together all Ge Jesus miracles, compares them and refers them to the miracle of Cana, as their origin or their **first source** , in the same way as the course of the spiritual graces that Jesus Christ was to shower on the humanity had its source, its **beginning** in the miracle of the purification of St. John the Baptist, in his mother's womb, on the day of the **Visitation** .

Now, in the mystery of the **Visitation** , it is through the intermediary, as through the voice of Mary, that this first grace of sanctification was communicated by Jesus to his Precursor.

Likewise, in the mystery **of Cana** , it is through Mary's voice that Jesus begins the course of his miracles.

It results from this approximation, and from the term used by the Gospel that Maria Sma. it is intentionally recommended to us as the **instrument** , the channel, both of the temporal places and of the spiritual graces of Jesus in his general dispensation.

This is the entire Catholic doctrine concerning the intercession of the Mother of Jesus.

This doctrine was already detached from the mystery of the Incarnation, in which God gives all graces to the world through Mary, in the person of Jesus.

It is from this fact that St. Augustine draws this wonderful and profound conclusion, that: "God, having given us Jesus Christ through Mary, this order changes no more, and Mary having collaborated in our salvation, in the Incarnation, which is the **universal principle** of grace , it must contribute to all other operations, which are dependent on this first operation.

This argument is a theological deduction, while the scene at Cana is an **evangelical fact** .

The Gospel therefore confirms the doctrine.

In fact, we see in these two evangelical facts: the Visitation and Cana, Jesus communicating his graces, both spiritual and temporal, through the Sma. Virgin.

These two facts are unreplicated; and if poor Protestants would reflect, they should recognize that the scene of the Wedding at Cana, far from depressing the power of Maria Sma., exalts and extends it.

## **IX. Conclusion**

Let us also pick up the last sentence, with which the Evangelist closes the scene at Cana, Jesus manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him (Jn 2,11)

Here it is about his manifestation as God, through the power of miracles.

This time had not yet come, as Jesus said, but he anticipated it in consideration of his Holy Mother's request.

Let us reflect carefully on this fact. What more sublime idea, what clearer testimony, could Jesus Christ give us of the **power** of his Mother's **intercession** than this of **anticipating** , in her consideration, the hour of her glorious manifestation?

God hasn't changed. nor did he change his plans, but he brought Mary's supplication into this plan, as a determined means of his designs, which, without this means, would not be what they are.

According to these designs, the hour of the manifestation of Jesus Christ would not have come, without the intermediary of Mary, as the grace of Jesus Christ would not have descended on John the Baptist, without the Visitation, as Jesus Christ would not have come down from heaven without his virginal consent.

Here is a triple and only truth that should be highlighted very clearly and in full relief, as it is founded on clear and positive **evangelical facts** . And admitting these facts, it is necessary, necessarily, to admit their consequences; and these consequences constitute the doctrine of the **intercession** of the Mother of God.

Combining in synthesis these great evangelical facts and their consequences, we are facing the great and **unique** divine **plan** , which extends at the same time to the order of **nature** , the order of **grace** and the order of **glory** .

In the order of nature, she gives birth to the Son of God, and gives the world the **ultimate** cause of its creation.

In the order of grace, she gives us Jesus-Eucharist, communicating to us what is the life of souls.

In the order of glory, it manifests Jesus Christ to us and determines his glorification. The saints owe you their glory.

This is what the three evangelical mysteries teach us: the Annunciation, the Visitation and the miracle of Cana.

What these three mysteries began, and what they teach us, must be perpetuated through the centuries. These are not just three evangelical facts,

they are three **mysteries** that perpetuate themselves, or always continue their mysterious action.

Constantly Jesus Christ comes into the world through Mary. Constantly Mary brings him to our souls, through visitation.

Constantly Mary manifests the glory of Jesus for the wonders she achieves from his mercy.

This is what Maria Sma is. in the saving and sanctifying work of the world.

Meditate on these mysteries, poor misguided Protestants, by the free interpretation of the Bible, and ask God to give you the grace to understand a doctrine so simple, so logical, so consoling and so evangelical.

The sublime scene at Cana thus takes on infinite proportions. It is no longer a simple wedding feast, it is the image of the great feast, to which Jesus Christ invites us, which He presides, but where we also find His Blessed Mother to introduce us to Him, and, if necessary, to ask. you a miracle in our favor.

Cana is, above all, the manifestation of Jesus by Mary, so that we, his disciples, may believe in him, as his disciples believed in him then.

## CHAPTER XIII

### Death and Assumption of Mary

The Protestants, by their petty objections to the life, the sanctity, the prerogatives of the Virgin Mary, during her earthly life, could not but persecute her, with their hatred, even in the glory of heaven.

In fact, they admit neither the glorious death of love, nor the **resurrection** , nor **the assumption** of the Mother of God.

For them, poor and unfortunate rebels against Catholic doctrine, the Mother of Jesus, despite having been the living Tabernacle of divinity, should know the rottenness of the tomb, the voracity of the worms, the oblivion of death, the material annihilation of her person .

Jesus Christ, his true son, who preserves the bodies of hundreds of Saints from destruction, as a reward for the virtues they practiced, would have allowed the most pure body, from which he had taken his own body, to be the prey of worms, corruption, of the rot of the grave?

Oh! no, no! The Christian's faith rebels at such blasphemy, as common sense protests against such an idea.

The bodies of a St. Margaret Mary, of a St. Catherine of Senna, of a Holy Vicar of Ars, of Ozanam, of Bernadette, and hundreds of other privileged souls are miraculously preserved even today, and God would have allowed the body of the Most Pure Virgin to be subject to the law of corruption?!...

It can not be!

Let us examine this question closely, and refute the infamous Protestant objection, denying the resurrection and glorious Assumption of the Mother of God, loudly proclaiming the chant of the Catholic Liturgy: Mary was raised above the Choirs of Angels in the Eternal Kingdom.

## I. The historical fact

Before discussing the reasons for the glorious Assumption of Mary, and refuting Protestant objections in this regard, let us narrate here the historical fact, as preserved for us by the Christians of apostolic times, by the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church, forming through the centuries , a firm, constant, uninterrupted tradition.

It is no dogma of faith, but the Catholic world eagerly awaits that, leaning on the implicit revelation of the Assumption in Holy Scripture, and on the explicit **revelation** of tradition, the supreme authority will proclaim this truth, and adorn with it the immortal diadem of glory of the immaculate,

Here, in short, what the Saints and Doctors of the early Church tell us about this.

On the occasion of Pentecost, Maria Sma. he was about 47 years old.

She remained on earth for 25 years after this event, to educate and form, so to speak, the nascent Church, as she had formerly educated, protected, and directed the infancy of the Son of God.

His prayers and his affectionate charity were the consolation of the first faithful.

She ended her mortal career at age 72; such is the most common opinion.

Sma's death. Virgin was gentle, as her life had been: she had lived on love, she died on love.

Arrived at the summit of the most incomprehensible holiness, his soul calmly detached itself from his most holy body. Her last breath was an aspiration of love, which took her as if naturally to the heights of heaven.

The nine Choirs of Angels took this matchless soul to the Bosom of God; where the Eternal Father received her as his **beloved Daughter** , the Son as his **dear Mother** , the Holy Spirit as his **immaculate Spouse** .

It seems certain that it was in Jerusalem that Maria Sma. left this world, to take your flight to heaven.

The Apostles who had not yet suffered martyrdom were present at this blessed death, except for the Apostle Saint Thomas, who was busy preaching the Gospel to the Indies at this time.

Jesus wanted to give this supreme consolation to his Most Holy Mother and his Apostles.

There were St. Peter, St. John with the other Apostles, and various disciples, among whom St. Dionysius Areopagite, disciple of St. Paul and first Bishop of Paris, has preserved for us the account of these events.

Several Holy Fathers of the Church narrate that the Apostles were miraculously taken to Jerusalem on the night before the Blessed Virgin's denouement.

Maria Sma. blessed them one last time, comforted them; probably, he received from the hands of St. Peter, the adorable Sacrament of the Eucharist, which, until this day, he had received daily from the hands of St. John.

Then, without any nuisance, without suffering, without agony, she gave her whole soul, smoldering with love, into the hands of her Creditor and her Son.

St. John Damascene, one of the most illustrious Doctors of the Eastern Church, tells that the faithful of Jerusalem, upon hearing of the death of their dear Mother, as they called her, came in crowds to pay their respects, and that soon the miracles multiplied around this sacred relic of your body.

Several dead have been resurrected; blind, paralyzed, sick of every kind, they were suddenly healed at the touch of the body of the Mother of Jesus.

As for the Apostles, they were as if torn between pain and joy, standing in prayer near the most holy body, exalting with song and praise the glories of

this blessed Virgin, who gave birth to the life of the world, Jesus Christ, and who conceived and he had carried in his bowels the Son of the Most High.

They buried the Most Holy Body with a veneration of loving children, wrapping it in white shrouds; followed by the multitude of the faithful accompanied by the Angels, they went to deposit the precious relics in a new tomb in the garden.

from Getsemani, where his family's grave was, and where the bodies of São Joaquim and Santa Ana already lay.

They closed the tomb with a large stone, shaped like a door, as was customary at this time.

Three days later, the Apostle St. Thomas arrived, whom divine Providence seemed to have removed, in order to better demonstrate the glory of Mary, as he had once used Thomas, to manifest the fact of Jesus' resurrection.

Thomas asked urgently to be able to contemplate, one last time, the august features of the Mother of God.

St. Peter, St. John and other Apostles who were in prayer near the tomb were happy to grant this desire, which was also their personal desire.

They broke the stone seals...

They opened the sepulcher but, oh! prodigy.

In the place, where the mortal remains of Maria Sma. had been deposited by themselves, they found nothing but the shrouds, carefully folded; as once in the tomb of the risen Savior, the Holy Women, St. Peter and St. John had found the folded shrouds that enfolded the Body of Jesus.

A perfume of heavenly softness **Immaculate Wife** exuded from the grave.

Like her Son and by virtue of her Son, the Holy Virgin had risen on the third day.

The Angels removed his Immaculate body and transported him to heaven, where he enjoys ineffable glory.

Nothing is more authentic than these ancient Church traditions on the mystery of the Assumption of the Mother of God.



These narrations are found in the writings of the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church, from the first centuries, and are reported in the General Council of Chalcedon, in 451.

## II. Mary's death

Protestants who believe only in themselves will not give faith to these authentic accounts of the first centuries, which form the sacred deposit of Tradition.

They want proof.

Let us give you these proofs now, showing that these facts and truths flow directly, though implicitly, from the Gospel.

The fact of Maria's death is undoubted, although the circumstances are in part unknown.

But how and why did Maria Sma. die?

Having been conceived without sin, she was exempt from the sentence of death handed down against humanity.

Death is the punishment for sin. *Slipendia peccati, mors* says the Apostle (Rom.6,23)—*Stimulus autem mortis, peccatum est.* (1Co.15.56)

This death, the Holy Fathers unanimously say, was not caused either by illness or age, but solely by the violence of divine love.

Love has a threefold influence on our life and death.

All men must die **in the love of God** , without this there is no salvation; this love is the grace of God in the soul.

