

**HOLY ROSARY MEDITATIONS**  
*FROM A TRADITIONAL DOMINICAN PRIEST*



## ***First Joyful Mystery : The Annunciation***

Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee.

**With these few simple words the Archangel Gabriel greeted the Virgin Mary, to whom he had been sent by God to announce to her that she was to become the Mother of the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity.**

**St. Maximilian Kolbe thus comments on this sublime greeting:**

"The Lord is with thee". O truly, God is always with her and in such a close manner, so perfectly. Is she not (as the Fathers say) "a part of the Most Holy Trinity" ? And wherever she goes, she carries with her the whole Blessed Trinity... There where she is absent, Jesus is absent also; and there where she is, there is the Most Holy Trinity. (ESI, p. 50)

**Let us not be afraid, then, to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to pray to her a lot, to pray to her always. Let us not let ourselves be troubled by these people who say, especially since the Council, that we must not exaggerate our devotion to our Lady, that we must be more like the Protestants who refuse the mediation of our Lady and want to go directly to God. How can we decide to go directly to God when we see that He decided not to come directly to us but through Mary ?**

**No. The angel, sent by God, said to her : "The Lord is with thee". The Lord is with Mary, he is nowhere else: if we look for Him outside of her we will not find Him for He is with her.**

## ***Second Joyful Mystery : The Visitation***

And it came to pass, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe in her womb leapt. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb ! And how have I deserved that the mother of my Lord should come to me ?" (Lk 1 : 41-43)

**When our Lady heard these words of St. Elizabeth, she immediately realized that her secret — her great secret that she would not dare reveal even to her husband St. Joseph — had been revealed by the Holy Ghost to her cousin. She could freely confide to her, then, the innermost sentiments of her heart with regard to this ineffable grace God had given her to become His mother and she goes on to do this in her magnificent song of praise, the *Magnificat*.**

**We too must ask the Holy Ghost to reveal to us "the secret of Mary", as**



**St. Louis de Montfort calls it, so that, in turn, she herself will reveal herself to us. Again, Fr. Kolbe speaks of both these revelations. Of the first, the revelation by the Holy Ghost, he says, speaking to his brothers:**

My little sons... it is not given to everyone to know the Immaculate, but only to those who beg for such a grace on their knees... Only the Holy Ghost can make His spouse known to whom He wishes and how He wishes. (Ricciardi, p. 247-248)

**And of the revelation that the Immaculate herself makes, he says :**

Human language must serve merely to make the soul approach Her, because it will be She Herself Who will manifest Herself more and more clearly to the soul... Approaching directly to Her heart you will attain a greater knowledge of Her and be inflamed by a greater love for Her than all human words together could teach you. (SK 1317)

**Let us pray, then, in this decade, asking the Holy Ghost to reveal to us the secret of Mary, and that she herself will reveal herself to us too.**

### ***Third Joyful Mystery : The Nativity of our Lord at Bethlehem***

And she wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the inn. (Lk 2 : 7)

**"Because there was no room for them in the inn." With these benign words St. Luke — or rather the sweet Virgin Mother herself, for she is the source of this account — with these benign words our Lady describes the circumstances that led to Jesus having to be born in such wretched conditions. How hard, how cruel even must have been those Jews at Bethlehem to have turned away out into the cold this poor young mother about to give birth to her child — and yet our Lady describes it without the least bit of rancour, as if it were perfectly normal, an unfortunate circumstance that couldn't be helped and that no one is to be blamed for. It is just : "because there was no room for them in the inn". How different she was from people nowadays who are so angry about their "rights" or other peoples "rights" being infringed upon and who want to take up arms and start revolutions to bring about "justice".**

**In this meek acceptance of the maltreatment of men, she was simply reflecting the meekness of the Babe she was about to bring forth, of whose birth St. Paul says, in a verse quoted in the liturgy at Christmas :**

The goodness and kindness of God our Saviour (has) appeared. (Tit 3 : 4)

