

CHAPTER II

Most Holy Mary Accompanies our Savior in His Preaching Tours; She Labors Much in This, and Looks After the Women who Follow Him, Proceeding in All Things with Consummate Perfection.

333. It would not be foreign to the purpose of this History to describe the miracles and heroic works of Christ our Redeemer and Master, for in almost all of them his most blessed and holy Mother concurred and took a part. But I cannot presume to undertake a work so arduous and so far above human strength and capacity, for the Evangelist St. John, after having described many miracles of Christ, says at the end of his Gospel (Jn. 21:25) there were *many other things which Jesus did, which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written*. If such a task seemed so impossible to the Evangelist, how much more to an ignorant woman, more useless than the dust of the earth? All that is necessary and proper, superabundant and sufficient, for founding and preserving the Church has been written by the four Evangelists, and it is not necessary to repeat it in this History. Yet in order to compose this History, and not pass over in silence so many great works of the exalted Queen which have not been mentioned, it is necessary to touch on a few particulars; moreover, I think to write them and thus fasten them in my memory will be both consoling and useful for my advancement. The others, which the Evangelists did not record in their Gospels and about which I have not been commanded to write, are better reserved for the beatific vision, where the saints shall see them manifested to them by the Lord, and where they will eternally praise Him for such magnificent works.

334. From Cana of Galilee Christ the Redeemer walked to Capharnaum, a large and populous city near the sea of Tiberias. Here, according to St. John (Jn. 2:12), He remained some days, though not many, for since the time of the Pasch was approaching He gradually drew nigh to Jerusalem in order to celebrate this feast on the fourteenth of the moon of March. After the wedding feast of Cana his most holy Mother accompanied Him, having said goodbye to her house in Nazareth for that time in order to follow Him in his preaching, which from that time on She always did even to the cross. She was absent from Him only a few times, such as when the Lord absented Himself on mount Tabor (Mt. 17:1), or on some particular conversions, as for instance that of the Samaritan woman, or when the heavenly Lady herself remained behind with certain persons in order to instruct and catechize them. But always after a short time She returned to her Lord and Master, following the Sun of justice until it sank into the abyss of death. During these journeys the Queen of heaven proceeded on foot just as her divine Son. If even the Lord was fatigued on the way, as St. John says (Jn. 4:6), how much more fatigued was this most pure Lady? What hardships did She endure on such arduous journeys in all sorts of weather? With this rigor did the Mother of Mercy treat her most delicate body. What She endured in these labors alone is so great that not all mortals together can ever satisfy their obligations to Her in this regard. Sometimes by permission of the Lord She suffered such great weakness and pains that He was constrained to relieve Her miraculously; at other times He commanded Her to rest at some stopping place for a few days; while again on certain occasions He gave such lightness to her body that She could move about without difficulty as if on wings.

335. The heavenly Mistress had the entire doctrine of the evangelical law written in her Heart (as declared above [3, 65]); nevertheless, She was as solicitous and attentive as a new disciple to the preaching and doctrine of her divine Son, and She had instructed her Angels to report to Her,

if necessary, the sermons of the Master whenever She was absent. And whenever His Majesty was preaching or teaching, the great Lady always listened to Him on her knees, She alone thus giving Him, according to the utmost of her strength, the reverence and worship due to his Person and doctrine. Since She was aware at each moment of the interior operations of the soul of Christ (as I have said in other places [*Inc.* 481; *Tran.* 279]), and of his continual prayers to the eternal Father for the proper disposition of the hearts of his hearers and for the growth of the seed of his doctrine unto eternal life, the most loving Mother joined the divine Master in his petitions and prayers, and in securing for them the blessings of her most ardent and tearful charity. By her attention and reverence She taught and moved others to duly appreciate the teaching and instructions of the Savior of the world. She also knew the interior of those who listened to the preaching of the Lord, their state of grace or sin, their vices and virtues. This various and hidden knowledge, so far above the capacity of men, caused in the heavenly Mother many wonderful effects of highest charity and other virtues; it inflamed Her with zeal for the honor of the Lord and ardent desires that the fruits of his Redemption and works be not lost to souls, while at the same time the danger of this loss through sin moved Her to solicit the remedy with incomparable fervor. She felt in her Heart a piercing and cruel sorrow in seeing God not known, adored and served by all his creatures, and this sorrow was in proportion to the unequalled knowledge and understanding She had of all these mysteries. For the souls who would not give entrance to divine grace and virtue She sorrowed with incomprehensible bitterness, and because of this She was accustomed to shed tears of blood at the thought of their misfortune. What the great Queen suffered in this her solicitude and labors exceeds beyond all measure the pains endured by all the martyrs of the world.

