

“On 8th Day Circumcision” (Mary of Agreda)

513. From the moment the most wise Virgin found Herself chosen as the Mother of the Word of God, She began to ponder upon the labors and sufferings in store for Her sweetest Son. As Her knowledge of Scriptures was so well understood, She understood all the mysteries contained therein and She began to foresee and prepare that He was to suffer for the Redemption of Man. This sorrow, foreseen and expected with such a full knowledge of details, was a lifelong martyrdom for the most meek Mother of the sacrificial Lamb of God. But in regard to the Circumcision, which was to take place after the birth of the Child, the heavenly Lady had received no command of the will of God the Father. This uncertainty caused concern in the tender and affectionate Mother. Her wise foresight enabled Her to speculate that Her Son had come to honor and apply His law by fulfilling it. He had come in order to suffer for men. Jesus would be obligated by His burning love to undergo the pains of circumcision.

514. On the other hand Mary's motherly love and compassion longed to exempt Her sweet Child if possible, from this suffering; moreover *She knew, that circumcision was a rite instituted for cleansing the newborn children from original sin*, whereas the divine Infant was entirely free from this guilt, not having acquired it in Adam. In this hesitation between love of Her Son Jesus

and obedience to the eternal Father, the most prudent Virgin practiced many heroic acts of virtue, unspeakably pleasing to God the Father. Although She could have easily escaped this uncertainty by directly asking Jesus what was to be done; yet, being as humble as She was prudent, She withheld. Neither would She ask Her Angels. She awaited the opportune time and occasion, assigned by God's Plan for all things, and She would not guess curiously to search or pry into God's design by consulting Jesus or the Angels for sources of information, especially in order to rid Herself of any suffering. When any grave and doubtful affair arose, in which there was danger of offending God, or some urgent undertaking for the good of mankind, in which it would be necessary to know the divine will, She first asked permission to submit Her petition for enlightenment regarding God's will.

515. Mary was most cautious, thus rarely asking for such extraordinary help from Her Son or the Angels. Without desiring new secrets of revelation She was in the habit of consulting the Holy Spirit, who governed and guided Her in all Her actions. In directing Her faculties by this interior light, She perceived the greater perfection and holiness open to Her in the affairs and actions of every-day life. Although it is true, that the Queen of heaven possessed special claims and rights to be informed of the will of God

in different ways; yet, as She was the model of all holiness and caution, She would not ask for help of the Angels or Jesus, except in such cases as were appropriate. As for the rest of Her actions She guided Herself by fulfilling to the letter the words of David:

Ps 123:1 To You God I lift up my eyes, O You who are enthroned in the heavens!

123:2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, like the eyes of a maid to the hand of Her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till He have mercy upon us.

516. The mystery of the Circumcision required a special and particular favor; it demanded a separate enlightenment by the heavenly Father, and for this the wise Mother was waiting. In the meanwhile, addressing in these words the law that required circumcision, She said: "O law, made for all, you are just and holy; but you do strike My heart by your hardness, if you are to wound My Son, who is your life and your Author! That you should inflict your sufferings upon those, who must be cleansed of guilt, is just; but that you should visit with your severity the Innocent, who is without fault. O would that it might please My Son to exempt Himself from this punishment! But how shall He refuse to undergo it, since He came to seek pain, to embrace the Cross, to fulfill and accomplish the law? O cruel knife! Would you direct your attacks upon My own life, and not upon the Lord, who gave it to Me! O My Son, sweet Love and Light of My soul, is it possible, that You so soon shall shed Your Blood, which is more precious than

heaven and earth? My loving compassion directs Me to hold My Son exempt from the common law, from which He is its Author. But the desire to fulfill it urges Me to comply with it, leaving You a prey to its harshness, unless You are willing to change the decree and punish Me instead. The human nature, which You are from Adam, my Lord, I have given You, but Your human nature is without its fault or guilt. It was in Your power You have preserved Yourself from original stain. Since You are the Son of God, You are removed from sin. Why then, My Lord, should You subject Yourself to circumcision provided for sin by the law? Yet am I aware, my Son, that You are the Teacher and Redeemer of men and that You must apply Your laws by the example. You will not yield the least point in this matter. O eternal Father, let the knife now lose its sharpness and the flesh its ability to feel pain! Let pain descend rather upon Me instead, insignificant worm; let Your Only Son fulfill the law, but let Me alone feel the punishment. O inhuman and cruel original sin, My Son cannot be guilty of you! O sons of Adam, hate and fear sin, which, for a remedy, demands bloody punishment of My Son and Your God".

