

# PART I

*Of the Life and Sacraments of the Queen of Heaven; what the Most High Worked in This Pure Creature from Her Immaculate Conception until the Word was Made Flesh in Her Virginal Womb, the Favors She Received in These First Fifteen Years, and How Far She Advanced by Divine Grace.*

# BOOK ONE

## FIRST OF PART I

*Contains the Predestination of Mary Most Holy; Her Immaculate Conception and Nativity; and Her Occupations and Exercises until Her Presentation in the Temple.*

### CHAPTER I

*Two Particular Visions which the Lord Showed to My Soul, and Other Enlightenments and Mysteries which Compelled Me to Withdraw from Earthly Things, and which Raised My Spirit and Habitation Above the Earth.*

1. I confess to Thee and magnify Thee, most high King, for by thy condescension and exalted majesty Thou hast hidden these exalted mysteries from the wise and the masters, and hast revealed them to me thy slave, the smallest and most useless one of thy Church (Mt. 11:25), so Thou mayest be known with admiration as the Almighty and Author of this work, all the more so as the instrument is more lowly and weak.

2. This most high Lord (after the long resistance I have mentioned and many disordered fears, and great delays born of my cowardice in recognizing this immense sea of wonders upon which I am embarking, and fearful of drowning myself in it) gave me to feel a power from on high, strong, gentle, efficacious and sweet (Wis. 8:1); a light which illumines the understanding, subdues the rebellious will, calming, rectifying, governing, and calling to the republic of the interior and exterior senses, submitting the whole creature to the pleasure and will of the Most High, and seeking in all things his glory and honor alone. Being in this disposition, I heard a voice from the Almighty, which called me and drew me to Him with great strength, raising my habitation on high (Ecclus. 51:13), and fortifying me against the lions who roared hungrily (Ib. 4) seeking to drive my soul away from the good offered in the knowledge of the great sacraments which are enclosed in this tabernacle and holy City of God; it delivered me from the gates of afflictions (Ib. 5) through which my enemies invited me to enter, encircled in the sorrows of death and perdition (Ps. 17:5), and surrounded by the flames of this Sodom and Babylon in which we live. My enemies desired to overtake me, so I would blindly turn to them and deliver myself to them, offering me objects of apparent delight to my senses, and fraudulently revealing them by fallacy and deceit. Yet from all these snares laid for my footsteps (Ps. 56:7; 24:15) the Most High rescued me, elevating my spirit, and teaching me with efficacious admonitions the way of perfection. He invited me to a life spiritualized and angelic in mortal flesh, obliging me to live so diligently that in the midst of the furnace the fire touched me not (Ecclus. 51:6).<sup>\*</sup> He liberated me from the lying tongue (Ib. 7), when many times it sought to communicate to me its earthly fables (Ps. 118:85). His Highness summoned me to rise from the dirt and debility caused by the law of sin, resisting the inherited effects of infected nature, restraining it in its disordered inclinations, and undoing them at the sight of the light, raising myself above myself (Lam. 3:28). With the strength of a powerful God, the corrections of a Father, and the caresses of a Spouse,

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<sup>\*</sup> cf. also Dan. 3:24 [Ed.]

many times He called me and said: “My dove and creation of my hands, *arise, make haste, come to Me* (Cant. 2:10), who am the light and the way; *he that followeth Me, walketh not in darkness* (Jn. 8:12). Come to Me, who am the secure truth and certain sanctity, for I am powerful and wise, and the corrector of the wise (Wis. 7:15).”

3. The effects of these words were in me arrows of sweet love, of admiration, reverence, fear, and recognition of my sins and abjection, by which I withdrew, cowered and annihilated. And the Lord said to me: “Come, soul, come, for I am thy omnipotent God, and though thou hast been prodigal and a sinner, raise thyself from the earth and come to Me, who am thy Father; receive the stole of my friendship and the ring of a spouse.”\*

