

## CHAPTER XVI

*Most Holy Mary Knows the Councils of the Demons to Persecute the Church; She Pleads for the Remedy in the Presence of the Most High in Heaven; She Warns the Apostles; St. James Arrives in Spain to Preach the Gospel, where He is Visited by Most Holy Mary.*

307. When Lucifer with his princes of darkness after the conversion of St. Paul were plotting the vengeance they wished to take against most holy Mary and the children of the Church as described in the last chapter, they did not realize the knowledge of this great Queen and Mistress of the world penetrated into those obscure and profound abysses of hell and extended to the most hidden secrets of their evil counsels. Thus deceived, those most cruel dragons esteemed most certain their victory and the full execution of their schemes against Her and against the disciples of her Son. But from her retreat the Blessed Mother with the clearness of her heavenly science knew all their conferences and understood all the intrigues of these enemies of the light. She perceived all their aims and the means which they intended to use, their wrath against God and against Her, and their mortal hatred against the Apostles and the rest of the faithful. Although the most prudent Lady was well aware the demons could execute none of their fury without the permission of the Lord, yet as this conflict in mortal life is unavoidable, and since She knew the weakness of men and their only too common ignorance of the demonic astuteness and malice intent on their perdition, She was filled with great solicitude and sorrow at the unanimous resolve of those jealous enemies for the destruction of the faithful.

308. In addition to this knowledge and the charity drawn directly from the Lord, She was endowed with another kind of tireless activity similar to that of the Divinity, which continues without interruption as one pure act. The most diligent Mother was ceaselessly actuated by her love and solicitude for the glory of the Most High and the consolation and protection of her children. At the same time She pondered in her most chaste bosom the supernal mysteries, conferring the past with the present and both with the future, and preparing for it with a more than human discretion and foresight. Her most ardent desire for the salvation of all the faithful, and her maternal compassion for their labors and dangers, compelled Her to estimate all their tribulations and perils as her own, and as far as her love was concerned She desired if possible to suffer them all Herself, while the rest of the followers of Christ would labor in the Church without molestation, meriting grace and eternal life for themselves in joyful peace and leaving to Her alone all sorrows and tribulations. Although this was not possible according to the equitable providence of God, yet men are greatly indebted to the charity of most holy Mary for this rare and marvelous affection, and on such occasions the will of God would indeed condescend to her desires in order to satisfy her love and give Her rest in her anxieties, allowing Her to suffer for us and thereby merit for us great benefits.

309. She did not know in particular on this occasion the resolves of the hellish foes in that cabal, understanding only in general their fury was directed against Her in a special manner; divine Providence concealed from Her some of the designs of the demons so the triumph She would gain over hell would afterwards be so much the more glorious as I shall describe further on (512ff.). This instruction and warning was not necessary to prepare the invincible Queen for suffering temptations and persecutions as it was for the other faithful, whose labors and tribulations She knew more explicitly and whose hearts were not so exalted and magnanimous as

hers. Since in all affairs She turned to prayer,\* consulting about them with the Lord as She was taught by the doctrine and example of her most holy Son, She then promptly retired alone, and with admirable reverence and fervor She prostrated Herself upon the ground as was her custom and prayed, saying:

310. “Most high Lord and eternal God, holy and incomprehensible, behold here prostrate before Thee this humble handmaid and vile wormlet of the earth. I beseech Thee, eternal Father, by thy Onlybegotten and my Lord Jesus Christ, do not despise my petitions and sighs which from my inmost soul I present before thy immense charity along with that which, issuing from the loving furnace of thy bosom, Thou hast communicated to thy slave. In the name of thy entire holy Church and of thy Apostles and faithful servants I present to Thee, my Lord, the sacrifice of the blood and death of thy Onlybegotten, the sacrifice of his sacramental body, the acceptable and pleasing petitions and prayers He offered to Thee during the time of his mortal and passible flesh,† the love with which He took the form of man in my womb in order to redeem the world, his being carried there for nine months, and his being raised and nursed at my bosom. All this I present to Thee, my God, so Thou mayest give me permission to ask Thee for the desire of my heart, which is manifest to thine eyes.”

