

“The Presentation of Jesus in The Temple” (Mary of Agreda)

585. Forty days after the birth of Her Son Jesus, during which a woman, according to the law, was considered unclean. Mary was obliged to continue Her purification for Her re-admittance into the temple. From the Book of Leviticus:

Lev 12:1 The Lord said to Moses,
12:2 “Say to the people of Israel, If a woman conceives, and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean.

12:3 And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

12:4 Then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying; she shall not touch any holy thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed.

12:5 But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days.

12:6 “And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the door of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering,

12:7 and he shall offer it before the Lord, and make atonement for her; then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female.

12:8 And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

In order to comply with this law and satisfy another obligation contained in Exodus, chapter thirteenth, which demanded the sanctification and presentation to the Lord of all the first born sons.

Ex 13:1 The LORD said to Moses,
13:2 “Consecrate to Me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is Mine.”

The Mother of all purity prepared to go to Jerusalem, where She was to appear in the temple with Her Son and purify Herself according to the custom of other women. She had no doubts about complying with that part of the law, which applied to Herself in common with other mothers. Not that She was ignorant of Her innocence and purity; ever since the Word became Man in Her womb, *She knew of Her exemption from actual sin and from the stain of original sin. Nor was She ignorant of the fact that She had conceived by the Holy Spirit, and brought forth without labor, remaining a virgin more pure than the sun.* Yet She hesitated not to subject

Herself to the common law; on the contrary, in the deep longing of Her heart, She desired to do this of Her own free will.

586. In regard to the presentation of Her most holy Son there was some occasion for the same doubt as in regard to the Circumcision, for She knew Him to be the true God, superior to the laws, which He Himself had made. But She was informed of the will of the Lord by divine light and by the interior acts of the most Holy Soul of the Word made Man; for She saw His desire of sacrificing Himself and offering Himself as a living Victim, to the eternal Father. From the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Ephesians:

^{Eph 5:1} Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

^{5:2} And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

His sacrifice was in thanksgiving for having formed His most pure Body and created His most Holy Soul; for having destined Him as an acceptable sacrifice for the human race. These acts of the most sacred humanity of the Word were constant throughout His entire life, conforming Himself to the Divine Will in so far as He was still a traveler upon earth and our Redeemer. Yet, in addition to these interior acts and in obedience to the law, He wished to be offered to the eternal Father in the temple where all adored and magnified Him.

587. The great Lady spoke about the journey with Her husband, and, having resolved to be in Jerusalem on the very day appointed by the law and having

made the necessary preparations, they took leave of the good woman, who had so devotedly entertained them. Although this woman was left in ignorance of the divine mysteries connected with her Guests, she was filled with the blessings of heaven, which brought her abundant fruit. Mary and Joseph went to the cave of the Nativity, not wishing to begin their journey without once more venerating that sanctuary so humble and yet so rich in happiness. The Mother handed the Child Jesus to Joseph in order to prostrate Herself and worship the earth which had been witness to such holy mysteries. Having done this with incomparable devotion and tenderness, She said to Her husband: “My master, give Me your blessing for this journey, as you are to do at departing from home. I ask you also to allow Me to perform this journey on foot without shoes; since I am to bear in My arms the Victim, which is to be offered to the eternal Father. This is a mysterious work and as far as it is possible, I should wish to perform it with due reverence and ceremony.” Our Queen was accustomed, for the sake of modesty, to wear shoes, which covered Her feet and served as a sort of stocking. They were made of a certain plant used by the poor and something like hemp, dried and woven into a coarse and strong texture, which, though poor, was yet cleanly and appropriate.