4. Being in this habitation I mentioned, one day I saw six holy Angels whom the Almighty had appointed to assist me in this work, guide me in it (and in other occasions of struggle), purify and dispose me. When they had done this they presented me to the Lord, and His Majesty gave to my soul a new light and quality as of glory, which proportioned and fortified me to see and know what is above my powers as an earthly creature. Then two other Angels of a superior hierarchy appeared to me, and I felt they called me by a powerful force from the Lord. I understood they were most mysterious and desired to manifest to me exalted and hidden sacraments. I answered them earnestly, eager to rejoice in the good they would reveal to me, and with ardent affection I declared my intention was to see what they desire to show me with the mystery hidden from me. Then immediately responded with great serenity: “Soul, restrain thyself.” I turned to their highnesses and said: “Princes of the powerful Lord and messengers of the great King, why, having called me, dost thou now detain me in this way, doing violence to my will and delaying my joy and happiness? What force is thine and what power, which calls me, encourages me, urges me, and yet detains me all at the same time, drawing me after the odor of my beloved Master and his ointments (Cant. 1:3), yet restrains me with strong chains? Tell me the cause of this.” They answered: “Because it is necessary, soul, to come discalced and stripped of all thy appetites and passions in order to know these exalted mysteries, which are incompatible and cannot be accommodated to tenebrous inclinations. Take off thy shoes like Moses (Ex. 3:5), for such was the command given to him before he could see the miraculous bush.” I responded, “Princes and my lords, much was asked of Moses, who in earthly nature had angelical operations; but he was holy, and I am a sinner full of miseries. My heart is disturbed, and I lament this servitude and the law of sin which I feel in my members and which is opposed to the law of the spirit (Rom. 7:23).” To this they said: “Soul, it would be something very intense asked of thee if thou wouldst labor by thy strength alone; but the Most High, who desires and asks for this disposition, is powerful, and He will not deny thee help if from thy heart thou ask Him and dispose thyself to receive it. And his power, which caused the bush be on fire and yet not be burnt (Ex. 3:2), is able to prevent the soul imprisoned and enclosed in the fire of the passions from burning, if it desires to free itself. His Majesty asks for what He desires, and can execute what He asks. In his reassurance thou canst do what He commands (Philip. 4:13). Take off thy shoes and weep bitterly, cry out to Him from the depths of thy heart, so thy prayer may be heard and thy desires fulfilled.”

5. I then saw a most precious veil covering a treasure, and my will was inflamed to see it lifted and discover what I understood was a hidden sacrament. To this my desire I received this response: “Obey, soul, in what thou art admonished and commanded; empty thyself of thyself, and this sacrament shall be revealed to thee.” I resolved to amend my life and overcome my

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\* cf. Lk. 15:22 [Ed.]

appetites; I wept with sighs and groans from the depths of my soul, so this good might be manifested to me. And as I was proposing my resolutions, the veil which covered my treasure was being lifted. Then the veil was raised entirely, and my interior eyes saw what I cannot describe or manifest in words. I saw a great and mysterious sign in heaven: I saw a Woman, a most beautiful Lady and Queen, crowned with stars, clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet (Apoc. 12:1). The holy Angels spoke to me: "This is that happy Woman whom St. John saw in the Apocalypse, and in whom are enclosed, deposited and sealed up\* the wonderful mysteries of the Redemption. So much has the Most High, the almighty God, favored this creature that it causes admiration to us, his angelic spirits. Be attentive and observe her excellences; write them down, since for this purpose they shall be manifested to thee according to the manner suitable to thee." I encountered so many wonders that their abundance has left me speechless, and the wonderment overwhelms me, and in mortal life I do not believe that all creatures together are capable of knowing them; further on in this History I will declare more regarding this.

6. On another day, during the time of calm and serenity in this same habitation I mentioned, I heard a voice from the Most High saying to me: "My spouse, I desire thee to finally resolve with all thy heart to seek Me earnestly, love Me fervently, and for thy life to be more angelic than human, forgetting entirely what is earthly. I desire to raise thee from the dust as one who is poor, and as a needy one from the dunghill (Ps. 112:7); and when I lift thee up, humble thyself, so thy spikenard gives its sweet odor while thou art in my presence (Cant. 1:11), and recognizing thy weakness and miseries, persuade thyself with all thy heart thou dost merit tribulation, and in it humiliation. Behold my grandeur and thy lowliness, that I am just and holy, and with equity assist thee using mercy, not chastising thee as thou dost deserve. Seek above all this foundation of humility in order to acquire the rest of the virtues so thou mayest fulfill my will. And in order for thee to be taught, corrected and reprehended, I appoint as thy Teacher my Virgin Mother; She shall instruct thee and direct thy footsteps toward my pleasure and satisfaction."