311. During this prayer the great Queen was elevated by a divine ecstasy in which She saw her Onlybegotten at the right hand of the eternal Father, asking Him to concede to his most holy Mother all her petitions and representing to Him that She was his true Mother, entirely pleasing to the Divinity and worthy of being received and heard in all her prayers. She saw also that the eternal Father considered Himself obliged and was pleased with her prayers, and looking upon Her with highest pleasure said to Her: “Mary, my daughter, ascend higher.” At this voice of the Father an innumerable multitude of Angels of different orders descended from heaven, and coming into the presence of most holy Mary they raised Her from the ground upon which She lay prostrate with her face adhering to it. They then bore Her up body and soul to the empyrean heaven and placed Her before the throne of the most holy Trinity, who manifested Himself to Her by a most exalted vision, though not intuitive but of another kind. She prostrated Herself before the throne and adored the being of God in the three divine Persons with the most profound humility and reverence, at the same time thanking her divine Son for having presented her petition to the eternal Father and asking Him again to do so. His Sovereign Majesty, who at the right hand of the Father acknowledged Her as his worthy Mother and the Queen of heaven, remembered the obedience He had shown Her on earth (Lk. 2:51); before all the courtiers of heaven He renewed this recognition of a Son, and as her Son presented anew to the Father the desires and prayers of his Blessed Mother, to whom the eternal Father himself responded in these words:

312. “My Son, in whom my holy will finds the plenitude of pleasure (Mt. 17:5), my ears are attentive to the clamors of thy Mother, and my clemency is inclined toward all her desires and petitions.” Then turning to most holy Mary He proceeded and said: “My Friend and my Daughter, chosen among thousands for my approbation, Thou art the instrument of my omnipotence and the Treasury of my love. Rest from thy cares and tell Me, my Daughter, what Thou askest, for my will is inclined toward thy desires and petitions, which are holy in my eyes.” With this consent most holy Mary spoke and said: “My eternal Father and most high God, who givest being and preservation to all creation, my desires and supplications are for thy holy

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\* cf. Philip. 4:6; I Thes. 5:17 [Ed.]

† cf. Heb. 5:7 [Ed.]

Church. Remember in thy kindness that it is the work of thy Onlybegotten made man, who acquired and planted it by his own blood (Acts 20:28). Against it arises anew the infernal dragon and all thy enemies, his allies, who all seek the ruin and perdition of thy faithful, who are the fruit of the Redemption of thy Son and my Lord. Confound the counsels of malice of this ancient serpent and defend thy servants the Apostles and the other faithful of the Church. So they may be freed from the snares and fury of these enemies, let them direct all their assaults against me, if it is possible. I, my Lord, am only one poor creature, and thy servants are many; let them enjoy thy favors and tranquility by which they advance the cause of thy exaltation and glory, and let me suffer the tribulations which threaten them.\* Let me battle against thy enemies, and Thou by the power of thy arm shalt conquer them and confound their malice.”

313. “My Spouse and my Beloved,” answered the eternal Father, “thy desires are acceptable in my eyes and thy petition shall be granted as far as possible. I shall defend my servants in that which is proper for my glory, and permit them to suffer what is necessary for their crown. And so Thou mayest understand the secret of my wisdom by which these mysteries shall be properly dispensed, I desire to raise Thee to my throne, where thy ardent charity gives Thee a place in the consistory of our great Council and in the singular participation of our divine attributes. Come, my Friend, and Thou shalt understand our secrets for the government of the Church and its increase and progress, and Thou shalt execute thy will, which shall be ours, as We shall now manifest to Thee.” By the force of this most sweet voice most holy Mary recognized Herself as raised to the throne of the Divinity and placed at the right hand of her onlybegotten Son to the admiration and joy of all the Blessed, who recognized the voice and the will of the Almighty. And in truth it was something new and admirable to all the angels and saints to see a woman in mortal flesh called and elevated to the throne of the great Council of the most blessed Trinity in order to be informed of the mysteries hidden to the rest and enshrined in the bosom of God for the government of the Church.

