

CHAPTER XXI

The Soul of Mary Most Holy Enters the Empyrean Heaven, and in Imitation of Christ our Redeemer She Returns to Resuscitate Her Sacred Body; in It She Again Rises to the Right Hand of the Lord on the Third Day.

760. Regarding the glory and happiness of the saints who participate in the beatific vision and blessed fruition of God, St. Paul says with Isaias (I Cor. 2:9; Is. 64:4) regarding mortals *that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love Him* and hope in Him. In accordance with this Catholic truth we should not wonder at what is related of St. Augustine, such a great light of the Church, who was about to write a book on the glory of the Blessed when his great friend St. Jerome, who had just died and entered into the joy of the Lord, appeared to him and advised him that he could not achieve his intention as he desired, since no tongue or pen of man could describe the least part of the blessings enjoyed by the saints in the beatific vision. Thus spoke St. Jerome. And if through the divine Scriptures we had no other testimony than this glory is eternal, by this fact alone it soars above all our understanding, for it can never comprehend eternity no matter how far its faculties extend; and since the object is infinite and boundless it is also inexhaustible and incomprehensible, no matter how much more and more it is known and loved. Just as God created all things while remaining infinite and omnipotent, and even if He would create endless worlds ever anew would not deplete or exhaust his power since He always remains infinite and immutable, so also He shall remain an infinite source of new knowledge and love though seen and enjoyed by countless saints, for in creation and in glory all creatures participate in Him only to a limited extent, each according to its condition, while He is in Himself without limitation or end.

761. And if for this reason the glory of any of the saints is ineffable, even the least among them,* what then shall we say of the glory of most holy Mary, since among the saints She is the most holy, and She by Herself is more like to her Son than all the saints together, and since her grace and glory exceed those of all the rest as those of an Empress or Queen over her vassals? This truth can and should be believed, but in mortal life it is impossible to understand it or explain the least part of it, since the inadequacy and deficiency of our terms and speech tend to obscure it rather than explain it. For now let us labor in this life not in seeking to comprehend it, but in meriting that afterward it be manifested to us glory, where according to our works we shall attain more or less of this joy for which we hope.

762. Our Redeemer Jesus entered into the empyrean heaven with the most pure soul of his Mother at his right hand. Only She among all mortals gave no cause to go through the particular judgment, and hence She did not undergo it, neither was She asked to give an account for what She had received, nor was any charge made against Her, for thus was it pledged when She was made exempt from the common guilt as being chosen as Queen and privileged above the laws of the children of Adam.† For the same reason, at the universal judgment instead of being judged like the rest She shall be seated at the right hand of her most holy Son to judge with Him all the

* cf. Mt. 11:11 [Ed.]

† cf. Esther 15:13 [Ed.]

creatures.* If in the first instant of her Conception She was the most clear and refulgent Aurora, highlighted by the rays of the sun of the Divinity beyond all the brightness of the most ardent Seraphim, and afterwards was so elevated that She herself touched with her most pure substance the humanity of Christ in his union with the Word, She consequently became for all eternity his Companion, with all the similarity possible between the Son and the Mother, He being God and Man and She a mere creature. With this title the Redeemer himself presented Her before the throne of the Divinity, and speaking to the eternal Father in the presence of all the Blessed, who were attentive to this wonder, the most sacred humanity spoke these words: "Eternal Father of mine, my most loving Mother, thy beloved Daughter and the cherished Spouse of the Holy Ghost, comes to receive eternal possession of the crown and glory which We have prepared as a reward for her merits. This is She who was born among the children of Adam as the rose among thorns, unaffected, pure and beautiful, worthy to be held in our hands and received on the seat which none of our other creatures can attain, nor those conceived in sin possess. This is our chosen One, unique and singular, to whom We gave grace and participation in our perfections above the common law of the other creatures; in whom We have deposited the treasure of our incomprehensible divinity and its gifts; who most faithfully preserved and made fruitful the talents We gave Her; who never strayed from our will; and who found grace and pleasure in our eyes (Lk. 1:30). My Father, most righteous is the tribunal of our justice and mercy, and in it the services of our friends are repaid with superabundant recompense. It is just for my Mother to be given the reward of a Mother; and if during her entire life and in all her works She was as similar to Me in the degree possible for a mere creature, She must likewise be similar to Me in glory and seated on the throne of our Majesty, so where sanctity is in essence there it may also be found in its highest participation."