517. Such grief the sorrowful Mother mixed with the joy of seeing the Word of God born of Her and resting in Her arms, and thus She passed the days which remained before the Circumcision. To God alone She spoke of the Circumcision; yet only in few words and mixed with the tears of compassion. Before the eight days after the Birth were completed, the most wise Queen placed Herself on Her knees in the presence of

God the Father and spoke to Him: "Highest King, Father of My Son, behold here Your slave with the true Sacrifice and Victim Jesus in My arms. My sighs and their cause are not unknown to Your wisdom. I know, My Father, what according to the law is Your pleasure and what should be done with Your Son. If I could suffer rigorous pains thus rescuing My Son and God, My heart is prepared. But I am likewise ready to see Him submit to circumcision, if that is Your will".

518. God the Father answered Her, saying: "My Daughter and My Dove, do not let Your heart be afflicted because Your Son is to be subjected to the knife and to the pains of circumcision. I have sent Him into the world as an example, that He put an end to the law of Moses by entirely fulfilling it".

Mtt 5:17 "Think not that I (Jesus) have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them.

The Father continued: "Though it is true that His humanity, which You have given Him as His natural Mother, is to be circumcised, and His flesh wounded together with Your soul, yet remember: He is My natural Son by an supernatural generation".

Ps 2:7 I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son, today I have begotten You.

The Father continued: "He is the image of My substance, equal to Me in essence, majesty and glory".

Heb 1:1 In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets;

1:2 but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.

1:3 He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature, upholding the universe by His word of power. When He had made purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1:4 having become as much superior to Angels as the name He has obtained is more excellent than theirs.

"You know beforehand, My Daughter, that You must reserve Your Son and Mine for this and other greater sufferings. Resign Yourself, then, to the shedding of His blood and willingly yield to Me the first fruits of the eternal salvation of men".

519. To this ruling of God the Father the heavenly Lady, as the Co-operator of our salvation, with complete and most loving obedience She offered up Her Son Jesus, saying:" Supreme Lord and God, I offer to You My Son as Victim and acceptable sacrifice with all My heart, although I am full of compassion and sorrow that men have offended Your enormous Goodness in such a way as to force God to make His Son a sacrifice. Forever shall I praise You for looking with such infinite love upon mankind and for refusing pardon to Your own Son rather than hinder the salvation of man.

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.

"I, who by Your lifting Me up am His Mother, must before all other men subject Myself to Your pleasure and therefore I offer to You the most meek Lamb, which is to take away the sins of the world by His innocence. But if it is possible to lighten the pains caused by this knife by placing the pain upon Me, Your arm is mighty to affect this prayer".

520. Most holy Mary issued from Her prayer and requested saint Joseph to take the necessary steps for the Circumcision of the divine Infant. With rarest wisdom She avoided telling Him anything of what She had been told in answer to Her prayer. She spoke as if She wished to consult Him or ask his opinion in regard to the Circumcision, saying that the time appointed by law for the Circumcision of the Child had arrived and since they had not received any orders to the contrary, it seemed necessary to comply with it. They themselves, She said, were more bound to please the Most High, to obey more quickly His laws, and to be more enthusiastic in the love and care of His most holy Son than all the rest of mankind, seeking to fulfill in all things the divine pleasure in return for His incomparable blessings. To these words saint Joseph answered with the greatest modesty and caution, saying, that, as no command to the contrary had been given concerning the Child he wished in all things to conform himself to the divine will shown in the common law; that, although as God the child Jesus was not subject to the law. Yet He was now

clothed with our humanity, and, as a most perfect Teacher and Savior, no doubt wished to become like other men in its fulfillment. Then he asked his heavenly Spouse how the Circumcision was to take place.

