

CHAPTER III

Continuation of the Preparation of Most Holy Mary with That Which the Most High Conceded to Her on the Third of the Nine Days Preceding the Incarnation.

27. The right hand of the omnipotent God, who opened the entrance of his divinity to most holy Mary, continued to enrich and adorn at the expense of his infinite attributes that most pure spirit and virginal body which He had chosen as his tabernacle, his temple, and the holy City of his habitation. And the heavenly Lady, engulfed in this vastness of the Divinity, winged her flight day by day farther away from earthly things, and transformed Herself more and more into a heavenly being, discovering ever new sacraments in the Most High; for as He is the infinite Object of desire, though the appetite is satiated with that which is received, always more remains to be desired and understood. Not all the hierarchies of the angels, nor all men together, have attained such preferment in blessings, mysteries and sacraments as this Princess attained, especially regarding those due to Her as Mother of the Creator.

28. On the third day of the nine which I am declaring, the same preparations having preceded as described in the first chapter of this Book, the Divinity manifested Himself anew in abstractive vision. Too slow and inadequate are our powers for understanding the increase of the gifts and graces which the Most High then lavished on heavenly Mary, and at this juncture I am at a loss for words to explain even the least portion of what I perceived. I can only express myself by saying the divine wisdom and power proceeded in a manner worthy of Her, She who was to be the Mother of the incarnate Word, in order that (as far as possible) a mere creature could come to possess that similarity and proportion to the divine Persons which was proper. Whoever has even a faint understanding of the distance which lies between the two extremes, the infinite God and the limited human creature, can better understand what is necessary to bring them together and establish a proportion.

29. More and more the Queen of heaven reflected his infinite attributes and virtues; more and more brilliantly shone forth her beauty under the touch of the paintbrush of the divine wisdom and under the colors and lights added to it from on high. On this day She was informed of the works of creation as they happened on the third day. She learned when and how the waters which were beneath the firmament flowed together into one place, disclosing the dry land which the Lord called earth, while He called the waters the sea (Gen. 1:9-10). She learned in what way the earth brought forth the fresh herbs and all plants and fructiferous trees with their seeds, each one according to its kind (Ib. 11-13). She was taught and comprehended the greatness of the sea, its depth and divisions, its correspondence with the streams and the fountains which take their rise from it and flow back into it, as well as the different plants and herbs, the flowers, trees, roots, fruits and seeds. She perceived how all and each one of them serve for the use of man. All this our Queen understood and penetrated with the keenest insight more clearly, distinctly and abundantly than Adam and Solomon themselves. In comparison with Her all those skilled in medicine in the world would appear but ignorant even after the most thorough studies and largest experience. Most holy Mary knew all that was hidden from sight, as the Wise Man says in chapter VII of the book of Wisdom (v. 21); and as She learned it without guile, She

communicated it without envy.* Whatever Solomon says there was realized in Her with incomparable eminence.

30. On some occasions our Queen made use of this science in order to exercise her charity toward the poor and needy, as will be related in the sequence of this History (*Inc.* 668; *Tran.* 156-7, 337; *Cor.* 159, 423). She had it under perfect control, and it was as familiar to Her as the well-trained musician is with his instrument. The same was true of all the rest of the sciences whenever She found it desirable or necessary to make use of them in the service of the Most High, for She was Mistress of all of them more perfectly than any mortal who ever excelled in any art or science. She also possessed superiority over the powers, qualities and operations of the stones, herbs and plants, and in Her was true what Christ our Lord promised to the Apostles and first Christians, that poisonous drinks would not hurt them (Mk. 16:18). This privilege belonged to the Queen as a sovereign, so neither poison nor anything else could ever injure Her or cause Her any harm except with her permission.

31. These privileges and favors the most prudent Princess and Lady always kept concealed, and as I have said She made no use of them for Herself, desiring not to be deprived of a share in the suffering which had been chosen by her most holy Son. Before conceiving Him and becoming his Mother She was inspired with divine knowledge and science regarding the passibility of the Word made flesh, and when She became his Mother She saw and experienced this truth in her Son and Lord himself; therefore She gave a greater license, or rather a more strict command, to creatures to afflict Her, since She saw the results of this activity in their own Creator. Hence, since the Most High did not desire his only and chosen Spouse to be continually molested by creatures, even though She herself desired it, He often restrained them and neutralized their operations so the heavenly Princess, unhindered by them, could occasionally enjoy the delights of the most high King.

