

CHAPTER II

St. John the Evangelist in Chapter XXI of the Apocalypse Describes to the Letter the Vision He Had when He Saw Descending from Heaven Most Holy Mary, Our Lady.

10. The office and such excellent dignity of son of Mary most holy, which our Savior Jesus gave to the Apostle St. John from the Cross as a special token of his divine love, had as a consequence that he was to be the secretary of the ineffable sacraments and mysteries of the great Queen which were much hidden from the others. For this reason many of her mysteries were revealed to him before her excursion into heaven, and he was made an eyewitness of the hidden mysteries on the day of the Ascension, when this sacred Eagle saw the sun, Christ our Good, ascend in sevenfold light, as Isaias said (30:26), and with it the moon Mary with light as the sun because of her likeness to Christ. The most fortunate Evangelist saw Her ascend and seated at the right hand of her Son; he also saw Her descend, as I have said (5), and with renewed astonishment because he saw and recognized the change and renovation at her return to the earth after the ineffable glory She had received in heaven, with such new influences of the Divinity and participation in his attributes. As is said in the second Part, our Savior Jesus had already promised the Apostles that before going to heaven He would arrange for the stay of his most blessed Mother for the consolation and direction of his holy Church (*Tran.* 794); but the Apostle St. John, during his first joy and wonder at seeing the great Queen seated at the right hand of Christ our Savior, forgot this promise, and absorbed in this unexpected new event he began to fear or suspect the heavenly Mother would remain in the glory which She enjoyed. Agitated by this uncertainty St. John, amid the jubilation of his soul, felt also the afflicting pangs of love at the loss, and these lasted until he again remembered the promises of his Master and Savior and saw his most holy Mother descending to the earth.

11. The mysteries of this vision remained impressed upon the memory of St. John and he never forgot them, nor the rest revealed to him by the Queen of the Angels, and the sacred Evangelist sought to spread the knowledge of them in the holy Church; however, the humility of the most prudent Mary our Lady deterred him as long as She lived, and persuaded him to keep them hidden within his bosom until the Most High would command otherwise, for it was not opportune to manifest them to the world until then. The Apostle obeyed the desires of the heavenly Mother. Before his death, at the time when God commissioned him to enrich the Church with the hidden treasures of these sacraments, he was instructed by the Holy Ghost to reveal them in deeply metaphorical and enigmatic language which, as the Church itself confesses, is difficult to understand. It was proper that these mysteries not be open to all, but enclosed as the pearl is in the nacre or in its shell, or as gold is hidden in the minerals of the earth. The holy Church, gradually more enlightened and studying them diligently, could draw upon these treasures as necessity required, and in the meanwhile preserve them in deposit within the obscurity which the holy Doctors have met with and acknowledged in Holy Scriptures, and especially in the Apocalypse.

12. In the course of this History I have already spoken of the providence of the Most High in concealing the greatness of his most holy Mother in the primitive Church (*Inc.* 413), and I will offer no excuse for pointing it out anew because of the admiration it will cause in those who now come to know of it. In order to moderate our doubts (if there are any), we need only consider what the various Saints and Doctors have said concerning the providential concealment of the body and the burial of Moses (Dt. 34:6). They say this was ordained so the people of the Jews, so

given to idolatry, might not be led astray into giving adoration to the body of the Prophet whom they esteemed so highly, or not begin to venerate him by some superstitious and vain cult. For the same reason they say Moses, writing of the creation of the world and of all creatures, did not expressly mention the creation of the Angels, though they were the most noble of all, but only indicated it by the words “God created light” (Gen. 1:3), because these words can be understood of both the material light of this visible world and by a hidden metaphor of those substantial and spiritual lights, the holy Angels, of whom a more open mention was not opportune at that time.