588. Saint Joseph told Her to arise, for She was kneeling before him, and said: “May the Most High Son of the eternal Father, whom I hold in my arms, give You His blessing. As for the rest it is well and good, that You journey afoot in bringing Him to Jerusalem. But You

must not go barefoot, because the weather does not permit it; and Your desire will be accepted by the Lord instead of the deed.” Thus Saint Joseph, in order not to deprive most holy Mary of the joy of humiliation and obedience, made use of his authority as husband, although with great reverence. And as Saint Joseph only obeyed Her and humiliated and mortified himself in commanding Her, it happened that both of them exercised humility and obedience at the same time. That he refused Her permission to go barefoot to Jerusalem was occasioned by his apprehensions, lest the cold should injure Her health. Joseph did not know the wonderful qualities and composition of Her virginal and perfect body, nor the other privileges, given Her by God’s right hand. The obedient Queen made no reply to the orders of Her husband and obeyed his wish not to go without shoes. In order to again receive in Her arms the Infant Jesus She prostrated Herself on the earth, thanking Him and adoring Him for the blessings, which He had given them and for the whole human race in that cave. She asked His Majesty Jesus, *that this cave of His birth be held in esteem and reverence by the Catholics and that it remain in their possession;* and She again placed it in charge of the holy Angel, who had been set as its guardian.

Brothers, currently in Bethlehem is the Church of the Nativity. This structure is built over a cave that the early Christians believed was the location of the birthplace of Jesus. Mary Agreda has assured us that the Holy Mother prayed that Her Son's birth place would be

venerated. The Church of the Nativity may be trusted as Jesus birthplace. I would prefer Papal approval in order to be sure.

She covered Herself with a cloak for the journey and, receiving in Her arms Jesus, the Treasure of heaven, She pressed Him to Her breast, tenderly shielding Him from the harsh wintry weather.

589. They departed from the cave, asking the blessing of the infant God, which *His Majesty gave Them in a visible manner.*

Saint Joseph placed upon the ass the box containing the clothes of the Infant and the gifts of the Kings destined for their temple-offering. Thus began the most holy journey, which was ever held from Bethlehem to the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus, the Queen, His Mother, and Saint Joseph, Her spouse, journeyed with ten thousand Angels. All these heavenly beings passed along in visible human forms, so beautiful and shining, that in comparison with them, all that is delightful or precious in the world, is less than dirt or mud compared to the finest and purest gold. In their splendor they were far brighter than the sun in its brightest light and would have turned night into the brightest day. The heavenly Queen and Saint Joseph rejoiced in their beauty, while all of them together exalted these mysteries by new songs of praise in honor of the divine Child about to be presented in the temple. In this fashion they journeyed the two leagues (About 6 miles) from Bethlehem to Jerusalem.



590. On this occasion the weather was unusually severe, so that, without regard for the tender Child, its Creator, the cold and sleety blasts pierced to His shivering limbs and caused the divine Infant to weep as it rested in the arms of His loving Mother. The child Jesus weeping was more for His compassion and love for men than by the cold weather upon His Body. The Holy Mary turned to the winds and elements and as Queen of creation commanded them to moderate their harshness toward the Child. At Her command the weather were changed into a soft and balmy air for the Infant, but remained harsh toward the Mother; thus She Herself felt it, but not Her Infant. She addressed also sin, which She had not contracted, and said: “O sin, how most disorderly and inhuman are you, since, in order to satisfy for you, the Creator of all things is afflicted. You are a terrible and horrible monster, offensive to God and destructive of creatures; you turn them into abominations and deprive them of their greatest happiness, that of being friends of God. O children of men, how long will you be so heavy-hearted as to love vanity and deceit? Be not so ungrateful toward the Most High God

and so cruel to yourselves. Open your eyes and recognize your dangers. Do not despise the laws of your eternal Father. Since the Son of God has assumed flesh in My Womb, has made Me the Mother of all creation; as such I love you and if it were possible and according to the will of the Most High, that I suffer all the punishments visited upon you from the time of Adam until now, I would accept them with pleasure.”

591. During the journey of our Lady with the infant God, it happened in Jerusalem that Simeon, the high priest, was enlightened by the Holy Ghost concerning the coming of the Word become Man and His presentation in the temple on the arms of His Mother. The same revelation was given to the holy widow Anne, and she was also informed of the poverty and suffering of Saint Joseph and the most pure Lady on their way to Jerusalem. These two holy persons, immediately conferring with each other about their revelations and enlightenments, called the chief procurator of the temporal affairs of the temple, and, describing to him the signs, whereby he should recognize the holy Travelers, they ordered him to proceed to the gate leading out to Bethlehem and receive them into his house with all benevolence and hospitality. This the procurator did and thus the Queen and Her spouse Joseph were much relieved, since they had been anxious about finding a proper lodging for the divine Infant. Leaving Them well provided in his house, the fortunate host returned in order to report to the high priest.

