

CHAPTER XXIII

Confession of Praise and Thanksgiving for the Graces which I, the Least of the Mortals, Sister Mary of Jesus, have Received from the Lord and His Most Holy Mother for Writing this Divine History According to the Teaching of the same Lady and Queen of Heaven.

786. I profess Thee, eternal God, Lord of heaven and earth, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the one and only true God, one substance and majesty in the Trinity of Persons; because without having received anything from any creature that Thou shouldst repay him (Rom. 11:35), solely by thy ineffable condescension and clemency Thou dost reveal thy mysteries and sacraments to the little ones (Mt. 11:25), and because Thou dost this with immense goodness and infinite wisdom, pleasing Thyself in it and doing all things well.* In thy works Thou dost magnify thy holy Name, exalt thy omnipotence, manifest thy grandeur, extend thy mercies, and assure the glory which is due to Thee as holy, wise, powerful, benignant, generous, and the sole beginning and Author of all good. None is holy as Thee, none strong like Thee (I Kg. 2:2), none most exalted besides Thee, who raises the pauper from the dust, vivifies him from nothing, and enriches the poor needy one (Ps. 112:7). Thine are, O God most high, the ends and the poles of the earth and all the celestial orbs (Ps. 88:12). Thou art the true Lord and *God of all knowledge* (I Kg. 2:3); Thou dost kill and give life; Thou dost humble and cast down to hell the proud (Ib. 6); Thou dost raise up the humble according to thy will; Thou *maketh poor and maketh rich* (Ib. 7), so in thy presence no flesh may glory (I Cor. 1:29), nor the strongest boast of his strength (I Kg. 2:9), nor the weakest be dismayed and discouraged in his frailty and lowliness.

787. I profess Thee, true Lord, King and Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. I profess and praise thy holy Name, and give glory to Thee, who givest wisdom. I profess Thee, the sovereign Queen of heaven, Mary most holy, worthy Mother of my Lord Jesus Christ, living temple of the Divinity, Depositary of the treasures of his grace, the beginning of our remedy, Restoratrix of the general ruin of the human race, new joy of the saints, glory of the works of the Most High, and singular instrument of his omnipotence. I profess Thee as the sweetest Mother of Mercy, Refuge of the miserable, Protector of the poor, and Comforter of the afflicted. All that the Angels and Saints profess in Thee, for Thee, and of Thee I also profess; and all that in Thee and through Thee praises and glorifies the Divinity, I also praise and glorify, and for all this I bless, magnify, profess and believe Thee. O Queen and Mistress of all creation, through Thee alone and through thy powerful intercession, and because Thine eyes of clemency have looked upon me, for this reason thy most holy Son has turned toward me the eyes of his mercy; and looking upon me as a Father, for thy sake He did not disdain to choose this lowly wormlet of the earth and the least of creatures to manifest his venerable secrets and mysteries. The many waters of my faults, ingratitude and miseries could not extinguish his immense charity (Cant. 8:7); and my delays and coarse incompetence could not halt or hinder the stream of the divine light and wisdom communicated to me.†

788. I confess, O most compassionate Mother, in the presence of heaven and earth, that I have struggled with myself and with my enemies, and my interior has been disturbed in hesitating between my unworthiness and my desire of wisdom. *I stretched forth my hands and bewailed my*

* cf. Mk. 7:37 [Ed.]

† cf. also Ps. 45:5 [Ed.]

ignorance of her (Ecclus. 51:26); *I directed my heart to her, and in knowledge I found her* (Ib. 27); with knowledge I possessed tranquility (Ib. 28); and when I loved her and sought her I found her a *good possession*,* and I was not confounded. The strong and sweet force of wisdom worked within me (Wis. 8:1); it manifested to me the most hidden things, and the most uncertain human knowledge (Ps. 50:8). I placed Thee before my eyes, O beautiful image of the Divinity and the Mystical City of his habitation, so in the night and darkness of this mortal life Thou couldst guide me as a star and enlighten me as a moon of immense light, so I could follow Thee as a Captainess, love Thee as a Mother, obey Thee as a Lady, and hear Thee as a Mistress; and in Thee, as in an immaculate and pure mirror, I could see and compose myself by the notice and new example of thy ineffable virtues and works, the summit of perfection and sanctity.