763. This decree of the incarnate Word was approved by the Father and the Holy Ghost, and immediately the most holy soul of Mary was raised to the right hand of her Son and true God[†] and placed on the same royal throne possessed by the most holy Trinity, which neither men, nor angels, nor the Seraphim themselves have attained nor shall ever attain for all eternity. This is the most exalted and excellent preeminence of our Queen and Lady, that She is seated on the very throne of the three divine Persons and occupies her place as Empress, while all the rest are set as servants and ministers to the highest King. To the eminence or majesty of that place, inaccessible for all the rest of creatures, correspond in most holy Mary the gifts of glory, which are comprehension, vision and fruition; for regarding that infinite Object which by innumerable degrees and variety the Blessed enjoy, She enjoys above all and more than all. She knows, penetrates and understands much deeper the divine Being and his infinite attributes, loving and rejoicing in his mysteries and most hidden secrets more than all the rest of the Blessed. And though there is an infinite distance between the glory of the divine Persons and that of Mary most holy, since the light of the Divinity (as says the Apostle [I Tim. 6:16]) is inaccessible, and in it alone dwells immortality and glory by essence, and though the most holy soul of Christ in his gifts also exceeds without measure those of his Mother, yet the glory of this great Queen compared with the glory of all the saints is exalted as it were inaccessibly above them, and has a likeness to that of Christ which cannot be understood or declared in this life.

764. Neither can it be reduced to words the new joy the Blessed received on that day, singing new canticles of praise to the Omnipotent and to the glory of his Daughter, Mother and Spouse,

* cf. Mt. 19:28 [Ed.]

† cf. Mt. 20:23 [Ed.]

in whom He glorified the works of his right hand. Though to the Lord himself could come or occur no new interior glory, since He possessed and possesses it immutable and infinite from his eternity, yet the exterior demonstrations of his pleasure and satisfaction at the fulfillment of his eternal decrees were greater on this day, for there issued a voice from the royal throne as of the eternal Father which said: "In the glory of our beloved and most loving Daughter is fulfilled our desires and holy will, which have been executed with the plenitude of our satisfaction. To all creatures we gave the existence they possess, creating them out of nothing so they could participate in our infinite goods and treasures according to the inclination and weight of our immense goodness. The very ones We made capable of our grace and glory have abused this benefit. Our cherished Daughter alone had no part in the disobedience and prevarication of the rest, and She has merited what the unworthy children of perdition have despised. Our Heart was not disappointed with Her at any time or moment. To Her belong the rewards which according to our common and conditional will We prepared for the disobedient angels, and for the men who have imitated them, if they had all cooperated with our grace and their vocation. She has recompensed this contempt by her submission and obedience, and has entirely pleased us in all her operations, meriting the seat on the throne of our majesty."

765. On the third day in which the most pure soul of Mary enjoyed this glory never to leave it, the Lord manifested to the saints his divine will that She return to the world and resuscitate her sacred body by uniting Herself with it, so She could in body and soul be again raised to the right hand of her most holy Son without waiting for the general resurrection of the dead. The appropriateness of this favor and its consistency with the others received by the Queen of heaven, along with her supereminent dignity, the saints could not but acknowledge, since even to mortals it is so credible that even if the Church had not sanctioned it we would judge as impious and foolish those who would dare deny it. But the Blessed saw it with greater clarity, together with the determined time and hour which God manifested to them in Himself his eternal decree. When the time for this wonder arrived Christ our Savior himself descended from heaven, bringing with Him at his right hand the soul of his Blessed Mother, with many legions of Angels and the Fathers and ancient Prophets. They arrived at the sepulchre in the valley of Josaphat, and all being within sight of the virginal temple the Lord spoke to the Saints these words:

766. "My Mother was conceived without stain of sin so from her virginal substance I could vest Myself most pure and without stain in the humanity in which I came to the world and redeemed it from sin. My flesh is her flesh, and She cooperated with Me in the works of the Redemption; therefore I must raise Her just as I rose from the dead, and this shall be at the same time and hour, since I desire to make Her like Me in all things." Then all the ancient Saints of the human nature rendered gratitude for this benefit with new canticles of praise and glory to the Lord. Those who especially distinguished themselves in their thanksgiving were our first parents Adam and Eve, and after them St. Anne, St. Joachim, and St. Joseph, as ones who had particular titles and reasons for magnifying the Lord in that wonder of his omnipotence. Then the most pure soul of the Queen, by the command of her most holy Son, entered the virginal body, reanimating and resuscitating it, giving it new life, immortal and glorious, and communicating to it the four gifts of clearness, impassibility, agility and subtlety, corresponding to the glory of the soul from which the body derives these gifts.

