

*The Mystical City of God*

by Ven. Mary of Jesus of Ágreda (1602-1665)

**Volume 2**

*The Incarnation*

Second of Four Volumes

PART II of III Parts

Books 3 and 4 of 8 Books

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**NEW ENGLISH EDITION**

A corrected English edition of the original English translation  
of Rev. George J. Blatter (Fiscar Marison) (1912)

Edited, Largely Retranslated, and Published by Timothy A. Duff, M.S.Ed.

From an authentic copy of the original Spanish edition of Most Rev. José Jiménez de Samaniego  
(1670)

the Religious Superior and Biographer of Ven. Mary of Jesus of Ágreda

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Printed by Refuge of Sinners Publishing, Inc., 5271 E. Mann Rd., Pekin, IN 47165

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# *The Incarnation*

## Books 3 and 4

*The Mysteries of the Life of the Holy Mother of God from the Incarnation of the Divine Word in Her Virginal Womb to the Return of the Holy Family from Egypt.*

# INTRODUCTION

## to the Second Part of the Divine History and Most Holy Life of Mary, the Mother of God.

1. When I was ready to present before the throne of God the insignificant results of my labors in writing the first Part of the most holy life of Mary, the Mother of God, I wished to subject it to the scrutiny and correction of the divine light by which I had been guided in my shortcomings. I was very anxious to be consoled by the renewed assurance and benign approval of the Most High, and to know whether He desired me to continue or to abandon this work which is so far above my lowliness. The Lord responded saying: "Thou hast written well, and according to our pleasure. But We desire thee to understand that in order to manifest the mysteries and most high sacraments of the rest of the life of our only and chosen Spouse, Mother of our Onlybegotten, thou hast need of a new and more exalted preparation. It is our desire for thee to die to all that is imperfect and visible, living according to the spirit and renouncing all the occupations and habits of an earthly creature, assuming instead those of an angel, striving to attain in them a still greater purity and an entire conformity with what thou art to understand and write."

2. In this answer of the Most High I understood that such a new mode of exercising the virtues and such a high perfection of life and habits was asked and required of me that as distrustful of my troubled plight and fearful of undertaking a work so arduous and difficult for an earthly creature I felt within myself great repugnance rising up in the flesh against the spirit. The spirit called me with interior force, urging me to strive after the disposition which was required of me, providing as reasons the pleasure of the Lord and the benefits accruing to myself. On the other hand the law of sin (Rom. 7:23) which I felt in my members opposed the divine promptings and discouraged me by the fear of my own inconstancy. I felt in this conflict a strong hindrance which deterred me and a cowardice which terrified me. In this excitement I began to believe that I was not capable of treating about such high things, especially since they were so foreign to the condition and estate of a woman.

3. Overcome by fears and difficulties I resolved not to continue this work, and to use all possible means to adhere to this determination. The common enemy knew my fear and cowardice, and since his utmost cruelty is more aroused against the weak and destitute he made use of this very disposition to attack me with incredible fury. It seemed to him I was left without help in his hands. In order to conceal his malice he sought to transform himself into an angel of light, pretending to be very solicitous for my soul and my welfare. Under this false pretext he perfidiously deluged me with his suggestions and doubts; he represented to me the danger of damnation and frightened me with punishments similar to those of the chief of the angels (Is. 14:12), since I had sought in my pride to comprehend what was above my powers and in opposition to God himself.

4. He pointed out to me many souls who professing virtue were deceived by some secret presumption and by giving place to the fabulations of the serpents, and he made me believe that insofar as I sought to scrutinize the secrets of the divine Majesty (Prov. 25:27) I could not but be guilty of pride and presumption, thus being already judged. He urged very strongly that the present times were ill suited for such matters, and sought to confirm his assertion by what happened to some well known persons who were found to labor under deceit and error. He

reminded me of the dread of the spiritual life in others, how great would be the discredit which would arise by any mistake of mine, and what evil effect it would have on those of little piety. All this I would know by experience and to my regret if I persisted in writing about this matter. And since it is evidently true that all the opposition to the spiritual life and the small esteem in which the mystic virtues are held is caused by that mortal enemy, so for the purpose of doing away with Christian devotion and piety in many souls he succeeds in deceiving some and sowing cockle among the good seed of the Lord (Mt. 13:25). Thus he causes confusion and obscures the true sentiment concerning the spiritual life, making it more difficult to distinguish the darkness from the light. I am not surprised to see him succeed therein, since true discernment is the special work of God and of those who participate in his true wisdom and do not govern themselves only by earthly insight.