592. On that evening, before they retired, most holy Mary and Joseph discussed

with each other about what they were to do. The most prudent Lady reminded him that it was better to bring the gifts of the Kings on that same evening to the temple in order to be able to make the offering in silence and without noisy demonstration, as was proper with all donations and sacrifices, and that on the way he might procure the two turtle doves, which on the next day were to be the public offering for the Infant Jesus. Saint Joseph agreed with Her request. As a stranger and one little known he gave the myrrh, incense and gold to the one who usually received such gifts for the temple, but Saint Joseph took care not to reveal himself to any one as the donor of these great presents. Although he could have bought the lamb, which the rich usually offered for their first-born, he chose not to do so; because the humble and poor apparel of the Mother and the Child as well as of the husband, would not have agreed with a public offering as valuable as that of the rich. In no particular did the Mother of wisdom deem it befitting to depart from poverty and humility, even under the cover of a pious and honorable intention. For in all things was She the Teacher of perfection, and Her most Holy Son, that of holy poverty, in which He was born, lived and died.

593. Simeon, as saint Luke tells us, was a just and god-fearing man and was hoping in the consolation of Israel; the Holy Spirit, who dwelt in him, had revealed to him, that he should not taste death until he had seen the Christ, the Lord. Moved by the holy Spirit he came to the temple; for in that night, besides the revelations he had already received, he was again divinely enlightened and made to

understand more clearly the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption of man, the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah, that a Virgin should conceive and bear a Son and that from the root of Jesse a flower should blossom, namely Christ; likewise all the rest contained in these and other prophecies. He received a clear understanding of the hypostatic union of the two natures in the person of the Word, and of the mysteries of the passion and death of the Redeemer. Thus instructed in these two high things, Saint Simeon was lifted up and inflamed with the desire of seeing the Redeemer of the world. On the following day then, as soon as he had received notice that Christ was coming to present Himself in the temple to the Father, he was carried in spirit to the temple, for so great is the force of divine enlightenment. Whereupon succeeded that, which I shall relate in the following chapter. Also the holy matron Anne was favored with a revelation during the same night concerning many of these mysteries and great was the joy of her spirit on that account; for, as I have said in the first part of this history, she had been the teacher of our Queen, during her stay in the temple. The Evangelist tells us that She never left the temple-grounds serving in it day and night in prayer and fasting; that she was a prophetess, daughter of Samuel, of the tribe of Asher. She had lived seven years with her husband and was now eighty years old. As will be seen, she spoke prophetically of the Child's future.

[Lk 2:22](#) **And when the time came for Their purification according to the law of**

Moses, They brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord

^{2:23} (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”)

^{2:24} and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

^{2:25} Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

^{2:26} And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.

It’s interesting to know that Simeon was high priest. It’s true that Scripture doesn’t reveal this but it is Mary of Agreda. What a contrast when compared to the high priest Caiaphas. Simeon was a Saint and Caiaphas demanded that Jesus be put to death. I doubt that Jesus would have been condemned to die if Simeon was the high priest. The Name Simeon is also the name of the second son of Jacob.

596. The sacred humanity of Jesus belonged to the eternal Father not only because it was created like other beings, but it was His special property by virtue of the union with the person of the Word and Man. Nevertheless the eternal Father had set that His Son should be presented to Him in the Temple in mysterious compliance with the law, of which Christ our Lord was the end.

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.