Others die **for the love of God** . It is the death of the glorious phalanx of our martyrs, who, giving their lives for the love of God, give them the supreme proof of the love that man is capable of giving.

Most Holy Mary, died in love, died for love, but died above all for love.

Love was the **cause** of his death.

Dying in love, Mary died as the Mother of men.

Dying for love she died Queen of martyrs.

Dying of love, she died as the Mother of God.

It is the only death that suited her, and that could separate her soul from her virginal body.

The sublime Bossuet says it very well, and his words are the summation of the entire Catholic tradition.

Believe me, holy souls, he says, do not look for another cause of the Holy Virgin's death: her love was so ardent and so inflamed, that she could no longer breathe a sigh that would not break the bonds of her mortal body; he could not formulate a regret that would not dissolve the harmony of his body; he could not breathe a sigh to heaven that would not draw his entire soul.

He said his death was a miracle; I must change the expression: it was not a miracle, it was the cessation of the miracle.

The continuous miracle is that Mary lived apart from her dear Jesus.

She lived, however, because such was the will of God, that she should conform to Jesus Crucified, through the unbearable martyrdom of a long life, the more painful, the more necessary it was for the Church.

But as divine love reigned in his heart, without any hindrance, it grew day by day, by itself and by exercise, to the point that it reached such intensity that the earth was unable to contain it.

Such is the only cause of Mary's death: the liveliness of her love." (1)

*1) Bossuet II. Sermon sur L'Assomption. 2 point.— St. Francis de Sales: 1 and 2 Sermon. Signature*

From what we have said about the Immaculate Conception, it can and should be concluded that, since death is a punishment for original sin, whoever was exempt from this sin would, in fact, be exempt from death.

And Maria Sma. is in this case. The law struck against all does not apply to her, as the law of Ahasuerus did not reach Queen Esther. (Esther 15.13)

On the subject, let us gather an admirable passage from St. Cyril, confirmed in 1672 by the Council of Jerusalem.

It is not to the contagion of sin, he says, that the death of the Blessed Virgin must be attributed, but to the natural dispositions that were in man before sin.

Man, by his nature, was subject to death, but a benign death.

God, by a special grace, suspended in his favor the laws of nature, and made him immortal.

Now, the Blessed Virgin was also enriched with this prerogative. Though she was filled with blessings and freed from the slightest stain, yet she bore in her, for humanity, the germ of death, and was to be subject to this death. God, in his goodness, preserved it, submitting this privilege to the consent of his creature.

In this way, she could have been taken alive, to heaven, if she had wanted to, and if that had been her pleasure.

But we know she didn't want to enjoy this privilege.

This is the best explanation of this mystery that all theologians today embrace and defend.

In fact, man's death can be considered under a double aspect: either as a natural consequence of the constitution of his body, composed of elements that are naturally disaggregating; or as a consequence of original sin.

If Adam had not committed the original sin, man, by a unique privilege among other living beings, would have had a perpetual life, because the fruit of the tree of life would have been enough to sustain his forces, which internal or external causes could weaken.

Adam sinning, that privilege was taken from him; the tree of life no longer bore its fruit, and nature took over its rights: It was "must die.

Original sin is destroyed in us by baptism, but the consequences of this sin remain; and one of these consequences is the lack of the fruit of the tree of life; whence man must die—Death morieris!

The Mother of Jesus, despite her Immaculate Conception, no longer had the fruit of the tree of life, and as such was subject to death.(2)

*2) Præterunda mihi haud videtur quæstio an mora quæ in aliis a peccato accidit fuerit in Maria peccati pœna?*

*Siquidem Cajetanus in opusculo de Conceptione Virginis a leonem X, vult ob peccatum mortuam Mariam; et contra sentire, hæreticum putet cum Paulus arguet: Christus pro nobis mortuus est: ergo omnes mortui sunt.*

*Albertus Pigijs et Ambrosius Catherinus ab hæresi excusant dicere, non propter peccatum mortuam Virginem, imo volunt pium esse sentire, nec mortem, nec aliquam originalis peccati posnalitatem a peccato provenisse Virgini, sed a voluntate Dei, qui sicut a peccato pocatomundi præservavit custodisset nisi eam conformari Filio vidisset conducere.*

*Nec id Christum Mariæ liberatorem negat, et pro ea mortuum, quia cetecis perfectius liberatam indicent sicut et redemptam.*

*Itac sicut docet. S. Augustinus and unanims consensus theologorum, etiamsi Adam non peccasset, nisi alioquin speciali Dei owner conservaretur, sed proprice naturor relinqueretur ex pugna continues calorıs nativi et humidi radicalis, tandem periret...*

*Ita Beatam Virginem affirmamus mortem sustinuisse, non tanquam pœnam peccati quod ipsa contraxerit; sed vei tanquam conditionem adnexam, corruptibili naturæ humanæ, vei certe ex debito modi naturalis conceptionis et ortus sui.*

*Obnoxia fuit morti corporis, nevertheless gratia præservatlonis a peccato originali, quia licet Deus gratiæ suæ preventerit infectionem anime, non tamen prsecavit carnis fæditatem, quam secum offert naturalis modus propagationis humane per seminalem rationem ex Adam.*

*Et Ideo, ratione lilius mansit BV mortis discriminani obnoxia sicut et mansit alfis pœ nalitatibus, quæ per peccatum primi parentis introierunt in orbem terrarum, sicut fames, sitis, et alii corpores labores. (B, Angelus de Pas: in expos. Symboli. 11b. 5, C. 622)*

It is believed, however, that, by a private privilege, God gave him the power not to die, if he so chose.

It was just a privilege, it was not a right: and Maria did not want to make use of this privilege.

What were the reasons for the choice of death by the Immaculate One?

We can mark four:

1. To refute beforehand, the heresy of those who would later claim that Mary was not a mere creature like us, but belonged to the angelic nature.
2. For in everything she resembled her divine Son, as far as the difference of sex would allow.

Now Jesus submitted to the general law of death.

Maria Sma. I wanted to imitate Him.

3. In order not to lose the merits of resigned acceptance of death, nor the enchantment that the soul experiences when it is freed from mortal life, to enter into eternal life.
4. To serve as a model and teach us to die well, with the dispositions of resignation and total abandonment that the sight of death inspires.

We can therefore summarize this doctrine by saying that God created **mortal** man .

Elevated him, by privilege, to immortality through the **fruit** of the tree of life.

Sin originates! **withdrew** this privilege.

Maria Sma., despite being Immaculate, not having this fruit from the tree of life, was **subject** to death.

God granted him the privilege (not the right) to be **immortal** , according to his will.

She chose to be like her divine Son, voluntarily choosing death, and not suffering it as a punishment for original sin that she had never had.

I wanted to die... and die of **love** .

### III. Mary's grave

I must not let the words of one of the eyewitnesses of the Immaculate Virgin's death and resurrection pass in silence.

Together with the Apostles, they attended the death of Maria Sma., Saint Timothy, first Bishop of Ephesus, Dionysius Areopagite, and the Blessed. Hierotheus.

St. Dionysius left this sublime scene in writing, narrating it in his book "The divine names"(3) and addressed to St. Timothy. The authenticity of this book was never discussed, being the work of Saint Dionysius himself.

*3) De divinis Nominibus C. III 2 Translation of Mgr. Darboy.*

The Saint then writes: "Hierotheus, our sublime teacher, shone among the inspired Pontiffs, as you saw, when together we went to contemplate, you and I, with many other brothers, the venerable Body that had produced life and contained God.

There were James, brother of the Lord, and Peter, Coryphæus, and Supreme Head of theologians.

All the Pontiffs wanted, each in their own way, to celebrate the goodness and omnipotence of God who had clothed himself with our illness.

Now, after the Apostles, our illustrious Master surpassed the other pious doctors, all enchanted and ecstatic, beside himself, all moved by the wonders he published, and esteemed by all who knew or heard him, considering him an inspired man from heaven, and as the worthy panegyrist of divinity.

But why remind you what was said in this House?

If my memory does not fail, I seem to have often heard fragments of these divine praises from your mouth. So great was your ardor concerning holy things.

Let us leave these mystical longings, which must not be divulged among the profane, and which you know perfectly well.

These words, coming from an eyewitness testimony, in addition to reminding us of the death of the Blessed Virgin, constitute ineffable proof that the cult of Maria Sma. it was inaugurated by the Apostles themselves.

And with what splendor and enthusiasm!

Early Christians could not recall these facts without deep emotion.

The Apostles, miraculously transported from different parts of the world, the most illustrious pontiffs of the Church, an immense concourse of the faithful, all gathered there to venerate the body that had generated **Life** and contained **God** Himself .

There were songs there. speeches and panegyrics so eloquent and moved that St. Timothy and St. Dionysius later recited them for their own consolation.

What more could the nascent, apostolic Church do in praise of the Mother of God?

\* \* \*

As comforting as the presence of the Apostles was for Mary, she eagerly awaited another visit: that of her divine Son.

And this visit could not be missed.

St. Gregory of Tours (4) summarizing the ancient traditions, writes:

"When the Blessed Virgin reached the end of her life, and the time had come to leave this land, all the Apostles from the different places who were evangelizing gathered together in her hermitage; and having heard from her lips that she was going to die, they watched over "her".

"And behold, the Lord came with his angels, and receiving the soul of his Most Holy Mother, he entrusted it to Saint Michæel."

*4) Denique impleto ad BV Maria hujus vitæ curaus congregati sunt omnes Apostoli. .. cumque audissent quia esset assumptio mundi, vigilabant cum ea simul. Et ecce Dominus Jesus advenit cum angelis suis, et accipiens animam ejus, tradidit Michæli Archaugelo. (Greg. Turon. De glor. mart. c. IV)*

St. John Damascene further amplifies this ancient tradition.

"Then another marvel took place, says the Saint. The divine King himself came to meet his mother, to gather with his divine hands, the holy and immaculate soul of Mary.

This blessed Mother said to him then:

It is into your hands, O my Son, that I send my soul. Deign to welcome her, for she is dear to you, and she must have been immaculate to you.

It is in your hands and not to the ground that I give my body. Preserve from corruption this abode which you have deigned to choose, and to which, by your birth, you have communicated a principle of eternal incorruptibility.

Be yourselves the comforter of my beloved children, who have deigned to call your brethren, The blessing that I give you, by the laying on of hands, gather new and abundant blessings.

Then raising her hands, as we are permitted to suppose, she besought divine blessings upon the apostles, and having finished she heard the voice of her Son.

"O Blessed Mother, arise, come, you who are the friend of my heart... the fairest among women."

St. John Damascene shows us later. all heaven, coming to meet the soul of Blessed Mary... surrounding, like an honor guard, this living Tabernacle of a living God.

\* \* \*

The next day, from dawn, the Apostles and the faithful led the venerable body to the place, which had been designated by Jesus himself.

The procession went on, solemnly slow for Getsemani.

In front marched St. John, carrying the sacred palm of the Archangel St. Gabriel.

Peter, the Supreme Pontiff, had reserved for himself the right to carry the coffin, and had admitted Paul to the honor of serving as his second.

