

## Lesson Six: Mariology Part: "Mother of God"

"O Mother of Perpetual Help, thou art the dispenser of all the goods which God grants to us miserable sinners, and for this reason he has made thee so powerful, so rich, and so bountiful, that thou mayest help us in our misery. Thou art the advocate of the most wretched and abandoned sinners who have recourse to thee. In thy hands I place my eternal salvation and to thee do I entrust my soul. Count me among thy most devoted servants; take me under thy protection, and it is enough for me. For if thou protect me, dear Mother, I fear nothing; not from my sins, for thou wilt obtain for me the pardon of them; nor from devils, for thou art more powerful than all hell together; nor even from Jesus my judge himself, because by one prayer from thee he will be appeased. But one thing I fear that in the hour of temptation I may neglect to call on thee and thus perish miserably. Obtain for me, then, the pardon of my sins, love for Jesus, final perseverance, and the grace always to have recourse to thee, oh Mother of Perpetual help." –

Devotions in honor of our mother of perpetual help.<sup>1</sup>

Once again for newcomers: we are letting the Catholic Church speak for itself. Sources of Catholic Doctrine.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church- Edited by Joseph Ratzinger [Also known as Pope Benedict XVI (1994)]
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Tonight we begin a two part session on Mary. She is called the Mother of God. She is indeed the human mother of the incarnated Christ. The physical Jesus had a **physical Mother** and her name was Mary. Jesus the 2<sup>nd</sup> member of the Trinity does not have a physical mother.

Where does one begin to try to unravel the **evolution** of the doctrines concerning Mary? Why such religious fervor toward Mary?

### **The Immaculate Conception [411,490-493, 508]**

The role of Mary in Salvation is understood by the RCC to have begun in **eternity past**. God chose Mary from the beginning of time to be the human mother of his only begotten Son [Ineffabilis Deus – Pope Pius IX]. Here is what that understanding led to be declared:

"We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful." [Ineffabilis Deus – Pope Pius IX].

The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the conception of Jesus it refers to the conception **of Mary**. The RCC teaches that Mary did not have **original sin** – she was not a sinner by inheritance from Adam.

### **The virgin Mother of God [484-489, 495-511]**

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<sup>1</sup> White, James R. *Mary : another redeemer*. Minneapolis, Minn: Bethany House, 1998. P9

The RCC teaches that Mary's conception and birth was miraculous but in a way that the Bible never mentions. She would have **no pain** in her child birth. Pain in childbirth was related to sin [Gen 3.16] and since she was not a sinner she had no pain. As well she did not lose her virginal **integrity** in childbirth [499]. *...born of his Mother without any diminution (decrease, reduction or lessening) of her maternal virginity... just as the rays of the sun penetrate without breaking or injuring in the least the solid substance of the glass, so after a like but more exalted manner did Jesus Christ come forth from his mother's womb without injury to her maternal virginity.*" [Catechism of the Council of Trent]. That is not the greatest part. She then **remained** a virgin never having children and never having **physical relations** with her husband Joseph. "Mary remained an Immaculate and Perpetual Virgin, abstaining from all sexual relations with her husband." The RCC calls Mary the Blessed Mary, ever virgin, the Virgin of virgins and the "all holy ever virgin, Mother of God." [Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Pope Sixtus V].

### **The Assumption of Mary [966, 974]**

Why do we die; or why does anyone die? In the Garden of Eden God told man to obey him or his sinful rebellion would be punished by? – death of course (physical, spiritual, eternal). So what causes death and decay? Sin causes death. Rom 6.23 says, "for the wages of sin is death..." But if Mary never sinned then she can't just die can she or at least if she ceases to live she can't see decay or corruption? Enter the teaching of the **Assumption** of Mary – it did not come along until **1950**. So for 1600 years the Church had no official teaching (the RCC began in the early 300's).

... We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. [Munificentissimus Deus [Pope Pius XII no.44]

### **A BIBLICAL RESPOSE.**

Mary is **unnamed** in the Old Testament but is predicted.

- The seed of the woman would crush Satan's head. *Ge 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*
- The virgin woman would give birth. *Is 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*
- A Jewish woman will give birth to the Messiah. *Mic 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."* *3 Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel.* That is it in the Old Testament. She is not named but she is prophesied.

Mary is clearly named in the New Testament but the references are few.

- Birth, infancy, flight to and return from Egypt. Matthew 1-2; Luke 1.26-2.40.
- The Jerusalem event at 12 years old. Luke 2.41-51
- Marriage at Cana. John 2.1-11
- Short visit to Capernaum. John 2.12
- Mary and Jesus' brothers came to Capernaum to try to take him away. Mt 12.46-50; Mark 3.20-35; Luke 8.19-21

- When doubters questioned his origin. Mt 13.55-56; Mk 6.3-4; John 6.42
- At the Crucifixion. John 19.25-27
- At prayer after ascension. Acts 1.14
- References by Paul. Rom 1.3; Gal 4.4

The Bible says nothing about the remaining years of Mary's life after Pentecost.