The law was established that the just men of the Old Testament should forever make holy and *offer to the Lord their first-born sons, in the hope that one thus presented might prove to be the Son of God.* According to our way of thinking His Majesty acted like men, who have a tendency to repeat and enjoy over and over again a thing which has caused them enjoyment. For although the Father understood and knew all things in His infinite wisdom, *He sought pleasure in the offering of the Word made Man.*

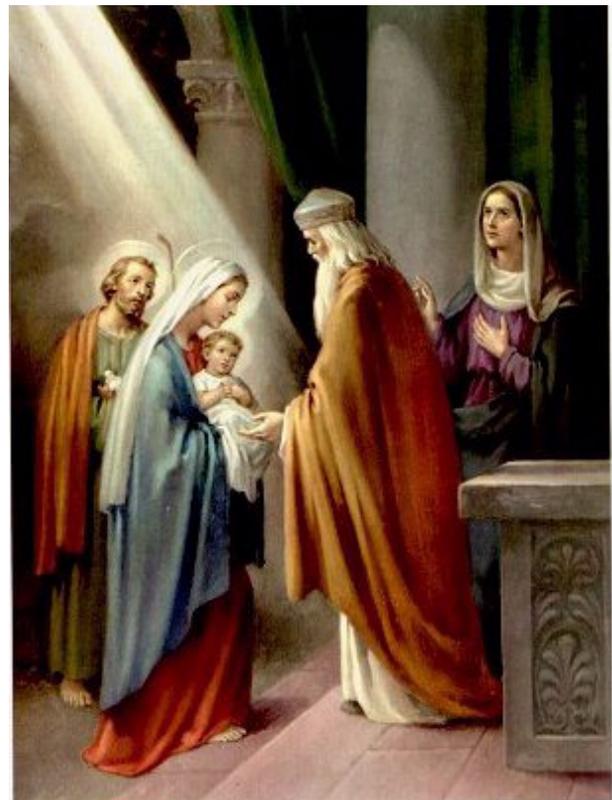
597. This will of the eternal Father, which was exactly as the will of His Son, was known to Mary; for She saw that all His interior actions were in union with the will of His eternal Father. Full of this holy science the great Queen passed the night before His presentation in the Temple in divine conversations. Speaking to the Father She said: "My Lord and God most high, Father of My Lord, a festive day for heaven and earth when I shall bring and offer to You in Your holy Temple the living Host, (Host is the name of the consecrated bread, the Body of Jesus.) which is at the same time the Treasure of Your Divinity. Rich, O My Lord and God, thus You can pour forth Your mercies upon the human race: pardoning the sinners, that have turned from the straight path, consoling those in pain, helping the needy, enriching the poor, aiding the weak, enlightening the blind, and finding those who have strayed away. This is, My Lord, what I ask of You in offering to You Your only Son,

who, by lowering Yourself by making Your Son my Son. If You have given Him to Me as a God, I return Him to You as God and Man. His value is infinite, and what I ask of You is much less. With great riches do I return to Your holy Temple. My soul shall praise You forever, because Your divine right hand has shown itself toward Me so liberal and powerful".

598. On the next morning, the heavenly Lady, having provided the turtle-dove and two candles, wrapped Jesus in swaddling-clothes and accompanied Saint Joseph from Their lodging to the temple. The holy Angels, who had come with them from Bethlehem, again formed in human and most beautiful forms, just as has been said concerning the journey of the preceding day. On this occasion however the Angels added many other hymns of the sweetest and most beautiful harmony in honor of the infant God, which were heard only by the most pure Mary. Besides the ten thousand, who had formed the procession on the previous day, vast numbers of others descended from heaven, who accompanied by those that carried the shields of the holy name of Jesus, formed the guard of honor of the Word of God made Man. These however were not in human shapes and only the Virgin Mary understood their presence. Having arrived at the Temple-gate, the most blessed Mother was filled with new and exalted feelings of devotion. Joining the other women who came to the Temple, She bowed and knelt to adore the Lord in spirit and in truth in His holy Temple and She presented Herself before the exalted Majesty of God with His Son in Her

arms. Immediately She was immersed in an intellectual vision of the most holy Trinity and She heard a voice issuing from the eternal Father, saying: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"*. Saint Joseph, the most fortunate of men, felt at the same time a new sweetness of the Holy Spirit, which filled him with joy and divine light.