521. The most holy Mary answered, that the Circumcision should be performed in the same way as it was performed on other children: but that She need not hand Him over to any other person, but that She would Herself hold Him in Her arms. And because the tenderness of the Infant would make this ceremony more painful to Him than to other children, they should have at hand the soothing medicine, which was ordinarily applied at circumcision. Moreover, She requested Saint Joseph to obtain a glass vessel for preserving the sacred relic of the Circumcision of the divine Infant. In the meanwhile the cautious Mother prepared some linen cloths to catch the sacred blood, which was now for the first time to be shed for mankind's rescue, so that not one drop of it might be lost or fall upon the ground. After these preparations the heavenly Lady asked Saint Joseph to inform the priest and request him to come to the cave.

522. Then most holy Mary and Joseph took counsel concerning the name to be given to the divine Infant in the Circumcision, and the holy Spouse said: "My Lady, when the holy Angel of the Most High informed me of this great sacrament, He also told me that Your most sacred Son should be called JESUS". The Virgin Mother answered: "This same name was revealed to Me when He assumed flesh in My womb; and thus receiving this name from the

Most High through the mouth of His holy Angels, it is correct that we obey in humble reverence and that we call Him JESUS. This name We will propose to the priest, for inscription in the register of the other circumcised children".

Mt 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His Mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together She was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit;

1:19 and Her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put Her to shame, resolved to send Her away quietly.

1:20 But as he considered this, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in Her is of the Holy Spirit;

1:21 she will bear a Son, and you shall call His Name *Jesus*, for He will save His people from their sins."

Jesus means: He will save His people from their sins.

523. While the great Lady of heaven and Saint Joseph thus discussed with each other, innumerable Angels descended in human forms, clothed in shining white garments, on which were woven red inscriptions of wonderful beauty. They had palm branches in their hands and crowns upon their heads and emitted a greater splendor than many suns. In comparison with the beauty of these holy Angels all the loveliness seen in this world appeared ugly. But most beautiful in splendor were the shields on their breasts, on each of which the sweet name

of Jesus was engraved. The holy Angels divided into two choirs in the cave, keeping their eyes fixed upon the King in the arms of His virginal Mother. The leaders of these heavenly choirs were the two princes, saint Michael and saint Gabriel, shining in greater splendor than the rest and bearing in their hands the most holy name of JESUS, written in larger letters on something like signs of incomparable beauty and splendor.

524. The two princes presented themselves apart from the rest before their Queen and said: "Lady, this is the name of Your Son, which was written in the mind of God from all eternity and which the blessed Trinity has given to Your Son and our Lord as the signal of salvation for the whole human race; establishing Him at the same time on the throne of David. He shall reign upon it, punish His enemies and triumph over them, making them His footstool and passing judgment upon them. He shall raise His friends to the glory of His right hand. But all this is to happen at the cost of suffering and blood; and even now He is to shed it in receiving this Name. This shall be the beginning of His sufferings in obedience to the will of God the Father. We all are here as ministering Angels, appointed and sent by the holy Trinity in order to serve the only Son of the Father and Your own in all the mysteries and sacraments of the law of grace. We are to accompany Him and minister to Him until He shall ascend triumphantly to the heavenly Jerusalem and open the doors of heaven. Afterwards we shall enjoy an accidental glory beyond that of the other blessed, to whom no such commission has been

given". All this was witnessed by the most fortunate spouse Joseph and His Wife the Virgin Mary. But Joseph's understanding of these happenings was not so deep as Hers, for the Mother of wisdom understood and comprehended the highest mysteries of the Redemption. Although Saint Joseph understood many more mysteries than other mortals, yet He did not penetrate them in the same way as His heavenly Spouse. Both of them, however, were full of heavenly joy and admiration, and glorified the Lord in new songs of praise. All that they experienced in these various and wonderful events surpasses human language, and certainly my own powers, and I cannot find adequate words for expressing my thoughts.

