

CHAPTER XIV

The Admirable Manner in which Most Holy Mary Celebrated the Mysteries of the Incarnation and Nativity of the Incarnate Word, and the Gratitude She Rendered for These Great Benefits.

642. Since most holy Mary was so faithful in smaller things, there can be no doubt She would be most faithful in the greater; and if She was so diligent, dutiful and solicitous in giving thanks for the lesser blessings, certainly She would render the full measure of gratitude for the greatest benefits which She and the entire human race received from the hand of the Most High. Among these the Incarnation of the eternal Word in the womb of his most blessed and pure Mother takes the first place, for this was the most excellent work and the greatest grace possible to the infinite power and wisdom of God in his dealings with men, joining the divine Being with the human nature in the Person of the Word by the hypostatic union, which was the beginning of all the gifts and blessings which the Omnipotent conferred upon the nature of man and of the angels. Regarding this wonder no one ever imagined God would undertake such an endeavor, for (according to our way of understanding) He would not have left such glory without assuming this same human nature as a certain guarantor, in whose sanctity and gratitude the proper return for such a rare benefit would be obtained with all plenitude, as I said in the first Part (Con. 40). This truth is more intelligible when we take into consideration what faith teaches, that the divine Wisdom foresaw in eternity the ingratitude of the reprobate and how they would abuse and waste such an admirable and singular favor as God becoming true man, the Master, Redeemer and Model of all mortals.

643. Thus the same infinite Wisdom ordained this wonder in such a way that among men there would be someone who would recompense this injury and offset this offense of the ingrates regarding this exalted benefit, and by worthy gratitude mediate between them and God himself in order to appease and satisfy Him insofar as possible on the part of human nature. This was done in the first place by the sacred humanity of Jesus our Redeemer and Master, who is our Mediator with the eternal Father, reconciling to Him the entire human race (I Tim. 2:5), satisfying for our sins by a superabundant excess of merits, and paying our debts. But since this Lord was true God and true Man, it still seemed human nature remained a debtor to Him unless someone among mere creatures could repay the Redeemer insofar as possible for man with the help of divine grace. This return was made by his own Mother and our Queen, since She alone was the secretary of the great council and the archive of his mysteries and sacraments. She was the only one who recognized, pondered, and so worthily rendered gratitude in the measure which could be desired from a human being not united personally with the Divinity. She alone recompensed and supplied for our ingratitude, and the paucity and rudeness of the return given by the children of Adam in comparison with Her. She alone knew how and was able to appease and satisfy her divine Son for the unjust behavior of all mortals in not having received Him as their Redeemer and Master, nor as the true God made man for the salvation of all.*

644. The great Queen kept so constantly present in her memory the incomprehensible and sacred mystery of the Incarnation that She never forgot it even for one instant. At the same time She was ever conscious of the ignorance of this blessing in so many of the children of Adam, and

* cf. I Tim. 2:4 [Ed.]

in order to give thanks for it in her own name and in the name of all She practiced many genuflections, prostrations, and other acts of adoration, repeating continually in diverse variations the following prayer: “Lord and God most high, in thy royal presence I prostrate myself and present myself before Thee in my own name and in that of the entire human race; and for the admirable benefit of thine Incarnation I praise, bless and magnify Thee, I confess and adore Thee in the mystery of the hypostatic union of the divine and human nature in the Person of the eternal Word. If the miserable children of Adam are ignorant of this benefit, and if those who know of it do not give worthy thanksgiving for it, remember, our most kind Lord and Father, that they live in weak flesh, full of ignorance and passions, and cannot come to Thee if thy most clement condescension does not draw them on (Jn. 6:44). Pardon, my God, this defect of such a fragile nature and condition. I, thy slave and a vile wormlet of the earth, for myself and for each one of the mortals, with all the courtiers of thy glory, give Thee thanks for this benefit of thy Incarnation. And I beseech Thee, my Son and Lord, from my inmost soul, to take as thine own this cause of men, thy brethren, and obtain for them pardon from thy eternal Father. Favor with thine immense kindness these miserable ones conceived in sin, who are ignorant of this damage in themselves, and who do not know what they are doing* nor what they should do. I beg for thy people and mine; for insofar as Thou art man we are of thy nature, which do not Thou despise; and insofar as Thou art God Thou givest infinite value to thy works. Let them be the worthy return and thanksgiving for our debt, since Thou alone canst pay for all we have received and owe to the eternal Father, who for the remedy of the poor (Lk. 4:18) and the rescue of the captives desired to send Thee from heaven to earth. Give life to the dead, enrich the poor, and enlighten the blind (Mt. 11:5). Thou art our salvation, our Good, and our entire remedy.”