5. It is not easy during this mortal life to discern true prudence from the false, for often also the good intention and zeal warp human judgment when counsel and light from on high are lacking. I had occasion to learn this in the execution of that which I am about to undertake, for some persons, well known as devout, not only those who loved me due to their piety and desired my welfare but also those who were less loving and considerate, all alike at one time wished to deter me from this undertaking and also from the path on which I was going, as if I was proceeding upon it by my own choice. Their fear of drawing discredit or confusion upon those who were striving after piety with me, or upon religion or my neighbors, and especially upon the convent in which I lived, caused anxiety to them and affliction to me. I was much enamored by the security which the ordinary paths of the other nuns seemed to offer; I acknowledged that this suited more my own insight and my inclination and desires, and was urged upon me still more by my timidity and great fears.

6. Cast about upon these impetuous waves my heart sought to reach the port of obedience in order to reassure myself in the bitter sea of my confusion. To add to my tribulation it began to be rumored about in our order that my spiritual father and superior, who had for many years directed my soul and who well understood my interior trials, who moreover had commanded me to write the preceding Part of this History, and who would most likely encourage, quiet and console me, was suggested for removal to a higher office. The suggestion was not acted upon, but it occasioned his absence for many days, and the dragon took advantage of all this in order to pour out against me the furious river of his wrath (Apoc. 12:15). Thus on this occasion as on others he labored with highest malice to divert me from the obedience and teaching of my superior and master, though his efforts were in vain.

7. In addition to all the contradictions and temptations already mentioned, and many others not possible to describe, the demon sought to deprive me of my health, causing many aches, indispositions, and disorders of the whole body. He harassed me with insurmountable sadness and conflicting thoughts; he seemed to confuse my understanding, hinder correct thinking, weaken my will power, and sift me in body and soul. It happened that in the midst of this confusion I committed some faults which were serious enough in me, though they were committed not so much in malice as from human frailty. Nevertheless the serpent sought to use them for my destruction more than any other means, for thus having interrupted the flow of good works his fury was let loose to cause still greater faults in this embarrassment by enticing me to exaggerate my guilt. To this he drove me by impious and most insidious suggestions, seeking to persuade me that all I had experienced in the path which I had trodden was false and erroneous.

8. Since these insinuations, because of the faults committed and my continual consternation and fears, began to appear plausible, I resisted them less than others, and it was only through the

special mercies of the Lord that I did not fall entirely from all belief and hope in a remedy. But I found myself so entangled in difficulties and surrounded by darkness that I can say the groanings of death surrounded me and *the sorrows of hell encompassed me* (Ps. 17:5-6), inspiring me with dread of extreme peril. I resolved to burn the manuscripts of the first Part of this divine History and to desist from writing the second. To this determination the angel of Satan who tempted me added also the resolution to withdraw myself from the whole undertaking, put an end to the pursuit of the spiritual life, neglect my interior life, and not communicate about it with anyone, for thus would I be able to do penance for my sins, appease the Lord, propitiate Him, and retain his friendship. In order to make sure of the effects of his concealed malice he proposed I make a vow not to write anymore because of the danger of being deceived and of deceiving, but that instead I amend my life, retrench my imperfections, and embrace penance.

9. With this mask of seeming virtue the dragon pretended to establish his damnable counsels and cover himself with the skin of a sheep, while in reality he acted as a bloodthirsty and devouring wolf. He persevered for some time in this attack, and all alone I remained for fifteen days in a night of darkness, without relief or consolation either human or divine, the former because I was without the help and the counsel of obedience, and the latter because the Lord had interrupted the flow of his favors, enlightenments, and continual inspiration. Above all was I distressed by despair of salvation, and in it the persuasion that death and the danger of my eternal damnation was approaching. All this was instigated and fostered in me by the enemy.