314. It would seem a great wonder if in some city of this world a woman was called to the meetings in which public government is transacted, and still more surprising to see her introduced to the podiums and assemblies of the supreme councils where the more difficult and grave public affairs for the kingdoms and the entire government are discussed and resolved upon. Such a course would rightly seem hazardous, since Solomon says that in seeking truth and reason among men he found but one out of a thousand who followed it, and among women not one (Eccles. 7:28-9). Owing to their natural frailty there are so few women who possess constancy and integrity of judgment that ordinarily it is presumed in none, and if there are any they are scarcely capable of managing affairs which are difficult to understand and require deep insight, unless they are aided by other light beyond the ordinary and natural. This common law did not extend to our great Queen and Lady, for if our mother Eve in her ignorance began by destroying the edifice of this world built by God, most holy Mary, who was most wise and the Mother of Wisdom, rebuilt it and restored it by her peerless prudence, and hence She was worthy to enter into the negotiation of the most holy Trinity dealing with its restoration.

315. There She was again asked what favors She requested and desired for Herself and for the whole Church, in particular for the Apostles and disciples of the Lord. The most prudent Mother repeated her most fervent desires for the glory and exaltation of the Holy Name of the Most High and the alleviation of the faithful in the persecution forged against them by the enemies of the same Lord. Although the three Persons of the most holy Trinity well knew all her desires, yet

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\* cf. Jn. 15:13 [Ed.]

they commanded the great Lady to propose them in order to elicit their approbation and delight, and to make Her more capable of new mysteries of their divine Wisdom and the predestination of the elect. In order to manifest and declare what has been given me to understand regarding this sacrament, I say that because the will of most holy Mary was most just, holy, and in all things exceedingly pleasing and conformable to the will of the most blessed Trinity, it seems (according to our way of understanding such things) God could not desire anything contrary to the will of this most pure Lady, towards whose ineffable sanctity He was inclined, being as it were wounded by the hair and eyes of so beloved a Spouse (Cant. 4:9), unique among all creatures. And since the Father looked upon Her as his Daughter, the Son as his Mother, and the Holy Ghost as his Spouse, and since the Heart of all Three had entrusted to Her the Church in fullest confidence (Prov. 31:11), therefore due to all these titles the three Persons did not desire to decree the execution of anything without as it were consulting the wisdom and pleasure of the Queen of all creation.

316. In order for the will of the Most High and that of most holy Mary to coincide in these decrees, it was necessary for the great Lady to first receive a new participation in the divine science and most hidden counsels of his providence by which all the affairs of his creatures are arranged in weight and measure (Wis. 11:21), along with all their means and ends in the highest equity and propriety. For this purpose most holy Mary received on this occasion a most clear insight into all that was to be done and preordained by the divine power in the Church Militant. She saw the most secret reasons for all these works; how many and which of the Apostles were to die before She would pass from this life; the labors they were to undertake for the Name of the Lord; the reasons He had for this, conformable to the hidden judgments of the Lord and the predestination of the saints; and hence in order to plant the Church why they must shed their own blood as His Majesty the Redeemer had done in order to found it upon his Passion and Death. She understood also how through her own compassion and sorrow in seeing the sufferings of the Apostles and followers of Christ She could compensate Herself for not being allowed to take upon Herself their sufferings as She desired, for this momentary labor could not be spared them if they were to reach the eternal reward in store for them (II Cor. 4:17). To give the great Lady an opportunity for this kind of merit She was informed of the near death of St. James and the imprisonment of St. Peter, but not of his liberation by an Angel. She understood also the Lord portioned out to the Apostles and the faithful that kind of suffering or martyrdom which corresponded with the grace and strength of soul of each one.\*