TEACHING FROM THE MOST HOLY QUEEN MARY.

525. My daughter, I wish to renew in you the enlightened teaching which you have received in order that you may treat your Spouse Jesus in the highest reverence. Humility and reverential fear should increase in the soul in the same measure in which especial and extraordinary favors are given upon it. On account of not being mindful of this truth, many souls either make themselves unworthy or incapable of great blessings, or, if they receive them, grow into a dangerous rudeness and boredom, which offends My Son very much. The loving sweetness with which the Lord often treats them causes in them a certain presumption and disrespectful forwardness, causing them to deal with His infinite Majesty in an irreverent

manner, and with a vain desire of searching and inquiring into those hidden ways of God which are far above their comprehension and capacity. They fall into this presumption because they judge conversation with God according to the imperfect insight of men, presuming to regulate it after the friendly conversation of human creatures with one another.

526. The soul is much deceived, measuring the reverence and respect due to the infinite God by the familiarity and equality caused by the human love of mortals to one another. But the love of God must ever be mindful of the immeasurable excellence of the infinite Being. The light of divine faith must always go before, revealing and awakening holy fear, restraining the blind emotions, and controlling them by the memory of the excellence and superiority of the Beloved.

527. If the person is practiced in and accustomed to holy and reverential fear, it is not in such danger of forgetting the respect due to the Most High, no matter how great the favors it receives; for the soul guards itself to the spiritual delights and does not lose, on account of them, the cautious care of the supreme Majesty; but it respects and reverences Him in proportion to the greatness of His divine love and enlightenment. With such souls the Lord converses as one friend with another.

Ex 33:10 And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the door of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, every man at his tent door.

33:11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Let it therefore, My daughter, be to You an important rule that the closer the embraces, and the greater the delights with which the Most High visits you, so much the more should you recognize God's unchangeable and infinite Majesty, praising and loving Him at one and the same time. In this wisdom will you learn to know and estimate more adequately the greatness of God's favors. You will avoid the dangerous presumption of those who lightly investigate into the secrets of the Lord at each trivial event. Imagining that God's wisdom should pay attention to or regard the useless curiosity excited by some emotion, far removed from holy Love.

528. Take notice of the cautiousness with which I proceeded in My duties. I held in My arms God Himself as His true Mother, I never proudly asked My Son to explain to Me anything about revelation, neither for the sake of knowing it or for the sake of ridding myself of suffering. For all this would have been human weakness, useless and sinful curiosity, which could find no room in Me. Whenever necessity urged it upon Me for the glory of His Majesty, or some circumstances made it unavoidable, I asked permission to suggest My wishes. Although I always found Him most favorable, ready to answer Me with kindness and mercifully urging Me to declare My wishes, I nevertheless humiliated Myself to the dust and merely asked Him to inform Me of what was most pleasing and acceptable in His eyes.

529. Write this doctrine in your heart, My daughter, and guard Yourself against curious desire of searching into or knowing anything above the powers of the human intellect. For besides the fact that the Lord makes no response to such foolish questions, because it displeases Him very much, remember that the demon is the real author of this sin in those who are in pursuit of a spiritual life. As the devil is the author of such blameworthy questions, satan also satisfies its curiosity by answering these questions himself at the same time assuming the appearance of an angel of light and thus deceiving the imperfect and the unguarded. When such questions arise from one's own natural emotions, one must be equally careful not to follow these emotions. Man's nature is infected and thrown into great disorder by sin, and is subject to much confusion and excess, making it unfit for guidance and direction in the high things of God. Equally wrong is it for the soul to rely on divine revelations in order to free itself from suffering and labor; for the spouses of Christ and his true servants must not seek His favors for the purpose of avoiding the Cross, but in order to seek and bear it with the Lord, patiently enduring the sufferings which His divine Will chooses to send. This course of action I desire you to maintain in humble fear. From now on I wish that you perfect all your motives and actions by divine love, as being the great end of all your undertakings.