**This was the Babe who, when He would have reached the fullness of His age and the time would come for Him to suffer His ignominious Passion, would display again, in an even more wondrous manner, this sweetness and benignity, so that St. Peter could write of Him :**

When he was reviled, (he) did not revile: when he suffered, he threatened not : but delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly. (1 Pe 2 : 23)

**By this meekness our Lord wanted to show His great love for men and thus soften their wicked hearts and win their love and teach us to do the same. Thus St. John of the Cross says in a letter to one of his penitents:**

Love very much those who contradict you and don't love you. For it is in this way that love is born in the heart where it is absent. This is what God does with us : He loves us so that we might love Him, because of the love He has for us. (La Peñuela, 1591)

(There) where there is no love, put love and you will reap love. (6/7/1591)

**O Child Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like unto thine.**

### ***Fourth Joyful Mystery : The Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple***

Behold, this child is set for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thine own soul a sword shall pierce, so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. (Lk 2 : 34-35)

**By these words, the holy old man, Simeon, revealed to our Lady, at the very beginning of the life of Jesus, while her heart was still in the full bloom of the joy of having given birth, the terrible sufferings that awaited her child and herself and the irrevocable division of the entire Jewish people because of the refusal of most of them to accept their Messiah <sup>1</sup>. Certainly she knew this before from her reading of the Old Testament which was full of prophecies fortelling all this, prophecies that she, the Queen of prophets, understood better than anyone. And yet God sends her this prophet, Simeon, to tell her these things, to remind her of them, to underline them and impress them forcefully in her heart already, so early on, even before the immense happiness that filled her heart at the birth of Jesus had begun to subside.**

**"Why ?", we might be tempted to ask. Why didn't God leave her alone, at**

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<sup>1</sup> — Cf Prophet who rends his garment before King Jeroboam (3 Kings 11 : 29-33).

least for a little while, and let her enjoy for a time in peace the joy of her motherhood of the God-man ? Yes, she will suffer, and Jesus will suffer, she will suffer because Jesus will suffer, and she knows it perfectly well — but why insist on it like this by sending her a prophet to remind her of it so explicitly and so soon ?

But Mary is too close to God now to be able to expect to have any human respite: she is too closely united now to the mystery of the redemption to escape its inner logic. The very reason for God's becoming man — and so the whole reason why Mary has become the Mother of God — is so that this God-man can die on the cross to save us by his sacrifice. So it is perfectly normal that her maternity be, from the beginning, a suffering maternity. The Incarnation is essentially redemptive and dolorous: so her divine maternity will necessarily be redemptive and dolorous too.

This is, in fact, the whole meaning of the Presentation in the Temple of the first-born of the Jews, in memory of the first-born of the Israelites who were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb on their doorposts on the night of the first Passover in Egypt. That was all to prepare for the coming of the true First-Born and now He has come, the true Lamb is now offered by Mary in the Temple already as a sort of Offertory that anticipates His bloody offering on Calvary: and so most fittingly Simeon is sent to remind her, at this moment, of the great mystery of God in which she has become the most intimate participant.

### ***Fifth Joyful Mystery : The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple***

And after three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting among the learned men and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. (Lk 2 : 46-47)

"The just man liveth by faith" says St. Paul, quoting the prophet Habacuc who had said it already in the Old Testament <sup>2</sup>. Mary and Joseph were "the just" *par excellence* and so they had to live by faith more than anyone. At the very beginning, its true, they had each had a revelation by an angel to inform them that the mystery of the Incarnation was to take place by the Virgin Birth of the Son of Mary — but from that moment on, they lived again by pure faith. This child that had been given to them so miraculously appeared,

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<sup>2</sup> — Rm 1 : 17, Hab 2 : 4.