336. All the followers of the Savior, and those He received into his ministry, She treated with incomparable prudence and wisdom, especially those whom She held in such high veneration and esteem as the Apostles of Christ. As a Mother She took care of all, and as a powerful Queen She procured necessities for their bodily nourishment and comforts. Sometimes when She had no other resources She commanded the holy Angels to bring provisions for them and for the women in their company. In order to assist them in advancing in the spiritual life the great Queen labored beyond the possibility of human understanding, not only by her continual and fervent prayers for them but by her precious example and counsels with which She nourished and strengthened them as a most prudent Mother and Teacher. When the Apostles or disciples were assailed by any doubts, which frequently happened in the beginning, or when they were attacked by some secret temptation, the great Lady immediately hastened to their assistance in order to enlighten and encourage them by the peerless light and charity shining forth in Her, and by the sweetness of her words they were befittingly restored and consoled. They were taught and they learned by her wisdom, subdued by her humility, and composed by her modesty; they found all goods accumulated in that workshop of the Holy Ghost and his gifts. For all these benefits, for the calling of the disciples, for the conversion and perseverance of the just, and for all the works of grace and virtue, She made a proper return to God, celebrating these events in festive hymns.

337. As the Evangelists tell us, some of the women of Galilee followed Christ the Redeemer on his journeys. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke tell us that some of those whom He had cured of demoniacal possession and of other infirmities accompanied and served Him (Mt. 27; Mk. 15; Lk. 8), for the Master of eternal life did not exclude women from his following, imitation and doctrine; hence some of the women attended upon Him and served Him from the very beginning of his preaching. The divine Wisdom thus ordained it for certain purposes, among which was also the desire to provide proper companions for his Blessed Mother during these travels. Our

Queen interested Herself in a special manner in these pious and holy women, gathering them around Her, teaching and catechizing them, and bringing them as listeners to the sermons of her divine Son. Although She herself was fully enlightened and instructed in the evangelical doctrine and abundantly able to teach them the way of eternal life, nevertheless, partly in order to conceal this secret of her Heart, She always availed Herself of the sayings of Christ in his public preaching as a text for her instructions and exhortations whenever She taught these and many other women who came to Her either before or after hearing the Savior of the world. Not all of them followed Christ, but through the efforts of the heavenly Lady all of them received sufficient knowledge of the sacred mysteries for their conversion. Thus She drew innumerable women to the knowledge of Christ and to the way of eternal salvation and evangelical perfection, though the Evangelists say nothing more than some of them followed Christ our Lord, for it was not necessary for their task for the Evangelists to go into these particulars. The powerful Lady performed among these women admirable works, not only teaching the faith and virtues by words, but She also taught them by example to practice piety by visiting the sick, the poor, the hospitalized, the imprisoned, and the afflicted, bandaging their sores with her own hands, consoling the sorrowful, and relieving their necessities. In order to relate these works in detail it would be necessary to fill a great part of this History, or add to it.

338. Nor are the innumerable and vast miracles of the great Queen during the public preaching of Christ our Lord recorded in the Gospels or in other histories, for the Evangelists spoke only of the wonders wrought by Christ and insofar as was necessary to establish the faith of the Church. It was necessary for men to first be well established and confirmed in this faith before the great deeds of the most holy Mother be manifested. But according to what has been given me to understand it is certain that She not only worked many miraculous conversions, but also raised the dead, cured the blind, and gave health to many. That this happened was proper for many reasons. On the one hand She was the Coadjutrix in the principal work for which the Word of the eternal Father was made flesh and came into the world,* namely his preaching and his Redemption, and it was through Her the Father opened the treasures of his omnipotence and infinite goodness, manifesting them through the incarnate Word and through his worthy Mother. On the other hand She as his Mother was to resemble her Son in the working of miracles, increasing the glory of both, and in this manner She bore credit to her most holy Son and his doctrine, and eminently and most efficaciously assisted Him in his ministry. That these miracles of most holy Mary should remain concealed was due both to the disposition of divine Providence and to the earnest request of the most prudent Mother herself; hence She performed them with such a wise secrecy that all the glory redounded to the exaltation of the Redeemer, in whose name and virtue they were wrought. The same course She also maintained in her instructions, for She did not preach in public, nor at any prearranged place or time, nor to those who were attended to by the appointed teachers and ministers of the divine word, for the great Lady knew this kind of work was not incumbent upon women (I Cor. 14:34). She contented Herself with the assistance She could render by private instruction and conversation, which She did with celestial wisdom and efficacy. By this assistance and by her prayers She secured more conversions than all the preachers of the world.

