

CHAPTER XXIII

Confession of Praise and Thanksgiving for the Graces which I, the Least of the Mortals, Sister Mary of Jesus, have Received from the Lord and His Most Holy Mother for Writing this Divine History According to the Teaching of the same Lady and Queen of Heaven.

786. I profess Thee, eternal God, Lord of heaven and earth, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one true God, one substance and majesty in the Trinity of Persons; because without having received anything from any creature that Thou shouldst repay him (Rom. 11:35), solely by thy ineffable condescension and clemency Thou dost reveal thy mysteries and sacraments to the little ones (Mt. 11:25), and because Thou dost this with immense goodness and infinite wisdom, pleasing Thyself and doing all things well.* In thy works Thou dost magnify thy holy Name, exalt thy omnipotence, manifest thy grandeur, spread thy mercies, and assure the glory which is due to Thee as holy, wise, all-powerful, benignant, generous, and the sole beginning and Author of all good. None is holy as Thee, none strong like Thee (I Kg. 2:2), none most exalted but Thee, who dost raise the pauper from the dust, vivify him from nothing, and enrich the poor needy one (Ps. 112:7). Thine are, O God most high, the ends and the poles of the earth and all the celestial orbs (Ps. 88:12). Thou art truly the Lord and God of all knowledge (I Kg. 2:3). Thou dost kill and give life; Thou dost humble and cast down the proud into hell (Ib. 6); Thou dost raise up the humble according to thy will; Thou maketh rich and maketh poor (Ib. 7), so in thy presence no flesh may boast (I Cor. 1:29), nor the strongest presume upon his strength (I Kg. 2:9), nor the weakest become dismayed or discouraged in his fragility and lowliness.

787. I profess Thee, true Lord, King and Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. I profess and praise thy holy Name, and give glory to Thee, who givest wisdom. I profess Thee, the sovereign Queen of heaven, Mary most holy, worthy Mother of my Lord Jesus Christ, living temple of the Divinity, Depositary of the treasures of his grace, beginning of our remedy, Restoratrix of the general ruin of the human race, new joy of the saints, glory of the works of the Most High, and singular instrument of his omnipotence. I profess Thee as the sweetest Mother of Mercy, Refuge of the miserable, Helper of the poor, and Comforter of the afflicted. All that the angelic spirits and the saints proclaim in Thee, for Thee, and of Thee I also profess, and I join them in whatever praise and glory they render in Thee and through Thee to the Divinity, blessing, magnifying, professing and believing with them all things concerning Thee. O Queen and Mistress of all creation, through Thee alone and through thy powerful intercession, and because Thine eyes of clemency have looked upon me, thy most holy Son has turned toward me the eyes of his mercy; and looking upon me as a Father, for thy sake He did not disdain to choose this vile wormlet of the earth and the least of his creatures to manifest his venerable secrets and mysteries. The multitudinous waters of my faults, ingratitude and miseries, and my sluggishness and gross dullness, could not halt or hinder the stream of the divine light and wisdom communicated to me (Cant. 8:7).†

788. I confess, O most kind Mother, in the presence of heaven and earth, that I have struggled with myself and with my enemies, and my interior has been disturbed in hesitating between my unworthiness and my desire of wisdom. *I stretched forth my hands and bewailed my ignorance*

* cf. Mk. 7:37 [Ed.]

† cf. also Ps. 45:5 [Ed.]

of her (Ecclus. 51:26); *I directed my heart to her, and in knowledge I found her* (Ib. 27); with knowledge I possessed quietude (Ib. 28); and when I loved her and sought her I found her a *good possession* (Ib. 29), and I was not confounded. The strong and sweet force of wisdom worked within me (Wis. 8:1); it manifested to me the most hidden things and the most uncertain human knowledge (Ps. 50:8). I placed Thee before my eyes, O beautiful image of the Divinity and the Mystical City of his habitation, so in the night and darkness of this mortal life Thou mayest guide me as a star and enlighten me as the moon of the immense light, so I could follow Thee as a Captainess, love Thee as a Mother, obey Thee as a Mistress, hear Thee as a Teacher, and in Thee, as in an immaculate and pure mirror, I may see myself and take notice of and new example from thy ineffable virtues and works, the summit of perfection and sanctity.