10. Yet since the aftertastes of his temptations are so bitter and end but in despair, the very disturbance by which he upset the whole republic of my powers and acquired habits made me more wary of fulfilling anything which he urged upon me and proposed to me. He availed himself of the continual fear which tormented me, that is the dread of offending God and losing his friendship, and when in my doubts I applied myself to works of piety he sought to draw me away. This very fear, however, made me hesitate at what the astute dragon had tried to convince me of, and in this uncertainty I deferred giving assent to it. Also my high regard for obedience by which I had been ordered to write, and the opposition of that which I felt in my interior, helped me to resist and to recoil at his suggestions. Above all the assistance of the Most High defended me and did not permit the beasts to snatch my soul, which amid sighs and groans confessed Him. I cannot describe in words the temptations, combats, troubles, dismays and afflictions which I suffered in this battle, for I saw myself placed in such a state that in my judgment there was really no great difference between my condition and that of the damned, except in hell there is no redemption, while in mine it was still possible.

11. One day in order to get some respite I cried out from the bottom of my heart saying: "O woe is me, that I have come to such a state! And woe is my soul, which finds itself therein! Whither shall I turn, since all the portals of my salvation are closed?" Immediately a strong and sweet voice gave answer within myself: "Where dost thou wish to go outside of God himself?" By this answer I perceived that my cure was at hand in the Lord, and at the breaking of this dawn I began to raise myself from the depth of the confusion into which I was cast, and I felt a powerful increase in the fervor of my desires and in the acts of faith, hope and charity. I humiliated myself in the presence of the Most High, and in firm confidence in his goodness I wept over my faults with bitter sorrow. I confessed them many times, and sighing from the depth of my soul I began to seek again the former light and truth. And since the divine Wisdom comes forth to meet those by whom He is invoked (Wis. 6:17), He advanced toward me in delight and cleared away the night of my confusion and tormenting afflictions.

12. Presently that bright day broke which I had desired so much, and the quiet possession of

peace returned, enjoying the sweetness of the love and vision of my Lord and Master, and with it I again perceived why I should believe, accept and esteem the benefits and favors which his mighty arm wrought in me. I gave Him thanks as far as was in my power; I saw who I was and who God is, and that all a creature can do by itself is nothing,\* because sin is nothing. I saw also what man can do when raised up and assisted by the divine right hand, being much more than can be imagined by our earthly faculties. Humbled in the perception of these truths and in the presence of the inaccessible light (which is vast and strong, without deceit or falsehood), my heart overflowed in sweet affections of love, praise and gratitude, for now I understood He had guarded and defended me so in the confused night of temptations my lamp might not be extinguished (Prov. 31:18), and in the depth of my gratitude I annihilated myself to the dust and humiliated myself as a worm of the earth.

13. To make this benefit more certain I immediately heard an interior exhortation without knowing clearly from whence it proceeded. While it severely reprehended me for my disloyalty and my wrongful ways, it at the same time admonished and enlightened, instructed and corrected me. It furnished me with a deep understanding of good and evil, of virtue and vice, of what was secure, useful and beneficial, as well as their opposites; it laid open to me the way of eternity, gave me a knowledge of the means and of the end, the value of life everlasting, and the miserable unhappiness and the so little considered ruin of endless perdition.

14. In the profound knowledge of these two extremes I confess I was dumbfounded and cast about between the fear of my dreadful infirmity and the desire of reaching the happiness of which I was unworthy because of my demerits. I was full of the thought of the kindness and mercy of the Most High and the fear of losing Him. I beheld the two different ends awaiting the creatures, eternal glory and eternal misery, and it seemed a small matter to me to suffer all the pains and torments of the world, of purgatory and hell itself, in order to attain the one and avoid the other. And though I perceived the divine help is assured to those who seek to make use of it, yet I also saw by this light that life and death are in our hands (Ecclus. 15:18), that our weakness or malice may prevent the proper use of grace, and the tree will lie for all eternity as it has once fallen (Eccles. 11:3). For this reason I was overcome by the deepest sorrow which penetrated my heart.

