

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 was faithful in the greater. If She was solicitous and diligent in giving thanks for the minor blessings, certainly She would render the full measure of gratitude for the more important benefits conferred by the Most High upon Her and the entire human race. 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 place Himself under such an obligation, for (according to our way of understanding) He would not have left such glory without assuming this same human nature as a sort of guarantee, 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 undo 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 comprehended, 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 smallness 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 incomprehensible and sacred mystery of the Incarnation the great Queen kept so constantly present in her memory 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: “My Lord and highest God, in thy royal presence I prostrate myself and present myself before Thee in my own name and in that of the human race; and for the admirable blessing 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 blessing, and if those who know of it fail in rendering worthy gratitude for it, remember, our most kind Lord and Father, that they live in weak flesh, so full of darkness and passions, and cannot come to Thee if Thou in thy loving condescension dost not draw them on (Jn. 6:44). Pardon, my God, the shortcomings of their weak nature and condition. I, thy slave and vile wormlet of the earth, with all the courtiers of thy glory, give Thee thanks for myself and for each one of the mortals in acknowledgment of this blessing. And I beseech Thee, O my Son and Lord, from the bottom of my soul, to take up this cause of thy brethren and obtain for them the forgiveness of thine eternal Father. Favor with thine immense compassion 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 my people and for thy own, for insofar as Thou art man we are all 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 satisfying our debt, since Thou alone canst pay what we have received and what we owe to the eternal Father for sending Thee from heaven to earth as the Savior of the poor (Lk. 4:18) and Rescuer of the captives. Give life to the dead, enrich the poor, and enlighten the blind (Mt. 11:5). Thou art our salvation, our happiness, and our restoration.”

645. This prayer and others like it were of ordinary occurrence in the life of the great Queen of the world. But to her continuous 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 Almighty renewed all the favors and blessings which He had conferred upon most holy Mary during those days immediately preceding the Incarnation, however with this difference, that her Son and our Redeemer now added new ones, for since He was already born of Her He took it upon Himself to assist, regale and favor his most loving and worthy Mother on this feast. On the first six days of this novena, after the Blessed Mother had passed some hours of the night in her accustomed exercises, the

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

incarnate Word descended from heaven refulgent in glory 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 pious and prudent Mother adored her Son and true God with the humility, veneration and worship such as 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 marvels of the nine days before the Incarnation in the order in which they had then occurred, and to these He added other 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 such occasions Her knowledge was enhanced by a new intelligence and divine light which enabled Her to apply and exercise her knowledge with greater clarity and effects.

648. On the first of these nine days She was shown all the works performed by God on the first day of the creation of the world; the order and mode of their creation; the heaven, earth and abysses, with their length, breadth and depth; the light and the darkness, their separation, and all the conditions, changes and qualities of these material and visible things. Regarding the invisible things She saw the creation of the angels, all their species and perfections, their perseverance in grace, the strife between the obedient and the disobedient, the fall of the apostates and the confirmation of the others in grace, and all the other mysteries which Moses includes in the works of the first day (Gen. 1:1). She recognized likewise the intentions of the Omnipotent in the creation of these things and the rest, namely to communicate and manifest his divinity so all angels and men according to their faculties could know and praise Him in them. And because the renewal of this knowledge was not idle in the most prudent Mother, her divine 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 I renew it in Thee now in order to confirm in Thee thy possession and dominion over the angels, the heavens, the earth, the light and the darkness, all of which shall serve and obey Thee as my Mother, and in order to give Thee an occasion to worthily thank and praise the eternal Father for the blessings of creation, which men do not know how to appreciate.”

649. To this will of the Lord and debt of men the great Queen faithfully responded and made satisfaction with all plenitude, giving thanks in her own name and in that of all men for these incomparable blessings. In these exercises and other mysteries She passed the day until the Lord returned to heaven. On the second day at midnight the Lord 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 one from the other, and the number of the heavens, their harmonious arrangement, nature and qualities, their greatness and beauty. All this She knew with infallible certainty just as they came into being, without mixture of mere opinions, although 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 upon the earth and formed the sea and the dry land, and how the dry land, upon the command of its Creator, immediately produced 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 hurtful to man. On the fourth day She recognized particularly the formation of the sun, moon, and the stars of heaven,

their material, their form, properties, influences, and all their movements, dividing the time into seasons, days and years (Ib. 14). 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, how in the beginning they were formed from the waters, and how these animals afterwards are reproduced and propagated, and how many were the species, conditions and faculties of the animals of the land and the sea. On the sixth day She received new light and knowledge regarding the creation of man as the end of all the other material creatures (Ib. 27); and understanding more of his composition and harmony, in which was included all the rest of creatures in a most wonderful manner, She perceived the mystery of the Incarnation, which was the end and purpose of the creation of man, and all the other secrets of the divine Wisdom hidden 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 prayed for all men, especially for the faithful, asking for their reconciliation to God and their enlightenment regarding the Divinity and his works so they would thereby be helped to know, love and praise the Almighty. And since She was aware of the ignorance of so many infidels who would neither come to this knowledge nor to the true faith which He desired to communicate, and that many faithful, although confessing these works of the Most High, were so tardy and negligent in rendering gratitude for them, most holy Mary performed heroic and admirable works in compensation for these defects of the children of Adam. Because She so faithfully responded her divine Son raised Her to a new participation in the gifts of his divinity and attributes, accumulating upon Her all that the rest of mortals lost by their most ungrateful forgetfulness. Over all the works of that particular day of creation He confirmed upon Her anew full possession and dominion so all would acknowledge Her and serve Her as the Mother of their Creator, who had constituted Her as the supreme Queen over all He had created in heaven and earth.