They followed the other Apostles and disciples, with burning torches in their hands.(5)

5) *Tunc igitur Sanctum Corpus imposuerunt feretro, Dexteruniquè ad invicem Apostoli: quer palmam hanc ante feretrum ejus portabit. Tunc Joannes sit ad Petrum: You qui præcedis us in Apostolatu, you must palmam hanc ante feretrum merito ferre.*

*Cui Petrus replied: You, virgo electus a Domino, tantam gratiam invenisti, ut super pectus ejus recumberes... You igitur portare debes hanc palmam, et ego suscipiam ad sustinendum sacrosantum hoc et venerabile corpus, usque ad locum monumenti. Cui Paulus ait:*

*Et ego qui junior sum omnium vestrorum, portabo tecum.*

*(S. Meliton: of death BVM)*

Arriving in Gethsemane, they deposited the coffin in front of the open tomb, and prepared it by them.

Prostrating on their knees, they paid him the farewell homage, in the midst of his tears and sobs.

They then deposited him in the tomb, which was carefully closed, sealed and guarded, day and night by the disciples and the faithful, until the day when St. Thomas, arriving late, asked to see his dear Mother one last time.

It was on this occasion that they witnessed the glorious resurrection of the Mother of Jesus.

#### **IV. Mary's resurrection**

As I said, there is no explicit, sensible proof of the Virgin Sma's resurrection. however, let us note that for lack of explicit proofs, there are many others, implicit, of authority, which leave no doubt in this regard.

The Apostles, by opening the tomb of the Mother of Jesus, to satisfy the piety of St. Thomas and their own piety, no longer finding the sacred body, drew an induction from the fact, concluding his resurrection.

It was not necessary to see Mary risen and glorified to believe in her resurrection.

The disappearance of the body, the heavenly circumstances of her death, her holiness, her dignity as Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, her union with the Redeemer, all these constitute irrefutable proof of her Assumption.

The assumption consists, as the word itself expresses it: *assumere*, that the soul of the Sma. Virgin, after being united again to the body, by a special privilege, was transported to heaven by the Angels.



The **Assumption** of Maria Sma. it differs essentially from the **Ascension** of Jesus Christ (ascendere) which ascends to heaven by its own virtue, while Mary is transported by the will of God.

How can one reason to establish, with certainty, the Assumption of the Immaculate Virgin?

### ***first argument***

All the works of God are in perfect harmony.

Its end corresponds to the beginning, and the whole corresponds to the different parts.

If, after such a holy life, the death of Maria Sma. were it similar to the death of others, this would be a more admirable miracle than that of a death analogous to his life.

Entering supernaturally into this life, it is necessary to come out of it supernaturally.

Such a supernatural becomes as natural to such a soul.

Now, as we have seen at length, Maria Sma. through her Immaculate Conception she supernaturally entered this life; it was therefore necessary for him to come out of this life in a supernatural way; and this way was the resurrection and assumption into heaven, in body and soul.

### ***second argument***

Death must be the echo of life. It is the law fixed by God: Talis vita, mors ita.

Well, in Maria Sma. everything was, not simply of an eminent holiness, but she was in everything the Blessed woman, without equal, surpassing all women, as the Archangel announced to her.

It was necessary, therefore, that she was also superior to all women in her death.

To die, and to be subject to the destruction of the grave, is the lot of all men.

And among men, there is a certain number, whose body God preserves from corruption, as a reward for their virtues, their angelic purity, above all.

God was to elevate Mary even above these privileged ones. And how can you do it, if not allowing, that after death, your soul reunites with your body, and soon, in body and soul, enjoy the heavenly happiness?

### ***third argument***

The dignity of the Mother of God demanded that God not forget the tomb from whom he took our humanity.

Maria Sma. it was made by the divine Word, in order to produce it in your humanity.

God made his Mother with his own hands; and he made her as he wanted to be made by her.

God placed in this privileged and unique Mother as a forecast of all the properties that he had to take from her in her conception and in her birth.

He prepared his physical and moral humanity in Mary's own humanity.

This is what made the Saints say that Mary is one like Jesus Christ begun.

It is the Tabernacle that is not made by the hands of men that is, it is not of this creation (Heb.9,11)

It is this Ark of sanctification (Para. 131,8).

From where should come the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (Jn 1:14).

This is why God, having to come out of this Blessed Ark, full of grace, she Mary, must be full of grace; and as He should be the blessed fruit of this breast (Lk.1, 42) she was blessed to give birth to it (Lk.1,42): as Jesus was to be the flower, she was the stem (Is.2, 1) in such a way that it can be said that the entire humanity of the Word was like a **germ** in the Virgin Mary, from which it sprouted, like the **flower** of her virginity.

And then how could it be conceived that this same virginal womb, radiant with such purity, adorned with so many graces, filled with so many blessings, enriched with such holiness, as if the substance and form of Jesus Christ himself had been delivered to the corruption of the grave?

How can it be admitted that this same power and this same love, which preserved its virginal integrity **before** childbirth, **during** and **after** childbirth, have forgotten it or rather have forgotten it, leaving it in the disgrace of human nature and in the infamy of our condition in the grave?

Far from daring to say it, says St. Augustine, I dread to think about it. Sentire non valeo, perlimesco dicere.

If the Son of God, continues the Saint, had the power to **keep** Mary's body a **virgin** in his Conception, he still had the same power to **keep it incorruptible** in the tomb.

If he had this power, he had this will, and if he had this will, he must have done it.

Soon, Maria Sma. he was to rise from the dead soon after his death.

#### ***fourth argument***

The dignity of the Son of God made Man demanded that he not leave in the tomb the One from whom he had received his sacred Body.

If Maria Sma. before the coming of the Savior was, in the words of the Saints, one as Christ began, we can and must conclude that, after the ascension, Maria Sma. it was a like remnant of Jesus Christ. This expression is taken in a metaphorical sense, no doubt, to better emphasize the intimate union between Jesus and Mary.

Jesus' flesh had been taken from Mary's flesh. The flesh of Jesus is not the flesh of Mary, but the substance of the child's flesh is taken from the substance of the mother's flesh. Dear Jesu, dear Mariæ, or rather Dear Jesu ex carne Mariæ.

The flesh of Jesus is so much more of the flesh of Mary, who was handed down to him as a virgin, and that Jesus kept her incorruptible.

Hence it can be concluded that Jesus Christ is indebted to his own Body, to keep his Mother's body incorruptible.

Were it not so, Jesus Christ would bring his sacred Body in glory, and while this Body would be worshiped in glory, the substance from which this Body was formed would be subject to putrefaction in the grave.

St. Bernard goes further and says that it was not only convenient for Jesus Christ to preserve his Mother's body from corruption, but that he should do so; and the saint gives as a reason: that the incorruptibility of the Body of Jesus Christ proceeded from a principle of incorruptibility that he had received from his Mother.

Non potrat Sanctum videre corruptionem, quia de incorrupti uteri virore ortum est (Serm. 35 in Cant.)

A privilege which, like all other privileges, undoubtedly came from Jesus Christ as God, while He received it from Mary as a man, but which supposed that she had such a privilege, as the stem has the properties which it must communicate to the flower. .

Jesus Christ was therefore to preserve his Mother from the corruption of the grave and glorify by the resurrection this flesh which was the substance from which he took his own flesh.

### ***fifth argument***

Jesus' filial affection for his Mother demanded that he not leave her forgotten in the tomb.

It can be said that there is no mark of respect, courtesy, dedication and love that Jesus did not lavish on his dear Mother, every time the occasion presented itself.

Now, such dedication and such love cannot be reconciled with Mary's prolonged delay in the tomb.

Such a delay would seem, on the part of the son, a kind of forgetfulness, and even abandonment.

It would even be absurd to think that Jesus did not do to his Mother what any of us would do to our own mother, if we could.

Let us suppose that our mother's fate were in our hands, and that we had the power to do for her whatever our child's heart dictated to us; what would we do?

First of all we would preserve our mother from the corruption of the grave; and not being able to preserve her from death, our first care would be to resurrect her soon after.

It is logical that Jesus did so.

Love wants union.

Jesus allowed Maria Sma. pass through the door of death; but as soon as he passed the threshold of this door, he was there to receive his Mother, in glory, to unite her to his Heart; not only your soul, but your body; for he wanted his Mother... his entire Mother... and the soul is just a part of us, incomplete in its genus, aspiring after the reconstitution of its personality, for the resurrection of the body.

### ***sixth argument***

The glory of Jesus Christ's ascension, as being the fruit of his sufferings, must have the same **relationship** between the ascension and the assumption as there is between the passion of Jesus and the compassion of Mary.

The direct relationship of the Saviour's Ascension and Passion is the result of Sacred Scripture; but it was, in a special way, promulgated by the word that Jesus said to the disciples at Emmaus: O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets announced! Was it not necessary that Christ should suffer such things, and thus enter into his glory? (Lc.24.25)

On the other hand, the immediate relationship of the Son's passion and the mother's compassion was energetically promulgated in the Gospel by the prophecy of St. Simeon, speaking of the Son to his own mother: Behold, this child is set for ruin and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and to be the target of contradiction. And a sword will pierce your soul. (Lc.2,34.45)

This translation is wide; the Latin text has a variant that seems to go beyond the vulgar text.

Et tua **ipsius** animam pertransibit gladius—which literally means: The same gladius will pierce his soul and yours.

It is as if the soul of the Son and the Mother were so intimately united that the gladius that pierced the one necessarily pierced the other.

It is a wonderful union that drains all the energy of expression and whose justification appears to us in this other word of the Gospel: — Stabat autem juxta crucem Jesu, Mater ejus.

This wonderful union, which we discover between the passion of Jesus and the pains of Mary, must also exist between the glory of Jesus and the glory of his Mother.

How could it be that, having been united so closely in suffering, they were less so in joy?

And this joy is not only the glory of heaven, it is also the **way** to enter it.

Jesus rose on the third day; he came out of the tomb, triumphant over death, and then ascended to heaven, to go to take her place beside her Father, Mary also had to rise on the third day, triumphant of death with her Jesus, and

ascend to heaven to take the place of honor incumbent upon her as Mother of God, co-Redeemer of men, Queen of Heaven and Mother of men.

The resurrection of the Holy Virgin and her Assumption into heaven, thus complete the perfect, indissoluble union of the Son and the Mother, to **perpetuate in glory** a union that began in suffering and death.

Glory corresponds to grace.

Grace is a glory begun.

Glory is an accomplished grace.

And Mary, full of grace, should be filled with glory in heaven... and for that, enter it with a majesty that does not belong to mere creatures, but only to Jesus and his Mother!

Let us limit ourselves to these six arguments.

Many others could be formulated, as it can be said that the whole life, all the prerogatives, all the virtues of the Virgin Mary. they demand the resurrection of his body and his Assumption into heaven!

I repeat it. It is not explicitly stated in the Gospel, but implicitly, but so convincingly, so sure, so logically, that doubt about it is absolutely impossible.

## **V. The glorious assumption**

The body of the Blessed Virgin after her resurrection did not remain here on earth.

The land was not worthy of possessing it; he needed heaven, with its glory and its supreme happiness.

Accompanied by the angels, carried under her luminous wings, Maria Sma. it shines with incomparable splendor, its body is transfigured, glorious, and it penetrates heaven amidst the cheers of the heavenly court.