15. This sorrow was increased by a most severe answer or inquiry which came from the Lord, for while I found myself thus annihilated in the consciousness of my weakness and danger and by the thought of having offended his justice, and not daring to raise my eyes toward Him, He met my speechless sorrow by the advances of his mercy, saying to me in answer to them: "Soul, which dost thou desire? Which dost thou seek? Which of these ways shalt thou choose? What is thy resolve?" This question was an arrow to my heart, for though I knew for certain the Lord knew my desires better than I myself, the delay between the question and the answer was incredibly painful to me. I desired if possible for the Lord to anticipate my answer and not show Himself ignorant of the response which I would give. But impelled by great emotion I made response in words coming from the inmost part of my soul and said: "Lord and omnipotent God! The path of virtue, the way of eternal life do I choose; this do I desire, and in this do Thou place me. And since I do not merit it in thy justice, I appeal to thy mercy, and I offer for myself the infinite merits of thy most holy Son and my Redeemer, Jesus Christ."

16. I was made aware this highest Judge remembered the promise which is given to the Church that He would grant all that is asked in the name of his Onlybegotten (Jn. 16:23), that in Him and

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\* cf. Jn. 15:5 [Ed.]

on his account my petition was granted and its fulfillment hastened according to my poor desires. Certain conditions were made and proposed to me by an intellectual voice, saying to me interiorly: "Soul, created by the hand of the Almighty, if thou dost desire as one of the elect to follow in the path of the true light and attain the position of a most chaste spouse of the Lord who calls thee, it is proper for thee to observe the laws and precepts of love which thou dost desire. First it is required of thee to reject entirely all earthly inclinations, renouncing all and every affection toward transient things, so thou dost retain no love or affection toward any created being, no matter how useful, beautiful or agreeable it may appear to thee. Cherish no created image, harbor no earthly affection; let thy will rest in no created object, except insofar as thy Lord and Spouse shall command thee for the well ordering of thy love, or insofar as thou canst be aided thereby to love Him alone.

17. "And when, after thus reaching this perfect abnegation and renunciation of thyself, thou shalt have freed and disentangled thyself from all earthly things, seek the Lord, raising thyself with the swift wings of the dove toward the high habitation in which He in his condescension desires to place thy spirit, so there thou mayest live in his presence and have a secure dwelling. This great Lord is a most jealous Spouse, and his love and emulation are strong as death (Cant. 8:6). He desires to adorn thee and set thee in a secure place so thou mayest not issue from it, nor leave his presence for another where thou shalt not find Him nor enjoy his caresses. He with whom thou art to converse without mistrust desires to sign thee with his own hand, and this is a most equitable law which the spouses of the great King must observe, for even those in the world observe it in order to show their faithfulness. It is due to the nobility of thy Spouse to behave in a manner corresponding to the dignity and position conferred by Him, without descending to anything not befitting this state or making thee unworthy of the adornment lavished upon thee for entrance into his bridal chamber.

18. "Next I require of thee to despoil thyself with diligence of the vestments torn by thy faults and imperfections, soiled by the effects of sin, and made odious by the inclinations of nature. His Majesty desires to wash off the stains and purify and renew thee with his beauty, but under the condition that thou never lose sight of the poor and despicable vestments of which thou hast been divested, so in the memory and knowledge of this benefit thou mayest spread the odor of sweetness for this great King by the spikenard of thy humility (Ib. 1:11) and never forget the return which thou owest to the Author of thy salvation. Thus shall He by the precious balsam of his blood purify thee, heal thy wounds, and enlighten thee copiously.

