

## CHAPTER VI

### *A Vision which Most Holy Mary had When the Child Jesus was Twelve Years Old in order to Continue Producing in Her the Imprint and Doctrine of the Evangelical Law.*

64. In chapters I and II of this Book I began what I must now complete in the following chapters, but I do it not without misgivings concerning my halting and inadequate powers of expression, and with much more hesitation because of the lukewarmness of my heart, all of which make me unfit to speak of the hidden communication of the incarnate Word with his Blessed Mother at Nazareth during the eighteen years intervening between his dispute with the doctors at Jerusalem and the beginning of his public preaching in his thirtieth year. On the shores of this vast ocean of mysteries I stand full of confusion and doubt, asking the most high Lord with inmost affection of soul to transfer my pen to the hands of an angel so I do not give offense in this matter, or that His Majesty, as powerful and wise, speak for me, enlighten me, and govern my faculties by his divine light so they may be instruments of his will and truth, and not take part in the human frailty and insufficiency of an ignorant woman.

65. I have already said in former chapters (3) our great Lady was the first and singular Disciple of her most holy Son, chosen among all creatures as the model of the elect, and in whom would be engraved the new law of the Gospel and of its Author, serving in his new Church as the unique pattern and model in whose imitation He was to form the other saints and produce the effects of human Redemption.\* In this work the incarnate Word proceeded like an excellent artist who understands the art of painting with all its qualities and conditions, who among many works of his hands seeks to finish one with consummate delicacy and skill, and from it gain credit and publish the greatness of his skill as the supreme example of all his works. It is certain all the sanctity and glory of the saints is the work of the love and merits of Christ (Eph. 2:5; Jn. 1:16), and they are all most perfect works of his hands; yet compared with the grandeur of most holy Mary they seem insignificant and as it were only rough sketches, for in all the saints are found defects (I John 1:8). Only this living image of her onlybegotten Son was free from all imperfections, and the first brushstroke in her formation were of greater beauty than the finishing touches in the highest angels and saints.† She is the pattern for all the perfection of sanctity and virtues of all his elect, and the utmost limit to which the love of Christ can proceed in a mere creature, since to no one has He given any grace or glory which most holy Mary could not receive, and She received all that others were incapable of receiving. Her most blessed Son gave to Her all She could receive and He could communicate.

66. The variety of the saints and their degrees silently magnify the Artificer of such sanctity (Ps. 18:2), and the lower or minor saints show the greatness of the higher ones; yet all of them together are a glorification of most holy Mary, for by her incomparable sanctity they are all surpassed, and they all partake of so much the greater happiness as they imitate Her, whose perfection redounds to all the saints. If most pure Mary has reached the highest pinnacle in the ranks of the just, She may also on this very account be considered as the instrument or motive through which all the saints have reached their degree of glory. Since we must judge her excellence (even if only from afar) by the labor which Christ the Lord applied for her formation,

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\* cf. Apoc. 20:12 [Ed.]

† cf. Ps. 86:1 [Ed.]

let us consider what labor He spent upon Her and how much upon the whole Church. To establish and enrich his Church He deemed it sufficient to spend only three years in preaching, selecting the Apostles, teaching the people, and inculcating the evangelical law by his public life, and this was amply sufficient to accomplish the work enjoined upon Him by the eternal Father, and justify and sanctify all true believers (Jn. 6:38-40). But in order to stamp upon his most holy Mother the image of his sanctity He consumed not three years but ten times three years, engaging in this work with all the power of his divine love, without ever ceasing hour after hour to add grace upon grace, gifts upon gifts, blessings upon blessings, and sanctity upon sanctity. And at the end of all this He still left Her in a state in which He could continue to add excellence after his Ascension to his eternal Father, as I shall describe in the third Part. Our reason is overwhelmed and our words fail at the greatness of this incomparable Lady, for She is elect as the sun (Cant. 6:9), and her refulgence cannot be searched by terrestrial eyes nor comprehended by any creature.