Hierarchies move away from it, seraphim open their loving phalanxes, to let it pass; and in the presence of the whole heavenly court, Jesus crowns, at the same time, their privileges, their virtues, and their sufferings.

She is **Queen** , like Jesus Christ her Son, she is **King** .

Queen by the splendor of her **perfection** , for everything that is not God is less perfect than she.

Queen for the immensity of her **happiness** , because all the happiness that is in the saints and in each one of them, accumulates and concentrates in her ecstatic soul.

Queen by the extent of her **power** , for the whole heaven is about to obey her, and ever since the heavenly vaults begin to reverberate the echoes of this hymn that will have no end: To the sorrowful mother of the Immaculate Lamb, glory, honor, power, in the century of centuries.

It is therefore a point of doctrine that the body of Mary, having been raised to heaven, there enjoys incomparable glory, and possesses, in the highest degree, all the perfections which the bodies of the other blessed will possess after the final judgment.

It is a point of doctrine, which is not yet a **dogma** of faith, but which cannot be disputed.

The assumption of Sma. Virgo has always been taught in all schools of theology, and no dissenting voice is found among the doctors.

The Assumption is a consequence of the incarnation of the Word.

In fact, there is an admirable connection between the different mysteries of Christianity and the Assumption, as I showed above.

If the Immaculate Virgin once received the Savior Jesus, it is only right that the Savior, in turn, receive the Holy Virgin.

Jesus, not having disdained descending into her most pure bosom, he must raise her up now, to share his glory.

Let us not be surprised that Mary is resurrected with such glory, for Jesus, to whom she gave earthly life, gives back to her today what he had received from her.

And since it is God's way to show him to be always the most magnificent, although he has received from her only a mortal life, he must, in return, give her an immortal life.

## **SAW. Conclusion**

The conclusion of these considerations can and should be short.

For a sincere soul discussion is impossible, and in the face of common sense Protestant objections vanish because they are baseless and unresisting.

The Mother of Jesus, and as such Mother of God, is entitled to all the honors and praise of which we are capable. And God chose her, among and above all women, filled her with grace and deigned to be born in her virginal womb. Then I wanted to be educated by her, directed, obeying her in everything, as we see in the Gospel.

After this elevation of Mary to the most sublime dignity that can exist, is it possible that God has repudiated her, dethroned her, rejected her?

We know that Maria Sma. she was always faithful to all graces, she responded faithfully to all the invitations of God, so that there was not the slightest infidelity on her part. She knew how to live up to her dignity as Mother of God.

Now, it is a basic law, that God never **moves away** from a soul, without that soul first turning away from Him: Draw near to God and he will draw near to you, says St. James (Jac.4,88)

How could he, then, reject his own mother? After having used her, for the realization of the most sublime mysteries, after having raised her above all creatures, He cannot despise her, and reduce her to the level of any other woman.

It's impossible!

It would be the greatest ingratitude.

God must, to preserve harmony in his own work, continue to favor the Immaculate Virgin, and continue to exalt her, as he began to do so from predestination until the hour of her death.

Now, being able to preserve his Holy Mother from the corruption of the tomb, being able to make her rise again and take her body and soul to heaven, He must do it.

God was to **crown in glory** that which he had already crowned on earth... and keep her close to Himself in heaven, as He had kept her close to Himself here on earth.



Mary, not failing in the duties of her high and sublime vocation as Mother of Jesus Christ, God could not fail in his commitment to her either.

And there was no shortage!

He remained faithful, enriching, more and more, that which was already full of graces, but whose fullness was expanding, in the measure of its cooperation with the divine graces.

And this is why God must, at the end of a life so full of holiness, like her mother's, as a **consequence** of her Immaculate Conception and her divine motherhood, preserve her from the corruption of the grave, make her resurrect, take her to Heaven, that there she might continue to be in glory what she was on earth: the mother of God and the mother of men.

So God must do.

And he did.

Maria Sma., was taken to heaven in body and soul, this virginal body participating in the prerogatives of the glorified bodies, and there in glory enjoying the possession of God, through intuitive vision.

Glory, or essential beatitude, consists in the clear, face-to-face vision of the Godhead, but this vision is **in relation** to the holiness of each elect.

In Maria Sma. such a vision should be incomprehensible, immense, infinite, because it must correspond to three things:

To the **dignity** of Mother of God.

The **graces** received during his mortal life.

To the excellence of its **merits** .

Now, Mary's **dignity** being incomprehensible, her glory must be under the same title.

Mary's graces are so immense that they surpass the graces given to all the saints together.

Its **merits** are beyond and beyond all comprehension, for having corresponded to all graces, to this fullness of graces, necessarily corresponds a fullness of merits.

We must therefore conclude that the glory bestowed by God on Maria Sma. is the supreme glory, which can conveniently be bestowed on a pure creature.

Through the beatitude of the Mother of God, we know better the greatness of God, his holiness, his power, his magnificence, than through the glorification of all the saints.

This essential beatitude of the Mother of Jesus does not differ in species from that of the other saints; yet this glory is so intense that it constitutes a special order which, after the vision of God and Jesus Christ, brings to the blessed greater happiness than all the other goods with which heaven is full.

Such is Mary to us in the glory of heaven.

Sitting at the right hand of her dear Son, (II Reg.II.19) clothed in the sun, as described in the Apocalypse (Rev.12,1) surrounded by glory, as the glory of the only Son of God (Jn. 1.14) for it is the same glory that involves the Son and the Mother!

How beautiful He is in this glory!

How soft is your Mother's smile!

How she extends her arms to us, to invite us to come to her, and one day share her glory!

## CHAPTER XIV

### Mary, Mediatrix of Graces

Here is a subject that will make hapless Baptists gnash their teeth.

Mary, Mediatrix between God and men, they will cry out, that's the ultimate, it's idolatry, it's absurd, it's papal invention, it's pagan... it's everything... what's horrible and loathsome, because it's not Protestant.

Poor Protestants! that not enervates the explosion of hatred that takes hold of you, which is already a rebuttal to your mistakes because **the hate** has never been and will never be virtue.

We refute your errors, because they are errors, but refuting them, we demonstrate with biblical, scientific and common sense proofs, the truth opposed to these errors, while you blasphemous, seek to refute the Catholic truth, but you never get to prove even one of your mistakes, and give them at least an appearance of truth.

This is the case with the truth of Mary, Mediatrix of graces. Yells against, you quote texts, but all these texts prove nothing to the contrary.

It is as if someone, to prove that St. John is a saint, quoted texts that prove that Judas is a traitor and vice versa.

But what relationship do these texts have: they prove what must not be proved, and they say nothing about what must be proved.

Let us examine well, face to face, this great Catholic truth, that Mary is the mediator of graces, and let us see the ridicule of Protestant objections.

## **I. The Protestant Objection**

I accept the objection of the Batista newspaper, a model of anti-Christian hatred and fanatical blindness.

Read the bit well, and examine what the arguments cited prove:

On what reasons does Catholicism support itself to prove the Virgin Mary's mediatorial office?

In pure human reasoning. Among all its reasons, it lacks precisely the most necessary and fundamental - the biblical reason, the reason of the constitutional charter of Christianity, the New Testament.

This teaching contradicts Holy Scripture which clearly and peremptorily teaches not only that Christ is the Mediator, but that he is the only Mediator between God and men. Here are just a few passages:

The Son of man came to seek and save what was lost. (Luke 19:10)

And their scribes and the Pharisees murmured against their disciples (of Jesus) saying, Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners? And Jesus answering said to them, Those who are healthy do not need a doctor, but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Luke 5:30-32).

How much more will the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself immaculate to God, cleanse your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God?

And that is why he is Mediator of a New Testament, so that, when death intervened for the remission of transgressions, which was under the first

testament, those called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (Heb.9.:14.15)

And to Jesus, the Mediator of a New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better than Abel's. (Heb.12:24)

Part of the speech of the apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost:

Let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israël, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, he whom you crucified, and whom God raised from the dead, in the name of him (ex-paralytic) stands before you healthy : he is the stone that was rejected by you the builders, which was set at the head of the corner. And in no other is there salvation, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved». (At.4:10-12)

Because there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (Tim.2:5)

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:9,11)

I am the way, and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

And on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried, saying, If anyone is thirsty, come to me and drink. Whœver believes in me, as the Scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his womb. And this he said of the Spirit that those who believed in him would receive. (John 7:37,39)

In that day ye shall ask (the disciples) in my name, and I do not say unto you that I will plead with the Father for you; for the same Father loves you; since you loved me, and believed that I came out of God. (John 16:26.27)

As there is, therefore, no passage in divine revelation that assigns the Virgin Mary the role of Mediatrix between her and her Son, but many militating in the opposite, that is the reason why the masters of Catholicism, who teach such a doctrine, use only human reasoning, human traditions, decisions of councils, etc., etc.

It is horrifying to think of the disastrous results of a doctrine that diverts souls from the only Mediator and Savior to another person who, although blessed, was not made by God Mediator, and who herself never called herself as such,

and who feels she would be horrified if she knew that she was owed the honor that only her blessed Son—Man and God—belongs.

How much turmoil in this accumulation of texts that prove nothing of what must be proved, and nothing refute of what must be disproved.

In all of this, which is the passage that proves that Maria Sma. is it not Mediatrix of the graces?

None...

It is even clearly seen that our Baptist friend does not even know exactly what a Mediator is; what is a primary Mediator, and what is a secondary Mediator.

Let's try to shed a ray of light in this Protestant labyrinth.

## **II. the only mediator**

In order to understand Catholic doctrine well, it is necessary not to consider each point in particular and separate from the other truths, but to take the whole of the evangelical truths.

One truth illuminates another and, often, what is difficult to understand separately, becomes luminous when other truths approach, which complete each other and indicate their exact meaning.

And the evil of Protestantism.

he takes a text, separates it from what precedes and what follows, and here he ascribes to that text a meaning completely contrary to that which the Sacred Author had in view.

The texts quoted by the Batista newspaper admirably prove this assertion.

For example, he quotes:

I am the good shepherd.

I am the way, the truth and « life, etc.

What do these texts prove against the mediation of the Mother of God?

Absolutely nothing.

The Good Shepherd is the image of the Savior's goodness.

He is the way, the truth and the life. It's right, of course.

Nobody doubts that... why then prove what must not be proved?

Why don't Batista quote a text that says:

Isn't Mary Mediatrix of graces?

It does not quote such a text, because it does not exist.

And will there be a contrary text?

Perfectly! but for those who know how to read and interpret, not only the letter that kills, but the spirit of the text, which gives life.

The most probative text, with which the Protestants judge to defeat the Catholic assertion, is from São Paulo.

and There is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and men.

This truth is repeated many times by the Apostle. (Gal.3,20 — Heb. 8,6 — 9,15 — 12,24) and this mediator is Jesus Christ (Tim.2,5).

Now, this text is in no way applicable to Maria Sma., as I will prove it here.

We Catholics accept this text in its entirety and in its clear and positive sense,

The Catholic Church everywhere proclaims that there is only one Mediator between God and men, and that Mediator is Jesus Christ, and this for the reason admirably expounded by the Apostle.

Christ gave us a new testament.

But where there is a will, the testator's death must intervene; for the testament is not confirmed, except for the dead. (Heb 9,16-17)

Now Christ offered himself, he died, shedding his divine blood.