789. Yet who could have moved the supreme Majesty to be so inclined to a vile slave but Thee, O powerful Queen, who art the grandeur of love, the breadth of compassion, the encouragement of mercy, the prodigy of grace, and the one who has filled up the voids of the sins of all the children of Adam? Thine is, O Lady, the glory, and thine also is this Book I have written, not only because it is about thy most holy and admirable life, but because Thou didst give it the beginning, middle and end; and if Thou thyself hadst not been its Author and Teacher, it would not have entered into human thought. Hence be Thou the gratitude and the return due for this Book; for Thou alone canst worthily render it to thy most holy Son and our Redeemer for such a new and rare benefit. I can only implore this of Thee in the name of the holy Church and in my own name. This I desire to do, O Mother and Queen of virtues; and humbled in thy presence, more than the lowest dust, I confess I have received this favor and others which I could never merit. I have written only that which Thou hast taught and commanded me; I have been only the mute instrument of thy tongue, moved and governed by thy wisdom. Perfect Thou this work of thy hands, not only by the worthy glory and praise of the Most High, but supply what I am lacking, so I may practice thy doctrine, follow thy footsteps, obey thy commands, and run after the odor of thy ointments (Cant. 1:3), which is the sweetness and fragrance of thy virtues which with ineffable condescension Thou hast suffused throughout this History.

790. I acknowledge myself, O Empress of heaven, as the most unworthy and the most obligated among the children of the holy Church. And so in it, and in the presence of the Most High and Thee, the monstrosity of my ingratitude may not become apparent, I propose, offer, and desire it to be understood that I renounce all that is visible and earthly; anew I surrender my liberty to the divine will and to thine, in order not to use my free will except for the greater glory and pleasure of God. Thou blessed among all creatures, just as by the clemency of the Lord and thine, without having merited it, I hold the title of his spouse, and of thy daughter and disciple which Thou hast given me, and since the Lord thy Son has so often deigned to confirm these titles, I beseech Thee, O purest Lady, do not permit me to regress from them. Thy protection and support assisted me in the writing of thy miraculous Life; help me now to put into practice thy doctrine, in which eternal life consists. Thou dost desire and command me to imitate Thee; stamp and engrave in me thy living image. Thou hast sown thy holy seed in my earthly heart; preserve it and nurture it, my Mother, Lady and Mistress, so it may yield fruit a hundredfold (Lk. 8:8) and not be snatched from me by the birds of prey, the dragon and his demons, whose indignation I have known in all the words which I have left written of Thee, my Lady. Direct me unto the end, command me as a Queen, instruct me as a Teacher, and correct me as a Mother. Receive in thanksgiving thy own life, and the consummate pleasure which by it Thou didst give to the most

* Ib. 29 [Ed.]

blessed Trinity as the culmination of his wonders. May the Angels and Saints praise Thee, and may all nations and generations know Thee; in Thee and through Thee may all creatures eternally bless their Creator, may they praise Thee, and may my soul and all my faculties magnify Thee.

791. This divine History (as I have repeated throughout it) I leave written in obedience to my superiors and confessors who govern my soul, by this means assuring me it is the will of God that I should write it, and obey his most blessed Mother, who for many years has commanded me to write it. And though I have submitted all of it to the censure and judgment of my confessors, without there being a single word which they have not seen and conferred about with me, I nevertheless submit it anew to their better judgment; and above all I submit it to the amendment and correction of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, to whose censure and teaching, as her daughter, I declare I am subject, in order to believe and hold only that which this same holy Church, our Mother, approves and believes, and in order to condemn all that She condemns, since in this obedience I desire to live and to die. Amen.

END OF BOOK EIGHT

END OF PART III

END OF *The Mystical City of God*