**outwardly, like all other children. He worked no miracles, He gave no teaching, He was just a little boy like all the other little boys of His age at Nazareth, so much so that when He finally did begin to teach and work miracles, the Gospel tells us that His fellow townsmen at Nazareth were amazed and said :**

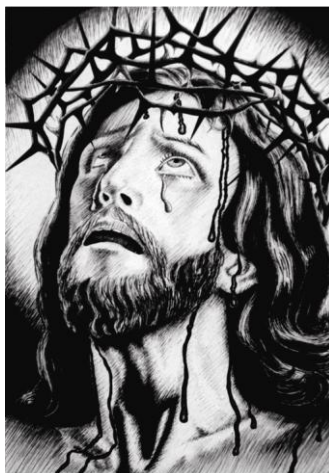
**"Where did he get all this ?" and "What is this wisdom that is given to him ?" and, "What mean such miracles wrought by his hands ? Is not this the carpenter's son ? Is not his mother called Mary ?" (Mk 6 : 2-3 ; Mt 13 : 55)**

**Here, however, in this mystery of the finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple, already the first rays of the Sun of Justice begin to dawn. The Word of God, the light that enlightens all men who come into the world, lets a little glimmering of His brilliance shine out upon the greatest teachers of the Law assembled in the Temple at Jerusalem. And, says the evangelist : "They were amazed".**

**We can well imagine that they would be : what must it have been like "to hear and see and touch the word of life", as St. John the Apostle says at the beginning of his first epistle. Mary and Joseph are amazed too, along with the others, for He had never before revealed His wisdom to them either. Then, after showing men this brief glimpse of His glory, He returns again to the obscurity of Nazareth, leaving the Jews at Jerusalem dumbfounded and plunging His parents once more into the night of faith.**

**God works the same way with us. He gives us brief glimpses of His glory in order to confirm our faith and encourage us to seek him, but then He disappears again into the dark night, into "the abyss of faith", as St. John of the Cross calls it, because it is there alone that He can really be found here below. We can't know Him by vision here below because He is too bright for our intelligences : the only way to truly know Him is by the darkness of faith.**

**O Mary and Joseph, prototypes and models of faith, help us "live by faith" so that we might be truly just before God.**



A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS

## ***First Sorrowful Mystery : The Agony in the Garden***

My soul is sorrowful unto death : stay you here and watch with me.  
(Mt 26 : 38)

These words of our Lord to Peter, James and John, His most intimate disciples, just before He goes off to pray alone in the Garden of Gethsemani, reveal the depths of His Sacred Heart. They reveal that this terribly human heart was so full of sorrow that it was enough already, in itself, to kill Him : and that, in its sorrow, like all human hearts, in its distress it sought the help and support of friends. This is seen also a little later in the awfully poignant words of Our Lord when He returns to find these closest friends of His sleeping.

Simon, sleepest thou ? He asks, astonished. Could you not watch one hour (with Me) ? (Mt 26 : 40 ; Mk 14 : 37)

All of this shows that if Jesus "trod the wine press (of His Passion) alone", as the Prophet said He did, it wasn't because He wanted to. If He had found someone to help Him, He would have gladly accepted their help, but men refused it to Him, they abandoned Him, leaving Him alone in His suffering.

This abandonment, however, was not absolutely universal. There was one disciple who was not sleeping while Our Lord passed that dreadful night in Gethsemani : she was watching with Him faithfully and continued to unite Herself to Him all through the torments of His Passion which began there. She thus trod the wine press with Him, cooperating with Him in the salvation of the world and thus merited the glorious title of Coredemptrix of the human race. O Sorrowful Mother, help us to watch with Jesus and unite ourselves to His Passion as you did.

## ***Second Sorrowful Mystery : The Scourging at the Pillar***

I find no cause in this man in those things wherein you accuse him... I will chastise him therefore and release him... Then, therefore, Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. (Lk 23 : 15-16 ; Jn 19 : 1)

**These words of Pilate aren't very logical :**

I find no cause in this man... I will chastise him therefore.

**If he finds no cause in him, why chastise him ? And he even says that it is *because he finds no cause in him that he chastises him* :**

I find no cause in this man... I will chastise him *therefore*.

**Pilate, then, was obviously no philosopher. He already showed this very clearly by the cynical remark he made to Our Lord just before this when he said :**

What is truth ?