Therefore, He is Mediator of the New Testament (Ibid 9,15)

So far there is no discussion: Catholics and Protestants are in agreement.

But Catholics go ahead and invoke the Immaculate Mother of God as **Mediatrix** of graces.

Is this possible?

Why not? And Protestants, on reflection, will be forced to concede what they illogically fight.

Mary is the Mediatrix of graces.

### III. Jesus and Mary in mediation

Let us try to understand well the infinite difference between the mediation of Jesus Christ and that of Maria Sma.

It is the confusion of this difference that exalts our Protestant friends and dictates to them the ridiculous objections they present to us.

First, what is a Mediator?

It is a person who is in the middle, between two other people, to unite them.

For this, two things are necessary: to **be** in the **middle** , and to have the profession to **unite** the two extremes.

Extremes always come together in the middle. (1)

One can exercise this office in two ways:

1. As principal and perfect agent (principaliter et perfecte).
2. As in charge of preparing the paths (ministerialiter et dispositive).

You can immediately see the difference between these two offices.

The first is to be the **means** , the mediator by right, by his own position.

The second is to be appointed to perform or prepare a union.

The first mediator is **principal** .

The second mediator is **secondary** .

The first is **necessary** .

The second is **useful** .

Let us elucidate this with a popular example.

*1) Ad mediatoris officium proprie pertinet conjungere et unire eos inter quos is mediator, nam extreme uniuntur in medio. (S.Tom.q.28.a1)*

We entered a trading house, and then find the **owner** of the house and **ca i xeiro** .

The owner is the main, necessary, perfect mediator between the buyer and the merchandise to be purchased.

The clerk is also selling goods, but as a secondary mediator, as a foreman, useful.

Negotiating with one of them, we are satisfied, and we don't even remember that the **owner** is the sole purchase broker, and that his clerk is an appointed broker, in charge of selling farms.

We feel natural that there is a helper next to the **owner**, and we buy from this helper's hands with the same confidence as the owner's hands.

Well then, such is, with all the imperfection of the comparison, the office of the primary and secondary mediator.

Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and men. It is true: he is more than Mediator, he is the Lord, he is the Master, he is God.

Having become a man, he was pleased to name the Blessed Virgin, his helper: a secondary helper, not necessary, but extremely useful.

Why do Protestants accept such a mediator near men and not accept her near God?

The mediation of the commercial assistant in no way harms, alters or diminishes the rights and the office of the **owner** of the house... because such assistant does not act on his own, but on behalf of his master, and according to his orders.

Thus the secondary Mediation of Maria Sma. in no way harms, alters or diminishes the authority of Jesus Christ, for she does not act on her own, but in accordance with Jesus, and under the direction of Jesus.

Jesus Christ is as well the only Mediator between God and men, as the owner of the commercial house is the sole owner of the goods of his house.

Maria Sma. he is an auxiliary, is entrusted by Jesus Christ with this office, remaining in the background, and acting in everything in accordance with his divine Son.

How then could your mediation be detrimental to that of Jesus Christ?

It's impossible... It's even ridiculous to suppose it.

This is what Protestants do. Not understanding the terms, the office, or the union, they immediately start attacking what they do not understand.

The mediation of Maria Sma., ministerialiter et dispositive, is the natural complement to the sovereign, principal and perfect mediation of Jesus Christ.



These two mediations come together to work the great reconciliation between God and men.

What we just saw, the union of Maria Sma. with her divine Son, as Mediatrix, secondary, of office, she gives us the reason why the Church calls her Mediatrix close to the Christ Mediator. These are the words of Saint Bernard and His Holiness Pope Pius IX, in Bulla Ineffabilis.

The Blessed Virgin, says this Pontiff, is the one with the most power in the entire world, close to the Only-Begotten Son, as mediator and Consoler.(2)

*2) Beatissima Virgo est totius terrarum orbis potentissima apud unigenitum Filium suum Mediatrix et Consolatrix.*

She is said to be: Mediatrix, close to the Christ Mediator— Mediatrix ad Christum Mediatorem, to better highlight her secondary mediation (ministerialiter et dispositive).

It can be said that she is the Mediator between Jesus Christ and men, as Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and men.

These expressions necessarily have the same meaning, for Jesus Christ being God, since Mary is Mediatrix between Christ and men, she is necessarily Mediatrix between God and men.

The term: "between Jesus Christ and men", better expresses its secondary, ministerial mediation and rejects the idea of wanting to equate the mediation of the Holy Virgin with the mediation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the mediator, the only mediator, because if He, by His divine and human nature, is **in the middle** between God and men, If He brings together in His **one** divine **person** the two extremes: God and man.

Maria Sma. she is a simple creature, but a creature raised by God to the most sublime honor: to the honor of Mother of God, and by her divine motherhood, she is united with her Son, for the accomplishment of the redemption of the world...

Consideration of this new work will reveal new truths, and place in our hands new arguments, apparently unknown to Protestants.

#### IV. Mary in the Redeemer work

The errors of Protestants in this regard stem from a lamentable confusion in the work of redemption.

They represent; redemption as being the work of Jesus Christ alone. like God, reducing the participation of Maria Sma. the part that other mothers have in the birth of their children.

For them, Jesus was born of Maria Sma. — Mary, de qua natus est Jesus, qui vocatur Christus (Mt.1,16).

They do not deny this fundamental point, because it is written in full text in the Gospel, falsifying, however, the meaning of the name: Christ — to make Mary Sma. the mother of a man and not the **Mother of God** . Now, Jesus Christ is a man, but he was never a man, lacking, for that, the human person.

Protestants claim that Mary gave birth to Christ, as the mother of Rui Barbosa gave birth to this son, or as St. Monica gave birth to St. Augustine, or as Margaret Zigler gave birth to Martin Luther.

Indirectly, Ruy Barbosa's mother had any influence on Brazilian letters, as Santa Monica has on the treatise on grace, written by her son, or as Luther's mother indirectly has an influence on the foundation of Protestantism; and that's it: nothing else,

For them, Maria Sma. it would have this same indirect, remote influence on redemption and nothing else.

Jesus was born of Mary. The Gospel shows us this in St. Elizabeth's house, near the manger; at Cana, at the foot of the cross; with the Apostles on the day of Pentecost; but, they conclude: what relation does this have to redemption and salvation?

Poor blind people, they do not see that the Redemption is a work entirely different from human works; it is a **divine work** and, as such, forms a perfect **unity** in all its parts.

The **Redemptive** work —and this point is the axis upon which all other divine works revolve— **redemption** is not simply the passion and death of the Savior, as Protestants think, but the whole of everything that concerns it, in the **preparation** , in the **execution** and in the **application** .

The Redemptive work, in the divine plan, is only one: it is our salvation through Jesus Christ.

The Incarnation and the different mysteries of Jesus Christ; they are solely oriented towards Redemption.

Redemption is oriented towards our salvation.

It is a unique work, consisting of two parts.

There is the Incarnation, the life and death of Jesus, to rescue us, reconcile us with God, and deserve the necessary graces that each one will receive at the right time, during life.

Then there are the particular graces that are prepared for us in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, and which form the fabric of our supernatural life.

Since Mary had her part, alongside Jesus, in the Redeeming work, for the very fact, she must have a part in the work of our salvation and in all the graces that are given to us, in view of the Redeemer, for all this is one and the same Redemptive work.

No bona fide Protestant can deny this complete **unity** of the divine work!

All of this is linked to divine motherhood.

On the occasion of the Incarnation, what does the Angel St. Gabriel, in the name of God, negotiate with the Virgin of Nazareth?

What does he propose to Maria?

Is it a private thing, folks?

The Angel asks Mary to consent to giving birth to the Son of God, who is then free to save the world as he sees fit, since Mary was a mere blind instrument, a kind of automatic machine, which is later rejected, as if cut and reject a banana tree that gave a bunch?

All this would be extremely ridiculous and unworthy of God... And it is the opposite that emerges from the simple reading of the Gospel.

The angel does not limit himself to speaking of the personal greatness of Jesus, but presents him as Savior, awaited Messiah, King of mankind, Redeemer...

This one (son: Jesus) will be great, says the Archangel... The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David... he will reign forever. He will be called Son of God (Lk.1,32)

Here is the personal greatness of Jesus.

At the time of birth, the Angels said to the Shepherds: A Savior has been born to you, who is the Lord Christ (Lc.1,41)

And Saint Simeon said of him: My eyes have seen your salvation (Lk.2,20).

Behold, this child is set for the ruin and resurrection of many in Israel and to be the target of contradiction (Lk.1,34).

We know that this is truly the Savior of the world (Jn 4.42).

We find the Messiah, which means the Christ (Jn 1.41)

Here is the mission of Jesus.

And Mary, having to be the mother of Jesus, is necessarily the mother of Jesus as a **whole** , of Jesus, as a person and as sent by God.

In this way, the Archangel proposes to him to cooperate in the Salvation of humanity, in the messianic work, in the establishment of the announced kingdom, in a word: the Redemptive work.

And this is the reason why Mary is full of grace, and blessed among all women (Lc.1,28)

One cannot distinguish in Jesus the **private person** , of which Mary would be the mother, and the **public person** , in the work of which her mother would have only an indirect and remote connection, as the Protestants claim.

Because of your cooperation with the Incarnation, Maria Sma. he cooperated with the Redeemer work, and that in a close and direct way.

The Incarnation is the redemption begun.

Cooperating with the Incarnation is therefore cooperating directly with redemption.

And cooperating with redemption is cooperating with our Salvation.

In this way we are indebted to Mary of **Jesus as a whole** : And Jesus as ransom and source of all graces.

It is not the Incarnation that saves us, without a doubt; but, yes, the death of the Incarnate Word.

But let us note that the Word became incarnate to die.

And this Jesus Incarnate to die is given to us **by** Mary.

Therefore, God giving us Jesus for Mary, gives us everything for Mary and she is truly the mediator between God and men, beside, although below, her Son Jesus.

## V. Mary in the Sanctifying Work

Mary, present in the Redeemer work, must also be present in the sanctifying work of men; for the second work is a continuation of the first, and must as such obey the **same principles** and the same directives.

As we have just seen: Mary is indissolubly united with Jesus in the work of our Redemption.

Now, Jesus' influence does not stop at the time of his death. We know that in heaven he never ceases to offer his merits to obtain for us the graces of sanctification and salvation.

Therefore, it is necessary to admit the action of Mary, close to Jesus, in heaven, how she acted close to him, on earth.

If this were not so, the term would not correspond to the beginning, there would be a kind of disagreement between the different parts of the divine plan, there would be a split in its **unity** .

The Redemptive work is not a work done, once for all, by the Savior, leaving it to God to distribute the graces deserved by the divine blood, while Jesus Christ would stand in the glory of heaven, as indifferent to this distribution, and indifferent to the souls you rescued a first time.

It's another Protestant error about Salvation,

The truth is that Jesus Christ continues to intervene close to God for us; it is he who makes a stream and who spreads the waves of grace on the souls redeemed by his blood.

My Father works, Jesus said to the Jews who persecuted him, and I work too (Jn.5,17).

The Father judges no one, but he gave the Son all the power to judge (Jn5,22).  
Whatever the Father does, so does the Son (Ibd.19).