Phil 1:8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

^{1:9} And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,
^{1:10} so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,
^{1:11} filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

I wish you to create in you an excess of love, accompanied by holy fear as will serve to keep you from transgressing the law of the Most High, and to perform all your exterior and interior acts in goodness. Be careful and persistent therein, even if it cost you much energy and pain; for I have endured the same in the Circumcision of My most holy Son, and for no other reason than because in His holy law this was shown to Me as the will of the Lord, whom we must in all things fully obey.

On 8th Day Circumcision continued.

530. Like other towns of Israel, the city of Bethlehem had its own synagogue, where the people came together to pray (wherefore it was also called the house of prayer), and to hear the law of Moses. This was read and explained by a priest from the pulpit in a loud voice, in order that the people might understand its meaning. But in these synagogues no sacrifices were offered; this was reserved for the temple of Jerusalem. It was not left to the choice of the people, in order to avoid the danger of idolatry, as is mentioned in Deuteronomy.

^{Dt 12:5} Instead, you shall resort to the place which the LORD, your God, chooses out

of all your tribes and designates as His dwelling

^{Dt 12:6} and there you shall bring your holocausts and sacrifices, your tithes and personal contributions, your votive and freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks.

But the priest, who was the teacher or minister of the law in those places, was usually also charged with administering the circumcision. Not that this was a binding law, for not only priests but any one could perform the circumcision. But pious mothers firmly believed that the infants would run less danger in being circumcised by the hands of a priest. Our great Queen, not on account of any apprehension of danger, but because of the dignity of the Child, also wished a priest to administer this rite to Him. Therefore She sent Her spouse to Bethlehem to call the priest of that town.

531. The priest came to the gates or cave of the Nativity, where Jesus the Son of God was resting in the arms of His Virgin Mother. With the priest came also two other officials, who were to render such assistance as was customary at the performance of the rite. The rudeness of the dwelling at first astonished and somewhat disturbed the priest. But the most prudent Queen spoke to him and welcomed him with such modesty and grace that he changed into devotion and into admiration at the composure and noblest majesty of the Mother. Without knowing the cause, he was moved to reverence and esteem for such an unusual grace found in Mary. When the priest looked upon the face of Mary and of the Child in Her arms he was filled with

great devotion and tenderness, wondering at the contrast exhibited amid such poverty and in a place so lowly and despised. And when he proceeded to touch the divine flesh of the Infant, he was renewed by a secret influence which sanctified and perfected him; it gave him a new existence in grace, and raised him up to a state of holiness very pleasing to the most high Lord.

532. In order to show as much exterior reverence for the sacred rite of circumcision as was possible, Saint Joseph lighted two wax candles. The priest requested the Virgin Mother to give the Child to the arms of the two assistants and withdraw for a little while in order not to see and give witness to the sacrifice. This command caused some hesitation in the great Lady; for Her humility and spirit of obedience inclined Her to obey the priest, while on the other hand She was withheld by the love and reverence for Her Son. In order not to fail against either of these virtues, She humbly requested to be allowed to remain, saying that She desired to be present at the performance of this rite. She held it in great esteem, and that She would have courage to hold Her Son in Her arms, as She wished not to leave Him alone on such an occasion. All that She would ask would be that the circumcision be performed with as much tenderness as possible on account of the tenderness of the Child. The priest promised to fulfill Her request, and permitted the Child to be held in the arms of His Mother. Thus She became the sacred altar on which the truths typified in the ancient sacrifice became a reality and She Herself offered up this new

mornings sacrifice on Her own arms in order that it might be acceptable to the eternal Father.

533. The divine Mother then unwound the swaddling clothes in which Her most holy Son was wrapped and drew from Her bosom a towel or linen cloth, which She had previously placed there for the purpose of warming it; for the weather was very cold on that day. While holding the Child in Her hands She so placed this towel that the relics and the blood of the Circumcision would fall upon it. The priest thereupon proceeded to his duty and circumcised the Child, the true God and Man. At the same time the Son of God, with immeasurable love, offered up to the eternal Father three sacrifices of so great value that each one would have been sufficient for the Redemption of a thousand worlds. The first was that He, being innocent and the Son of the true God, assumed the condition of a sinner.