19. "Above all this (added that voice), in order to forget all earthly things and have thy beauty desired by the highest King (Ps. 44:11-12), seek to adorn thyself with the jewels which He in his pleasure has prepared for thee. The vestments which shall cover thee are to be whiter than snow, more brilliant than the diamond, more resplendent than the sun, and yet they shall be at the same time so delicate that they shall easily be spoiled by any negligence, making thee abominable in the sight of thy Spouse. But if thou preserve them in the purity which He desires, thy steps shall be beautiful as the Prince's daughter (Cant. 7:1), and His Majesty shall be pleased with thy sentiments and thy words. As a cincture of thy vestment He shall give thee the knowledge of his divine power and his holy fear, that having bound thy inclinations thou mayest direct thyself by his pleasure. The jewels of thy necklace which adorn thy neck, signifying thy humble submission, shall be the costly stones of faith, hope and charity. As a clasp for thy hair (which are the high and exalted thoughts and thy heavenly intelligences) thou shalt have from Him infused science and wisdom, and the embroideries of thy vestments shall be all the beauty and richness of the virtues. Thy diligence in performing what is most perfect shall serve thee as

sandals, and the laces shall be the avoidance and restraints thou shalt use in order to keep from evil. The rings which shall beautify thy fingers shall be the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the beauty of thy face shall be the participation of the Divinity, which shall shine from it due to his holy love. To this thou shalt add the blush of confusion for having offended Him, so it can make thee ashamed of offending Him in the future, comparing at the same time the coarse and sordid habits of the past with those which now adorn thee.

20. "And because thy own merits would make but a poor and miserable return for such a high espousal, the Most High desires to ratify this contract by singling out, as if for thee alone, the infinite merits of thy Spouse Jesus Christ, and He makes thee a partaker of all his possessions and treasures in the heavens and upon earth, for all belongs to this supreme Lord (Esther 13:11), and of all this thou shalt be mistress as his spouse for thy own use and for the greater love of Him. But remember, soul, that in order to obtain such a gift thou must hide all this within thyself without ever losing thy secret, for I warn thee of the danger of soiling thy beauty with the least imperfection. But if at any time thou dost commit such an imperfection out of weakness, rise from it at once like a strong one and weep over it, acknowledging the small fault as if it had been the most grave.

21. "And in order for thee to have a dwelling place and habitation befitting such a great state, thy Spouse does not desire to set any limit for thee; rather it is his pleasure for thee to dwell in the infinite regions of his divinity, and roam about and disport thyself through the illimitable fields of his attributes and perfections, where the view of the intellect is without restraint, where the will is delighted without shadow of misgiving, and where the inclinations are satiated without bitterness. This is the paradise always delightful, where the most beloved brides of Christ find their recreation, where they gather the fragrant flowers and myrrh, and where the infinite is found for those who have renounced the imperfect nothing; there shall thy habitation be secure. And so thy communication and companionship may be in correspondence with it, I desire thee to converse with the Angels, holding them as friends and companions, and copying from them, during their frequent conversations and dealings with thee, their virtues by faithful imitation.

22. "Take notice, O soul" (continued the voice), "of the greatness of this benefit, for the Mother of thy Spouse and the Queen of heaven adopts thee anew for her daughter, receives thee as her disciple, and assumes the place of a Mother and Teacher toward thee. Through her intercession dost thou receive those special favors, and they are all granted to thee so thou mayest write her most holy Life; for this reason thou hast been pardoned without thy merit, and that which otherwise thou wouldst not have reached has been conceded to thee. What would become of thee, O soul, if it were not for the Mother of Mercy? Thou wouldst already have perished if her intercession had failed thee. Poor and useless would have been thy works if by divine condescension thou hadst not been selected to write this History; but the eternal Father chose thee for his daughter in view of this work, and for a spouse of his onlybegotten Son, and the Son received thee to his close embraces, and the Holy Ghost selected thee for his enlightenments. The document of this contract and espousal is written and imprinted on the white parchment of the purity of most holy Mary; there the finger and the power of the Most High have written it; the ink is the blood of the Lamb; the executor is the eternal Father; the tie which binds thee to Christ is the Holy Ghost; and the guarantor is the merits of the same Jesus Christ and his Mother; for thou art but a vile worm, having nothing to offer and being expected merely to give thy free consent."