**He may not be logical but he is at least consistent. He doesn't care for truth, and so he flaunts it openly in his actions, acting purely out of political motives and pressures. How many injustices are committed in this way, simply out of indifference, or rather contempt, for truth and justice. How rare it is to find a man who acts out of conscience and not just out of cynical self-interest.**

**And so Pilate "chastises" Jesus by scourging Him. The Holy Shroud of Turin shows just how cruel a "chastisement" this was. The Roman soldiers, not limited to the 40 blows that Jewish law imposed as a maximum, and no doubt egged on by the bribes of the Jews who desired that this "chastisement" be fatal, inflicted on Our Lord more than double this amount and a careful study of the Shroud has shown that is absolutely impossible for a man to have survived such an ordeal. Our Lord, then, must have worked a miracle so that He could suffer more in order to repair the honour of God so foully besmirched by so many sins of impurity. At the end of it all His sacred body was nothing but a torn up rag, soaking in a huge pool of its own blood.**

**O Immaculate Virgin, by your intercession may these unjust sufferings of the Lamb of God purge sinful souls of all the iniquitous delights in which they are plunged and bring them back to God.**



### ***Third Sorrowful Mystery: The Crowning with Thorns***

Shall I crucify your king ?

**These words of Pontius Pilate addressed to the Jews and reported by the Evangelist St. John ring out down through the centuries with an awful profundity.**

Shall I crucify your king ?

**On one level these words are a simple ironic quip launched by Pilate to these cantankerous Jews who exasperate him by their inexplicable hatred of this innocent man who has done them no harm. In spite of Pilate's genuine lack of animosity towards Jesus, these words are hardly fit to gain Him any favour with His people. On the contrary, presenting Him, as they do, as a ridiculous parody of a king, they insinuate a sarcastic gibe against the Jewish people itself by implying that they would have such a king. Similarly the soldiers mocked Him saying :**

Hail King of the Jews !

**and spat in His face.**

**On another, deeper level, however, these words express the horrific malice of the sin committed by the Jewish people in rejecting their Messiah, the Son of God. This meaning was no doubt present already, to a certain extent, in the mind of Pilate himself, who, at the same time as he taunts the Jews for having such a ridiculous king, wonders how they can be so vicious towards so excellent a person. The depth of his question is revealed even more when we remember the fact that he really believes that Jesus is the King of the Jews, as is shown by his insistence that a declaration of this kingship be written for all to see on the cross and his adamant refusal to change it, saying :**

*Quod scripsi, scripsi !* What I have written, I have written !

**His question, then, expresses a sincere amazement :**

Shall I crucify your king ?

**That is to say, how is it that you ask me to crucify Him who is truly your king ?**

**But Pilate, being a pagan, can only vaguely guess at the enormity of the terrible incongruity that he evokes, it is a mystery that far surpasses his understanding.**

Shall I crucify your king ?

**Yes, Pilate, you shall crucify their king, and it is a far more grievous crime than you can even imagine. But it has been so decreed and prophesied centuries ago already : the King of the Jews shall be a crucified king, more,**

**He shall be king *because* He is crucified.**

*Regnavit a ligno Deus.* God has reigned from the Cross.

**You wonder at this, as well you might, for this is not the way of the kings of this world — but did He not tell you that His kingdom is not of this world ?**

### ***Fourth Sorrowful Mystery : The Carrying of the Cross***

And bearing the cross for himself, he went forth to the place called the Skull... (Jn 19 : 17)

**The reality of the terrible rigour of the chastisement of sin is manifested to us by this pitiful scene of Jesus, crushed by the weight of the Cross, which He is unable to carry without falling, He who, St. Paul tells us**

upholds all things by the word of His power (Hb 1 : 3).

**Indeed, the chastisement of sin is heavier than the whole universe, for it is the hand of God Himself which imposes it directly and no one can resist it. Men today don't understand this at all, but they must learn to understand it or an eternity of woe awaits them.**

**St. AUG tries to teach men this lesson in his commentary on the verse of the Psalm that says :**

*"Quis est homo qui vult vitam et diligit dies videre bonos ?* Who is the man who desires life : who loves to see good days ?" (Ps 33 : 13)

What do you want ? "To live and see good days." Listen, then, and do what the Psalmist tells you : "Keep your tongue from all evil". "I don't want to do that, says wretched man, I don't want to watch over my tongue and keep it from all evil ; I want to live and see good days."