651. On the seventh day these divine favors were still further increased and enhanced, though her divine 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, at the command of this same Lord, the Angels carried Her up 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 to whom they gave them; and because all of 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 subtlety, beauty and grace unspeakable in human 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 love and wisdom, supplicating for the whole human race and especially for the holy Church.

653. Then her divine 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 in thine eyes, as the one chosen for my Mother from among all creatures and as a testimony to our infinite attributes. She alone knows worthily and fully how to estimate and gratefully acknowledge the favor I have shown to men in vesting Myself in their nature for the purpose of teaching them the way of eternal life and saving them from death. We have chosen Her so She could appease our indignation at the ingratitude and small return We receive from mortals. She makes up for what the others are either unable or unwilling to give, and We cannot despise the prayers which our Beloved offers for them in the plenitude of her sanctity and to our entire pleasure.”

654. All these marvels 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 Almighty 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 divine Mother. But it has especially been shown to me that on the day on which She celebrated the Incarnation She liberated all the souls from purgatory, and that from heaven, where this favor was granted to Her as the Queen of all creation and the Mother of the Redeemer, She sent Angels to bring them to Her so She could offer them as the fruit of the Incarnation to the eternal Father, for in that mystery He had sent his onlybegotten Son to rescue these souls for Him from the tyranny of their enemies. For all these souls She composed new canticles of praise, and in the jubilation of having thus augmented the court of heaven She returned to the earth, where She continued her thanksgiving with her accustomed humility. This wonder is not unworthy of belief, since on the day in which most holy Mary was raised to the immense dignity of Mother of God himself and Mistress of all creation it is not strange for all the treasures of the Divinity to be opened to the children of Adam, her brethren and children; for on that same day the Divinity itself was poured out upon Her, entering her womb and uniting Himself hypostatically with the substance derived from Her, and only her wisdom could ponder this blessing for her own benefit 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 divine 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, with the permission of Jesus her Son, descended from the throne and prostrated Herself anew at his feet. 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 their 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 alleged 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 it entailed, 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 his obligation to listen to the charitable pleadings of his most happy Mother 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 begged 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 divine Son, who in giving it returned to heaven.

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

657. My daughter and disciple, I desire thy admiration in writing of the mysteries of my life and sanctity to induce thee to praise the Omnipotent for his liberality toward me, and thy confidence in my powerful intercession and protection should raise thee above thyself. But if thou art astonished my divine Son thus added grace upon grace 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 Mother and He my Son, to work such wonders with me as are beyond created thought and which were due to no other creature. The dignity of Mother of God so far exceeds the sphere of all other creatures that it would be base 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. In addition to this, on my part I placed no obstacle, but merited the unlimited and unrestrained liberality of the Omnipotent in all his gifts, graces and favors as far as they could be communicated to a creature. Since these, notwithstanding their wonderful greatness, were always finite, and the power and essence of God is always infinite and without limit, it can easily be understood how I could accumulate graces upon graces and blessings upon blessings. And not only was I capable of thus receiving, but it was equitable for me to receive them so I could correspond with entire perfection to his marvelous work of making me the Mother of God, for none of his works remain imperfect or defective. Since this dignity of being made the Mother of God contains all graces as in their origin and fount, hence as soon as men know me to be the Mother of God they implicitly also know, as in their cause, the perfections due to such excellence and dignity. It was left to the devotion, piety and courtesy of the faithful in order to oblige my divine Son and merit my protection by searching worthily into my sanctity and gifts so they could deduce and confess them according to their devotion and my dignity. For this purpose special knowledge and enlightenment has been given to many Saints, to authors and writers, besides the special revelations to others concerning some favors and privileges conceded to me by the Almighty.

659. Since nevertheless many mortals, even the zealous ones, have been timid in this matter, and others unduly sluggish in their lack of piety, my divine Son, in his fatherly condescension and at the time most opportune for his holy Church, has manifested to them these hidden mysteries without depending upon human insight and knowledge, but upon the enlightenment of his own truth, so they could gather new joy and hope from the knowledge of my privileges and give to the Almighty new glory and praise for the blessings coming from me and from the works of the Redemption.

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 corresponding to the mysteries which thou hast here described. 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 his having become incarnate in me for their remedy, and also praising Him for having raised me to the dignity of being his Mother. And remember that nothing ever arouses so much astonishment in the saints and angels, who have knowledge of the infinite essence of God, than to see Him united to the human nature; and though they continue to understand more and more of this mystery, there will always remain more to find out forever and ever.

661. In order for thee to properly renew and celebrate these benefits of the Incarnation and Nativity of my divine 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 thus any kind of sin is equivalent to despising it and blotting it out of 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.