Now, Jesus was not alone in this first part of the work: Mary was with him.  
Erat Mater Jesu ibi (Jn 2.1).

If He were only in the second part, the unity of the divine plan would be broken, which cannot be.

Therefore, it is necessary that the current intervention of Mary joins the current intervention of Jesus.

They were at work together; together they must be in glory...

If the King of heaven still acts for us, the Queen must act with him.

A strange thing would be, if Mary's role ended at the gate of heaven, what if she were of lesser importance there than here on earth...

She would be a mother who ceases to be a mother!

She would be a Queen, without a scepter and without a kingdom!

She who was full of grace on earth would not be full of glory in heaven!

But all reasonings of common sense, science and revelations of faith fall to the ground!

Theology teaches us that the glory of heaven is the crowning of grace, so that a fullness of grace on earth requires a fullness of glory in heaven.

And would Mary, Mother of God on earth, cease to be such in heaven?

In that case she would have been more on earth than in heaven, and instead of heaven crowning her grace in glory, He would tear her most glorious diadem from her forehead!

Oh! please shut up poor Protestant! stop blaspheming... Such an assumption is simply horrible, unworthy of God and unworthy of His Justice.

No, no! never can such blasphemy be accepted by a man of common sense, by a Christian.

\* \* \*

Indeed, the Gospel itself clearly insinuates the opposite, showing us that Maria Sma. continues in heaven what she has already done on earth.

God did not use it only at the Incarnation and at Calvary. He is carried in his mother's arms, and as a result of his voice, Jesus makes his first influences felt, sanctifying Saint John the Baptist.

She is at the side of the crib to welcome and introduce the first worshipers.

She is in Cana to obtain from Jesus the first miracle, which confirmed his first disciples.

She is in the Cenacle, the cradle of the nascent Church, as Queen and Teacher of the Apostles.

We see it in all the important phases of the life of Jesus Christ; in which he communicates his graces and draws souls to God.

Isn't that a pretty clear sign of God's design?

The Catholic tradition, based on evangelical facts, has never hesitated, and in these facts it recognizes the evidence of truth, to publicly affirm Maria Sma's intervention. in the distribution of graces, in other words, she acclaims the Holy Virgin as Mediatrix of all graces.

### **SAW. Mary's double mediation**

Mary is therefore truly our Mediatrix, and this in two senses.

In the first sense, to emphasize, in general, that she is **on the side of the Mediator** , who is Jesus Christ, in the work of our reconciliation with God, of our sanctification and our salvation.

In a second sense, as Mediatrix **between Jesus and us** , to give us Jesus, and with Jesus give us all the graces of redemption; to lead us to Jesus, to intercede for us, and to draw upon us his mercy and favors.

Such is the double meaning of the Mediation of the Holy Virgin:

A **general mediation** , with Jesus, between God and men.

A **particular** mediation between Jesus and men.

To refute the Protestant errors in this regard, let us repeat that this does not in any way mean that we accept a Mediator alongside the one Mediator, or

that Jesus' mediation seems insufficient to us, or that we attribute anything to Mary outside Of Jesus.

None of that. Mary is at the side of Jesus—Mediator, to make him a perfect Mediator in this sense that He occupies in the work of mediation **of life** the part that God has given him; as Eve was at Adam's side, in the mediation **of death** .

In both senses indicated here, the name **Medianeira** includes, for Maria Sma., the double cooperation with the work Redemptor, as mentioned above: cooperation, through its **action** , on earth; cooperation by their **intercession** , in heaven.

These two mediations are universal, as the mediation of Jesus is universal, and extend to all the graces bestowed on us in view of Jesus.

This universality is immediately understood, remembering the **unity** of the Redeeming work, and the indissoluble union between Mary and Jesus in the plan of redemption and salvation by the Son of God.

Whœver gave us Jesus, as the author of all graces, has given us, in fact, all the graces that Jesus came to deserve for us.

Whœver played such a part in the great gift of God cannot be left without an actual influence in the distribution of grace, for grace is like the extension and extension of Jesus to us.

Whœver, in every birth, was a mediator with Jesus, cannot cease to unite his action with the very act by which Jesus exercises his mediation.

Wherever the mediation of Jesus Christ is contemplated, on earth as in heaven, in redemption or deserving, in redemption or sanctification, everywhere, there is the mediation of Mary, united with the mediation of Jesus Christ.

\* \* \*

Such is the beautiful and consoling doctrine that the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church transmit to us, and they do so with a firmness, a conviction that show that such has always been the Catholic tradition, and such a universal tradition, that it has rarely been contested, if not by heretics.

In one of the prayers of the feast of the miraculous medal, the Church fully adopts this opinion, saying: Lord, Almighty God, who would have us receive all



goods through the Immaculate Mother of your Son, (3) grant us, through the help of such a mother powerful, etc.

3) *Miraculous Medal Feast — 27 Nov.- Postcom.*

The beautiful words of St. Bernard are well known, which sum up all this doctrine: God placed in Mary the fullness of all good; therefore let us not forget that all our hope, of grace and of salvation, comes to us from her; and which is like the super-fullness of this channel of blessing that pours down on us.(4)

4) *Altius ergo intueamini, how much devotionis affectu a nobis eam voluerit honorari, qui totius boni plenitudinem posuit in Maria: ut proinde si quid spei in nobis est, si quid gratiæ, si quid scitis, ab ea noverimus rodungare Serm. Aquæducta n.6).*

Let us also cite this beautiful excerpt from St. Bernardino de Senna, which summarizes the entire mechanism of the transmission of grace:

"All the graces transmitted to men in this world, come to them through a triple process: They go from the Father to Christ, from Christ to the Holy Virgin, from the Holy Virgin to us.

In fact, from the moment Mary conceived in her womb the Son of God, she enjoys a kind of jurisdiction or authority over all the temporal processes of the Holy Spirit, so that no creature receives graces from God except through mediation From Maria.

This is what Christian piety expresses in this classic axiom: "Everything for Jesus, nothing without Mary".

## **VII. Conclusion**

Great and sublime truths passed before our Spirit.

Certain, irrefutable truths, but which nevertheless do not constitute a dogma of faith, because the Church has not defined them yet.

It should be noted that a truth is no less certain and less proven, because it is not yet declared a dogma of faith, by the infallible authority of the Church.

The Church has not defined it yet, because there is no discussion to settle on this point. Few are the enemies, apart from the Protestants, who dispute this title of Mary, as Mediatrix of all graces.

Dogmas develop subjectively, that is, through the broader and deeper knowledge that we acquire from them, through study, attacks and discussions, although they remain objectively immutable, that is, as they are in themselves.

Among the most closely definable truths are, of course, Mary's universal **Mediation** and her glorious **Assumption** .

These truths explicitly handed down by tradition are implicitly contained in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and of the divine and spiritual motherhood of Mary, from which they separate, as they are studied, in greater depth by theologians.

Let us close this Chapter by summarizing in a few words the way in which the Holy Virgin mediates.

Mary's intervention today, on our behalf, does not have the effect of **producing** grace, which belongs to God alone, but rather of **obtaining it** and **contributing** to it.

Such intervention is only exercised in the order of salvation.

When asked to and from her obtain temporal favors, Mary's influence is always to lead men to their supernatural end.

And how to exercise this salutary influence of Mary?

Mainly, by way of intercession, by your prayers.

It is through her supplications, above all, that the Immaculate Virgin continually inclines the Son's heart to apply the fruits of her blood, and the Father's mercy to infuse into souls the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And these supplications of the Mother of God are supported by a double motive: firstly, about the **merits of her Son** and, secondly , about her **own merits** .

We can approach God with confidence, with the Son as Mediator close to the Father, and Mary as Mediatrix close to the Son.

The Son shows the Father his wounds and his open side.

The Mother presents to the Son the entrails that gave birth to him, the breast that nourished him — this one supplicates that surpasses the supplications of the Angels and of men.

Mary's plea rests secondarily on her own merits. Not about new merits that she acquires in heaven, for the saints in heaven are incapable of merits, but rather about the merits she acquired during her earthly life, and which by leaving this world she presented to God.

Such merits have already received a reward for their entry into heaven, however, from the three parts of which the merit is composed: meritorious, satisfactory and petitionary part, only the meritorious part received this reward, so that it continues to intercede for men , for the satisfactory and compelling part of its merits.

The distinctive character of this intercession is that of being irresistible or **omnipotent** , in such a way that the Saints call Maria Omnipotencia suplex, the omnipotence supplicant.

Secondly, Mary's mediation is **universal** , knowing no limits, neither for time, nor for space, nor for number, nor for the kind of graces.

Its benefits extend to everyone, says the Church in one of its antiphons: Sentiant omnes tuum juvamen!

\* \* \*

Here, in summary, is the beautiful and harmonious doctrine of the universal Mediation of Maria Sma.

If the Protestant friends, listening less to the hatred of their sect, than to the common sense of their reason and the evangelical narration, would meditate well on this doctrine, they would understand how far it deviates from their petty and hateful conception of such Mediation.

They would understand that Catholics, far from contradicting St. Paul's text, which proclaims that there is only one mediator between God and men, highlight this text and put it in full light, admitting the only mediator between God and men, Jesus Christ , the only Redeemer of mankind.

But just as God placed the Immaculate Virgin by the side of this one Redeemer, as the ministerial helper of this redemption, making her not a Redeemer, but a helper or co-Redeemer; thus, in the work of sanctifying souls, God placed the Virgin herself as helper, or co-mediator, between God and men, and as a special mediator between Jesus Christ and men.

Such is the logical, gentle, rational and biblical doctrine that the Church professes, and that it is the basis of the cult of love and trust that her children dedicate to the Blessed Virgin.

Oh! instead of blaspheming the goodness of God, who has given us such a powerful and so loving intercessor, call upon her, implore her, poor Protestants, that she may dispel the darkness of your Spirit, and make this love shine before your hearts divine that Jesus comes to bring into the world, but that He communicates through his dear mother.

## CHAPTER XV

### A final summary

Although each Chapter, as the refutation of a given error and the exposition of the opposite truth, has its own conclusion, the set of these rebuttals requires a conclusion, a brief final synthesis of the controversies, so that the reader can cover, at a glance, all the doctrine set out here.

I do not intend to repeat the theses in this chapter, but only to point them out, so that the reader can immediately find them in the indicated chapter.

A thesis cannot be summed up, without losing the strength and cohesion of its argument.

This chapter will, however, have the advantage of recalling in substance the thesis already read, and reviving the first impressions of this reading, at times when it would not be possible to reread them in full.

### I. Protestant Hatred

It is sad to write such a book, to refute errors, not only grotesque and absurd, but above all voluntary errors, invented by hatred, envy and the most stupendous contradiction with common sense.

That Protestants, driven by their ignorant delusion, attack the Catholic Church, slander the Pope and Fathers, ridicule worship, sacraments and ceremonies... is sadly ridiculous, but there is a plausible **explanation** .

They **attack** what they ignore!

They **blaspheme** what they don't understand!

They **ridicule** what is outward, without penetrating the quickening Spirit.