32. There is another special favor which most holy Mary received for the benefit of mortals on the third day and in that vision of the Divinity, for during this vision God manifested to Her in a special way the desire of his divine love to come to the aid of men and raise them up from all their miseries. In accordance with the knowledge of his infinite mercy and the object for which it was conceded, the Most High gave to most pure Mary a certain kind of participation of his own attributes, so afterwards as the Mother and Advocate of sinners She could intercede for them. This influence by which most holy Mary participated in the love of God for men and in his inclination to remedy them was so divine and powerful that if from that time on the strength of the Lord had not assisted and supported Her She would not have been able to bear her impetuous affection for the remedy and salvation of all sinners. By this love and charity She would have delivered Herself, if necessary or proper, innumerable times to the flames, the sword, and the most exquisite torments of death for their salvation. All torments, sorrows, tribulations, pains and infirmities She would have accepted and suffered, and She would have considered them a great delight for the salvation of sinners. Whatever all men have suffered from the beginning of the world until this hour, and whatever they will suffer until the end, would have been a small matter for the love of this most merciful Mother; hence let mortals and sinners understand what they owe to most holy Mary.

33. From that day on we can say the heavenly Lady continued to be the Mother of kindness and great mercy, and for two reasons: First, because from that moment She sought with special affection and desire to communicate without envy the treasures of grace which She had

* cf. Wis. 7:13 [Ed.]

comprehended and received, and therefore such an admirable sweetness grew up in her Heart that She was ready to communicate it to all men and shelter them in her Heart in order to make them participants of the divine love which was enkindled therein. The second reason is because this love of human salvation which most pure Mary conceived was one of the principal dispositions which adapted Her for conceiving the incarnate Word in her virginal womb. It was eminently proper for Her to be all mercy, kindness, piety and clemency who was Herself to conceive and give birth to the Word made man, since He in his mercy, clemency and love desired to humiliate Himself to the lowliness of our nature and be born of Her capable of suffering for men. They say the newborn child in proceeding from the womb takes with him the conditions of the mother, just as water partakes of the qualities of the minerals through which it flows; and though the birth of Christ originated in the Divinity, yet He also partook of the conditions of the Mother to the degree possible. She therefore would not have been suitable for concurrence with the Holy Ghost in this conception (in which only the activity of man was lacking) if She had not been endowed with perfections corresponding to those of the humanity of Christ.

34. Most holy Mary issued from this vision with ever increasing fervor, and during all the rest of the day She occupied Herself in the prayers and petitions commanded Her by the Lord. The Heart of her Spouse was wounded with love, so (according to our mode of understanding) He already longed for the day and the hour when He would rest in the arms and recline at the breast of his Beloved.

INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE MOST HOLY QUEEN.

35. My dearest daughter, great were the favors which the hand of the Most High showered upon me in the visions of the Divinity vouchsafed to me during the nine days before He was conceived in my womb. And though He did not manifest Himself intuitively and altogether unveiled, yet He did it in an exalted manner and with such effects as are reserved to his wisdom. In the remembrance of what I perceived in this vision I rose to the true perception of who God is in comparison to men, and men in comparison to God; this inflamed my heart with love and rent it with sorrow, for I realized the immensity of his love towards mortals and their most ungrateful oblivion of such incomprehensible goodness. Many times would I have died at the thought of these extremes if God himself had not comforted and preserved me. This sacrifice of his servant was most pleasing to His Majesty, and He accepted it with greater satisfaction than all the holocausts of the old Law, for He beheld my humility and delighted in it very much. Whenever I performed these exercises He showed great mercy to me and to my people.

36. These sacraments, my dearest, I manifest to thee in order to encourage thee to imitate me as far as possible with thy weak forces aided by grace. Look upon the works of which thou hast learned as a pattern and example to be closely followed. Meditate much and weigh over and over again, as well in the light of grace as in that of reason, how exactly mortals ought to correspond to this immense kindness of God and to his eagerness to assist them, and compare at the same time the heartless obduracy of the children of Adam. I desire for thy heart to be softened in affectionate gratitude toward the Lord, and melted in sorrow at these unhappy proceedings of men. I assure thee, my daughter, on the day of the general inquiry the cause of the greatest wrath of the just Judge shall be man's most ungrateful forgetfulness of this truth, and the confusion of men because of this wrath shall be such on that day they would of their own accord cast

themselves into the abyss of pain if there were no ministers of divine justice to visit this retribution upon them.

37. In order to avoid such abominable guilt and forestall such a horrible chastisement, renew in thyself the memory of the blessings which thou hast received at the hands of his love and infinite clemency, and remember that God has distinguished thee among many generations. Do not make the mistake of considering these great favors and special gifts as conferred on thee for thyself alone; they have been given also for the sake of thy brethren, for the divine mercy is extended to all men. Therefore the return which thou owest to the Lord must be made first for thyself and then for thy brethren. And because thou art poor, offer up the life and merits of my most holy Son, and with them all that I have suffered by the force of my love. Thus shalt thou make thyself pleasing to God and render some recompense for the ingratitude of mortals. In all these things exercise thyself repeatedly many times, remembering what I thought and felt in similar acts and exercises.