Phil 2:5 Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus,
 2:6 who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,
 2:7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

The Son of God subjected Himself to a rite instituted as a remedy for original sin, and to a law not binding on Him.

2 Cor 5:21 For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

The second was His willingness to suffer the pains of circumcision, which He felt

as a true and perfect Man. The third was the most powerful love with which He began to shed His blood for the human race, giving thanks to the eternal Father for having given Him a human nature capable of suffering for His exaltation and glory.

534. This prayerful sacrifice of Jesus our Savior the Father accepted, and, according to our way of speaking, He began to declare Himself satisfied and paid for the indebtedness of humanity. The Word of God offered these first fruits of His Blood as pledges that He would give it all in order to finish the Redemption and extinguish the debt of the sons of Adam. All these interior acts and movements of Jesus His most holy Mother understood, and in Her heavenly wisdom She penetrated the mystery of this sacrament, acting as His Mother and in concert with Her Son and Lord in all that He was doing and suffering. True to His human nature, the divine Infant shed tears as other children. Although the pains caused by the wounding were most severe, as well on account of the delicacy of His Body as on account of the coarseness of the knife, which was made of flint, yet *His tears were caused not so much by the sensible pain as by the supernatural sorrow caused by His knowledge of the hard-heartedness of mortals.* For this was more rude and unyielding than the flint, resisting His sweetest love and the divine fire He had come to enkindle in the world and in the hearts of the faithful.

Lk 12:49 “I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!

12:50 I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!

Also the tender and affectionate Mother wept. In mutual love and compassion the Child clung to His Mother, while She sweetly caressed Him at Her virginal breast and caught the sacred relics and the falling Blood in the towel. These She entrusted to Saint Joseph, in order to tend to the divine Infant and wrap Him once more in the swaddling-clothes. The priest was somewhat surprised at the tears of the Mother; yet, not understanding the mystery, he thought that the beauty of the Child might well cause such deep and loving sorrow in Her who had given Him birth.



535. In all these proceedings the Queen of heaven was so prudent that She caused admiration in the Angelic Angels and highest delight to Her Creator. She was unyielding in Her desire of holding the Child in Her arms during the Circumcision, most careful in preserving the flesh, most compassionate in her affliction and tears, feeling Herself His pains, most loving in Her caresses, most diligent in procuring His comfort, fervent

in imitating Him in His works. Mary was always careful to treat Him with the highest reverence, without ever failing in Her acts of virtue, and without ever letting the perfection of one disturb that of the other. Wonderful spectacle exhibited by a Maiden of fifteen years, and affording even the Angels a sort of new lesson and cause of admiration! In the meanwhile the priest asked the parents what name they wished to give to the Child in Circumcision; the great Lady, always attentive to honor Her spouse, asked Saint Joseph to mention the name. Saint Joseph turned toward Her in like reverence and gave Her to understand that He thought it proper this sweet name should first flow from Her mouth. Therefore, by God's Plan, both Mary and Joseph said at the same time: "JESUS is His name." The priest answered: "The parents are unanimously agreed, and great is the name which they give to the Child." He wrote it in the tablet or register of names of the rest of the children. While writing it the priest felt great interior movements, so that he shed tender tears. Wondering at what he felt yet not being able to account for, he said; "I am convinced that this Child is to be a great Prophet of the Lord. Have great care in raising Him, and tell me in what I can do for your needs." Most holy Mary and Joseph answered the priest with humble gratitude and dismissed him after offering him the gift of some candles and other articles.