13. If the Hebrew people were subject to the danger of idolatry because of the communication and vicinity of heathenism, so blind and inclined to attribute divinity to all creatures who seemed great, powerful or superior in any capacity,* then if in the first preaching of the Gospel and the faith of Christ our Savior the great excellences of his most holy Mother had been propounded to them the gentiles would have been in still greater danger of this error. In corroboration of this we have the saying of St. Dionysius the Areopagite, who though he was such a great philosopher that he had found out the existence of the true God even by his natural acumen of mind, openly maintained after he had become a Catholic that when he had seen and conversed with most holy Mary he would certainly have esteemed and adored Her as God if faith had not taught him otherwise. In this danger the ignorant would have fallen much more easily, and they would certainly have confused the divinity of the Redeemer, which they were obliged to believe, with the greatness of his most pure Mother, thinking since they were propounded at the same time and showed such similarity in sanctity She was God just as her Son. But this danger vanished after the faith and practice of the Church had taken such deep roots, and after it had been so clearly established by the teachings of the holy Doctors and by so many miracles wrought by God in testimony of the Redeemer. Enlightened by these testimonies we know He alone is God and true man, *full of grace and truth* (Jn. 1:14), and his Mother is a mere creature, full of grace without possessing the Divinity, immediately next to God and superior to all the rest of creatures. In our times then, so enlightened by the divine truths, the Lord knows when and how it is proper to spread the glory of his most holy Mother by opening up the enigmas and secrets of the Holy Scriptures wherein He holds them enshrined.

14. The mystery of which I am about to speak, with many others concerning our great Queen, was recorded by the Evangelist in the metaphors of chapter XXI of the Apocalypse, especially introducing most holy Mary under the type of the holy city of Jerusalem, and describing Her with the terms with which that entire chapter proceeds. Although in the first Part I have explained it at length in three chapters, applying it (as it was then given me to understand) to the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother,† yet it is necessary now to interpret it in relation to the mystery of the descent of the Queen of the Angels after the Ascension of the Lord. Let it not be understood that there is a contradiction or incompatibility in these explanations, since both of them are legitimately founded on the literal text of the Scriptures, and there can be no doubt that divine Wisdom can comprehend in the same and identical words many mysteries and sacraments. In one spoken word we can understand two things, as David says (Ps. 61:12), which can be understood without equivocation or contradiction. This is one of the causes of the difficulties found in Holy Scriptures, and one that was necessary in order to make it more pregnant and precious in its meaning, and so the faithful might study it with greater humility and reverence. That it is so full of enigmas and metaphors is

* cf. Acts 14:10-12 [Ed.]

† cf. *Conception* 243ff. [Ed.]

necessary, since in that style and wording the sacred mysteries, which would be strained by the more proper terms, can be expressed much more fully.

15. This will be better understood in the mysteries now under consideration, for St. John says: *I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, adorned*, etc. (Apoc. 21:2). There is no doubt this metaphor of a city refers truly to Mary most holy, and points out her descent after having ascended with her most blessed Son; at the same time it also refers to her descent in the divine mind by her Immaculate Conception, in which She was formed as the new earth and the new heaven, as explained in the first Part. The Evangelist included both of these sacraments when he speaks of this event in that chapter. Hence it is necessary to explain it in this new sense, though this will imply a repetition of the sacred text; however, I shall explain it more briefly due to what I have already said in the first Part. I shall speak in the name of the Evangelist for the sake of greater brevity.

