

CHAPTER XIX

Christ our Lord Prepares for His Public Preaching by Giving Certain Notice of the Coming of the Messiah, Assisted by His Most Holy Mother; Lucifer begins to be Disturbed by These Events.

209. The fire of divine charity which burned in the bosom of our Redeemer and Master was as it were violently enclosed until the destined and opportune time in which He was to manifest it, breaking the jar and vase of his most sacred humanity* and laying bare his bosom by means of his preaching and manifest miracles for men. Although it is true, as Solomon says, that fire cannot be concealed in the bosom without burning the vestments (Prov. 6:27), and though the Lord always manifested his love, sending forth from Him its sparks and flames in all his doings since the moment of his Incarnation, yet in comparison to what He was to accomplish in his chosen time, and in comparison to the conflagration of his interior love, we may say the flames of his love had until then remained covered and enclosed. His Majesty had now reached the age of perfect adolescence, attaining his twenty-seventh year, and according to our way of understanding it already seemed He could neither resist nor restrain the impetus of his love and desire to press onward in obedience to his eternal Father in the sanctification of men. He was filled with sorrowing love, prayed and fasted much, and began to mingle with the people and communicate with mortals. Many times He passed the nights in prayer in the mountains, and began to absent Himself two or three days from the house and from his most holy Mother.

210. The most prudent Lady, who already in these journeys and absences of her Son began to feel his labors and sorrows approaching, was pierced in heart and soul by the sword foreseen by her pious and devout affection, and was entirely consumed in most tender acts of love for her Beloved. During these absences of her Son her heavenly courtiers and vassals, the holy Angels, attended upon Her in visible forms, and the great Lady spoke to them of her sorrows and sent them as messengers to her Son and Lord so they could bring Her news of his occupations and exercises. The holy Angels obeyed their Queen, and by their frequent messages She was enabled in her retirement to follow Christ, the highest King, in all his prayers, supplications and exercises. Whenever the Lord returned She received Him prostrate upon the ground, adoring Him and thanking Him for the blessings which He had gained for sinners. She served Him, and as a loving Mother sought to procure for Him alleviation and the food, poor though it was, which She knew He needed as a true man subject to suffering, for often it happened that He had passed two or three days without rest, food or sleep. The most blessed Mother knew the cares of the Savior in the manner already described (200, 203-4), and the Lord always informed Her of them and of his new undertakings and the hidden blessings communicated to many souls by new light concerning the Divinity and the Redemption.

211. Full of this knowledge the great Queen was accustomed to say to her most holy Son: “My Lord, the true and highest Good of souls, I see, Light of my eyes, that thy most ardent love which Thou hast for men will not rest or be appeased until it has secured their eternal salvation. This is the proper occupation of thy charity, and the work entrusted to Thee by thy eternal Father. Thy words and works of inestimable value are powerful to draw to Thee many hearts; yet, O my sweetest Love, I desire all mortals to be drawn to Thee and correspond to thy solicitude and the

* cf. Mk. 14:3 [Ed.]

kindness of thy charity. Lord, here is thy slave with a heart prepared to employ all my faculties for thy greater pleasure and offer my life, if necessary, so all creatures submit themselves to the desires of thy most ardent love, which so completely devotes itself to drawing them to thy grace and friendship.” This offering the Mother of Mercy made to her most holy Son, moved by the force of her inflamed charity which obliged Her to desire and procure the fruit of the works and doctrine of our Repairer and Master; and since the most prudent Lady worthily weighed them and knew their value, She desired none of them to be wasted for souls, nor proper gratitude for them to be lacking in men. By this ineffable charity She desired to assist the Lord, or rather to assist those who were to hear his words and witness his works to correspond to this benefit and not lose the occasion of their remedy. She also desired, as She truly did in fact, to render worthy gratitude to the Lord and praise for the wonderful works He would accomplish for souls, so all these mercies would be acknowledged and gratitude given for them, not only for those mercies which were efficacious but also those withheld due to the guilt of men. In this type of thanksgiving the merits attained by our great Lady were as hidden as they were admirable, because in all the works of Christ our Lord She participated in a most exalted degree, not only regarding the cause, her most holy Son with whom She concurred, cooperating with his charity, but also regarding the effects. She labored for each soul as if She herself was the one to be benefited. Of this I shall say more in the third Part (*Cor.* 111, 160-8).

212. To this offering of the most loving Mother her most holy Son answered: “My Mother and Friend, already the time has arrived in which it is suitable for Me, conformable to the will of my eternal Father, to begin to prepare some hearts so they receive the light of my doctrine, and give them notice that the chosen and opportune time of human salvation has arrived. In this work I desire Thee to accompany and follow Me. Do Thou beseech my Father to guide by his light the hearts of mortals and awaken their souls so with an upright intention they receive the knowledge which shall now be given them of the coming of their Repairer and Master into in the world.”* By this exhortation of Christ our Lord the Blessed Mother was made ready to accompany and follow Him in his journeys as She desired. From that day on the divine Master was accompanied by his Mother on nearly all his excursions from the town of Nazareth.