599. The holy high-priest Simeon, moved by the Holy Spirit also entered the Temple at that time. Approaching the place where the Queen stood with the Infant Jesus in Her arms, he saw both Mother and Child enveloped in splendor and glory. The prophetess Anne had come at the same hour also saw Mary and Her Infant surrounded by this wonderful light.



In the joy of their spirits both of them approached the Queen of heaven, and the

priest received the Infant Jesus from Her arms upon his hands. Raising up his eyes to heaven he offered the child Jesus up to the eternal Father, pronouncing at the same time these words so full of mysteries: "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word, for mine eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel". It was as if He had said: "Now, Lord, You will release me from the bondage of this mortal body and let me go free and in peace; for until now have I been detained in it by the hope of seeing Your promises fulfilled and by the desire of seeing Your Only Son made Man. Now that my eyes have seen Your salvation, Your only Son made Man, joined to our nature in order to give it eternal life according to the intention and plan of Your infinite wisdom and mercy, I shall enjoy true and secure peace. Now, O Lord, You have prepared and placed before all mortals Your divine light that it may shine upon the world and that all who wish may enjoy it and obtain there from guidance and salvation. For this is the light which is revealed to the gentiles for the glory of Your chosen people of Israel".

Lk 2:27 And inspired by the Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the Parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law,
 2:28 he took Jesus up in his arms and blessed God and said,
 2:29 "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to Your word;

2:30 for mine eyes have seen Your salvation

2:31 which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

2:32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel."

2:33 And His father and His Mother marveled at what was said about him;

2:34 and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His Mother, "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against

2:35 (and a sword will pierce through Your own Soul also), that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed."

2:36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Samuel, of the tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years from her virginity,

2:37 and as a widow till she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.

2:38 And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

600. Most holy Mary and Saint Joseph heard this song of Simeon, wondering at the exalted revelation it contained. The Gospel of Luke calls them in this place the parents of the divine Infant, for such they were in the eyes of the people who were present at this event. Simeon, addressing himself to the most holy Mother of the Infant Jesus, then added: "Behold this Child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted.

And Your own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed". Thus saint Simeon; and being a priest he gave his blessing to the happy parents of the Child. Then also the prophetess Anne acknowledged the Word made Man, and full of the Holy Spirit, she spoke of the mysteries of the Messiah to many, who were expecting the redemption of Israel. By these two holy old people, they gave public witness of the coming of the Redeemer.

601. At the moment when the priest Simeon mentioned the sword and the sign of contradiction, *which were speaking about the future passion and death of the Lord*, the Child bowed its head. Thereby, and by many interior acts of obedience, Jesus confirmed the prophecy of the priest and accepted it as the sentence of the eternal Father pronounced by His minister. All this Mary noticed and understood; She presently began to feel the sorrow predicted by Simeon and *thus in advance was She wounded by the sword*, of which She had thus been warned. *As in a mirror Her Spirit was made to see all the mysteries included in this prophecy*; how Her most holy Son was to be the stone of stumbling, the damnation of the unbelievers, *and the salvation of the faithful*; the fall of the synagogue and the establishment of the Church among non-believers; She foresaw the triumph to be gained over the devils and over death, but also that a great price was to be paid for it, namely the frightful agony and death of the Cross. She foresaw the endless opposition and disputes, which the Lord Jesus was to

experience both personally and in His Church.



Jn 15:20 Remember the word that I (Jesus) said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

At the same time She also saw the glory and excellence of the elect. Most holy Mary knew it all and in the joy and sorrow of Her most pure soul, excited by the prophecies of Simeon and these hidden mysteries, She performed heroic acts of virtue. All these sayings and happenings were forever impressed upon Her memory, and, of all that She understood and experienced, She forgot not the least thing. At all times She looked upon Her most holy Son with

such a living sorrow, as we, mere humans with hearts so full of ingratitude, shall never be able to feel. The holy spouse Saint Joseph was by these prophecies also made to see many of the mysteries of the Redemption and of the labors and sufferings of Jesus. But the Lord did not reveal them to him so clearly and openly as they were understood by His heavenly Spouse; for in him these revelations were to serve a different purpose, and besides, Saint Joseph was not to be an eye-witness of them during his earthly life.