**And St. Augustine gives an example to show the absurdity of this attitude.**

If a worker said to you : I want to ravage this vineyard and receive my salary from you ; you brought me to your vineyard to prune it, I will cut off all the branches that give fruit, I will cut off the vines themselves in order to take away from you any hope of a harvest, and after I've done that, you will pay me for my work. Wouldn't you say that such a man was out of his mind ?

Such are the men who want to do evil, to take false oaths, to blaspheme God, murmur, commit frauds, get drunk... commit adultery... have recourse to sorcerers, and see good days.

**Isn't this a perfect description of the wicked and adulterous generation in the midst of which we find ourselves ? They want to shake off the law of God**

**and do all the evil that is in their hearts and, after that, "see good days".**

**St. AUG concludes, saying to these men :**

You cannot, while doing evil, demand to receive the reward due to those who do good. Just because you are unjust, does that mean that God is unjust too ?

**O Jesus, crushed under the weight of our sins, by the merits of Your Holy Passion, convert us, make us become truly just, so that we might "see good days".**

### ***Fifth Sorrowful Mystery: The Suffering and Death of Our Lord on the Cross***

The silence of Our Lord on the Cross at Calvary was almost as complete as His silence in the Manger at Bethlehem. It was no longer the time to speak, "the seed of the word had been disseminated" (*sparso Verbi semine*), now, again, the Word falls silent.

He no longer speaks to the world which has heard Him and rejected Him. The few words He has left He speaks to His elect — His Mother, His beloved disciple, the converted thief — and, especially, to His Father :

Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

The Word made flesh no longer speaks on the Cross — He works. Preaching is necessary, souls need to be instructed, taught the truth, but that is only part of Christ's mission. Teaching isn't enough, men's souls are hard : they know the truth, but they don't care. God tells them, down through the ages, through His prophets, through His priests, but they just don't care. Teaching isn't enough, something more is needed, something much more. These stones which are their hearts must be cracked and broken open, and they are so hard that the only thing powerful enough to do that is this unnameable suffering of the Man-God on the Cross. And so He no longer speaks, He gives Himself up completely to pure suffering, and by this suffering He works, He works the salvation of the world.

And He succeeds. As He dies the earth suddenly quivers and quakes : the rocks groan, crack and shatter, signifying the breaking open of the hard hearts of the sons of Adam who, from this moment on, suddenly start

**flocking towards the true God they had abandoned for their sins and their idols.**

"When I shall be lifted up", He had said, when He was still speaking, "I will draw all men to myself".

**And He has kept His word.**

**O Jesus, by the infinite merits of your cruel agony and death on the Cross, soften our hearts and the hearts of those for whom we pray.**



### ***First Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection***

Sir, we have remembered, that that seducer said, while he was yet alive : "After three days I will rise again". Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day ; lest his disciples come, and steal him away, and say to the people : "He is risen from the dead" ; and the last error shall be worse than the first. (Mt 27 : 63-64)

**Thus spoke the Jews to Pilate after the death of Our Lord. Being bald-faced liars themselves, they imagined that the Apostles would do what they themselves would have done in their place, that is, steal Our Lord's body and then lie to the people saying He had risen from the dead. And so they take measures to prevent them from doing this lest "the last error be worse than the first", that is, lest more people be "seduced" by Our Lord after His death than had been during His life.**

**But all this manoeuvring was for naught and, indeed, the "last error" did become worse than the first, much worse. During His life the preaching of Jesus had converted only a small number of people in the little corner of Palestine where He lived, and almost all of them abandoned Him at the moment of His death. But after His resurrection not only a good number of Jews believed in Him, but much more than that, when the Apostles began to**