213. The Lord began to make these journeys more frequently in the three years preceding his public preaching and Baptism. In the company of our great Queen He made many journeys in the neighborhood of Nazareth and to the province of Nephtali (according to the prophecy of Isaias [Is. 9:1]), and to other places. In his conversation with men He began to announce to them the coming of the Messiah, assuring them He was already in the world and in the territory of Israel. He told them of it without intimating that He himself was the one they thus expected, for the first testimony that He was the Son of the eternal Father was given publicly by the Father himself when He said at the Jordan: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Mt. 3:17). Yet without manifesting in particular his dignity as the Onlybegotten made man, He began to give notice of it in general terms as one who knows with certainty. Without working public miracles, nor by other demonstrations of his divine power, He secretly accompanied his teachings and testimonies with interior inspirations and helps which He conferred on the hearts of those with whom He conversed and treated. Thus disposing their souls by faith, He prepared them to receive Him afterwards more easily as their Messiah.

214. He made acquaintance with those who by his divine wisdom He knew to be suitable and capable, or less incapable, of accepting the seed of truth. To the more ignorant He spoke of the

* cf. Jn. 6:44 [Ed.]

signs of the coming of the Redeemer known to all, such as the coming of the three Kings, the slaughter of the Innocents, and similar events. With the more enlightened He adduced the testimonies of the Prophets already fulfilled, and He explained to them these truths with the power and force of a divine Teacher. He proved to them the Messiah had already come to Israel, and He pointed out to them the kingdom of God and the way to attain it. Since He exhibited in his outward appearance so much beauty, grace, peace, sweetness, and gentleness of manner and speech, and since all his discourse, though veiled, was nevertheless so vivid and strong, and since He added thereto also his interior help of grace, the fruit of this wonderful mode of teaching was very great. Many souls came out of sin, others improved their life, and these and others were made capable of and catechized in great mysteries, and especially that the Messiah for whom they hoped was already in his reign.

215. To these works of mercy the divine Teacher added many others, for He consoled the sorrowful, relieved the oppressed, visited the sick and grieving, encouraged the disheartened, gave salutary counsel to the ignorant, assisted those in the agony of death, secretly gave health of body to many, helped those in great distress, and at the same time led them on to the path of life and true peace. All those who trustfully came to Him, or heard Him with a devout and upright mind, were filled with light and gifts of the powerful right hand of his divinity. It is not possible to enumerate or estimate the admirable works of the Redeemer during these three years before his Baptism and public preaching. All was done in a mysterious manner, so without manifesting Himself as the Author of salvation He communicated it to a vast number of souls. In nearly all these wonderful operations our great Lady was present as a witness and most faithful Coadjatrix of the Master of life. Since all of them were manifest to Her, She assisted and gave thanks for them in the name of these beneficiaries of divine mercy. She composed hymns of praise to the Almighty, prayed for souls as one knowing all their interior necessities, and by her prayers gained for them new blessings and favors. She herself also undertook to exhort and counsel them, drawing them to the sweet teachings of her Son and giving them intimation of the coming of the Messiah; however, She practiced these works of mercy more among women, imitating among them the works of mercy which her most holy Son performed for men.

216. Few people accompanied and followed the Savior and his most holy Mother in those first years, for it was not yet time to call them to the close following of his doctrine, and hence they remained in their homes, informed by the divine light and improving their lives by it. The ordinary companions of the heavenly Teachers were the holy Angels, who served them as most faithful vassals and servants, and although Jesus and Mary often returned from these journeys to their home in Nazareth, yet during them they stood more in need of the ministry of these courtiers of heaven. Some of the nights they passed in prayer without any other shelter than the sky, and on these occasions the Angels protected them and sheltered them from the inclemency of the weather, and sometimes they brought food. At other times the Lord and his Mother begged for food, refusing to accept any money or other gifts not necessary for their present nourishment. When at times they separated, the Lord visiting the sick in hospitals and the Queen other sick persons, innumerable Angels accompanied Her in visible forms. Through their mediation She performed some of her works of charity and was kept informed of the doings of her most holy Son. I shall not tarry in explaining in particular the wonders performed by them during this time, nor upon the labors and inconveniences suffered on the roads, inns, and from the obstacles which the common enemy placed in their way; it is enough to know the Teacher of life and his most holy Mother were looked upon as poor pilgrims, and preferred the way of suffering without refusing any labor for our salvation.

217. In this hidden manner the divine Master and his Mother spread the knowledge of his coming to all sorts of persons, yet the poor were more especially the objects of his blessed solicitude (Lk. 7:22); they are ordinarily better disposed, with fewer sins and greater light, and minds uncluttered and free from anxieties, and thus more readily receive and admit his doctrine. They are likewise more humble and diligent in subjecting their will and understanding, and in applying themselves to an upright and virtuous life; and since during these three years Christ our Lord had not yet begun his public teaching and doctrine, nor with manifest authority confirmed by miracles, He addressed Himself rather to the humble and poor, who are led to the truth with less show of authority. Nevertheless, the attention of the ancient serpent was much aroused by many of the doings of Jesus and Mary most holy, for not all of his miracles remained concealed, though the power by which they were done was hidden. Lucifer saw that through his words and exhortations many sinners were brought to penance, amended their life, and escaped his tyranny, while others advanced in virtue, and in all who listened to the Teacher of life the common enemy noticed a great and unheard-of change.