602. The ceremony of the presentation thus being over, the Holy Mother kissed the hand of the priest and again asked his blessing. Mary also kissed the hand of *Anne, Her former teacher*; for Mary's dignity as Mother of God, the highest possible to Angels or men, did not prevent Her from these acts of deepest humility. Then, in the company of Saint Joseph, and of the fourteen thousand Angels in procession, She returned with the divine Infant to Her lodging in Jerusalem. They remained, as I shall relate farther on, for some days in Jerusalem, in order to satisfy their devotion. *During that time She spoke a few times with the priest about the mysteries of the Redemption and of the prophecies above mentioned.* Although the words of the most prudent Virgin Mother *were few*, measured and reserved, they were also so weighty and full of wisdom, that they filled the priest with wonder and excited in him the most exalted and the sweetest sentiments of joy in his soul. The same happened also to the prophetess Anne. Both of them died in the Lord shortly afterwards. The

holy Family lodged at the expense of Simeon. During these days the Queen frequented the Temple and in it She was visited with many favors and comforts in repayment for the sorrow caused by the prophecies of the priest. In order to heighten their sweetness Her most holy Son spoke to Her on one of these days saying: "My dearest Mother and My Dove, dry up Your tears and let Your purest heart be expanded; since it is the will of My Father, that I accept the death of the Cross. *I desire that You be My companion in My labors and sufferings*; I long to undergo them for the souls, who are the works of My Hands, made according to My image and likeness, in order to make them share of My Kingdom and of eternal life in triumph over My enemies".

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

"This is what You Yourself does wish in union with Me". The Mother answered : "O My sweetest Love and Son of My womb, if My accompanying You shall include not only the privilege of witnessing and feeling Your sufferings, but also of dying with You, so much the greater will be My relief; for it will be a greater suffering for Me to live, while seeing You die". In these exercises of love and compassion She passed some days, until saint Joseph was advised to fly into Egypt, as I shall relate in the following chapter.

Words of enlightenment from Mother Mary.

594. My daughter, one of the misfortunes, which deprive souls of happiness, or at least diminish it, is that *they content themselves with performing good works negligently or without fervor, as if they were engaged in things unimportant or merely accidental.* On account of this ignorance and meanness of heart few of them arrive at an intimate friendship of God, *which they can attain only by fervent love.* This is called fervent precisely because of its similarity to boiling water. For just as water is made to boil and foam by the fire, so the soul, by the sweet violence of the divine conflagration of love, is raised above itself and above all created things as well as above its own doings. In loving, it is more and more inflamed, and from this very love springs an unquenchable affection, which makes the soul despise and forget all earthly things while at the same time it becomes dissatisfied with all temporal goodness. And as the human heart, when it does not attain what it dearly loves (if that attainment is possible) is inflamed with ever greater desire of reaching it by other means; therefore, the loving soul, finds ever new things to strive after for the sake of the Beloved and all service will seem to it but little. Thus it will pass from good will to a perfect will and from this to what will please the Lord still more, until it arrives at the most intimate union with Him and at a perfect conformation with the will of God.

595. Hence you will understand, My dear, why I desired to go barefooted to

the Temple, carrying at the same time My most holy Son in order to present Him there; and why I also wished to comply with the law of the purification; for, urged on by My love, which constantly demanded what was most perfect and agreeable to the Lord. I sought the fullness of perfection in all My actions and it was precisely this anxiety, which created in Me such a desire of excellence in all My works. Labor to imitate Me with all speed in all that I did; for I assure you, My dear, *that it is this exercise of your love, which the Most High is desiring and expecting of you,* and, as is mentioned by the spouse in the Canticles. He is watching you so close at hand that not more than a slight screen intervenes between the soul and its vision of the Lord. With intense attraction and drawn onward *He approaches closely to those souls, who thus love and serve Him in all things, while He withdraws from the lukewarm and negligent ones,* or deals with them only according to the general rules of His divine Providence. *Do you aim continually to the most pure and perfect in the practice of virtues and study and create new schemes and projects of love;* so that all the forces of your interior and exterior talents continue to be emotionally occupied in what is most exalted and excellent in the service of the Lord. At the same time mention all your spiritual actions to your spiritual father and subject them to the obedience and advice of your counselor, following his instructions: for this will always be the best and secure way.