23. Thus far proceeded the voice and admonition which I heard. Though I judged it to be that of an Angel, yet whether such it was I could not ascertain clearly, for I did not perceive it in the



same way as at other times. Such manifestations and disclosures accommodate themselves to the dispositions of the soul at the time of their reception, as for instance happened to the disciples at Emmaus (Lk. 24:16). Many other experiences I had in order to overcome the opposition of the serpent against the writing of this History, but it would draw out this introduction too much to mention them now. I continued my prayers for some days, asking the Lord to govern and direct me in order not to make a mistake, and representing to Him my incapacity and timidity. His Majesty persisted in exhorting me to ordain my life toward all purity and the greatest perfection, and in urging me to continue in it after having begun; and especially the Queen of the Angels intimated to me her will many times, and with great sweetness and tenderness commanded me to obey Her as her daughter and write her most holy Life which I had begun.

24. To all this I desired to add the security of obedience. Without saying anything of that which I had heard from the Lord and from his most holy Mother, I asked my confessor and superior what he would direct me to do in this matter. He answered by commanding me under obedience to continue and to write the second Part of this History. Finding myself thus compelled both by the Lord and by obedience, I returned again to the presence of the Most High where I found myself one day in prayer, and renouncing my whole self and recognizing my insignificance and danger of erring I prostrated myself before His Majesty and said: "My Lord, my Lord, what dost Thou desire to do with me?" Whereupon I received the following intelligence.

25. It seemed to me the divine light of the blessed Trinity showed me my own self full of poverty and defects, and severely reprehending me for them, furnishing me at the same time with the highest doctrine and salutary directions for a perfect life, and for this purpose God purified and enlightened me anew. I became aware that the Mother of Grace, most holy Mary, standing before the throne of the Divinity, was interceding and pleading for me. With such assistance my confidence took new life, and profiting by the clemency of such a Mother I addressed myself to Her and spoke to Her only these words: "My Lady and my Refuge, consider, as a true Mother, the poverty of thy slave." It seemed to me as if She heard my prayer, and speaking with the Most High She said: "My Lord, I desire anew to receive this useless and poor creature as a daughter and adopt her as my own." (Truly this was the act of a most liberal and mighty Queen!) But the Most High answered: "My Spouse, for such a great favor as this what does this soul bring in return? She does not deserve it, being a useless and destitute worm, and thankless for our gifts."

26. O wonderful power of the divine speech! How shall I describe the effects produced in me by this answer of the Omnipotent? I humbled myself to my nothingness, and I was filled with the knowledge of the misery of creatures and my own ingratitude towards God. My heart sank within me in sorrow for my sins and in the desire of obtaining the unmerited happiness of being the child of that Sovereign. I raised my eyes full of dread to the throne of the Most High and my visage was transported in fear and hope. I turned toward my Advocate, and desiring to be admitted as her slave, since I did not merit the title of daughter, I spoke from the bottom of my heart without forming any words; and I heard the great Lady say to the Lord:

27. "Divine Lord and my God, it is true this poor creature has nothing to offer to thy justice; but I offer for her the merits and the blood which my most holy Son poured out for her, and with it I present also the dignity of Mother of thy Onlybegotten which I received from thy ineffable kindness, all the works which I performed in thy service in having borne Him in my womb and nourished Him with the milk of my breast, and above all I offer Thee thy own bounty and divinity. I earnestly entreat Thee to consider this creature as my adopted daughter and disciple

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\* cf. Acts 9:6 [Ed.]

for whom I shall stand as guarantor. Under my guidance she shall amend her faults and perform her works according to thy pleasure.”

28. The Most High (may He be eternally praised for hearing the petition of the great Queen interceding for the least of his creatures) yielded to these prayers, and immediately in the joy of my soul I felt immense effects such as are impossible to describe. With my whole heart I turned toward all the creatures of heaven and earth, and not being able to contain my exultation I invited them to exalt for me and with me the Author of grace. It seemed to me that I addressed them in the following words: “O ye inhabitants and courtiers of heaven and all ye living creatures, formed by the hand of the Most High, behold this marvel of his liberality and mercy, and bless and exalt Him for all eternity, since He has raised from the dust the most vile of the universe and has enriched the most destitute; He has honored the most unworthy, though He is the highest God and the powerful King. And since you sons of Adam see here the poorest orphan succored and the greatest sinner pardoned, issue forth from your ignorance, raise yourself from your listlessness, and renew your hope, for if his powerful arm has assisted me, if He has called and forgiven me, all of you can hope for your salvation; and if you desire to assure yourselves of it, seek, seek the protection of most holy Mary, ask Her for her intercession, and you shall find Her to be the Mother of ineffable mercy and clemency.”