767. With these gifts most holy Mary issued from the tomb in body and soul, without removing or raising the stone which enclosed it, and leaving the tunic and mantle composed in the way it had covered her sacred body. Since it is impossible to manifest her loveliness, beauty, and the refulgence of such glory, I shall not detain myself in the attempt. It suffices me to say that just as

the heavenly Mother gave her most holy Son the form of man in her virginal womb, furnishing it pure, clean, spotless and sinless in order for Him to redeem the world, so likewise in return for this gift the same Lord in this resurrection and regeneration gave Her glory and beauty similar to his own. In this exchange, so mysterious and divine, each did what was possible, since most holy Mary engendered Christ and assimilated Him to Herself as far as possible, and Christ raised Her from the dead, communicating to Her his glory as far as She could receive it within the sphere of a mere creature.

768. Then from the sepulchre was ordered a most solemn procession, moving with celestial music through the region of the air, advancing toward the empyrean heaven. This happened at the same hour in which Christ our Savior arose, on a Sunday past three o'clock in the morning,* and hence not all of the Apostles could perceive this sign[†] at that time, but only some of them who were present and keeping vigil at the sacred sepulchre. The Saints and Angels entered heaven in the order in which they had started, and in the last place came Christ our Savior and at his right hand the Queen, clothed in gilded variety as David says (Ps. 44:10), and so beautiful that She was the admiration of the courtiers of heaven. All of them turned toward Her to look upon Her and bless Her with new jubilation and canticles of praise. Thus were heard those mysterious eulogies recorded by Solomon: Come, daughters of Sion, to see thy Queen, who is praised by the morning stars and celebrated by the sons of the Most High.^Δ *Who is She that goeth up from the desert*, like a pillar of all the aromatic perfumes (Cant. 3:6)? *Who is She who rises like the aurora, more beautiful than the moon, elect as the sun,*[‡] *terrible as many serried armies* (Ib. 6:9)? *Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, resting upon her Beloved* (Ib. 8:5)? *Who is She in whom the Divinity himself finds so much pleasure and satisfaction above all his creatures, and whom He exalts above them all to the throne of his inaccessible light and majesty? O wonder never before seen in the heavens! O novelty worthy of the infinite Wisdom! O prodigy of his omnipotence which thus magnifies and exalts Her!*

769. With these glories most holy Mary arrived body and soul at the royal throne of the most blessed Trinity, and the three divine Persons received Her upon it with an eternally indissoluble embrace. The eternal Father said to Her: “Ascend higher than all creatures, my Elect, my Daughter, and my Dove.” The incarnate Word said: “My Mother, from whom I received human existence and the return for my works by thy perfect imitation, receive now from my hand the reward Thou hast merited.” The Holy Ghost said: “My most beloved Spouse, enter into the eternal joy which corresponds to thy most faithful love; rejoice without solicitude, for past is the winter of suffering (Ib. 2:11), and Thou hast arrived at the possession our eternal embraces.” There most holy Mary was absorbed among the divine Persons, and as it were submerged in that boundless ocean and abyss of the Divinity, while the saints were filled with admiration and new accidental joy. And since in this work of the Omnipotent other wonders occurred, I shall speak of them if I can in the following chapter.

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

* cf. *Transfixion* 755 [Ed.]

† The cessation of the celestial music; cf. *Coronation* 781 [Ed.]

Δ cf. Job 38:7 [Ed.]

‡ cf. 1st Vespers of Aug. 15, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Antiphon at the Magnificat* [Ed.]

770. My daughter, lamentable and inexcusable is the ignorance of men in forgetting so deliberately the eternal glory which God has prepared for those who dispose themselves to merit it. I desire thee to weep bitterly and lament over such pernicious forgetfulness, since there is no doubt that whoever willfully forgets eternal happiness and glory is in evident danger of losing it. No one has a legitimate excuse for this guilt, not only because maintaining the memory of this happiness and seeking to attain it does not cost anyone much labor, but also because many work with all their might in matters which makes them forget the end for which they were created. It is certain this forgetfulness arises from men surrendering themselves to the pride of life, the covetousness of the eyes, and the concupiscence of the flesh (I Jn. 2:16), since occupying in this all the forces and faculties of their soul and all the time of their life there remains no care, or attention, or room to reflect with tranquility, or even without it, on the eternal happiness of beatitude. Let men acknowledge and confess whether this recollection costs them more labor than to follow their blind passions in acquiring honors, riches, or transitory pleasures, all of which have an end with this life; and many times, after exhausting themselves in this pursuit, they do not and cannot ever obtain them.