67. Christ our Redeemer began to manifest his designs in regard to his heavenly Mother after they had come back from Egypt to Nazareth, as I have already mentioned (2), and from that time He continued to follow up his purpose in his quality as Teacher and the divine Enlightener in all the mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption. After they returned from Jerusalem in his twelfth year the great Queen had a vision of the Divinity, not an intuitive vision but one consisting of intellectual images, one very exalted and full of new influences of the Divinity and secrets of the Most High. She was especially enlightened in regard to the decrees of the mind and will of the Lord concerning the law of grace which the incarnate Word would establish (Eph. 2:14-15), and concerning the power which was given to Him in the consistory of the most blessed Trinity (Mt. 28:18). At the same time She saw how for this purpose the eternal Father consigned to his Son the seven-sealed book of which St. John speaks in chapter V of the Apocalypse (1ff.), and how no one could be found either in heaven or on earth who could unseal and open it until the Lamb broke its seals by his Passion and Death and by his doctrines and merits, for in this figure God desired to intimate that the secret of this book was nothing else than the new law of the Gospel and the Church founded upon it in this world.

68. Then the heavenly Queen saw in spirit that by the decree of the most blessed Trinity She was to be the first one to read and understand this book; that her Onlybegotten was to open it for Her and manifest all of it to Her, while She was to put into practice what it contained; that She was the first one who, as accompanying the Word to whom She had given flesh, would follow Him and take her legitimate place immediately next to Him in the paths which He, descending from heaven, had come to manifest in that book so mortals could go up to Him from earth to heaven. In Her as his true Mother would be deposited this Testament. She saw how the Son of the eternal Father and of Herself accepted this decree with great pleasure, and how his sacred humanity obeyed it with ineffable joy on her account. Then the eternal Father turned to the most pure Lady and said:

69. "My Spouse and my Dove, prepare thy heart so according to our pleasure Thou mayest participate in the plenitude of our science and have the New Testament and holy law of my Onlybegotten written in thy soul. Inflamm thy desires and apply thy mind to the knowledge and execution of our doctrine and precepts. Receive the gifts of our generous power and love for Thee. So Thou mayest return to Us worthy recompense, take notice that by the disposition of our infinite wisdom We have determined that my Onlybegotten, in the humanity which Thou hast given Him, shall make Thee, a mere creature, his closest possible image and likeness as an effect and fruit proportionate to his merits, and thereby shall his holy Name be magnified and exalted

by a worthy return. Hence take notice, my Daughter and elect, that a great willingness on thy part is required of Thee. Prepare Thyself for the works and mysteries of our powerful right hand.”

70. “Eternal Lord and immense God,” the most humble Lady responded, “in thy divine and royal presence I am prostrate, acknowledging at the sight of thy infinite Being my own insignificance, which is mere nothingness. I recognize thy greatness and my littleness. I find myself unworthy of the name of thy slave, and for the benignity with which thy clemency hast looked upon me I offer Thee the fruit of my womb and thy Onlybegotten, and I beseech His Majesty to answer for his unworthy Mother and handmaid. *My heart is ready* (Ps. 56:8), and with gratitude for thy mercies it melts and pines away with affection (Ps. 72:26) since it cannot carry out its vehement longings. Yet if I have found grace in thine eyes (Esther 7:3) I shall speak in thy presence, my Lord and Master, only in order to beseech and supplicate Thy royal Majesty to do with thy slave all Thou dost ask for and command, since no one can execute it separated from Thee, most high Lord and King. If Thou dost ask of me a heart free and submissive, I offer it to Thee in order to suffer and obey thy will unto death.” Immediately the heavenly Princess felt new influences of the Divinity, being enlightened, purified and spiritualized with such plenitude of the Holy Ghost as to exceed all that had happened to Her until that day, for this blessing was one of the most memorable ones for the peerless and sovereign Lady. Though all of them were so exalted and without equal or similarity in the rest of creatures, and thus each one seemed supreme so no more could be given, yet in the participation of the divine perfections there is no measure as long as the capacity of the creature to receive them does not fail. Since this power of participation was so vast in this Queen and increased with each participation, the great gifts merely disposed Her for still greater ones; thus the divine power, not finding in Her any obstacle, set all its treasures in motion and laid them up in the secure and most faithful Depositary of most holy Mary our Queen.