**preach to them, the Gentiles believed too. The whole world began to leave the worship of idols and serve the true God in a movement of conversion that was soon to take over the whole Roman empire and make millions of converts well outside its borders too, a movement that reached the ends of the earth and that continues to this day. The last error was indeed worse than the first — the Jews didn't know how well they spoke.**

**Let us not worry too much, then, about the present crisis in the Church, where we see Her humiliated and apparently ruined by Her enemies. This Passion She is going through now will most certainly be followed by a Resurrection, a Resurrection in proportion to the Passion that preceded it, a Resurrection that will be all the more glorious for having been preceded by a humiliation that was so ignominious. All we see Her suffering now is just to prepare a future resurrection that will bring Her a glory She has never yet known.**

**As Our Lady promised us at Fatima :**

**In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph.**

## ***Second Glorious Mystery : The Ascension of our Lord into Heaven***

**Therefore, if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, shall appear, then you too will appear with him in glory. (Col 3 : 1-4)**

**These magnificent words of St. Paul to the Christians at Colossus, which the Church has us chant at the Easter Vigil, reveal to us the whole new horizon that is opened up to us by the Resurrection of Christ and His Ascension into heaven, which are not just events that happened to Him, but affect profoundly each one of us who believe in Him. We who believe in Christ, St. Paul tells us, have died with Him and risen with Him, and our real life, our "conversation" as he says in another place, is in heaven.**

**And all that has practical consequences in our lives that we live now "upon the earth", as he goes on to say immediately :**

**Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth : fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence and covetousness which is the service of idols. For which things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of unbelief : in which you walked some time, when you lived in them.**

**The morality of our religion has its source in the depths of the supernatural mysteries it reveals to us : it is because "our life is hidden with Christ in God" through the Ascension that we must "mortify our members which are upon the earth". It is the reason why we must keep ourselves far from the impurity of "the children of unbelief", it is why St. Paul tells us in another place :**

(Be) simple sons of God, without blame, in the midst of a depraved and perverse nation, among whom you shine out like stars in the world.  
(Ph 2 : 15)

**And so he goes on to spell out even more explicitly these consequences of the Ascension :**

But now put you also all away : anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of your mouth... stripping yourselves of the old man with his deeds. And putting on the new, him who is renewed unto knowledge, according to the image of him who created him. (Col : 3 : 5-10)

**O celestial Virgin, by this divine life we have received in baptism, the life of the Risen Christ ascended to heaven, help us mortify the old man in us and put on the new and shine out like stars in the darkness of this world.**

### ***Third Glorious Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lady and the Apostles at Pentecost***

(The apostles) were persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus... (Ac 1 : 14)

**It is thus that St. Luke describes to us the novena of prayer accomplished by the Apostles as they "stayed in Jerusalem awaiting the promise of the Father" as Jesus had commanded them : they persevered in prayer with the women and especially with "Mary the mother of Jesus".**

**The sacred writers are exceedingly discreet about Our Lady and mention her only very rarely in Holy Scripture — but that just makes it all the more significant when they do mention her. Thus we see her appear only at the crucial moments of salvation : at the conception and birth of Christ where we see her exercising her role as Mother ; at His death on Calvary, where we see her cooperating with Him in the Redemption of the world ; and then, mysteriously, at the moment of the Coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. This was also a very crucial moment, for it was for this, in fact, that Christ**

had come to earth, the sending of the Holy Ghost was the whole reason of His coming, as He Himself declared :

I have come to send fire upon the earth

that is, the fire of the Holy Ghost, Who descends visibly in tongues of fire upon the Apostles and all the other disciples assembled in the Cenacle on the day of Pentecost. And again, at that moment, Holy Scripture expressly mentions that Mary was there.

Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, says that it was through the intercession of Mary on that day that the Holy Ghost came. It was through Mary, then, that the Apostles received the Holy Ghost that Jesus had promised would lead them into all truth, and ever since it has been the prayer of Mary that has sustained the Church in all her trials. It was Mary's prayer that obtained the Church the strength to endure the first persecution which began with the martyrdom of Stephen and it was her prayer that converted the persecutor Saul and made him become the great light and Apostle Paul, Teacher of the gentiles.