317. In order to satisfy in all things the most ardent charity of this purest Mother the Lord permitted Her to fight anew all the battles with the dragons of hell and gain over them victories and triumphs which the rest of mortals shall never attain. By this means She was to crush the head of these dragons and confound them in their arrogance, weakening their forces and breaking their strength which they were mustering against the faithful. God renewed in Her all his gifts and participations in his divine attributes, and each of the three Persons gave Her his blessing. The holy Angels returned Her to the Cenacle in the same way they had brought Her to the empyrean heaven. As soon as She found Herself recovered from her ecstasy She prostrated Herself with her face upon the ground in the form of a cross, and with most tender tears and incredible humility thanked the Almighty for this new blessing conferred upon Her in answer to her most humble petitions. For some time She conferred with her holy Angels regarding the mysteries and necessities of the Church in order to attend to its most pressing needs. It seemed

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\* cf. I Cor. 10:13 [Ed.]

advisable to prepare and encourage the Apostles for the coming tribulation, since the common enemy was to direct his main battle against them. For this purpose She spoke to St. Peter, St. John, and the rest who were in Jerusalem, notifying them of many particulars which were to happen to them and to the whole Church, confirming the report of the conversion of St. Paul, and telling them of the zeal with which he was preaching the Name of his Master and Lord.

318. To the Apostles and disciples who were not in Jerusalem She sent Angels in order to notify them of the conversion of St. Paul, and to prepare and encourage them with the same good counsels as those She had given to those present with Her. She especially commanded one of the holy Angels to warn St. Paul of the intended assaults of the demon and to animate and confirm him with the hope of divine assistance in his tribulations. Obediently the Angels fulfilled all these tasks with their accustomed alacrity, manifesting themselves in visible forms to the Apostles and disciples. All of them were exceedingly consoled and encouraged by these favors of most holy Mary, and each one answered through the same envoys, sending humble acknowledgment and offering themselves to die for the honor of their Redeemer and Master. St. Paul especially showed his gratitude in his answer, for his desire of seeing and thanking his Protectress urged him to demonstrate his devotion in a more fervent manner. He was at that time in Damascus preaching and disputing in the synagogues, though soon after he went to Arabia to preach. From there he afterwards came to Damascus a second time as I shall relate further on (375).

319. St. James the Greater was farther away than any of the others. He was the first Apostle to leave Jerusalem (236), and having preached some days in Judea he departed for Spain. For this journey he embarked at Joppe, which is now called Jaffa, in the year thirty-five in the month of August,\* which was called Sestilis, one year and five months after the Passion of the Lord, eight months after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, and five months before the conversion of St. Paul, all according to what I said in chapters XI and XIV<sup>†</sup> of this third Part. Sailing from Jaffa, St. James touched at Sardinia and shortly afterwards arrived in Spain, disembarking at the port of Cartagena where he began his preaching. He tarried but a short time in Cartagena, and guided by the Spirit of the Lord he made his way to Granada, where he was made aware the harvest was bountiful and the occasion opportune for beginning his labors for his Master, as in truth happened.

320. Before going on I shall state St. James was one of the most beloved and favored disciples of the great Lady of the world. In her exterior conduct She did not much signalize him due to the equality with which She most prudently treated all (as I said in chapter XI [180]), even though St. James was her relative. St. John, being the brother of St. James, shared the same degree of kinship with most holy Mary, though there were different reasons governing her conduct toward him, for the whole Apostolic College knew the Lord from the cross had appointed him as the son of his most pure Mother (Jn. 19:26); hence the most prudent Queen and Teacher was not under such restrictions in regard to exterior tokens of love with St. John as She was with St. James and the other Apostles. But interiorly She loved St. James with special tenderness, as I have already stated in the second Part (*Tran.* 373), and She manifested it in extraordinary favors conferred upon him during his life until his martyrdom. St. James deserved these favors due to his special piety and affection toward Mary most holy, distinguishing himself therein from all the rest. He needed the protection of the great Queen because he was of a generous and magnanimous heart

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\* cf. *Coronation* 358 [Ed.]