16. *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more* (Ib. 1). He calls the most sacred humanity of the incarnate Word, and that of his heavenly Mother, a new heaven and a new earth; a heaven because of the inhabitation of the Divinity in the humanity, and a new one because of the renovation of mankind. In Christ Jesus our Savior lives the Divinity (Col. 2:9) in a oneness of personality by the indissoluble substantial union, while in Mary another kind of union is effected, the greatest next to Christ, by a singular mode of grace. These heavens are now new because the passible humanity, which the Evangelist had seen wounded and dead in the sepulchre, he now saw elevated and placed at the right hand of the eternal Father, crowned with glory and with the gifts merited by his life and death. He saw also the Mother, who had given to Christ this passible nature and had cooperated in the Redemption of the human race, seated at the right hand of her Son (Ps. 44:10)* and absorbed in the ocean of the inaccessible light of the Divinity, participating in the glory of her Son as Mother and meriting it in justice and because of her ineffable works of charity. He also called a new heaven and a new earth the homeland of the living since it was renewed by the lamp of the Lamb (Apoc. 21:23), with the spoils of his triumphs and the presence of his Mother, who as true Sovereigns had taken possession of their reign which shall be eternal. They renewed it by the sight of them, by the new joy which they communicated to its ancient inhabitants, and by the new children of Adam whom they had brought to heaven and would never lose, to populate it as citizens and inhabitants. With this renewal *the first heaven and the first earth was gone*, not only because the sacred humanity of Christ and that of most holy Mary (in whom He had lived as in the first heaven) had gone to the eternal dwellings, bearing with them also the earth of their human essence, but also because men themselves, from the ancient heaven and earth of their passible being, had passed to the state of impassibility. Gone were the rigors of justice, and blessed rest was attained. The winter of troubles had fled (Cant. 2:11), and the eternal springtime of joy and delight had come. The first earth and heaven of all mortals had likewise vanished, for the celestial Jerusalem had been barred and locked during five thousand two hundred years so none could enter, and all mortals would have been confined to the old sin-stained earth if through the entrance of Christ and his most blessed Mother these bars and locks had not been shattered and the divine justice satisfied.

17. Mary most holy was singularly a new heaven and a new earth by ascending with her Son and Savior Jesus, and by taking possession at his right hand in glory of body and soul without having passed through the death common to all the sons of men. Although before in the earth of

* cf. also Mt. 20:23 [Ed.]

her human condition She was a heaven where in a most special manner She saw the Divinity, yet this first heaven and earth of this great Lady passed by an admirable decree to become *a new heaven and a new earth*, in which God would dwell in highest glory among all the creatures. With this renewal and in this new heaven in which God dwelt *the sea was now no more*, because for Her the bitterness and sorrows of labor would have come to an end if She had consented to remain from that time on in that most happy state. In regard to the other Saints, who in body and soul, or only in soul, remained in glory, all storms and dangers of the first earth in mortal life had now in reality come to an end.

18. The Evangelist proceeds: *And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband* (Apoc. 21:2). I, an unworthy Apostle of Jesus Christ, am the one to whom this hidden sacrament was revealed so it could become known to the world. I saw the Mother of the Incarnate Word, the true mystical city of Jerusalem, the vision of peace, descending from the throne of God himself to the earth, and I saw Her clothed as it were with the Divinity himself and adorned with a new participation of his attributes, of wisdom, power, sanctity, immutability, amiability, and similarity with his Son in her behavior and actions. She came as an instrument of the right hand of the Omnipotent, as it were his representative by a new participation. Although She came to the earth in order to labor upon it for the benefit of the faithful, and for this purpose deprived Herself voluntarily of the vision of eternal glory, nevertheless the Most High resolved to send Her adorned and furnished with the power of his own arm and to compensate Her for the beatific vision She had relinquished; instead of it She was favored with another sort of vision and participation in his incomprehensible Divinity, suited to her present state of pilgrimage, yet so divine and exalted that it exceeds all the thoughts of angels and men. For this He adorned Her with his own hand with all the gifts He could extend to Her, and has prepared Her as a Bride for her Man, the incarnate Word, enriching Her so no grace or excellence was lacking in Her; nor should her absence from his right hand deprive Her of the presence and communication of this Man, who was to remain in Her as in his proper heaven and throne. Just as the sponge receives and soaks up the fluids into its hollow spaces, so (according to our manner of understanding) this great Lady was filled with influences and communications of the Divinity.