645. This prayer and others like it were of ordinary occurrence in the life of the great Queen of the world. Yet to her continual and daily thanksgiving She added other exercises to celebrate the sovereign mystery of the Incarnation when the days arrived during which the divine Word assumed flesh in her most pure womb, and on these days She was more favored by the Lord than on others. This feast for Her lasted not only for one day, but for the nine consecutive days which immediately preceded the twenty-fifth of March, for in these days were executed the sacrament of the preparation for the Annunciation of which I spoke in the beginning of the second Part (Inc. 5ff.). I have there recorded in nine chapters the marvels which preceded the Incarnation, by which the heavenly Mother was to be worthily prepared for the conception of the incarnate Word in her sacred and virginal womb. It is necessary here to refer to them and recall them briefly in order to describe the manner in which She celebrated and renewed her thanksgiving for this highest of wonders and blessings.

646. She began the solemnity on the sixteenth of March in the evening, and during the next nine days until the twenty-fifth of March She remained in retirement without eating or sleeping. St. John the Evangelist was the only one who came to Her, and then only in order to administer Holy Communion to Her during those nine days. The Omnipotent renewed all the favors and benefits He had conferred upon most holy Mary during those nine days which preceded the Incarnation, and He now added new ones since His Majesty, having already been born of the most blessed and worthy Mother, took it upon Himself to assist, regale and favor Her on this feast. On the first six days of this novena, after the worthy Mother had passed some hours of the night in her accustomed exercises, the incarnate Word descended from heaven refulgent in glory

* cf. Lk. 23:34 [Ed.]

and majesty and accompanied by thousands of Angels. With this grandeur He entered the oratory into the presence of most holy Mary.

647. The most prudent and pious Mother adored her Son and true God with the humility, veneration and worship which She alone in her wisdom knew how to give. Then by the ministry of the holy Angels She was raised from the earth and placed at the right hand of the Lord himself on his throne, where She felt an intimate and ineffable union with his humanity and divinity which transformed and filled Her with glory and new divine influences which no words could suffice to explain. In this condition and state the Lord renewed in Her the wonders of these nine days before the Incarnation, the first of these days corresponding to the first of those, the second with the second, and so on for the rest. He added other new favors and admirable effects conformable to the state attained since then by both Himself and his Blessed Mother. Although the habitual knowledge of all things was always preserved in Her, yet on this occasion by new intelligence and divine light the use and application of this knowledge was applied to her understanding with greater clarity and effects.

648. On the first of these nine days was manifested to Her all the works performed by God on the first day of the creation of the world: The order and manner by which were created all things pertaining to this first day, such as heaven, earth, and the abysses, with their length, breadth and depth; light and darkness and their separation; and all the conditions, qualities and properties of these material and visible things. Regarding the invisible She recognized the creation of the angels, all their species* and qualities, how long they persevered in grace, the strife between the obedient and the apostates, the fall of the latter and the confirmation in grace of the former, and all the other mysteries which Moses includes in the works of the first day (Gen. 1:1). She likewise recognized the ends which the Omnipotent had in the creation of these things and the rest, namely to communicate his divinity and manifest it by creation, so all angels and men, being capable, could know and praise Him for them. And since the renewal of this knowledge was not idle in the most prudent Mother, her most holy Son said to Her: “My Mother and my Dove, I gave Thee knowledge of all these works of my infinite power in order to manifest to Thee my greatness before assuming flesh in thy virginal womb, and now I renew it in order to grant Thee anew the possession and dominion of all as my true Mother. I desire the angels, the heavens, the earth, the light and the darkness to serve and obey Thee as my Mother, and so Thou mayest worthily render gratitude and praise to the eternal Father for the benefit of creation for which mortals do not know how to be grateful.”

649. To this will of the Lord our great Queen responded and made the fullness of satisfaction for the debt of men, thanking God for Herself and for all creatures for these incomparable benefits. In these exercises and other mysteries She passed the day until the Lord returned to heaven. On the second day at midnight His Majesty again descended in the same manner and renewed in the heavenly Mother the knowledge of the works of the second day of creation (Ib. 6), how in the midst of the waters was formed the firmament, dividing the ones from the others, and the number and arrangement of the heavens and all their composition and harmony, nature and qualities, greatness and beauty. All this She knew with infallible certitude just as it happened without opinions, though She also knew what knowledge the doctors and writers had concerning this. On the third day was manifested to Her anew that to which the Scriptures refer (Ib. 9), that the Lord congregated the waters which were above the earth, forming the sea and uncovering the dry land so it may bring forth fruits, as immediately happened upon the command of its Creator,

* cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 50, Article 4 [Ed.]

producing plants, herbs, trees, and other things for its beauty and adornment. She knew the nature and qualities of all these plants and the manner in which they are useful or harmful in the service of man. On the fourth day (Ib. 14) She recognized in particular the formation of the sun, the moon, and the stars of heaven, their material, form, properties, influences, and all the movements by which they function to distinguish time into seasons, days and years. On the fifth day (Ib. 20) was manifested to Her the creation and generation of the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, which were all formed from the waters; the manner in which this happened in their beginning; that which afterwards they possessed for their preservation and propagation; and all the species, conditions and qualities of the animals of the land and the fishes of the sea. On the sixth day was given to Her new light and knowledge regarding the creation of man as the culmination of all the other material creatures (Ib. 27); and besides understanding his composition and harmony, in which was included all the rest of creatures in a most wonderful manner, She recognized the mystery of the Incarnation, for which was ordained this formation of man, and all the other secrets of divine Wisdom enclosed in this and all the other works of creation, testifying to his infinite greatness and majesty.

650. On each of these days the great Queen composed a special hymn of praise to the Creator for the works performed on the corresponding day of creation and the mysteries made known to Her. Then She made great petitions for all men, particularly for the faithful, that they would be reconciled to God and given enlightenment regarding the Divinity and his works, so in them and by them they would know, love and praise Him. And since She recognized the ignorance of so many infidels who would neither come to this knowledge nor to the true faith which He could communicate to them, and that many of the faithful, though confessing these works of the Most High, would be tardy and negligent in the thanksgiving due to them, most holy Mary performed heroic and admirable works in compensation for these defects of the children of Adam. And because She so faithfully responded her most holy Son favored Her by raising Her to a new participation in the gifts of his divinity and attributes, amassing upon Her all that the rest of mortals lost by their most ungrateful forgetfulness. Over each of the works of that day of creation He gave Her new dominion and sovereignty so all would acknowledge and serve Her as the Mother of their Creator, who had constituted Her as the supreme Queen of all He had created in heaven and earth.

651. On the seventh day these divine favors were still further increased and enhanced, though her most holy Son did not descend from heaven on the last three days; instead, She herself was raised up to Him in correspondence with what had happened on the three days before the Incarnation. Thus at midnight, by the command of the Lord himself, the Angels carried Her to the empyrean heaven where, while She was adoring the immutable being of God, the supreme Seraphim clothed Her in a vestment more pure and white than the snow and more refulgent than the sun. They girded Her with a girdle of jewels so rich and beautiful that there are none in nature for comparison; each one shone more brilliantly than the globe of the sun, yea of many suns combined. Then they added bracelets, necklaces, and other adornments proportioned to the person who received them and the Lord who gave them; and since all these jewels were brought down with admirable reverence by the Seraphim from the very throne of the blessed Trinity, each one signified and manifested a participation of the Divinity in a different way. And not only did these adornments signify the new participation and communication of the divine perfections given to their Queen, but the Seraphim themselves who adorned Her (and there were six) likewise represented the mystery of their ministry.

652. After these Seraphim came six others who in another manner adorned the Queen, as it were retouching her faculties and giving them a refinement, beauty and grace which cannot be manifested in words. Above all this adornment came six other Seraphim, and by their ministry they furnished the qualities and light with which her understanding and will were elevated for the beatific vision and fruition. Having thus adorned and beautified the great Queen, all eighteen Seraphim raised Her to the throne of the most blessed Trinity and placed Her at the right hand of his Onlybegotten, our Savior. There She was asked what was her petition and desire, and the true Esther answered (Esther 7:3ff.): “I ask, O Lord, mercy for my people, and in their name and mine I desire and long to thank Thee for the favor thy merciful omnipotence has granted us in giving human form to the eternal Word in my womb in order to redeem us.” To these petitions and prayers She added others of incomparable charity and wisdom, supplicating for the whole human race and especially for the holy Church.

653. Then her most holy Son spoke to the eternal Father and said: “I confess and praise Thee, my Father, and I offer to Thee this creature and daughter of Adam, pleasing and acceptable to Thee, chosen from among the rest of creatures for my Mother and as a testimony of our infinite attributes. She alone knows worthily and fully how to estimate and acknowledge with a grateful heart the favor I worked for men in vesting Myself in their nature in order to teach them the way of eternal salvation and redeem them from death. We have chosen Her to appease our indignation at the ingratitude and poor correspondence of mortals. She gives Us the return which others are unable or unwilling to give, for We cannot despise the prayers which our Beloved offers for them to Us in the plenitude of her sanctity and our pleasure.”