218. What enraged him most was he could not succeed in his attempts with those who were in the throes of death. Though he multiplied his cunning and malice in these last hours of souls in this life, it often happened that this bloodthirsty dragon, having approached the sick in order to exert his malice, was interrupted by the entrance of Christ our Lord or his most holy Mother and felt a powerful force which hurled him and his demons to the deepest caverns of hell. If the Sovereigns of heaven, Jesus and Mary, had previously come to the sickroom, the demons could not enter and could exert no influence upon the sick person who thus died in the powerful protection of the Lord. Since this dragon felt the divine power and was ignorant of its cause he developed a furious agitation and rage, and sought a remedy for the damage he felt. Then happened what I shall relate in the following chapter, in order not to enlarge this present one.

TEACHING OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN, MARY MOST HOLY.

219. My daughter, I see thee astonished at the information which I give thee concerning the mysterious works of my most holy Son and my own share in them, for thou dost see on the one hand how powerful they are for making an impression on human hearts, and on the other hand that many of them have remained hidden until now. Thy wonder should not be that men have not known these mysteries, but that having been informed of so many others concerning the life and activity of their Lord and mine they have held them in such contempt and forgetfulness. If their hearts were not so heavy, and if they would lovingly contemplate the divine truths, they would find in the life of my Son and in my own, as far as it is known to them, most powerful motives for gratitude. By the articles of faith, and by the many other truths taught and preached in the holy Church, many worlds could be converted, since these truths exhibit clearly that the Onlybegotten of the eternal Father clothed Himself in the mortal flesh of sinful man in order to redeem the human race by the frightful death of the cross (Philip. 2:7), acquiring for them eternal life by giving them his temporal life, and withdrawing them and liberating them from the death of hell. If this blessing would be taken at its true value, and mortals were not so ungrateful to their God and Savior and so cruel toward themselves, none would lose the occasion of their remedy, or deliver themselves over to eternal condemnation. In thy amazement then, my dearest, weep ceaselessly over the terrible loss sustained by so many insane and ungrateful souls who are forgetful of God, of their duty, and of their own selves.

220. On former occasions (172) I have already told thee that the number of those foreknown as doomed is so great, and of those who save themselves is so small, that it is not expedient to say more in particular, for if thou hast the sentiments of a true daughter of the Church, the spouse of Christ, my Son and Lord, thou wouldst die at seeing such misfortune. What thou mayest know is that all the loss and misfortune apparent in Christian nations and governments, as well among leaders as among subjects of the Church and of the secular state, all originate and flow from the forgetfulness and contempt of the works of Christ and of his Redemption. If there was a way of rousing them to a sense of gratitude and of their duty as faithful and acknowledged children of their Creator and Redeemer, and of me, who am their Intercessor, the wrath of the divine Judge would be appeased, and there would be some diminution of the widespread ruin and perdition among Catholics. The eternal Father, who is justly zealous for the honor of his Son, and rigorously chastises the servants who know the will of their Lord and refuse to fulfill it, would again be reconciled.

221. The faithful in the Church make much of the sin of the infidel Jews in taking away the life of their God and Master; they are right in doing so, for it was a most heinous crime and merited the punishments decreed against that people. But Catholics forget that their own sins are rendered heinous by other elements of guilt surpassing that of the Jews, for though their error was culpable, they esteemed it as truth in the end; then also the Lord willfully delivered Himself up to them, permitting them to work darkness and its power (Lk. 22:53) in which by their sins the Jews were oppressed. In these times, however, Catholics do not have this ignorance, but the fullness of the light by which they know and understand the divine mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption. The holy Church has been founded, spread out, made illustrious by miracles, by Saints, by holy writings, and by the knowledge and proclamation of truths unknown to the Jews. Despite all these multiplied advantages, blessings, truths and enlightenments, many live like infidels and as if they had not before their eyes so many inducements to draw them on and oblige them, nor so many chastisements to fill them with dread. How can Catholics then, under these circumstances, imagine that the sins of others have been greater or more grievous than their own? How can they presume that their punishment shall not be more lamentable? O my daughter, ponder well this doctrine, and be filled with a holy fear! Humble thyself to the dust and confess thyself the lowest of the creatures before the Most High. Look upon the works of thy Redeemer and Master; be directed by them and apply them for thy justification with sorrow and penance for thy sins. Do thou imitate and follow me in my ways as far as thou art enlightened from on high. And I desire thee to labor not only for thy own salvation but also for the salvation of thy brethren.* This thou must do by praying and suffering for them, charitably admonishing those thou canst, and eagerly doing for them more than is thy duty. Show thyself even more anxious to benefit those who have offended thee; be patient with all, and humble thyself below the most abject. According to the directions given thee before (173-4), be thou solicitous to assist, with fervent charity and firm assurance, those who are in the danger of death.

* cf. Eccclus. 24:47 [Ed.]