The ways of God do not change, for He is not like man, in time, but eternal. In the terrible crisis the Church is undergoing today, then, it is to Mary again that the Church must turn to obtain the light and strength she needs to get out of this impossible situation in which she finds herself. Our Lady gave the Church and the world the solution to its present difficulties at Fatima but, up until now, she has not been heeded. Recently Bishop Fellay has launched a great Rosary crusade to ask the faithful to offer our Lady twelve million rosaries and as many sacrifices in order to obtain the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart, which is the only way out of the quandary where all our refusals to listen to her have put us in. Let us offer this decade especially, then, to ask the grace to be docile to this appeal and be very generous to pray and do penance so that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, might come to the aid of the Church once again.

### ***Fourth Glorious Mystery : The Assumption of our Lady, Body and Soul, into Heaven***

*"Quae est ista quae ascendit sicut aurora consurgens, pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol ? Who is this who arises like the dawn, as beautiful as the moon, as resplendent as the sun ?"*

These words are attributed to the angels the day of the Assumption who

see the body of Our Lady, which « rises up like the dawn » and ascends far above their own choirs to sit at the right hand of Christ. "*Quae est ista ?*" they say to each other : "Who is this ?" They ask because they don't know. The mystery of the glory of Mary surpasses them — in spite of their seraphic intelligences, plunged in the light of the beatific vision, they are reduced, stupified, to stuttering questions to which they know they will never have the answer. "*Quae est ista ?*" The glory of Mary surpasses them and will surpass them for all eternity. As Pius IX says, speaking of this glory :

no other thought than that of God Himself can measure its grandeur.

It would seem, then, that this mystery of the Assumption of Our Lady puts a great distance between her and us. On seeing her exalted to this summit of glory that surpasses us so much, are we not condemned to remain like children abandoned forever by their mother ? And if it were only during this life here below, we could perhaps accept it, but even after our death, in heaven, will we not always be very far away from her because of this ineffable glory that we will never begin to understand ? If the seraphim are overwhelmed by her glory, what about us ? It would almost seem that this glory of Mary that distances her from us is a cause of sadness for us.

[A child loves to see his mother happy and praised, but if because of that, she is separated from him, sadness invades his heart in spite of himself. There is nothing he can do about that : this glory saddens him, not because he doesn't love his mother, but precisely because he loves her too much to be able to bear being separated from her.]

But happily we are not the only ones to have hesitations about this glory of Mary — for she herself, more than anyone, has, with regard to it, a certain reserve. It is the same sentiment we can see behind a little remark of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus near the end of her life, when she says, speaking of her great attraction for littleness :

(Jesus will have to transform my soul after my death) so that I can put up with eternal delight.

If St. Thérèse could develop such a love of humility and lowliness, and a corresponding distaste for all elevation, even if it be celestial, what must we think of the sentiments in the soul of Mary, she who, on hearing that she was to become the Mother of God, immediately threw herself down into the nothingness she so loved saying : « Behold the handmaid of the Lord » ?

It is very difficult for us, who are so proud, to understand that. We think

**that it is wonderful to have great desires of lifting ourselves up to God and we blame ourselves for not having enough of these sorts of desires. No doubt there is some truth in that, but let us remember that Satan too had such desires : « I shall be like the Most High » he said. And he is still repeating it. But it is he who was thrown down to the depths of hell, while the « handmaid of the Lord » took his place.**

["He who exalts himself shall be humbled", says Our Lord, "and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

This paradox is a mystery that we do not understand, but that it is sovereignly important that we understand if we want to save our souls. Let us meditate upon it when we recite this fourth glorious mystery, let us follow the counsel of St. John of the Cross, who says :

Constantly remind yourself of eternal life, and of the fact that the most abject and the most needy and those that have the least esteem of themselves will enjoy in God the highest lordship and the greatest glory <sup>3</sup>.]