29. I turned also to this most exalted Queen and said to Her: “Ah, my Lady, now I do not call myself an orphan, since I have a Mother, and a Mother who is the Queen of all creation; I shall not anymore be ignorant (except through my own fault), since I have the Teacher of divine wisdom; I shall not be poor, since I have Him as Lord who is Master of all the treasures of heaven and earth. I have a Mother who protects me, an Instructress who teaches and corrects me, and a Lady who commands and governs me. Blessed art Thou amongst all women, wonderful among all creatures, admirable in heaven and on earth, and let all confess thy greatness with eternal praises. Since it is not easy or possible for the least among creatures, the lowest worm of the earth, to give Thee any return, receive it then from the divine right hand and in the divine vision where Thou standest in the presence of God enjoying Thyself through all eternity. I shall remain thy acknowledged and bounden slave, praising the Almighty as long as my life shall last, since his generous mercy has so favored me as to give me my Queen as my Mother and Teacher. Let my loving muteness praise Thee, since my tongue has not words or terms adequate for doing it, for all of them are strained and limited.”

30. It is not possible to describe what the soul feels during such mysterious favors. They were the source of great good to my soul, for immediately I was made aware of a perfection of life and of works for which I fail to find terms. Yet all of this, the Most High told me, was given to me because of most holy Mary and in order to write her Life. It was intimated to me that by ratifying this blessing the eternal Father chose me to manifest the sacraments of his Daughter, the Holy Ghost poured out his light and inspirations so I could declare the hidden gifts of his Spouse, and the most holy Son appointed me to manifest the mysteries of his most pure Mother Mary. And so I could become capable of this work, the Holy Trinity enlightened and bathed my soul in a special light of the Divinity, and the divine power touched up my faculties as with a paintbrush, furnishing them with new habits for the perfect execution of this work.

31. The Most High also commanded me to strive to imitate with all my heart, according to my weak powers, all that I would understand and write about the heroic virtues and most holy operations of the heavenly Queen, guiding my life according to her example. Knowing how unfit I am for the fulfillment of this obligation, the same most kind Queen offered to me anew her favor, help and instruction for all the Lord commanded and pointed out to me. Then I asked for

the blessing of the most holy Trinity in order to begin the second Part of this divine History, and I perceived that all three Persons conferred it. Issuing from this vision I sought to wash my soul in the Sacraments, and full of contrition for my sins, in the name of the Lord and of obedience, I set myself about this work for the glory of the Most High and for his most holy Mother, the ever immaculate Virgin Mary.

32. This second Part comprises the life of the Queen of the Angels from the mystery of the Incarnation to the Ascension of Christ our Lord into heaven, which is the principal and most important part of this History, for it includes the whole life and mysteries of the Lord himself, with his Passion and most holy death. I wish only to remark here that the graces and blessings conceded to most holy Mary in preparation for the Incarnation began to flow from the moment of her Immaculate Conception; already at that time, in the intention and the decree of God, She was the Mother of the incarnate Word. But to the extent the realization of the Incarnation drew nigh the favors and gifts of grace continued to increase. Although they seemed to be all of the same kind and nature from the beginning, yet they continued to augment and increase, and there are not terms new and varied enough to equal in their significance these increases and advances in the blessings conferred. Thus it becomes necessary in this entire History for us to refer to the infinite power of the Lord, who giving much, retains enough to give infinitely more, while the capacity of each soul, and even more the soul of the Queen of heaven, is in its own way infinite, being able to receive ever more and more, which happened to Her until She arrived at the summit of sanctity and participation of the Divinity, to which no other mere creature has attained nor will ever attain for all eternity. May the Lord himself enlighten me so I may follow up this work according to his divine pleasure. Amen.