† cf. *Coronation* 198 and 267 respectively [Ed.]

and most fervent spirit, being ceaselessly drawn on to offer himself for labors and dangers; hence he was the first one to go forth preaching the faith, and the first of all the Apostles to suffer martyrdom. While on his missionary journeys he was indeed like the lightning flash, like the son of thunder, for thus was he called and designated upon entering the apostolate (Mk. 3:17).

321. In the evangelization of Spain St. James faced incredible difficulties and persecutions which the demon stirred up by means of the unbelieving Jews. And not insignificant were those he afterwards faced in Italy and Asia Minor, where he had returned to preach and to suffer martyrdom in Jerusalem, having in the few years of his apostolate traveled in many distant countries. Since it cannot be my purpose to relate all St. James suffered in his extensive journeys, I shall record only what concerns more closely this History. In general I have understood the great Queen of heaven watched over him with a special love for reasons already stated, and through her Angels defended and rescued him from many and great dangers, consoled and comforted him many times, and sent information and advice such as he needed more particularly and more often than the other Apostles during his short life. Also many times Christ our Savior sent Angels from heaven to defend his great Apostle and carry him from one region to another during his missionary travels.

322. During the time of his preaching in these Spanish kingdoms the great Queen, besides many other tokens of her love, twice favored St. James by a personal visit in order to defend him in his tribulations and dangers. In Saragossa happened one of these visits, which is no less certain than celebrated in the world, and which cannot be denied without doing violence to a well-known fact, corroborated and witnessed by great miracles and the traditions of more than sixteen hundred years; of this I shall speak in the next chapter. Regarding the other miraculous visit, I do not know whether there is any record of it in Spain since it happened not so publicly. As was revealed to me it took place in Granada, and in the following manner. The Jews had in that city some synagogues ever since the time they first began to travel from Palestine to Spain, where because of the fertility of the soil and the close proximity to the ports of the Mediterranean Sea they could live more comfortably while corresponding with Jerusalem. When St. James came to preach in Granada they were already informed concerning Christ our Redeemer. Though some of them desired to become acquainted with his doctrine and the grounds upon which it rested, yet others, the greater number, had already been prejudiced with impious incredulity by the demon, so they would neither accept his doctrine nor even permit it to be preached to the gentiles because it was contrary to the Judaic rites and to Moses, and if the gentiles received that new law it would destroy Judaism entirely. Stirred on by this diabolical deceit the Jews hindered the faith from spreading among the gentiles, who knew Christ our Lord was a Jew, and seeing those of his own nation and his law reject Him as false and a deceiver they would not easily be inclined to follow Him in the beginnings of the Church.

323. When therefore St. James arrived to preach in Granada the Jews began their opposition, proclaiming him an adventurer, a deceiver, the author of false sects, a sorcerer, and an enchanter. St. James brought twelve disciples with him in imitation of his Master, and since all of them persisted in preaching, the hatred of the Jews and of their followers increased and they wished to assassinate the disciples, and actually killed one of them who in his ardent zeal had opposed the Jews. Yet since the holy Apostle and his disciples not only did not fear death, but on the contrary longed to suffer for the name of Christ, they continued to preach the faith with still greater effort. Having thus labored for many days, and converted many of the infidels of that city and province, the fury of the Jews rose to a higher pitch. They seized them all and led them forth bound and fettered beyond the city walls and there likewise chained their feet, for they considered them to

be magicians and sorcerers who might otherwise escape. As their enemies made preparations to behead them all immediately, the holy Apostle ceased not to invoke the favor of the Most High and of his Virgin Mother, and speaking to Her he said: "Most holy Mary, Mother of my Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ, favor in this hour thy humble servant. Pray, most sweet and merciful Mother, for me and for these faithful professors of the holy faith. If it is the will of the Most High that we here give our lives for the glory of his holy Name, do Thou ask, O Lady, that my soul be received in the presence of his divine countenance. Remember me, most kind Mother, and bless me in the name of Him who chose Thee from among all creatures. Receive the sacrifice of my not being able to see now thine eyes of mercy if this is to be the last day of my life. O Mary! O Mary!"