19. The text further states: *And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them. And they shall be his people; and God himself with them shall be their God* (Ib. 3). This voice proceeding from the throne transported all my attention by divine effects of sweetness and joy. I understood how before her death the great Lady attained possession of the great reward which She had merited as a singular favor and a prerogative due only to Her among all mortals; and though no one after attaining possession of their glory had permission or authority to return to life, yet this privilege was conceded to this only Spouse for the increase of her glory. In full possession of eternal beatitude and proclaimed by all the courtiers of heaven as their legitimate Queen and Lady, She desired of her own free will to descend and become the Servant of her servants, educating and governing them as her children. Because of this measureless charity She merited anew to have all mortals as her subjects and be given new possession of the Church Militant to which She returned as an inhabitant and Governess. She also merited that God would be with them and be merciful and propitious with men, for in her bosom the Lord was sacramentally present during the whole time in which this tabernacle, most holy Mary, lived in the Church after her descent from heaven. In order to thus be present within Her (even if there had been no other reason) her Son remained

sacramentally in the world, and through her merits and petitions He was with men by grace and new benefits. Wherefore the Evangelist adds:

20. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying* (Ib. 4). This great Lady came as the Mother of grace, of mercy, of joy, and of life. She it is who fills the world with joy and who dries away the tears brought on by the sin of our mother Eve. She turned mourning into rejoicing, tears into new jubilee, clamors into praise and glory, and the death of sin into life for all who seek it. Now the death of sin is at an end, together with the cries of sinners and their heretofore irreparable sorrow, if only before their damnation they will take refuge in this sanctuary and there find pardon, mercy and consolation. The first ages of the world, in which Mary the Queen of the Angels was absent, have fled and passed with sorrow, along with the clamors of those who desired to see Her and could not, for now the world possesses Her for its remedy and Refuge, She who holds back divine justice in order to entreat mercy for sinners.

21. *And He that sat on the throne, said: Behold I make all things new* (Ib. 5). This was the voice of the eternal Father, who gave me to understand how He made all things new: A new Church, a new Law, and new Sacraments. Having conferred upon men such new blessings as to give them his onlybegotten Son, He gave them another most singular blessing by sending them most holy Mary thus renewed and endowed with such admirable gifts and power as to enable Her to distribute the treasures of the Redemption which her Son had placed into her hands so She could pour them out among men according to her most prudent will. For this purpose He sent Her to the Church from his royal throne, renewed in the image of his Onlybegotten, sealed with the attributes of the Divinity, as exact a copy of the Original as is possible in a mere creature so her holiness could be copied from Her by the new evangelical Church.

22. *And He said to me: Write, for these words are most faithful and true. And He said to me: It is done. I am Alpha and Omega; the beginning and the end. To him that thirsteth, I will give of the fountain of the water of life, freely. He that shall overcome shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son* (Ib. 5-7). The Lord from his throne commanded me to write down this mystery in order to give witness to the fidelity and truth of his words and of the works of most holy Mary, for whose greatness and glory He pledged his omnipotence. And because these sacraments are so exalted and hidden I announce them in figures and riddles, leaving it to the Lord to manifest them in the world at his own time, and letting all understand that whatever is possible has been done for the restoration and welfare of mortals. In saying *it is done*, God reminds men of their obligations to Him for sending his Onlybegotten to suffer and die for them and to teach them his doctrine, for sending his Mother to assist and protect the Church, and for sending the Holy Ghost to promote and enlighten, to strengthen and comfort it with the gifts He had promised. And since the eternal Father had nothing more to give us, He says *it is done*, as if He had said: I have given all that is possible to my omnipotence and proper to my equity and bounty, as the One who is the beginning and end of all that has being. As the beginning I give it by the omnipotence of my will, and as the end of all I receive all things, providing in my wisdom the means by which they attain their last end. These means are all under the control of my most holy Son and his Mother, my chosen and beloved One among the children of Adam. In Her are the pure and living waters of grace from which all mortals who thirst after their eternal salvation may draw as from its fount and source (Jn. 7:37).^{*} For them these waters are distributed freely, since they could not merit them; yet with his own life my

^{*} cf. also Eccus. 24:40-42 [Ed.]

incarnate Son has merited them, and his happy Mother gains and merits them for those who go to Her.* And whoever shall overcome the hindrances to these waters of grace, that is, whoever overcomes himself, the world, and the demon, shall find Me a generous, loving and mighty God. He shall possess all my goods and whatever through my Son and his Mother I have prepared for him, for I shall adopt him as my child and as an inheritor of my eternal glory.

23. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death* (Apoc. 21:8). To all the children of Adam I give my Onlybegotten as a Master, Redeemer and Brother, and his Mother as a Protectress, Mediatrix and Advocate, powerful before Me, and as such I send Her again into the world so all may understand how much I desire them to avail themselves of her protection. But those who do not overcome the repugnance of their flesh to suffering, or do not believe my testimonies and wonders wrought for their benefit and testified by my Holy Scriptures, and those who having believed have entangled themselves in the base impurities of carnal delights, and the sorcerers and idolaters who forsake my true power and divinity, following the demon, and all those who work deceit and malice, shall have no other inheritance than what they thus choose for themselves. This will be the dreadful fire of hell, which is a pool of burning sulfur, full of darkness and stench, where for each of the damned there shall be different pains and torments according to the abominations committed by each one, and all of them shall be eternal and connected with the loss of the divine and beatific vision enjoyed by the saints. This shall be the second death, and shall be without remedy because they did not take advantage of the Redemption from the first death of sin through the virtue of their Repairer and his Mother which could have restored them to the life of grace. Still describing his vision, the Evangelist proceeds:

24. *And there came one of the seven angels, who had the vials full of the seven last plagues, and spoke with me, saying: Come, and I will show thee the Bride, the wife of the Lamb* (Ib. 9). I saw that this Angel and the others were of the highest and closest to the throne of the blessed Trinity, and were endowed with special powers to chastise the temerity of men who would commit the aforementioned sins after the publication to the world of the mystery of the Redemption, life, doctrine and death of our Savior, and the excellence and power which his most holy Mother has to remedy the sinners who call upon Her with all their heart. With the passage of time these sacraments have become more manifest, together with the miracles and light which the world has received, and the examples and lives of the Saints, and in particular those of apostolic men, the founders of religious orders, and such a great number of martyrs and confessors; because of all this, the sins of men in the last ages are more heinous and detestable, and their ingratitude toward such blessings is more abominable and worthy of greater punishments, and thus they are deserving of greater indignation and worthy of the divine wrath and justice. Thus in the future times (which are the present ones for us) God shall rigorously chastise men with the last plagues, since they shall be the last days, each day drawing closer to the Last Judgment. Let the reader refer to paragraph number 265 in the first Part (*Con.* 265).

25. *And he took me up in spirit to a great and high mountain; and he showed me the holy city of Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God* (Apoc. 21:10). I was raised by the power of God to a high mountain of supreme intelligence and light regarding hidden sacraments, and in this state I saw the Bride of the Lamb, who was his wife, as the holy city of Jerusalem; the Bride of the Lamb because of her likeness and reciprocal love of Him, who took away the sins of the

* cf. Heb. 4:16; *Introit* for Aug. 22, the Immaculate Heart of Mary [Ed.]

world (Jn. 1:29), and wife because She accompanied Him inseparably through all his works and wonders, and because for Her He came forth from the bosom of his eternal Father to have his delight with the children of men (Prov. 8:31), who were the brethren of this Bride and through Her also his own brethren (Mt. 28:10). I saw Her also as the city of Jerusalem, who enclosed Him within Herself and provided Him a spacious habitation, though He cannot be encompassed by heaven or earth (II Par. 6:18), and because He placed in that City the temple and propitiatory where He desired to be sought and propitiated by mankind. And though on earth She humiliated and prostrated Herself beneath the feet of all as if She had been the least of creatures, I saw Her raised on high to the throne and to the right hand of her Onlybegotten (Ps. 44:10), from whence She again descended to the Church, prosperous and bountiful to enrich its faithful children.