7. This Queen stood before me when the most high Lord spoke these words to me, and the heavenly Princess deigned to accept the office which His Majesty gave Her. She benignly accepted it, and said to me: "My daughter, I desire thee to be my disciple and companion, and I shall be thy Teacher; yet be aware thou must obey me with fortitude, and from this day forward no trace of a daughter of Adam should be recognized in thee. My life, the works of my pilgrimage on earth, and the wonders which the powerful arm of the Most High wrought with me, must be thy mirror, and the model for thy life." I prostrated myself before the throne of the King and Queen of the universe, and offered to obey in all things. I gave thanks to the Most High for the benefit which He granted me, so far above my merits, in giving me such protection and guidance. Into her hands I renewed the vows of my profession, and offered anew to obey Her and cooperate with all my strength to amend my life. The Lord said to me: "Behold and see." I did so, and saw a most beautiful ladder with many steps, with a great number of Angels who assisted, and others ascending and descending by it. His Majesty said to me: "This is the mysterious ladder of Jacob (Gen. 28:12), which is *the house of God and the gate of heaven* (Ib. 17); if thou shalt dispose thyself and thy life, such that my eyes find nothing reprehensible, thou shalt ascend by it to Me."

8. This promise incited my desires, inflamed my will, and enraptured my spirit, and with many tears I grieved that I have become a grave and heavy burden to myself (Job 7:20). I sighed for the

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\* cf. Cant. 4:12 [Ed.]

end of my captivity, and to arrive where there would be no obstacle to my love. In these longings I spent several days, trying to perfect my life; I again made a general Confession, and reformed some of my imperfections. The vision of the ladder continued, yet I did not understand its interpretation. I made many promises to the Lord, determining anew to turn away from all that is earthly, and use my free will only to love Him, without allowing it to be diverted toward anything, though it is small and unsuspecting. I repudiated and denied all imaginary and sensible things. After passing several days in these affections and this disposition, the Most High declared to me that this ladder was the life of the most holy Virgin, its virtues and sacraments. His Majesty said to me: "I desire thee, my spouse, to ascend by this ladder of Jacob, and enter through this Gate of Heaven to know my attributes and contemplate my divinity; hence arise and, walk, and ascend by it to Me. These Angels who assist and accompany Her are those whom I dedicated for her guard and defense, and as the garrison of this City of Sion; pay attention to Her, and meditating upon her virtues labor to imitate them." Then it seemed to me that I ascended by this ladder, and recognized the greatness of the wonders and the most ineffable prodigy of the Lord in a mere creature, the greatest sanctity and perfection of virtues which the arm of the Omnipotent has ever worked. At the top of the ladder I saw the Lord of lords\* and the Queen of all creation, and they commanded me that by these magnificent sacraments I glorify, praise and extol Him, and to write what I understood of these sacraments. The sublime and eminent Lord placed me before these tablets, greater than those given to Moses (Ex. 31:18), as a law which I could meditate upon and observe (Ps. 1:2), written by his powerful finger. He moved my will so in his presence I declared to the most pure Queen that I would overcome my resistance, and with her help write her most holy Life, paying attention to three things. First, to acknowledge the profound reverence due to the eternal God, and how the creature must humble and abase itself more as His immense Majesty condescends to it; and that the effect of greater favors and benefits must be a greater fear, reverence, attention and humility. Second, so the human race, forgetful of its remedy, will take notice and recognize what it owes to its Queen and Mother of Mercy in the works of the Redemption, the love and reverence She gave to God, and the love and reverence we must have for this great Lady. Third, that whoever governs my soul, and the whole world if appropriate, may know my littleness and lowliness, and the poor return I give for what I receive.

9. To this my desire the most holy Virgin responded to me: "My daughter, the world is in great need of this doctrine, since it does not know or have the reverence due to the omnipotent Lord; and due to this ignorance the audacity of mortals provokes the righteousness of his justice to afflict and oppress them. They are dominated by their forgetfulness and overshadowed by their darkness, without knowing how to seek the remedy or find the light; and this comes upon them because they lack the fear and reverence which they ought to have." These and other admonitions the Most High and the Queen gave me in order to manifest their will in regard to this work. It seemed to me temerity, and lack of charity toward myself, not to accept the doctrine and teaching which this great Lady had promised to give me during the narrative of her most holy Life; nor did it seem to me proper to delay it to another time, since the Most High had manifested this to be the opportune and appropriate time. Regarding this He spoke to me these words: "My daughter, when I sent my Onlybegotten into the world, it was in the worst condition it had been since the beginning, except for the few souls who served Me; for human nature is so imperfect that if it does not submit itself to the interior government of my light, and to the practice of the instruction of my ministers, subjecting its own opinion and following Me, who am