324. These last words St. James repeated many times, and from her oratory in the Cenacle, where She was favored by a specially clear vision, the great Queen heard all and saw what was passing with the most beloved Apostle James. By this enlightenment her maternal feelings of tender compassion were moved at the tribulation in which her servant suffered and called upon Her. She felt still more sorrow at being so far away, and since She knew nothing is difficult to the divine power She had the loving desire of helping and defending the Apostle in his danger. Since She also knew this Apostle was to be the first to shed his blood for her divine Son her compassion became more vehement; however, She did not ask the Lord or the Angels to take Her to the place where St. James then was because her admirable prudence prevented Her from making such a petition, and She knew divine Providence needed no such reminder on her part, nor would fail in anything necessary. As long as She lived in the flesh She exercised the highest discretion and restraint in asking for such miracles, always subjecting her desires to the will of the Lord.

325. But her Son and true God, who took notice of the desires of such a Mother, knowing they were holy, just, and full of piety, immediately commanded the thousand Angels of her guard to assist Her and fulfill the will of their Queen and Lady. All of them manifested themselves to Her in human form and told Her what the Most High had commanded. Without delay they placed Her upon a throne made of a beautiful cloud and carried Her to Spain over the field where St. James and his disciples were shackled. The enemies who had taken them prisoner had already bared their scimitars or cutlasses to strike off their heads. Only the Apostle saw the Queen of heaven in the cloud, from which She spoke to him in most endearing terms, saying: "James, my son and dearly beloved of my Lord Jesus Christ, take courage and be eternally blessed by Him who nurtured thee and called thee to his divine light. Rise then, faithful servant of the Most High, and be free from thy shackles." At the presence of Mary the Apostle had prostrated himself upon the ground as far as was possible, being so shackled. At the voice of the powerful Queen his shackles and those of his disciples instantly fell and they found themselves free. But the Jews, who stood with weapons in their hands, all fell to the earth where they remained for some hours deprived of their senses; and the demons who had accompanied them and stirred them on were hurled to the profound abysses, thus leaving St. James and his disciples at liberty and giving thanks to the Almighty for this blessing. The Apostle most fervently thanked the heavenly Mother with incomparable humility and joy of his soul. His disciples, though they did not see the Queen or her Angels, understood the miracle and were informed by the Apostle of some of the particulars by which they could be confirmed in faith, hope, and devotion to most holy Mary.

326. Even greater was this rare benefit of the Queen, since She not only defended St. James from death but desired all Spain to rejoice in his preaching and instruction. From Granada She ordered him to continue his journeys, commanding a hundred of her Guardian Angels to

accompany him and show him the way from one place to another, to defend him and his disciples from all dangers, and finally after having traversed all the provinces of Spain to bring him to Saragossa. All this the hundred Angels executed as the Queen had ordered, and the rest brought Her back to Jerusalem. In such celestial company and guardianship St. James traveled through all of Spain more securely than the Israelites through the desert. In Granada he left some of his disciples who afterwards suffered martyrdom, and with the others and those he afterwards gathered he continued his missionary tours in many parts of Andalusia. Then he came to Toledo, and from there he passed into Portugal, Galicia and Asturias. Afterwards, making digressions to different places, he arrived in Rioja, and by way of Logroño he went to Tudela and Saragossa, where happened what I shall relate in the next chapter. Throughout this pilgrimage St. James left disciples as bishops in the different cities of Spain, planting the faith and divine worship. So great and prodigious were the miracles he performed in Spain that those of which we know must not appear extraordinary in comparison with those of which we know nothing, since these are much more astonishing. The fruit of his preaching in Spain was immense in proportion to the shortness of his stay, and it would be a great error to say or think the conversions he made were few, for in all the places reached by him he left planted the faith, and for this ordained so many bishops for the government of the children he engendered to Christ.

