

## CHAPTER VI

### *A Vision which Most Holy Mary had When the Child Jesus was Twelve Years Old in order to Continue Producing in Her the Imprint and Doctrine of the Evangelical Law.*

64. In chapters I and II of this Book I began what I must now complete in the following chapters, but I do it not without misgivings concerning my halting and inadequate powers of expression, and with much more hesitation because of the lukewarmness of my heart, all of which make me unfit to speak of the hidden communication of the incarnate Word with his Blessed Mother at Nazareth during the eighteen years intervening between his dispute with the doctors at Jerusalem and the beginning of his public preaching in his thirtieth year. On the shores of this vast ocean of mysteries I stand full of confusion and doubt, asking the most high Lord with inmost affection of soul to transfer my pen to the hands of an angel so no injustice might be done to the subject of the discourse, or that He himself, the most powerful and wise God, speak for me and enlighten my faculties, so governed by his divine light they may be fit instruments of his will and truth, and be free from the human frailty of an ignorant woman.

65. I have already said in former chapters (3) our great Lady was the first and singular Disciple of her most holy Son, chosen among all creatures as the model of the elect, and in whom would be engraved the new law of the Gospel and its Author, serving in his new Church as the unique pattern and model in whose imitation He was to form the other saints and produce the effects of human Redemption. In this work the incarnate Word proceeded like an excellent artist who understands the art of painting with all its qualities and conditions, who among many works of his hands seeks to finish one with consummate delicacy and skill, and from it gain credit and publish the greatness of his skill as the supreme example of all his works. It is certain all the sanctity and glory of the saints was the result of the love and merits of Christ (Eph. 2:5; Jn. 1:16), but in comparison with the excellence of most holy Mary they seem insignificant and as it were only rough sketches, for in all the saints are found defects (I John 1:8). But this living image of the Onlybegotten was free from all imperfections, and the first strokes of his pencil in Her were of greater beauty than the last touches in the highest angels and saints.\* She is the pattern for all the perfection of sanctity and virtues of all his elect, and the utmost limit to which the love of Christ can proceed in mere creatures, because to no one has He given any grace or glory which most holy Mary could not receive, and She received all that others were incapable of receiving. Her most blessed Son gave to Her all She could receive and He could communicate.

66. The variety of the saints and their degrees silently magnify the Artificer of such sanctity, and the lower or minor saints show the greatness of the higher ones; yet all of them together are a glorification of most holy Mary, for by her incomparable sanctity they are all surpassed, and they all partake of so much the greater happiness as they imitate Her, whose perfection redounds to all the saints. If most pure Mary has reached the highest pinnacle in the ranks of the just, She may also on this very account be considered as the instrument or motive through which all the saints have reached their degree of glory. Since we must judge her excellence (even if only from afar) by the labor which Christ the Lord applied for her formation, let us consider what labor He spent upon Her and how much upon the whole Church. To establish and to enrich his Church He deemed it sufficient to spend only three years in preaching, selecting the Apostles, teaching the

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\* cf. Ps. 86:1 [Ed.]

people, and inculcating the evangelical law by his public life, and this was amply sufficient to accomplish the work enjoined upon Him by the eternal Father, and justify and sanctify all the true believers (Jn. 6:38-40). But in order to stamp upon his most holy Mother the image of his sanctity He consumed not three years but ten times three years, engaging in this work with all the power of his divine love, without ever ceasing hour after hour to add grace to grace, gifts to gifts, blessings to blessings, and sanctity to sanctity. And at the end of all this He still left Her in a state in which He could continue to add excellence after his Ascension to his eternal Father, as I shall describe in the third Part. Our reason is overwhelmed and our words fail at the greatness of this incomparable Lady, for She is elect as the sun (Cant. 6:9), and her effulgence cannot be borne by terrestrial eyes nor comprehended by any earthly creatures.

67. Christ our Redeemer began to manifest his designs in regard to his heavenly Mother after they had come back from Egypt to Nazareth, as I have already mentioned (2), and from that time He continued to follow up his purpose in his quality as Teacher and the divine Enlightener in all the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption. After they returned from Jerusalem in his twelfth year the great Queen had a vision of the Divinity, not an intuitive vision but one consisting of intellectual images, one very exalted and full of new influences of the Divinity and secrets of the Most High. She was especially enlightened in regard to the decrees of the mind and will of the Lord concerning the law of grace which was now to be established by the incarnate Word (Eph. 2:14-15), and concerning the power which was given to Him in the consistory of the most blessed Trinity (Mt. 28:18). At the same time She saw how for this purpose the eternal Father consigned to his Son the seven-sealed book of which St. John speaks in chapter V of the Apocalypse (1ff.), and how none could be found either in heaven or on earth who could unseal and open it until the Lamb broke its seals by his Passion and Death and by his doctrines and merits, for in this figure God desired to intimate that the secret of this book was nothing else than the new law of the Gospel and the Church founded upon it in this world.

68. Then the heavenly Queen saw in spirit that by the decree of the most blessed Trinity She was to be the first one to read and understand this book; that her Onlybegotten was to open it for Her and manifest it all to Her, while She was to put it perfectly into practice; that She was the first one who was to accompany the Word; and that She was to occupy the first place next to Him on the way to heaven which He had opened up for mortals and traced out in this book. In Her as his true Mother was to be deposited this Testament. She saw how the Son of the eternal Father and of Herself accepted this decree with great pleasure, and how his sacred humanity obeyed it with ineffable joy on her account. Then the eternal Father turned to the most pure Lady and said:

69. "My Spouse and my Dove, prepare thy heart so according to our pleasure Thou mayest participate in the plenitude of our science and have the New Testament and holy law of my Onlybegotten written in thy soul. Excite thy desires and apply thy mind to the knowledge and practice of our teachings and precepts. Receive from Us the gifts of our liberality and of our love for Thee. So Thou mayest render Us appropriate gratitude, consider that by the disposition of our infinite wisdom We have resolved to make Thee, a mere creature, the closest image and likeness of my Onlybegotten, thus producing in Thee effects and fruits proportionate to his merits, and thereby shall his most holy Name be magnified and exalted by a worthy return. Hence take notice, my Daughter and elect, that a great willingness on thy part is required of Thee. Prepare Thyself for the works and mysteries of our powerful right hand."