654. All these wonders were repeated on each of the last three days of the novena, and on the last, which was the twenty-fifth of March, at the hour of the Incarnation the Divinity manifested Himself to Her intuitively and with a greater glory than to all the Blessed. And though on all these days the saints received new accidental joy, this last one was a great feast of extraordinary rejoicing for that entire triumphant Jerusalem. The favors received by the Blessed Mother on that day far exceed all human thought, for all her privileges, graces and gifts were on that day ratified and increased by the Omnipotent in an ineffable manner. As She was still a wayfarer and knew all the conditions of the holy Church in the present and future ages, She asked and merited great blessings for all times, or to say it more briefly, all that the divine power has worked and shall work for men until the end of the world.

655. On all these feasts celebrated by the great Queen She obtained the conversion of innumerable souls who at that time and in future times were to come to the Catholic faith. On this feast of the Incarnation, however, this privilege was made still more extensive, for on these days She merited for many kingdoms, provinces and nations the blessings and favors they have received in being called to the holy Church. Those who have persevered more faithfully in the Church are so much the greater debtors to the petitions and merits of the heavenly Mother. Moreover I have especially been given to understand that on the day on which She celebrated the Incarnation She liberated all the souls who were in purgatory; and from heaven, where this favor was granted to Her as the Queen of all creation and Mother of the Repairer of the world, She sent Angels to bring them to Her so She could offer them to the eternal Father as the fruit of the Incarnation by which He sent into the world his onlybegotten Son to gain souls whom his enemy had been tyrannizing. For all these souls She composed new canticles of praise; and in the joy of having thus augmented the court of heaven She returned to the earth, where She continued her thanksgiving with her accustomed humility. Regarding this wonder we must not be incredulous, since on the day most holy Mary was raised to the immense dignity of Mother of God himself

and Mistress of all creation it is not surprising that the treasures of the Divinity would be opened to the children of Adam, her brethren and own children, when the Divinity himself was lavished upon Her, being received in her womb united hypostatically with her own substance She provided; and only her wisdom could ponder this benefit for her own good and the common good of all.

656. The solemnity of the birth of Christ her Son She celebrated in still another manner. On the evening before She began with the exercises, hymns, and other devotions as for the other feasts, and at the hour of the Nativity her most holy Son descended with thousands of Angels and in glorious majesty as on other occasions. He was accompanied also by the patriarchs St. Joachim, St. Anne, St. Joseph, St. Elizabeth the mother of the Baptist, and other Saints. Then the Angels at the command of the Lord raised Her from the ground and placed Her at his divine right hand amid celestial harmony, singing the hymn of glory as on the day of the Nativity (Lk. 2:14), and other canticles which the Lady herself had composed in honor of this mystery and in praise of the infinite perfections of God. After having united with them in these praises for a long time the heavenly Mother asked the permission of Jesus her Son to descend from the throne, and again She prostrated Herself in his presence. In this posture She adored Him in the name of the entire human race, and thanked Him for his having been born into the world for its remedy. In addition to this thanksgiving She prayed most fervently for all men, especially for the children of the Church, representing to Him the fragility of the human condition and its need of grace and divine help for raising itself and meriting eternal life. She claimed for this the mercy by which the Lord himself was born of her virginal womb for the remedy of the children of Adam, the poverty of his Birth, the labors and hardships which He accepted, how He was nursed at her breast and raised by Her as his Mother, and all the mysteries which followed upon these works. This prayer was accepted by her Son our Savior, and in the presence of all the Angels and Saints who accompanied Him He acknowledged Himself bound by the charity and reasonings with which his most happy Mother prayed for her people. Again He confirmed Her as the Mistress and Dispensatrix of all his treasures of grace, and commissioned Her to apply and distribute them to men according to her pleasure. This the most prudent Queen proceeded to do with admirable wisdom and to the immense benefit of the Church. At the close of this solemnity She asked all the Saints to praise the Lord for the mystery of his Nativity in her name and for all the other mortals. She then asked the blessing of her Son, and giving it His Majesty returned to heaven.