71. She issued from this ecstatic vision and went to her most holy Son, prostrating Herself at his feet and saying: “My Lord, my Light and my Teacher, behold here thy unworthy Mother prepared for the fulfillment of thy holy will. Admit me anew as thy disciple and servant, and take me into thy powerful hand as the instrument of thy wisdom and desire. Execute in me the pleasure of the eternal Father and thy own.” Her most holy Son received Her with the majesty and authority of a divine Teacher, and instructed Her in most exalted mysteries. He taught Her with most powerful reasonings and extreme gravity the value and profundity contained in the mysterious works which the eternal Father had enjoined upon Him concerning the affair of human Redemption and the founding of the new Church and the evangelical law which had been determined upon in the divine mind. He declared and reaffirmed that in the execution of these high and hidden mysteries She was to be his companion and Coadjutrix, receiving and enjoying the first fruits of grace, and thus She, the most pure Lady, was to follow Him in his labors until his death on the cross with a magnanimous and well-prepared Heart in invincible and unhesitating constancy. He added heavenly instruction to enable Her to prepare for the reception of the whole evangelical law and the understanding and practice of all its precepts and counsels in their highest perfection. Other sacramental secrets concerning his works in this world the child Jesus manifested to his most blessed Mother on this occasion, and the heavenly Lady met all his words and intentions with profound humility, obedience, reverence, gratitude, and most ardent love.

*INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE HEAVENLY LADY.*

72. My daughter, many times in the course of thy life, and especially at this time when thou writest my Life, I have called upon thee and invited thee to follow me by the greatest imitation possible to thy forces aided by divine grace. Now I renew the demand of this invitation and call, after by the condescension of the Most High He has given to thee such clear understanding and light of the sacrament which his powerful arm wrought in my heart, writing therein the whole law of grace and doctrine of the Gospel, the effect this benefit wrought in me, and the manner in which I rendered Him gratitude for it and cooperated by the proper and most perfect imitation of my most holy Son and Teacher. The knowledge thou hast of all this thou must consider as one of the greatest favors and benefits His Majesty has conceded to thee, for in it thou shalt find the summit and summary of the greatest sanctity and pinnacle of perfection reflected as in the clearest mirror; by it the paths of divine light shall be open to thy mind (Prov. 4:18), whereon thou canst walk secure and without the darkness of ignorance which envelops other mortals (Jn. 12:35).

73. Come then, my daughter, come and follow me. And so thou mayest imitate me as I desire, have thy understanding enlightened, thy spirit lifted, thy heart prepared, and thy will infused with fervor, dispose thyself with liberty detached from all things, as thy Spouse asks of thee; withdraw thyself from all that is earthly and visible, depart from every creature, deny thyself (Mt. 16:24), and close thy senses to the false fantasies of the world and the demon (Ps. 39:5). In thy temptations I counsel thee not to be too embarrassed, or to afflict thyself; for if they cause thee to halt in thy course, by which they shall gain over thee a great victory, and thou shalt not become robust in perfection. Attend therefore to the Lord, who greatly desires the beauty of thy soul (Ps. 44:12); He is generous in granting it to thee, powerful to deposit in thy soul the treasures of his wisdom, and solicitous to oblige thee to receive them. Allow Him to write in thy heart his divine evangelical law; let that be thy continual study, thy meditation day and night (Ps. 1:2), thy remembrance and sustenance, the life of thy soul, and the nectar of thy spiritual taste. Thus shalt thou obtain what the Most High desires of thee, and what thou and I desire