70. "Eternal Lord and immense God," the most humble Lady responded, "in thy real and divine presence I lie prostrate, acknowledging at the sight of thy infinite Being my own

insignificance, which is mere nothingness. I perceive thy greatness and my littleness. I know I am unworthy to be thy slave, and for the kindness with which Thou hast looked upon me I offer to Thee the fruit of my womb and thy Onlybegotten, and I beseech Him to answer for his unworthy Mother and handmaid. My heart is prepared (Ps. 56:8) and overwhelmed with gratitude for thy mercies, and consumed with affection (Ps. 72:26) as long as it cannot satisfy its vehement longings. But if I shall find grace in thine eyes (Esther 7:3) I shall speak in thy presence, O my Lord and Master, only in order to beseech and supplicate Thy royal Majesty to do with thy slave all Thou dost order and command, for no one is able to execute it unless Thou thyself assist him, O Lord and most high King. If Thou dost desire from me a heart free and devoted I now offer it to Thee, ready to obey Thee and suffer for Thee until death.” Immediately the heavenly Princess felt new influences of the Divinity, being enlightened, purified and spiritualized with such a plenitude of the Holy Ghost as to exceed all that had happened to Her until that day, for this blessing was one of the most memorable ones for the peerless and sovereign Lady. Although all of them were exalted and without equal in any of the rest of creatures, reaching the highest perfection, yet in the participation of the divine perfections there is no measure as long as the capacity of the creature to receive them does not fail. As this power of participation was so vast in this Queen and increased with each participation, the great gifts merely disposed Her for still greater ones; thus the divine power, not finding in Her any obstacle, set all its treasures in motion and laid them up in the secure and most faithful Depository of most holy Mary our Queen.

71. She issued from this ecstatic vision and went to her most holy Son, prostrating Herself at his feet and saying: “My Lord, my Light and my Teacher, behold thy unworthy Mother prepared for the fulfillment of thy desires. Admit me anew as thy disciple and servant, and make use of me as the instrument of thy wisdom and power. Execute in me thy pleasure and that of thy eternal Father.” Her most holy Son received Her with the majesty and authority of a divine Teacher, and instructed Her in most exalted mysteries. He taught Her with most powerful reasonings and extreme gravity the value and profundity contained in the mysterious works which the eternal Father had enjoined upon Him regarding the affair of human Redemption and the founding of the new Church and the evangelical law which had been determined upon in the divine mind. He declared and reaffirmed that in the execution of these high and hidden mysteries She was to be his companion and Coadjutrix, receiving and enjoying the first fruits of grace, and thus She, the most pure Lady, was to follow Him in his labors until his death on the cross with a magnanimous and well-prepared Heart in invincible and unhesitating constancy. He added heavenly instruction to enable Her to prepare for the reception of the whole evangelical law and the understanding and practice of all its precepts and counsels in their highest perfection. Other sacramental secrets concerning his works in this world the child Jesus manifested to his most blessed Mother on this occasion, and the heavenly Lady met all his words and intentions with profound humility, obedience, reverence, gratitude, and most ardent love.

#### *INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE HEAVENLY LADY.*

72. My daughter, many times in the course of thy life, and especially while thou art writing this History of my own life, I have called upon thee and invited thee to follow me by the closest imitation possible to thee. I now renew this invitation and demand, for now thou hast by the condescension of the Most High received light and intelligence in this sacrament of his powerful arm in my heart, how He wrote therein the whole law of grace and all the doctrine of the Gospel,

what effects this favor wrought in me, and how I corresponded by the closest and most perfect imitation of my most holy Son and Teacher. The knowledge of all this thou must consider as one of the greatest favors ever bestowed upon thee by the Lord, for in it thou shalt find the sum total and essence of the most exalted sanctity and perfection reflected as in the clearest mirror. The paths of divine light shall therein be revealed to thee (Prov. 4:18) whereon thou canst walk secure from the darkness of ignorance enveloping other mortals (Jn. 12:35).

73. Come then, my daughter, come and follow me. And so thou mayest imitate me as I desire, have thy understanding be properly enlightened, thy spirit sufficiently ennobled and prepared, and thy will inflamed, separate thyself from all earthly things as thy Spouse desires; withdraw thyself from what is visible, forsake all creatures, deny thyself, and close thy senses to the deceits and false fantasies of the world and the devil (Ps. 39:5). And in thy temptations I exhort thee not to be troubled or afflicted very much, for if they cause thee to halt in thy course they will already have gained a great advantage over thee, and they will prevent thee from becoming strong in the practice of perfection. Listen therefore to the Lord alone, who is desirous of the beauty of thy soul (Ps. 44:12), and who is generous in bestowing his gifts upon it, powerful to deposit therein the treasures of his wisdom, and solicitous to oblige thee to receive them. Allow Him to write into thy heart the evangelical law. Let that be thy continual study, thy meditation day and night (Ps. 1:2), the sweet nourishment of thy memory, the life of thy soul, and the sweet nectar for thy spiritual taste. Thus shalt thou obtain what the Most High and I require of thee, and what thou thyself dost desire.