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\* cf. Apoc. 19:16 [Ed.]

the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6), and keeping my commandments in order not to lose my friendship, it will then fall into the abyss of darkness and innumerable miseries, from abyss to abyss, until it arrives at obstinacy in sin. From the creation and sin of the first man until I gave the law to Moses, men governed themselves according to their own inclinations, and committed great errors and sins (Rom. 8:13). And even after the law was given they proceeded to disobey it (Jn. 7:19), and thus they wandered and strayed further from truth and light, arriving at the state of utter forgetfulness. With fatherly love I sent them eternal salvation (Eph. 2:4-5), and the medicine for human nature in order to remedy their incurable infirmities, by which I justified my cause. And as I then was attentive to the time so this mercy would shine most brightly, so now I desire to grant them another very great mercy, since it is the opportune time to grant it while my hour is coming, in which the world shall find so many charges brought against it, and their prosecution so substantiated, that they shall know the just cause of my indignation. In this shall be manifested my anger, justice and equity, and how well justified is my cause. To better accomplish this, and because it is the time in which the attribute of my mercy is to be more manifest, and in which I desire my love not to be idle; now, when the world has arrived at such a calamitous age, and when, after the Word has become incarnate, mortals are more careless of their welfare and seek it less; when the day of their transitory life draws closer to its end at the setting of the sun of time; when the eternal night arrives for the foreknown; when for the just is born the eternal day without night; when most mortals are in the darkness of their ignorance and sins, oppressing the just, and mocking the children of God; when my holy and divine law is despised in the iniquitous affairs of state, so odious as the enemy of my providence; when the wicked have least obliged my mercy: Looking upon the just there are at this time as acceptable, I desire to open to all a gate so through it they can enter into my mercy; I desire to give them a lamp to enlighten them in the darkness of their blindness; I desire to furnish them an opportune remedy if they desire to avail themselves of it to attain my grace. Those who find it shall be very happy (Prov. 3:13ff.), and blessed shall they be who recognize its value; rich shall they be who discover this treasure;\* happy and very wise shall they be who with reverence shall scrutinize it and understand its mysteries and sacraments. I desire mortals to know how valuable is her intercession, She who remedied their sins by giving in her womb mortal life to the Immortal. I desire them to have a mirror in which they can see their ingratitude, the wonderful works wrought by my powerful arm in this pure creature, and reveal to them much of what is hidden, according to my exalted judgments, regarding the Mother of the incarnate Word.<sup>†</sup>

10. "I did not reveal these mysteries in the primitive Church, because they are so magnificent that the faithful would pause to scrutinize and admire them, when it was necessary for the law of grace and of the Gospel to be established. And though all these mysteries are compatible, yet human ignorance could have suffered some misgivings and doubts, when faith in the Incarnation and Redemption, and the precepts of the new evangelical law, were still in their beginnings. For this reason the Person of the incarnate Word said to his disciples at the Last Supper: *I have yet many things to say to you; but you are not now disposed to receive them* (Jn. 16:12). Through them He spoke to the whole world, which until the law of grace and faith in the Son was established was not ready to be introduced into the mysteries and belief in the Mother. But now the need is greater, and it obliges Me more than their disposition. And if men would now oblige Me by reverencing, believing and acknowledging the wonders which the Mother of Mercy

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\* cf. Mt. 13:46 [Ed.]

† cf. Apoc. 3:12 [Ed.]

encloses within Herself, and if all would solicit her intercession from their whole heart, the world would have some restoration. I do not desire to refrain from placing before men this Mystical City of refuge; describe and delineate it to them as far as thy timidity can achieve. I do not desire this description and declaration of her life to be opinions or contemplations, but the certain truth. *They that have ears to hear, let them hear* (Mt. 11:15). Let those who thirst come to the living waters (Apoc. 22:17) and leave the dried-out cisterns;\* let those who desire the light follow it to the end.” Thus spoke the Lord God omnipotent.

11. These are the words which the Most High spoke to me on that occasion. And of the manner in which I receive this doctrine and light, and how I know it is the Lord, I shall speak in the following chapter, fulfilling by obedience the command given to me, and in order to leave declared to all the understanding and mercies of this kind which I receive and to which I shall later refer.

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\* cf. Jer. 2:13 [Ed.]