771. How much easier it is for mortals not to fall into this perversity, and even more so for the children of the Church, since they have at hand faith and hope, which without labor teaches them this truth! And even if to merit eternal happiness was just as difficult as to attain honors, riches, and other apparent delights, it is great insanity to labor as much for the false as for the true good, for eternal punishment as for eternal glory. This abominable foolishness thou shalt well know in order to weep over it, my daughter, if thou shalt consider the age in which thou livest, so disturbed by wars and discords; how many unhappy ones there are who go about seeking death for a brief and vain stipend of honor, of vengeance, and other most vile interests; and yet regarding eternal life they have no more remembrance or care than irrational animals. It would be fortunate for them if like animals their existence would end with temporal death; but since most of them act against justice, and others who possess it live forgetful of their end,* the ones as well as the others shall die eternally.

772. This is a sorrow beyond all sorrows, and a calamity without equal and without remedy. Afflict thyself, lament and grieve without consolation over this ruin of so many souls purchased by the blood of my most holy Son. I assure thee, my dearest, that from heaven where I am in glory as thou knowest, if men were not so unworthy, my charity would incline me to send forth a voice heard throughout the whole world exclaiming: "Mortal and deceived men, what are you doing? For what purpose are you living? Do you realize what it is to see God face to face, and participate in his eternal glory and company? Of what are you thinking? Who has thus disturbed and captivated your judgment? What shall you seek if you lose this true good and happiness without having any other? The labor is short, the glory infinite, and the punishment eternal."

773. Together with this sorrow which I desire to awaken in thee, seek to labor tirelessly in order not to incur this danger. Thou hast a living example in my life, which was all one continual suffering as thou hast come to know; yet when I arrived at the rewards I received all of it seemed as nothing, and I forgot it as if it had not occurred. Resolve, my friend, to follow me in exertion, and even if it exceeds that of all mortals consider it as very light;† let no difficulties seem to thee grievous or very bitter, even to passing through fire and sword. Extend thy hand to great things, and shield thy domestics, the senses, with double vestments (Prov. 31:19, 21) of suffering and

* cf. Heb. 10:38; Ecclus. 7:40 [Ed]

† cf. Mt. 11:30 [Ed.]

labor with all thy strength. Together with this I desire thee to be free from another common error, that of men who say: Let us endeavor to assure salvation; greater or less glory does not matter very much, since we shall all be together in that life. By this false principle, my daughter, salvation is not assured but rather put in jeopardy, since it arises from great foolishness and sparse love of God. Whoever seeks these contests with His Majesty disoblige Him such that He leaves them in danger of losing all. Human weakness always tends to do less good than it desires to do, and when this desire is not great then it will execute very little; hence if the desire is small it places the soul at risk of losing all.

774. He who contents himself with the mediocre or lowest in virtue always leaves room in the will and inclinations for the intentional admittance of other earthly affections and love of what is transitory, and this cannot be maintained without consequently clashing with divine love; for this reason it is impossible to prevent one from being lost and the other from becoming permanent.* When the creature resolves to love God with all his heart and with all his strength as He commands (Dt. 6:5), God takes into account this affection and determination when the soul, due to other defects, fails to attain the highest rewards; but to disregard them or purposely not esteem them is not the love of children, or of true friends, but of slaves who are content to live and pass the time. If the saints could return to merit any new degree of glory by suffering all the torments of the world until Judgment Day without doubt they would do so, since they have a true and perfect knowledge of the value of that reward and they love God with perfect charity. It is not proper for this privilege to be granted to the saints, yet it was conceded to me as thou hast recorded in this History (2), and my example confirms this truth and reproves the indolence of those who in order to avoid suffering and embracing the cross of Christ desire a curtailed reward contrary to the inclination of the infinite goodness of the Most High, who desires souls to gain merits in order to be rewarded copiously in the happiness of glory.

* cf. Mt. 6:24 [Ed.]