536. Being again left alone with the Child, most holy Mary and Joseph celebrated anew the mystery of the Circumcision, commenting on the holy name of JESUS amid sweet songs and

tears of joy, the fuller knowledge of which (as also of other mysteries which I have mentioned) is reserved as an additional accidental glory to the saints in heaven. The most prudent Mother applied to the wound caused by the knife such medicines as were used on such occasions for other children, and during the time while the pain and the healing lasted She would not for a moment part with Him, holding Him in Her arms day and night. The tender love of the heavenly Mother is beyond all comprehension or understanding of man. Her natural love was greater than any other mother was capable of, and Her supernatural love exceeded that of all the Angels and Saints together. Her reverence and worship cannot be compared with that of any other created being. These were the delights of the infant Jesus which He desired and longed for among the children of men; and this was the repayment, which His loving heart drew from the sanctity of the Virgin Mother.

Prv 8:30 then I was beside Him, like a master workman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing before Him always,
8:31 rejoicing in His inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men.

Although He pleased Himself in Her alone above all the mortals and in Her found full satisfaction of His love, yet the humble Queen sought to calm His bodily pains by all the means within Her power. Therefore She asked the holy Angels to assist Her and produce sweet harmony for their God made Man, and Her suffering Child. The Angels of the Most

High obeyed their Queen and Lady and in audible voices they rehearsed the songs which She Herself had composed with Her spouse in praise of the new and sweet name of JESUS.

537. With this music, so sweet that in comparison to it all human music seemed but irksome, the heavenly Lady entertained Her most holy Son; and sweeter yet was the harmony of Her heroic virtues. She said these words of prayer by saying, "Hard are human hearts, and more than slow and dull in recognizing and thankfully acknowledging such sacred sacraments, instituted for man's eternal salvation by the immense love of the Creator and Redeemer. O sweetest Good of My Soul and of My life! What wicked return do we make for Your eternal love! O measureless charity, which is not extinguished by the over whelming waters of our gross and faithless ingratitude! You could not go to a greater length for love of us, nor exercise a most powerful love than to assume the form of a sinner, drawing upon Yourself the punishment of the sin, which otherwise could never approach You. If men despise such an example and forget such a benefit, how can they be said to retain the use of their reason? How can they take glory in their wisdom, prudence or judgment? If men would afflict themselves and weep over their dullness and darkness of mind in not being moved by the works of their God; since not even the divine love can melt the iciness of their hearts.

Words of enlightenment from Mary.

538. My daughter, I wish you to consider attentively the blessed favor given upon you by being informed of the care and attention which I gave My most holy and sweetest Son concerning the circumcision. God the Father does not give you this special light in order to be made famous by the knowledge of these mysteries; but in order to imitate Me in all these things as a faithful servant. Ponder, then, dear daughter, upon the small return given for the love of My Son and Lord by men, and how forgetful of thanks even His faithful continue to be. Assume it as your task, as far as your weak powers allow, giving satisfaction for this terrible offense. Spend your time loving Him, thanking Him and serving Him with all your powers, for all the other men who fail to do so. You must die to all earthly things, eliminating and crushing all human desires and rising upon the wings of love to the heights of love designed for you by the Lord.

539. Although you are not capable as a human to be truly thankful: yet, in order that you may fear the danger of forgetfulness, I particularly inform you that the saints in heaven, having the ability by the divine light, are astonished at themselves for not having paid more attention to them during their life. And if they were capable of pain, they would be deeply grieved for their tardiness and carelessness in not having set proper value upon the works for the Redemption, and for failing in the imitation of Christ. Men have compassion neither for the sufferings of the Lord, nor for the sufferings they are in danger of incurring. When the damned, in unending bitterness shall

recognize their dreadful forgetfulness and their indifference to the works of Christ their Savior, their confusion and despair will be an intolerable punishment, beyond all imagination. They will then see the Redemption, which they have despised. Hear Me, My daughter, and bend your ears to these counsels and doctrines of eternal life. Cast out from your mind every image and affection toward humans and turn all the powers of your heart and soul toward the mysteries and blessings of the Redemption. Occupy yourself wholly with them, ponder and weigh them, give thanks for them as if you alone were living, as if they had been solely for you. Thus you will find life and the way of life, proceeding thus you can not err.