789. Yet who could have inclined the supreme Majesty to such a vile slave but Thee, O powerful Queen, who art the grandeur of love, the breadth of piety, the encouragement of mercy, the prodigy of grace, who has filled up the voids of the sins of all the children of Adam? Thine is, O Lady, the glory, and thine also is this Book I have written, not only because it is about thy most holy and admirable life, but because Thou didst give it a beginning, middle and end; and if Thou thyself hadst not been its Author and Teacher, it could never have entered into human thought.

Hence be Thou the gratitude and the return due for this work, because Thou alone canst worthily render it to thy most holy Son and our Redeemer for such a new and rare benefit. I can only implore this of Thee in the name of the holy Church and mine. This I now desire to do, O Mother and Queen of virtues; and humbled in thy presence, more than the most insignificant dust, I confess I have freely received this favor and others I could never merit. I have written only that which Thou hast taught and commanded me; I was only the mute instrument of thy tongue, moved and governed by thy wisdom. Perfect Thou this work of thy hands, not only by the worthy glory and praise of the Most High, but supply what I am lacking so I may practice thy doctrine, follow thy footsteps, obey thy commands, and run after the odor of thy ointments (Cant. 1:3), which is the sweetness and fragrance of thy virtues which with ineffable condescension Thou hast spread throughout this History.

790. I acknowledge myself, O Empress of heaven, as the most unworthy and the most obligated among the children of the holy Church. And so the monstrosity of my ingratitude may not be witnessed in the Church and in the presence of the Most High and Thee, I propose, offer, and desire it to be understood that I renounce all that is visible and earthly; anew I surrender my liberty to the divine will and to thine, in order not to use my free will except for the greater glory and pleasure of God. Thou Blessed among creatures, just as by the clemency of the Lord and thine I hold the title of his spouse without meriting it, and of thy daughter and disciple which Thou hast given me, and since the Lord thy Son has so often deigned to confirm these titles, I beseech Thee, O purest Lady, do not permit me to fall away from them. Thy protection and help have assisted me in the writing of thy miraculous Life; help me now to put into practice thy doctrine, in which eternal life consists. Thou dost desire and command me to imitate Thee; stamp and engrave in me thy living image. Thou hast sown in my earthly heart the holy seed; guard it and foster it, my Mother, Lady and Mistress, so it may bring forth fruit a hundredfold (Lk. 8:8) and not be snatched from me by the birds of prey, the dragon and his demons, whose indignation I have known in all the words which I have written of Thee, my Lady. Direct me unto the end, command me as a Queen, instruct me as a Teacher, and correct me as a Mother. Receive in thanksgiving thy own life and the highest pleasure which by it Thou hast given to the most blessed Trinity as the summary of his wonders. May the angels and saints praise Thee, and may

all nations and generations know Thee; in Thee and through Thee may all creatures bless their Creator eternally, and may my soul and all my faculties magnify Thee.

791. This divine History (as I have repeated throughout it) I have written in obedience to my superiors and confessors who govern my soul, by this means assuring me it is the will of God that I write it and obey his most blessed Mother, who for many years has commanded me to write it. And though I have submitted all of it to the censure and judgment of my superiors, without there being a single word which they have not seen and conferred about with me, I nevertheless submit it anew to their better judgment. Above all do I subject it to the amendment and correction of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, to whose censure and teaching, as her daughter, I protest I shall be subject, in order to believe and hold only that which this same holy Church, our Mother, approves and believes, and in order to condemn all that She condemns, since in this obedience I wish to live and to die. Amen.

END OF BOOK EIGHT

END OF PART III

END OF *The Mystical City of God*