There is an explanation for all this; for Protestant pastors, from Luther to Boje, have accumulated so many slanders, written so many lies and falsified so many facts, that a poor sincere Protestant, in order to free himself from so many prejudices, needs to be the bearer of an unusual intelligence, of a most penetrating insight and of a love for the truth, which surpasses all interests, otherwise he will be the victim, perhaps unwittingly, of his parents and brothers in the faith.

But what is sad... very sad, is that such Protestants attack the very **Mother of God** !

Attacking, blaspheming, demeaning the Mother of this Jesus Christ that they intend to adore!

This is the height of folly!

Wanting to please Jesus Christ and conspire against his most pure mother!

How against common sense!

Acclaim the child and cast the mother into the mud!

It's a mystery of perversity!

Oh! poor and unhappy Protestants... reflect, reflect... read the Gospel; but read in its entirety, just as it is, leaving its clear, positive meaning to it, and not giving it an interpretation that would distort it and make it say what you think, and not what the Holy Spirit thinks or says.

What harm has the Mother of Jesus done to you?

Why this hatred against a Creature raised up by God, exalted by Him, acclaimed by Him, and placed by Him before suffering humanity, to console, sustain and lead them to God?

**Why this hatred** against the most pure Virgin?

Why don't you attack St. Paul, the Apostles, Magdalene, Martha, Lazarus, Zacchæus, Nicodemus, the holy women?

Why did you choose the One who is so closely united with Jesus Christ, the one from whom He took the body and blood that He was to sacrifice for the salvation of the world?

Why concentrate your hatred on the haloed head of purity, love and glory of this Blessed woman?

What dark mystery is this?

You recite the Our Father, because it is in the Gospel and you reject, as blasphemy, the Hail Mary, which is also in the Gospel.

Why that?

Why would one be less worthy than the other, since both of these prayers fell from the lips of the Holy Spirit?

Why, after the recitation of the Our Father, do you not add, as we do, this beautiful greeting transmitted by St. Luke?

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you,

Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus (Lc.1,28.42).

Recite this prayer and you will be Catholic.

In rejecting it, you are but poor heretics, for you reject the Gospel.

## **II. Fulfillment of a prophecy**

God is just, and this justice extends to all creatures and through all times.

More than 19 centuries ago, two cousins met one day near Hebron, one of them an elderly woman, already on the decline of life; and the other a young woman, pure, beautiful, clothed in all the charms of earth and sky, of nature and grace.

They greeted each other affectionately, when suddenly, the eldest one is filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaims: Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

Where does the saying that the Mother of my Lord come to me comes from? (Lc.1,22)

It was Elizabeth, the Wife of Zechariah, the mother of the forerunner John the Baptist.

Faced with such an extraordinary, strange greeting, the 17-year-old girl is not disturbed, not surprised... on the contrary, she feels worthy of these praises

and, with the same firmness, with the same conviction as her elderly cousin, this A 17-year-old girl, who is still ignorant of what life is and what the future is, this candid girl, inspired by the same Holy Spirit, casts this stupendous prophecy to heaven, and through the centuries:

Behold, from now on, all generations will call me blessed. (Lc.1,48).

Did you listen, poor unhappy Protestants?

All generations must acclaim the Blessed Virgin, for it is she who uttered this ineffable prophecy... or rather: it was the Holy Spirit who placed it on her lips.

Maria Sma. it has to be called **Blessed** by all generations.

As I have proved in these books, from this hour, from Elizabeth's voice, which echoed through the valley of Hebron, and above the mountains of Judea, to the present day, an immense, piercing unison cry echoes above this world, proclaiming the glory of the Mother of God.

The first centuries, from the Apostles to Luther, are full of hymns in honor of Mary Immaculate.

Read the first chapters of this book...

Hear the cries of love of the Holy Fathers exalting the **Blessed Woman** !

Collect the countless passages in which Saints of all centuries acclaim the Blessed Virgin!

It is the fulfillment of the aforementioned prophecy!

But for the full light to illuminate the truths, there must be shadows that make it stand out, give it relief, salience, life.

And this is done through errors, through heresies.

In the first centuries, hearts seemed to light up the face of the Immaculate One.

Mistakes are born, like shadows, in a frame full of light. The refutation of these errors led to the discovery of new truths, it made one better understand the truths already known, and it brought into full relief some of the forgotten truths.

That's what happened to the Blessed Virgin.

Protestantism raised its sacrilegious hand against the Immaculate Virgin, denying her virginal purity, her dignity as Mother of God and of men, her universal Mediation, her glorious Assumption, her power close to her Son.

The poor unfortunates wanted to tear off the glorious diadem that God had placed on his Mother's forehead, and behold, Catholicity, and behold, the Church, loving and jealous of the greatness of the Mother of God and her Mother, rises in weight, to repel attacks, refute heresies and make the prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin shine more radiant.

In this way the unfortunate Protestants became the **involuntary** and indirect **panegyrist**s of the Cult of the Mother of God.

They wanted to demean the exalted Queen of Heaven, but her subjects explained the true doctrine, opening new treasures to the eyes of all, making new titles shine forth.

Protestants, too, are thus obliged to proclaim **blessed** that which God has proclaimed blessed among all women!

What a terrible punishment for their barbaric impiety!

It was in this environment and under this impulse that this book was born.

It is a **response** to Protestant wickedness and ignorance.

In my other books I collected their objections against the cult of the Mother of God and gave them, as they presented themselves, the necessary answer.

Such responses received counter-answers, showing more and more the accumulated, concentrated hatred against the Blessed Virgin.

God allowed it, to decide me to give them a complete, doctrinal answer, taking the matter at the base and head-on, and refuting, one by one, all the heresies that ignorance and hatred cast against the throne of the Immaculate.

### **III. the basis of truth**

The reader will have noticed that I gave prominent place to the great dogma of the Immaculate Conception, fully proving this great and sublime truth, under the different aspects that it presents itself.

After having shown, in the first chapter, that the Cult of Maria Sma. it is a completely evangelical Worship, practiced by the apostles, the early Church



and the Christians of the first centuries, I focus attention on the Immaculate Conception of Mary, as this truth is the **foundation** of all her privileges.

Can there still be doubt in the spirit of the sincere reader?

It seems impossible to me.

This truth proved by theology (chapter II), by Sacred Scripture (chapter III), by the words of the Archangel (chapter IV), by tradition (chapter V) forms the granitic, unshakeable pedestal of the great Catholic dogma, exposed and discussed in Chapter VI).

It is impossible to go through these tests, to read these beautiful and luminous quotes from the Holy Fathers, without feeling, and as if feeling the truth always taught, defended and solemnly proclaimed by the Catholic Church.

This is the basis of all the controversy regarding the Mother of Jesus.

Proved that Mary was preserved from original sin, in anticipation of her divine motherhood, proven are her perpetual purity and all the other prerogatives that adorn her virginal forehead.

Indeed, as can be seen from Chapter VII, even intelligent and sincere Protestants make themselves the defenders of this truth, condemning their own brethren of heresy, and treating them as heretics and obsessed.

I quote here once again this beautiful doctrinal sonnet, written by the devil himself, by order of two religious saints.

It is a unique, sublime monument of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception:

“ *Son,*

*True mother I am, of a God who is*

*and of Him I am, as well as His Mother;*

*Ab æterno was born, but he is my Son,*

*Well I was born in time, I am your Mother.*

*He is my Creator, but he is my Son,*

*I am your creature, and your Mother;*

*Prodigy was divine, to be my Son,  
An eternal God and I am his Mother.*

*Being is almost common, to Mother and Son;  
Because of the Son, the Mother had to be,  
And from the Mother the Son also had to be.*

*Now, if the Son's being had the Mother;  
Or will it be said that the Son was stained,  
Or without a labour if the Mother must be told.*

#### **IV. errors and contradictions**

Protestant impiety, with the miserable intention of demeaning the Blessed Virgin and contradicting the Catholic Church, was inventing the brothers of Jesus, basing itself on the word brother used in the Gospel, and forgetting that this word is a generic term that encompasses any and all relatives.

Chapter VIII definitively refutes this heresy, showing clearly and irrefutably that Maria Sma. she was a Virgin before, during and after the birth of her only Son: Jesus.

Admitting the Immaculate Conception, this truth is, in fact, a corollary of this prerogative.

God would have performed an unprecedented miracle in favor of his future Mother, preserving her from every stain of sin, so that, Virgin in body and soul, she would be a worthy Mother of her Son; and then would he allow this living Sanctuary of purity to be violated by a man, taking her virginity so carefully preserved?

This would be an intolerable contradiction in the divine work!

But the poor Protestants, playing with the texts of Scripture, as one plays with a ball, weave their meanings and absurd comments, which even in their own eyes have no merit other than to contradict Catholic teaching.

What they want is to make you believe that everything the Catholic Church teaches is wrong...

In the other Protestant sects which are close to 900 (in 1936), apart from a few errors, they accept a true part; only in the Catholic Church is there nothing to be taken advantage of: everything, absolutely everything there is wrong.

Such is the Protestant idea. Since the Catholic Church says: yes, they cry: no. If the Church says: white, they will say: black; and if, impossible, the Church changed its teaching, which it does not do, since the truth is immutable, the Protestants would immediately change theirs and adopt an opinion contrary to Catholic opinion,

It can be seen right away that in all these objections there is no sincerity: there is only hatred... and hatred has always been and will always be a vice, and I will never be a virtue.

What I have developed in Chapters IX and XIII of this book admirably proves this assertion.

Protestants highlight words from Holy Scripture, such as "Until", "firstborn" and others, giving them a meaning that abrogates all laws of grammar, logic and hermeneutics, but which has the merit of teach the opposite of the Catholic Church.

Reading the rebuttal to these interpretations, one is amazed to see so much ignorance on the one hand, and so much obsession on the other.

## **V. The Mother of God**

We are here facing the height of ignorance and absurdity.

Protestantism admits that Mary is the Mother of Jesus—Mary from whom Jesus was born (Mt.1,16) and does not admit that Mary is the Mother of God.

How to explain such contradictions?

It is the renewal of Nestorius' error, condemned in the fifth century by the Council of Ephesus, in the year 431.

This heresiarch claimed that in Jesus Christ there were two persons: one divine and the other human. The first, being Son of the Eternal Father, the second, being Son of Mary.

In this case, Maria Sma. she would be Mother of a human person, and would have nothing with the divine Person in Jesus Christ.

Now this is an absurdity which I amply refute in Chapter X.

There cannot be two people in Jesus Christ. There is one Person, although there are two natures united in this one, divine Person.

Among creatures it is called a person: a singular, complete, free, and intelligent substance.

In God personality is understood in the same sense, but in a more excellent way, as, moreover, everything that we attribute to God is more excellent than when it is attributed to creatures.

Now, admitting in Jesus Christ two persons, or two singular substances, complete, free and intelligent, it is immediately seen that he would be a divided being, and therefore an incomplete being, since every being divided is necessarily incomplete in its species.

The divine person would do one thing and the human person the opposite, since being independent of each other, there would be no connection between the two personalities.

This is impossible. It's a contradiction... It's the destruction of divinity.

There is, therefore, **one person** in Jesus Christ, uniting the two natures, divine and human, and each nature retaining its proper operations.