*INSTRUCTION GIVEN ME BY THE GREAT LADY
OF THE ANGELS, MARY MOST HOLY.*

657. My daughter and disciple, the admiration with which thou writest the secrets of my life and sanctity I desire thee to convert entirely into the praise of the Omnipotent, who was so generous with me, and to raise thee above thyself by the confidence thou must have in asking for my powerful intercession and protection. Yet if thou art in wonder that my most holy Son added to me graces upon graces and gifts upon gifts, and visited me so frequently and raised me to his presence in heaven, remember what thou hast already recorded regarding how I deprived myself of the beatific vision for the sake of governing the Church (*Tran.* 811; *Cor.* 2). And even if this charity had not merited this recompense during my mortal life, He was ready, since I was his Mother and He my Son, to perform such works and wonders with me as are beyond created thought and which were not suitable for any other creature. The dignity of Mother of God so far exceeds the sphere of all other creatures that it would be listless ignorance on the part of men to

deny me favors greater than those bestowed upon the other saints. The taking of human flesh of my substance by the eternal Word was an obligation of such weight for God himself that (according to thy mode of understanding) He could not fulfill it unless He correspondingly worked all his omnipotence could accomplish in me and all I was capable of receiving. This power of God is infinite and inexhaustible, and shall always remain so, yet that which God communicates is finite and limited. I too am a mere created being, and in comparison with the being of God all creation is nothing.

658. Yet together with this, on my part I placed no obstacle, thus meriting that the Omnipotent operate in me without limit or measure all his gifts, graces and favors as far as they could properly be extended. And since all of these were always finite, however great and admirable they were, and the power and essence of God infinite and without limit, from this is understood how He could accumulate in me graces upon graces and benefits upon benefits. And not only could He do this, it was proper for Him to do so in order to accomplish with all perfection this work and wonder of making me his worthy Mother, since none of his works of whatever type remain imperfect or with any defect. And because this dignity of being made the Mother of God contains all my graces as in their origin and beginning, for this reason the day men come to know me as the Mother of God they implicitly recognize, as in their cause, the conditions which for such excellence pertain to me. It was left to the devotion, piety and courtesy of the faithful to oblige my most holy Son and merit my protection if they would ponder worthily my sanctity and gifts so they can infer and confess them according to their devotion and my dignity. For this purpose many Saints, authors and writers have been given particular knowledge and light, and other revelations they have had, regarding certain favors and many privileges conceded to me by the Most High.

659. And since in this matter many mortals, even the zealous ones, have been timid, and others in their lack of devotion tardy in what they owe, my most holy Son, in his paternal condescension and at the time most opportune for his holy Church, has desired to manifest to them these hidden mysteries without entrusting them to human discourse and the knowledge stemming from it, but upon his own divine light and truth,* so mortals would receive joy and hope knowing what I can do to favor them, giving the Omnipotent the glory and praise they owe Him for the works of human Redemption, particularly those accomplished in me.

660. In this obligation I desire thee, my daughter, to consider thyself the primary one indebted, more than all the rest of men, since I have chosen thee for my special disciple and daughter, so by writing my Life thou might raise thy heart with more ardent love and desires to follow me by imitation, to which I invite and call thee. The lesson of this chapter for thee is to follow me in the ineffable gratitude I had for the blessed mystery of the Incarnation of the Word in my womb. Write in thy heart this wonder of the Omnipotent in order never to forget it, and signalize especially the days which correspond to the mysteries thou hast written of me. In them and in my name I desire thee to celebrate this festivity with great fervor and joy of thy soul, thanking God in the name of all mortals for becoming incarnate in me for their remedy, and also praising Him for the dignity to which He raised me in making me his Mother. And remember that nothing causes more admiration in the angels and saints, after their knowledge of the infinite essence of God, than to see Him united to the human nature; and though they continue to know more and more of this mystery, there will always remain more to know forever and ever.

* cf. Ps. 42:3; *Prayers at the Foot of the Altar of Holy Mass* [Ed.]

661. In order for thee to properly renew and celebrate these benefits of the Incarnation and Nativity of my most holy Son, I desire thee to seek to attain the humility and purity of an angel, for by these virtues the gratitude which thou owest the Lord shall please Him, and by this return pay something of the debt thou hast for his having made Himself of thy nature. Ponder deeply how heavy are the sins of men who, while having Christ as their Brother, fall from such excellence and neglect their obligations. Consider thyself as a portrait or image of the Godman, and by any sin thou dost commit thou dost despise it and erase it from thy soul. This new dignity to which human nature was raised is much forgotten by the children of Adam, and they refuse to forsake their old habits and miseries in order to put on Christ (Rom. 13:14). But thou, my daughter, forget the house of thy father and thy people (Ps. 44:11), and seek to renew thyself with the beauty of thy Savior so thou mayest be pleasing in the eyes of the supreme King.