Words of enlightenment from Mother Mary.

603. My daughter, the doctrine and example contained in the last chapter will teach you to seek after the constant and expansion of heart, by which you may prepare yourself to accept blessings and hardships, the sweet and the bitter without being disturbed. O dear soul! How narrow and unwilling is the human heart toward that which is contrary and distasteful to its earthly emotions! How it is annoyed in labors! How impatiently it meets them! How unbearable it sees all that is against to its desires! How persistently it forgets, that its Teacher and Master has first accepted sufferings, and has honored and made holy in His own Person! It is a great shame, yea a great boldness, on the part of the faithful, *that they should hate suffering, even after My most holy Son did suffer for them* and when so many of the souls before Jesus Death were led to embrace the Cross solely by the hope that Christ would once suffer upon it, although they would never live to see it. And if this falling short of God's will is so ugly in others, consider well, my dear, how disgusting it would be in you, who are so anxious to obtain the grace and the friendship of the Most High; who desire to merit the name of a spouse and friend of God. You wish to belong entirely to Him and that He belong entirely to you, you wish to be My disciple and that I be your Teacher, who desires to follow and imitate Me, as a faithful daughter. *All this must not result in emotion only and in empty words, or oft-repeated words of: Lord, Lord; and, when the occasion*

of tasting the chalice and the cross of suffering is at hand, you must not turn away in sorrow and pain from the sufferings, by which the sincerity of a loving heart is to be tried.

604. All this would be denying in your actions, what you profess in your words and it would be a swerving from the path of eternal life. *You can't follow Christ, if you refuse to embrace the cross and rejoice in it, nor will you find Me by any other way.* If people fail you, if temptation or trouble come against you, if the sorrows of death encircle you, you must in no way be disturbed or disheartened; since nothing displeases My most holy Son or Me more than placing a obstacle or misusing the grace given by Him for your defense.

Ps 18:2 The cords of death encompassed me, the torrents of perdition assailed me; 18:5 the cords of Sheol entangled me, the snares of death confronted me.

By misusing grace and receiving it in vain, you give great victory to the demon, who glories much in having disturbed or subjected any soul that calls itself a disciple of Christ and of Me; and having once brought you to sin in small things, he will soon oppress you in greater ones. Seek then the protection of the Most High and press onward trusting in Me. Full of this trust, whenever tribulation comes over you, with great emotion exclaim: "The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? He is my Helper, why should I hesitate? I have a Mother, a Queen and Mistress, who will help me and take care of me in my affliction".

605. In this security seek to preserve interior peace and keep forever in your view My works and My footsteps for your imitation. Remember the sorrow, which pierced My heart at the prophecies of Simeon, and how I remained in peace, without any sign of disturbance, although My heart and soul were pierced by a sword of pain.



In every event I sought motives for glorifying and adoring His wisdom. If the passing labors and sufferings are accepted with joy and with serenity of heart, they spiritualize the creature, they elevate it and furnish it with a divine grace; by which the soul begins to value affliction at its proper value and soon finds comfort. This is the teaching of the school of the Redeemer, hidden from those living in Babylon and from those who love vanity.

Mt 11:25 At that time Jesus declared, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes;

11:26 yea, Father, for such was Your gracious will.

I wish also that you imitate Me in respecting the priests and ministers of the Lord, who in the new law hold a much higher dignity than in the old, since the divine Word has now united Itself with human nature and become the eternal High-Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Listen to their words and instructions, as God requires, whose place they take. Consider the power and authority given them in the Gospels, where it is said: "Who hears you, hears Me; who obeys you obeys Me. Strive after the perfection they teach you. Ponder and meditate without intermission upon that, which My most holy Son suffered, so that your soul be a partner in His sorrows. Let the holy memory of His sufferings create in you a disgust and hatred of all earthly pleasures that you despise and forget all that is visible, and instead, follow the Author of eternal life.