In this way there is in Jesus Christ a divine and human intelligence, a divine and human love; because such faculties belong to nature and not to the person; but all this is united in one person, and that person in Jesus Christ is **divine** .

Now the parent of a man is not the mother of nature but the mother **of the person** of her child.

Man is composed of a body and a soul.

Our mother is not the mother of our soul; but **of our person** , composed of body and soul.

Maria Sma, in the same way, is the mother, not only of the body of Jesus Christ, but of **his person** .

Now this person is a divine person.

Therefore, Mary is Mother of the divine person of Jesus Christ; in other words, she is the **Mother of God** .

It's simple, it's logical, it's right.

But poor Protestantism prefers to renew old errors, rehabilitate heresies doomed to 16 centuries before adopting Catholic doctrine.

### **SAW. the mother of men**

As a logical corollary of the divine motherhood of Maria Sma. Catholicism deduces that Maria Sma. She is also the Mother of Men.

Protestantism, rejecting the first truth, must also reject the second.

By denying divine motherhood, the poor heretics deny the Holy Virgin's spiritual motherhood.

In this way they retain nothing more of the Mother of God, neither in their belief nor in their worship. It's a complete ruin... It's a truncated, falsified, incomplete Christianity.

Maria is to them a strange creature, unknown, even an enemy.

Poor blindness, poor hatred!

Chapter XI is the complete exposition of this beautiful and consoling truth, of Mary's spiritual motherhood.

In times of discouragement, Catholics re-read this exhibition, full of light, enchantment and sweetness, and they will find in this truth an encouragement and comfort in the practice of the holy religion.

A parent's thing is to give life.

Giving life is being a mother.

Mary gave us her soul-life.

Therefore, she is our Mother.

There are, in fact, **two lives** in us: a material life and a spiritual life, because man is a composite of body and soul, and both of these components have a life of their own.

The life of the body is a **natural** life that it receives from the soul.

The soul-life is a **supernatural** life that you receive from God.

It is called the life of the body, **human life** .

It is called the life of the soul **divine life** .

Each of these lives has a different origin.

Human life comes from the union of **body and soul** ,

The divine life comes from the union of the **soul with God** .

We know where the life of the body comes from: from our parents.

The life of our soul comes from God; therefore, He is our Father, but He comes to us by Sma. Virgin Mary; therefore, she is our Mother.

God is the **source** .

Mary is the **channel** .

Both Jesus and Mary cooperate in our soul life.

So, if God is our Father, Maria Sma. it's our Mother!

Five main reasons confirm the doctrine of the **spiritual** Motherhood of Mary, reasons explained and commented on in the same chapter XI that can be summarized in this reasoning:

Christ is our life, as St. Paul says (Phil. 1,21)

Now Mary is the Mother of this life.

Therefore, she is also our Mother.

This is why the Gospel says that Mary gave birth to her firstborn Son (Mt.1,25).

This firstborn is unique in the natural order; in the spiritual order He is first among many brothers. Ut sit ipse primogenitus in multis fratribus, as the Apostle says. (Rm.8.29)

## **VII. the wedding of Cana**

It is one of the most enchanting scenes in the Gospel, and it highlights the universal **mediation** of the Blessed Virgin.

It is the reason why the Protestants falsified the text that clearly expresses the **mission** of the Mother of Jesus.

This is what is exposed in Chapter XIV. showing, by the parallel texts, the true meaning of this step.

It is a simple wedding party for a relative of Maria Sma. or of St. Joseph.

Mary was there present.

Jesus and his disciples had also been invited.

In the middle of the party, the wine is lacking.

Mary, with the look of a mother and a housewife, perceives the embarrassment of the waiters and without their revealing their embarrassment, she turns to Jesus and whispers in his ear: they have no more wine.

Nothing else.

Jesus listened and understood; that's enough.

Turning his head slightly to the side of his shuddering Mother, he responds with a soft smile:

Let it be, Lady, I'll take care of it, though it's not my time yet.

Mary returns her Son's smile, and addressing the servants directly, she says to them, visibly transmitting her Son's recommendation: Do whatever he tells you.

Then Jesus gets up, orders the ablution urns to be filled with water... and, at his Mother's request, changes the water into wine, making this mute the first of his miracles.

He manifested his glory and his disciples believed in him (John 2.11)

This scene is not simply a fact; it is **a law** .

The law, promulgated by Jesus, that all his graces must pass through the hands of his Blessed Mother.

He, the Christ, is the **beginning** and source of all graces; Maria is your transmitting **channel** .

It is the conclusion that St. Augustine draws from this fact.

God, having given us Jesus Christ through Mary, he says, this order no longer changes, and Mary, having collaborated for our salvation in the Incarnation,

which is the **universal principle** of grace, must contribute in all other operations, which are dependent of this first one.

To prove this **theological** deduction , we have three evangelical **facts** , without reply.

All the graces given to men refer to this threefold manifestation of God: the Incarnation, the Visitation and the miracle of Cana.

Constantly Jesus Christ comes into the world, **through Mary** ;

Constantly Mary brings us her Jesus, through the **Visitation** ;

Constantly God gives his thanks, through the **Intercession** of Mary.

It is a general law, confirmed by these three evangelical facts; or rather, it is the **conclusion** of these three facts,

The scene at Cana is not a simple wedding feast, it is the image of the great feast to which Jesus Christ invites us, to which he himself presides, but where we also meet his Blessed Mother, to introduce us to him, and, if need be, ask him for a miracle on our behalf.

The scene at Cana is therefore the manifestation of **Jesus by Mary** for the world to believe in Him, as for this fact the disciples believed in Jesus.

### **VIII. Death and Assumption of Mary**

It is the subject of Chapter XIII.

It's another attack from Protestantism.

They certainly do not deny the death of the Mother of Jesus, but they attribute a natural death to her, like any other living creature.

As for the Assumption into Heaven, in body and soul, they completely deny it.

It was proved in this chapter, because it is like Maria Sma. died.

Having been preserved from original sin, she was not subject to the general law of death, as this law being the punishment of sin, but was subject to death by her human **nature** which was mortal.

By a special privilege, God exempted the Holy Virgin from death, as in the earthly paradise, by a special privilege, He had exempted our first parents from death.



The rebellion of Adam and Eve made them lose this privilege and they were, as punishment for their disobedience, condemned to death.

God restored this privilege to his Blessed Mother; she, however, in order to be more like her divine Son, did not want to enjoy this privilege and preferred to pass through the door of death, to enter into glory.

Mary died, as we all must die: **in the love** of God.

She died, as martyrs die, **for love** .

And she died as was fitting for the Mother of God to die: **of love** .

Such a death required the **Assumption** .

Love is eternal, it is indestructible, as the apostle says.

And Maria Sma. it was all love.

She could not be subjected to the putrefaction of the grave.

Six beautiful arguments prove this great truth.

They are too beautiful to summarize them; you need to reread them all in chapter XII of this book.

Mary should, as much as possible, become like her son.

Jesus rose on the third day to ascend to heaven and occupy his throne with the Eternal Father.

Maria Sma. she also had to rise again on the third day, and ascend to heaven, to occupy her place of honor, as Mother of God, co-Redeemer of men, Queen of Heaven and Mother of men.

Jesus was to **crown in glory** that which he had already crowned on earth, and he was to keep her close to him in heaven, as he had kept her close to him here on earth.

The glory of the Virgin Mother in heaven must correspond to these three immeasurable things:

To the **dignity** of Mother of God;

To the **graces** received during your mortal life;

To the excellence of its **merits** .

Three unfathomable abysses for us... involving the impenetrable grandeur of the Immaculate Virgin and demanding her resurrection and assumption into heaven.

## IX. The Mediatrix of Graces

It is the last expository chapter of this work, destroying the great protestant objection against Mary's universal **mediation** in the **distribution** of graces, and laying this truth on the indestructible basis of the Gospel, logic and common sense.

If there is a Mediator between God and men, says St. Paul, and this mediator is Jesus Christ (Tim.2,5).

The Catholic Church teaches and defends this truth, and has never sought to place another Mediator between God and men.

It should be noted, therefore, that just as there is **only one Redeemer** , although there is by this Redeemer his Most Holy Hand, united to Him, suffering with Him, and redeeming the world with Him, so there is **only one Mediator** , although there is on His side, His Blessed Mother, helping him in this office of distributing graces, as she helped him with his requisition.

There is a double way of being a Mediator:

1. As main **agent** , required.
2. As in **charge** of preparing the ways.

The first Mediator is the **main one** .

The second is **secondary** .

The first is necessary.

The second is useful.

Maria Sma. she is the helper in charge of this office for Jesus Christ, remaining in the background, and acting in everything in accordance with his divine Son.

Its mediation is instrumental, ministerial, and does not in any way prejudice the essential mediation of Jesus Christ. on whom it depends, as the person in charge of a business depends in everything on the owner of this business.

This secondary mediation of Mary is twofold:

1. **general** , with Jesus, between God and men.
2. **private** , between Jesus and men.

Jesus Christ is the only Mediator, because he alone, by his divine and human nature, is in the middle, between God and men, and can thus serve as a bond of reconciliation and union between them.

Mary is a simple **creature** , but raised to the dignity of Mother of God; and, through her divine motherhood, she is **united with her Son** , for the accomplishment of the redemption of the world.

It is true that Mary had an active part, alongside Jesus, in the **Redemptive** work , for the very fact, she must have a part in the work of our **salvation** , and in all the graces that are given to us in view of the Redeemer, for all this is a one and the same Redemptive work.

Jesus and Mary were at work together; together they must be in glory.

So we can, and should, draw this beautiful conclusion from St. Bernardina de Sena, which sums it all up:

All graces transmitted to men in this world, come to them through a triple process: They go from the Father to Christ, from Christ to the Holy Virgin, from the Holy Virgin to us.

## **Conclusion**

At the end of these pages defending the privileges of the Blessed Virgin, I feel the need to withdraw, to put down for a moment the double-edged sword of controversy, to address to the loving Mother of Jesus and our Mother a fervent prayer for the poor and unhappy Protestants, who they close their hearts to the love of their dear heavenly Mother, to let the hatred of the ancient serpent penetrate them.

In this way, in spite of themselves, they fulfill yet another prophecy concerning the Immaculate Virgin and her defrauders.

Addressing the cursed serpent who had just lost our first parents, God said to him:

I will put enmities between you and the woman, between your posterity and her posterity (Gen.3,15).

The woman referred to there is visibly the **Blessed woman** .

The posterity of this woman are those who honor and invoke her, who proclaim **her blessed** , according to their own prophecy and to the example of St. Elizabeth.

The serpent is the devil, the angel of darkness, the father of error and lies.

The posterity of this serpent are those who revolt against this Blessed woman, thus continuing throughout the centuries the eternal separation between God and the devil, between Mary and the serpent.

Sad prophecy, which we see fulfilled in the contempt that the unhappy Protestants vote for the Mother of Jesus.

O dear Mother! Mother of mercy, enlighten the poor and miserable who have gone astray, and may your motherly hand extend to them too, to reach them the grace of conversion.

In these pages I fight their errors, solely with the aim of showing them the light and love they ignore, as well as making sure and extending the love that Catholics consecrate to you.

May these pages be bearers of light for the first and of love for all.

It is the author's only aspiration.

Fr. Julio Maria