

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

railroads, steamboats, and other things which are abused, I answer that the things that are of great use and small abuse are not to be given up on account of their abuse. But when the evil is exceptionally great and the use is but little, when a thing leads to enormous evil, and the good is small, when the advantages are infinitesimally small and the evil infinite, then give up the use altogether. This is common sense and prudence. We are one of our brothers' keepers. We are bound to give good example to our brethren and to show them the right way. The responsibility we have as fathers in Christ, children of one father, God, for example's sake then do not drink liquor. This is all I claim. It is good, wise, prudent, not to drink. Do not touch, taste, handle wine. Avoid even the smell of it, at the last day you will stand by the smell of it, at the last day you will stand by the smell of it, at the last day you will stand by the smell of it.

But many a one will regret that he has had to leave so strong drink.

This is a sure cure of vice. There are no rewards for those who practice self-denial, who take up the cross of Christ.

THE POSITION OF THE BLESSED

## THEOLOGY

## WHY WE HONOR HER

From the Catholic Quarterly Review

The sincere adores and lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ look with reference on every object with which He was associated, and they conceive an affection for every person that was near and dear to Him on earth. And the closer the intimacy of those persons with our Saviour the holier do they appear in our estimation; just as those planets partake most of the sun's light and heat which revolve the nearest around him.

There is something hallowed to the eye of the Christian in the very day of Judea, because it was pressed by the footprints of our Blessed Redeemer. With what reverent steps we would enter the cave of Bethlehem, because *there* was born the Saviour of the world. With what religious demeanor we would tread the streets of Nazareth when we remembered that *there* were spent the days of His boyhood. What profound religious awe would fill our hearts on ascending Mount Cavalry, where He paid to His ideal the ransom of our souls.

But if the *lifeless* soul claims so much reverence, how much more veneration would be entailed in our hearts for the *living* persons who were the friends and associates of our Saviour on earth! For, we know that He exercised a certain salutary and magnetic influence on those whom He approached. "All the multitude sought to touch Him, for virtue went out from Him and healed all" (Luke vi. 19), as happened to the woman who had been a bed-ridden invalid for twelve years, and who, by touching His garment, was cured of her ailment (Matt. ix. 20).

We would seem indeed to draw nearer to Jesus, if we had the happiness of only conversing with the Samaritan woman, or of eating at the table of Zaccheus, or of being entertained by Nicodemus. But if we were admitted into the inner circle of His friends, of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, for instance, the *disciples*, or the *Apostles*, we would be conscious that in their company we were drawing still nearer to Jesus, and imbibing somewhat of that spirit which they must have largely received from their familiar relations with Him.

Now, if the land of Judea is looked upon as hallowed ground, because Jesus dwelt there; if the Apostles were considered as models of holiness, because they were the chosen companions and pupils of our Lord in His latter years, how peerless must have been the sanctity of Mary, who gave him birth, whose breast was His pillow, who nursed and clothed Him in infancy, who guided His early steps, who accompanied Him in His exile to Egypt and back, who abode with Him from infancy to boyhood, from boyhood to manhood, who during all that time listened to the words of wisdom which fell from His lips, who was the first to embrace Him at His birth, and the last to receive His dying breath on Calvary! This sentiment is so natural to us that we find it bursting forth spontaneously from the lips of the woman of the Gospel, who, in the full sanctity, lifted up her voice and said: "My Lord! Blessed is the womb that has borne Thee, and the breasts that gave Thee suck."

When Moses was called by heaven to be the leader of the Hebrew people, he hesitated to assume the formidable task in alliance on the plea of "impediment and shewbread of tongue." But Jehovah reassured him, promising to qualify him for the sublime functions assigned to him: "I will be in the mouth, and I will teach thee what thou shalt speak." (Exod. 4: 12.)

The Prophet Jeremiah was sanctified from his very birth, because he was destined to be the herald of God's law to the children of Israel: "Before I formed thee in the bowels of thy mother, I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee." (Jer. i. 5).

"Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost," (Luke, i. 41), that she might be worthy to be the hostess of our Lord during the three months that Mary dwelt under her roof.

John the Baptist was "filled with the Holy Ghost" even from his mother's womb" (Luke i. 15). "His lamp was a burning and a shining light," (John v. 35) because he was chosen to prepare the way for the Lord.

The Apostles received the plenitude of grace when they were endowed with the gift of tongues, and other privileges (Acts ii.) before they commenced the work of the minister of God. Hence St. Paul says "Our sufficiency is from God, who hath made us ministers of a new covenant" (Cor. ii. 6).

Now of all who have participated in the ministrations of the Redemption, there is none who filled an office so exalted, so sacred, as is the incommunicable office of Mother of Jesus ; and there is no one who consequently had *needed* so high a degree of holiness as she did.

For if God thus sanctified the  
 ones, as being destined to be the bearers of the word  
 of life, how much more will he bear the anointed must Mary  
 have been, who was to bear the Lord and "Anthonia  
 life?" (John 1:15. If John was so holy, because  
 he was chosen as the pioneer to prepare the way  
 for him, how much more holy was she who ushered  
 him into the world. If holiness became John's  
 mother, surely a greater holiness became the mother  
 of John's Master. If God said to his priests of old  
 "Be ye clean, you that carry the vessels of old  
 Law." [Isaiah 61: 11.] nay, if the vessels themselves  
 used in the divine service and churches are set apart

of special consecration, we cannot conceive Mary to have been ever profaned by sin who was the chosen vessel of devotion, even the Mother of God.

When we call the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God, we assert our belief in two things : 1st. That her Son, Jesus Christ, is true man, else she were not a *mother*. 2nd. That He is true God, else she were not the *Mother of God*. In other words, we affirm that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of God, who is His Divine nature, is from all eternity begotten of the Father, consubstantial with Him, and that the fullness of time, again begotten, by the birth of the Virgin, thus taking to Himself from her maternal womb, a human nature of the same substance with hers.

But it may be said : the Blessed Virgin is not the Mother of the Divinity. She had not, and could not have any part in the generation of the Word of God. For, that generation is eternal ; her maternity temporal ; He is her Creator ; she His creature. Style her, if you will, the mother of the man Jesus, or even of the human nature of the Son of God, but not the Mother of God.

I shall answer this objection by putting a question. Did the mother who bore us, have any part in the production of our *souls*? Was not this nobler part of our being the work of God alone? And yet who would for a moment dream of saying, "the mother of my body," and not "*my mother!*"

The cousin teaches us that the terms *parent* and *child*, *mother* and *son*, refer to the persons and not to the parts or elements of which the persons are composed. Hence, the title of my *son* is not in all propriety "my mother," the mother of me who live and breathe, think and act, *one* in my personality though uniting it in a soul directly created by God, and a material body directly derived from the maternal womb. In like manner, as far as the sublime mystery of the Incarnation can be reflected in the natural order the Blessed Virgin, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, by communicating to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the substance with her own, in the human nature of the same substance with her own, is thereby really and truly His Mother.

It is in this sense that the title of *Mother of God*, denied by Nestorius, was vindicated to her by the General Council of Ephesus in 431; and in this sense, and in no other, has the Church called her by that title.

Hence, by immediate and necessary consequence follow her surpassing dignity and excellence, and her special relationship and affinity, not only with her divine Son, but also with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Mary, as Wordsworth beautifully expresses it, united in her person "a mother's love with maiden purity." The Church teaches us that she was always a Virgin, a Virgin before her espousals, during her married life, and after her spouses' death. "The Angel Gabriel was sent from God . . . to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, . . . and the Virgin's name was Mary." [Luke i. 26,

27]. That she remained a virgin till after the birth of Jesus is expressly stated in the Gospels [Matt. i, 25]. It is not less certain that she continued in the same state during the remainder of her days; for she is called a Virgin in the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed, and that epithet cannot be restricted to the time of our Saviour's birth, but must be referred to her whole life, inasmuch as both creeds were compiled long after she had passed away.