327. In concluding this chapter I wish to state that by different means I was made acquainted with the many contrary opinions of ecclesiastical historians concerning the things which I am describing, such as the departure of the Apostles from Jerusalem for the purpose of preaching the faith, the partition of the world among them by lot, the ordainment of the Symbol of the faith, and the departure of St. James and his death. About all these and other events I understand writers differ very much in assigning the years or dates of their happening and in harmonizing them with the text of the canonical writings. Yet I have no command from the Lord to satisfy all of these doubts and others, nor to reconcile these controversies. From the very beginning I have said the Lord commanded me to write this History without opinions, mixing them in with the knowledge of the truth (*Con.* 10; *Tran.* 404).<sup>\*</sup> If what I write follows naturally and does not contradict in any way the sacred text, and at the same time maintains the dignity corresponding to the matter, I cannot give more authority to this History, and neither will Christian piety ask for more. It is also possible that by proceeding in this manner some of the differences of historians may be made to harmonize, and to this the well-read and the learned shall attend.

*INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE QUEEN  
OF HEAVEN, MARY MOST HOLY.*

328. My daughter, the miracle of my being raised by the divine power to the sovereign throne of God so I could be consulted in the decrees of his divine wisdom and will as described by thee in this chapter is so great and extraordinary it exceeds all the capacity of man in this mortal life, and only in the fatherland and the beatific vision shall men recognize this sacrament with a most special joy of accidental glory. Since this blessing and wonderful privilege was the effect and reward of the most ardent charity with which I loved and do love the highest Good, and the humility by which I considered myself as his slave, and as these virtues truly raised me to the throne of the Divinity and established me there even while yet in mortal flesh, I desire thee to have a more intimate knowledge of this mystery, which without a doubt was one of the most

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<sup>\*</sup> cf. also *Incarnation* 678 [Ed.]

exalted wrought in me by the divine omnipotence, and which excited the greatest wonder in the angels and saints. I desire thee to turn thy own admiration into a most vigilant care and most lively desire of imitating me and following me in the virtues by which I merited such favors.

329. Take notice then, my dearest, that not only once but many times I was raised to the throne of the most holy Trinity in mortal flesh during the time which intervened between the descent of the Holy Ghost and my Assumption to eternal glory. In what still remains for thee to write of my life thou shalt understand many other secrets connected with this privilege, for whenever the right hand of the Most High granted me this favor I experienced most copious effects of graces and gifts according to the different modes included in the infinite power and the capacity He gave me for the ineffable and almost overwhelming participation in the divine perfections. Sometimes in conferring upon me these favors the eternal Father said to me: "My Daughter and my Spouse, thy love and fidelity oblige Us above any other creature and give Us the plenitude of satisfaction which our holy will desires. Ascend to our place and throne so Thou mayest be absorbed in the abyss of our Divinity and have in this Trinity the fourth place as far as possible to a mere creature. Take possession of our glory, the treasures of which We place into thy hands. Thine are the heavens, the earth, and all the abysses. Enjoy in this mortal life the privileges of the Blessed above all the saints. Let all the nations and creatures, to whom We gave the being they have, serve Thee; let the powers of heaven obey Thee; let the supreme Seraphim be subject to Thee; and do Thou share our goods in our eternal consistory. Understand the great Council of our wisdom and will, and take part in our decrees, since thy will is most equitable and faithful. Penetrate into the reasons We have for our just and holy determinations, and let thy will and motive be one with ours in what We dispose for our Church."