### **Mary was the mother of Jesus.**

The 'Mother of God title' has no **biblical** foundation. The argument is that since Jesus is divine then Mary must be the Mother of God and somewhat divine herself. God has no mother. Just as Jesus had no human father, his **divine** nature had no human mother. The Bible calls Mary the mother of **Jesus** (Jn 2.1; Acts 1.14). The RCC says that tradition establishes her as the Mother of God from antiquity. They point to the Council of Ephesus which was not a council at all but a free for all seeking power and control of the church. At the council of Ephesus 431 AD Nestorius was held in contempt for disagreeing with the word the church was using for Mary *Theotokos*. It literally means god-bearer.

### **Mary was a virgin; not a perpetual virgin**

The Bible says nothing about preserving her womb inviolate or as if it had never given birth. The Bible says nothing about her **perpetual** virginity or that she refrained from having sexual relations with her husband. The RCC bases this belief on traditions and philosophical considerations. Thomas Aquinas provided 4 reasons that perpetual virginity is 'fitting' as a doctrine for Mary.

- Jesus was the 'only begotten son of his Father' so it is fitting that he is the only begotten son of his mother.
- Intercourse with Joseph would have desecrated the virginal womb of Mary. This would have been an insult to the Holy Spirit since her womb was his shrine.
- It would have been beneath the dignity of holiness of Mary to have intercourse with Joseph thus forfeiting her miraculous virginity. Such an act would show she was ungrateful and not satisfied with being Jesus' mother – indeed the Mother of God.
- It would have been, "extreme presumption", for Joseph to have attempted, "to violate," Mary whom he knew had conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Aquinas concluded, "We must therefore simply assert that the 'Mother of God', as she was a virgin in conception and in giving birth, so did she remain a virgin ever afterward." [Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Part III, q. 28, A3]

Mary did have **relations** and did have other **children** whom at first did not believe in Jesus but later came to faith and even helped lead the church at Jerusalem and penned part of the New Testament.

- At a wedding - *Jn 2:12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.*
- At Capernaum - *Mt 12:46 While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. (see also 46-50).*
- Christ's opponents questioned his provenance (origin) *Mt 13:55 Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? 56 And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?"* THEY HAD NAMES FOLKS. THERE WAS MORE THAN ONE OF THEM, MEN AND WOMEN.

- After his family came to faith -Ac 1:14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- The testimony of Paul - *Ga 1:19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.* – (also Gal 2.9-12; 1 Cor 9.5).

The RCC brushes this aside and says they were just believers or more often they were cousins. The Greek words used are *adelphos* - brother and *adelphē* – sister. They can be used in the wider sense but there are other words for cousin (*anepios* used by Paul of Mark as Barnabas' cousin) and *sungenis* carrying the meaning of kinsman used by Luke speaking of Elizabeth Mary's kinsman. Even in Prophecy in *Ps 69:8 I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children;* there is no doubt who the Psalmist was speaking of – they were Jesus' brothers and sisters.

Then Matthew clarifies the perpetual virginity question when he said of Joseph; *Mt 1:25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.* NONE OF THIS IS TO DENY THE VIRGIN BIRTH OR TO CAST DOUBT UPON THE FAITHFULNESS AND PURITY OF MARY. But she was not a perpetual virgin.

### **Mary was not a sinless saint**

*Ro 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—* Yet in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception the RCC demands that she is **sinless**. They love to point to the announcement of Gabriel in Luke 1.27-28 *27 ... To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary.*

*28 And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.* <sup>2</sup> (*douay – Rheims Bible*). She was full of grace! Therefore she never was subject to the curse; she was immune from all sin, personal or inherited. [Catechism 490-491]

The problem is that they have written their own bible to include "full of grace." The Bible actually says *Lk 1:28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"* Every single translation gives it the same word – favored one! There is only one who lived without sin. *1 Pe 2:22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";* (see also 2 cor 5.21; 1 John 3.5; Rev 15.4; Luke 18.19)

Mary acknowledged her sin and need for a Savior in her 'Magnificat' in *Lk 1:46* And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, *47* And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior."

This Mary (another Mary) of superstition or of even 'spiritual' origin is not leading people to faith in **Jesus** alone but rather toward a mystical chasing of apparitions and myths that are ever expanding.

OK then is the RCC teaching leading people to saving faith or not?

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<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible, Translated from the Latin Vulgate.* (2009). (Lk 1:27–28). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.