The Canon of the Mass likewise very probably of Apostolic antiquity, speaks of her as the "glorious *Virgo Virgo*," and in this sentiment all Catholic tradition concurs.

There is a propriety which suggests itself to every Christian in Mary's remaining a Virgin after the birth of Jesus, for, as Bishop Bull of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England remarks, "It cannot with decency be imagined that the most holy vessel which was once consecrated to be a receptacle of the Deity, should be afterwards desecrated and profaned by human use." The learned Grotius, Calvin, and other eminent Protestant writers hold the same view.

The doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary is now combated by Protestants as it was in the early days of the Church by Helvidius and Jovinian, on the following grounds :

1st. The evangelist says that "Joseph took unto him his wife, and he knew her not *till* she brought forth her firstborn son." [Matt. i. 25]. This sentence suggests to dissenters that other children besides Jesus were born to Mary. But the qualifying word *till* by no means implies that the chaste union which had subsisted between Mary and Joseph up to the birth of our Lord was subsequently altered.

The Protestant Hooker justly complains of the early heretics as "abusing greatly these words, gathering, against the honor of the Blessed Virgin, that a thing denied with special circumstance doth import an opposite affirmation when once that circumstance is expired." To express Hooker's idea in plainer words, when a thing is said not to have occurred until another event had occurred, it does not necessarily

The Scripture says that the raven went forth from the ark, "and did not return till the waters were dried up upon the earth." [Gen. viii. 7.] that is, it never returned. "So Samuel saw Saul no more till the day of his death." [1 Kings xv. 35.] and did not return till the Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand *until* I make thy enemies thy footstool. [Ps. cxviii.] These words apply to our Saviour, who did not cease to sit at the right hand of God till all his enemies were subdued.

2nd. But Jesus is called Mary's *firstborn* Son, and does not a firstborn always imply the subsequent birth of other children to the same mother? By no means; for the name of firstborn was given to the first son of every Jewish mother, whether other children followed or not. We find this epithet applied to Machir, for instance, who was the only son of Manasse. (Josh. xvii. 1).

3rd. But is not mention frequently made of the brethren of Jesus? (Matt. xii. 46; xiii. 55, 56). Fortunately the Gospels themselves will enable us to trace the maternity of those who are called His brothers, not to the Blessed Virgin, but to another Mary. St. Matthew mentions, by name, James and Joseph among the brethren of Jesus: [Matt. xii. 46; xiii. 55, 56,] and the same Evangelist and also St.

15). "He  
n v. 35).  
ray of the

Mark tell us that among those who were present at the crucifixion, were Magdalen and Mary the mother of James and Joseph. [Matt. xxvii.; Mark xvi.] And St. John, who narrates with more detail the circumstances of the crucifixion, informs us who this second Mary was, for he says that there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen. (John

made us *fit* (iv. 6). The ministry is filled in accordance with the communication of holiness (xix. 25). There is no doubt that Mary of Cleophas is identical with Mary who is called by Matthew and Mark the mother of James and Joseph. And as Mary of Cleophas was the kinswoman of the Blessed Virgin, James and Joseph are called the brothers of Jesus, in conformity with the Hebrew practice of giving that appellation to cousins or near relations. Abraham, for instance, was the uncle of

Mary is exalted above all other women, not only because she united "a mother's love with maiden purity," but also because she was conceived without original sin. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception is thus expressed by the Church: "We define that the Blessed Virgin Mary in the first moment of her conception, by the singular grace and privilege of God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, her Son and of all Christians, was preserved free from all stain of original sin."

the mother priests of old : vessels of the is themselves are set apart of Almighty God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved free from every stain of original sin." (Bulla Dogmat. Pii Papæ IX).

**To be Continued.**

To be Continued