330. By such ineffable condescension the Most High thus singularly governed my will in order to conform it to his own, and so nothing would be done in the Church not in accordance with my disposition, which was to be conformable to that of the Lord himself, who knew the reasons, motives and opportuneness in his eternal Council. I saw it was not possible for me according to the common law to suffer all the labors and tribulations of the Church as I had desired, and especially not those of the Apostles. This charitable desire, though the execution of it was impossible, was not a deviation from the divine will, but rather was given to me by God as a token and witness of the boundless love with which I loved Him, for it was due to the love of the Lord toward men that I desired to take upon myself the labors and sufferings of all men. And because on my part this charity was true and my heart was ready\* to fulfill these desires if possible, for this reason it was so acceptable in the eyes of the Lord, and He rewarded it as if I had truly fulfilled it in deed, for I suffered great sorrow because I could not suffer for all. From this was born in me the compassion I had for the torments and martyrdoms by which were put to death the Apostles and the others who suffered for Christ; in and with all of them I was afflicted and tormented, and in some measure I died their death. Such was the love I had for my children the faithful, and (except for suffering) it is the same now, though they do not suspect or know how much my charity obliges their gratitude.

331. I received these ineffable benefits from the right hand of my divine Son at the time when I was raised from the world and placed at his side, participating in his exaltation and glory in the full measure possible to a mere creature. The hidden decrees and sacraments of the infinite Wisdom were first manifested to the most holy humanity of my Lord by the admirable order maintained by the Divinity, to whom He is united in the eternal Word, and then by the mediation

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\* cf. Ps. 56:8; 107:2 [Ed.]

of my most holy Son they were communicated to me in another manner, since the union of his humanity with the Person of the Word is immediate and substantial, and hence He participates in the Divinity and his decrees in a manner corresponding and proportionate to the substantial and personal union. But I received this favor in another admirable and unprecedented manner, more adjusted to the being of a mere creature not having the divine nature; yet it was similar to the most holy humanity, and after my most holy Son was most immediate to the Divinity himself. Thou canst not at present understand more or penetrate deeper into this mystery, but the Blessed understood it, each one according to his degree of knowledge, and all of them understood this conformity and similarity between myself and my divine Son, as well as the difference. To them all of this was and is now a motive for new canticles of glory and praise of the Omnipotent, for this was one of the great wonders wrought in me by the powerful right hand of God.

332. So thou mayest increase the force of thy holy affections and desires as well of nature as of grace, though they may not be within the possibility of execution, I shall reveal to thee another secret. It is this: When I perceived the effects of the Redemption in the justification of souls by the operation of grace through contrition, or through Baptism and the other Sacraments, I conceived such an esteem for that benefit that I had for it as it were a holy emulation and desire for it. Since I had no sins of which I could be cleansed and justified I could not receive that favor in the same degree as the sinners who received them; yet because I wept over their sins more than all of them, and since I thanked the Lord for that blessing worked for souls with such liberal mercy, I gained more graces than were necessary to justify all the children of Adam. Thus far did the Most High permit Himself to be indebted to my works, and such was their merit of grace in the eyes of God.

333. And now, my daughter, consider under what obligations thou art after being informed and enlightened concerning these great and venerable secrets. Let not these talents lie idle,\* nor waste or despise such great blessings of the Lord, but follow me in perfect imitation of all my doings manifested to thee. In order for thee to nourish the flame of divine love, ceaselessly bear in mind how my most holy Son and I in this mortal life sighed and ardently yearned for the salvation of all the children of Adam, and wept over the eternal perdition incurred by so many in their deceitful and counterfeit pleasures. In this charity and zeal I desire thee to distinguish and exercise thyself very much as my daughter, disciple, and a most faithful spouse of my Son, who because of this virtue of charity delivered Himself to the death of the cross. If the force of this charity did not take away my life it was because the Lord miraculously preserved it; yet it was this charity which bore me up to the throne and Council of the most blessed Trinity. If thou, friend, will be as diligent and fervent in imitating me, and as attentive to obey me as I desire of thee, I assure thee of a participation in the favors shown to my servant James; I shall hasten to thy aid in thy tribulations, I shall govern thee as I have so often promised thee, and more than this, the Most High shall be more generous with thee than all thy highest desires can ever hope to compass.†

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\* cf. Mt. 25:14ff. [Ed.]

† cf. *Collect* for 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost [Ed.]