339. This will be better understood if we remember that along with the heavenly influence of her words She possessed a most intimate knowledge of the nature, disposition, inclinations, and bad habits of all men, of the time and occasion best suited to bring all to the way of eternal life,

* cf. Jn. 1:14 [Ed.]

and that to this knowledge were added her most fervent prayers and the exquisite sweetness of her conversation. All these gifts were animated by her most ardent charity and her desire to bring souls to salvation and to the friendship of the Lord, and therefore the results of her labors were exceedingly great; She rescued innumerable souls, drawing them on and enlightening them. None of her petitions were denied Her, and none of her efforts failed to produce the holy effects which She asked for them. Thus as the work of salvation was the principal object of all her endeavors, She without a doubt performed greater deeds than can ever be understood by men in this mortal life. In all these labors the heavenly Lady proceeded with the greatest gentleness, like the simplest dove, with extreme patience and forbearance, overlooking the imperfections and rudeness of the new faithful and enlightening the ignorance of the vast number of those who came to subject themselves to the doctrines of the Redeemer. She always guarded her serenity with the magnificence of a great Queen, yet at the same time only She, in imitation of the Savior, could ever have joined with it such perfection of humility and sweetness. Both treated all with such great kindness and fullness of charity that no one could ever be excused from humble subjection to such Teachers. They spoke, conversed and ate with the disciples and with the women who followed them (Mt. 9:10; Jn. 12:2; Lk. 5:29; 7:36), observing all due moderation and reserve, and hence no one found it strange or doubted that the Savior was a true man, the natural and legitimate Son of most holy Mary; and for this reason the Lord attended other banquets with such affability, as is recorded in the holy Gospels.

TEACHING OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN, MARY MOST HOLY.

340. My daughter, it is true I labored more than is known or imagined by mortals in following and accompanying my divine Son to the cross, nor were my cares for their welfare any less after his death as thou shalt be made to understand in writing the third Part of this History. Amid all my labors and hardships I was ineffably rejoiced in spirit to see the incarnate Word working for the salvation of men and opening the book sealed by the seven mysteries of his divinity and most holy humanity (Apoc. 5:8). The human race owes me no less for my rejoicing at the welfare of each one than for my solicitude in procuring it, because both sprang from the same love; in this I desire thee to imitate me, as I have so often exhorted thee. Although thou dost not hear with thy bodily ears the sermons of my divine Son, nor his own voice in preaching, yet thou canst imitate me in the reverence with which I listened to Him, for it is the same One who speaks to thy heart and who teaches thee the same doctrine. Therefore I exhort thee whenever thou dost recognize the enlightening voice of thy Spouse and Pastor to kneel down in reverence and listen to his words, adoring Him full of gratitude and writing his counsels in thy heart. If thou dost happen to be in a public place where thou cannot show this external reverence, do it interiorly and obey Him in all things as if thou wert present at his very preaching; for just as hearing Him at that time without obeying Him would not have made thee happy, so thou canst now make thyself blessed by executing that which thou hearest Him say to thee interiorly, even though thou dost not hear Him with thy bodily ears. Great is thy obligation, since most extraordinary is the kindness and mercy shown to thee by the Most High and by me. Do not be dull of heart, lest thou remain poor amid such riches of divine enlightenment.

341. Yet not only to the interior voice of the Lord must thou listen reverently, but also to the voice of his ministers, preachers and priests, whose words are the echoes of the Most High and the aqueducts through which the blessed doctrine of life and the perennial fountains of divine truth flow to the souls. In them God speaks and the voice of his divine law resounds; hear them

with such reverence that thou art unwilling to look for any error, nor presume to pass judgment on what they say. For thee all must appear wise and eloquent, and in every one of them hear only the voice of Christ, my Son and Lord. Be warned not to fall into the foolish presumption of the worldly, who with vanity and pride most reprehensible and odious in the sight of God despise his ministers and preachers because they do not speak in accordance with their depraved taste. When they go to hear the divine truth they judge only the expression and style, as if the word of God was not simple and effectual (Heb. 4:12), depending not on oratorical and artful arrangement of words adjusted merely to the weakness of those who listen. Do not count this advice as small; listen to all that I say to thee in this History, since as a Teacher I desire to inform thee in that which is less and that which is more, in great and in small matters.* Remember, to perform anything with perfection is always great. I also exhort thee to treat affably the rich as well as the poor, without the acceptance of persons so common among the children of Adam. My divine Son and I rejected and condemned all such distinction, showing ourselves equally kind to all, and even more so to those who were most despised, indigent and afflicted (James 2:2). Worldly wisdom looks upon the person, not at the state of the soul; not at virtue, but at outward ostentation; but heavenly prudence considers the image of God in all. Thou must not wonder that thy sisters and neighbors perceive thy defects of nature such as are derived from the first sin, thy infirmities, fatigues, appetites, and other shortcomings. Sometimes the hiding of these defects is hypocrisy and lack of humility. The friends of God should fear only sin and desire to die rather than commit it; all other defects do not sully the conscience, and it is not necessary to conceal them.

* cf. Lk. 16:10 [Ed.]