**We have nothing to fear, then, from this mystery of the Assumption of Our Lady. It is true that Mary is elevated to an almost infinite glory, but that doesn't, as it were, affect her in the least, for her heart isn't there. Just as Satan will continue to repeat forever in his eternal obstination : « I shall be like the Most High », all the while being thrust to the bottom of the abyss by his pride, so also the Blessed Virgin will repeat forever : « Behold the handmaid of the Lord », in spite of the glory she receives because of this humility. In the midst of the « eternal delight » of heaven, she will always feel closer to those who are lowly, that is to us, than to those who are lifted up.**

There is another remark of St. Thérèse which could fittingly be put on the lips of Our Lady in this mystery of her Assumption. « *Je descendrai !* » she said : « I will come down ! », that is, I will come down from heaven after my death. "I will spend my heaven doing good on earth », she declared, and the « shower of roses » which followed her death, the miracles and graces she accorded in abundance and even still accords today are proof of the sincerity of her words.

**Our Lady as well, and much, much more so, said the same thing as she departed this world on the day of her glorious Assumption : « *Je descendrai !* : I will come down ! I will spend my heaven doing good on earth ! »**

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<sup>3</sup> —Maxime n. 129.



Satan says : « I will ascend ! I shall be like the Most High ! » : Mary says : « I will come down ! » Yes, Mary will come down like Thérèse, to do good on earth until the end of time, to us, her poor children. Her motherly heart will not permit her to abandon us here below, but will be, according to her promise at Fatima, the way that will lift us all up to God.

### ***Fifth Glorious Mystery : The Crowning of our Lady, Queen of Heaven and Earth***

To him that shall overcome, I will give him to sit with me on my throne :  
as I also have overcome and have sat with my Father on his throne.  
(Ap 3 : 21)

These words of Our Lord in the book of the Apocalypse apply to all those who believe in Him, and therefore also, and most especially, to Our Lady, who "overcame" the devil more than anyone else, having never been under his dominion even for one instant, since she never sinned and was exempt even from original sin. She reigns, therefore, with Our Lord, more perfectly than anyone, she is truly Queen of heaven and earth.

In one of His parables Our Lord speaks of how the servant who was faithful with five talents will have power over five cities, and the one who was faithful with ten talents will have power over ten cities. What power is given, then, to she who was faithful with the infinitely precious talent given her, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father ? To her is given power over the entire universe.

When we say to her then: "Hail, Holy Queen", it is not just some pious, sentimental title: it's real. She really shares in the authority of Christ, she "sits with Him on His throne", as He Himself puts it in the book of the Apocalypse. And God wants that authority to be recognized and obeyed, especially in these last times: this is surely the fundamental meaning of the spectacular events at Fatima and everything connected to them.

In heaven everyone acknowledges the sovereignty of Her love.  
(OMK 1197) says St. Maximilian Kolbe.

But on earth that is not the case, yet: the reign of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is not yet recognized. Nevertheless, as the same Fr. Kolbe says, it is absolutely imperative that she does reign, or all is lost:

*The Immaculate, Queen of heaven, he writes, must be recognized, and as quickly as possible, as Queen of all men and of every single soul, whether in Poland or beyond its borders, in both hemispheres of the earth. On this, we dare affirm, depends the peace and the happiness of individual persons, of families, of nations, of humanity. (SK 1113, Rycerz Niepokalanej, January, 1926)*

**And he quotes an exclamation of St. Catherine Labourée after Our Lady revealed to her the miraculous medal which seems to foretell the triumph of her heart:**

*"O how pleasant will it be, how pleasant will it be to hear: Mary is Queen of the whole world ! And all her children will repeat: She is the Queen of each one of us !" (SK 1043 Rycerz Niepokalanej, November 1923)*

**And thus he set as the goal of the movement he founded, the Militia Immaculate, precisely the conquering of the world for Our Lady, to submit it to her reign:**

Bend the proud neck of the world before the feet of the Immaculate, he writes: this is the end of the M.I., conquer the whole world and every single soul to Her, and this as soon as possible, as soon as possible, as soon as possible and the reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will take dominion over the world through Her.

It is absolutely necessary to conquer the whole world for Her so that the dominion of sin might cease. (SK 1301 5-20/8/1940)