

MOTHER MARY: (Mariology)

~ CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS ~

According to Sacred Scripture, Mary is present at almost every major event in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- Jesus conception
- Jesus development in the womb (Luke 1:31) (Luke 1:43)
- Jesus birth
- Offering Jesus to God (Luke 2:7) (Luke 2:22)
- Jesus early childhood
- Jesus confirmation at age 12 (Luke 2:22-38) (Luke 2:49)
- The beginning of Jesus' public ministry and the first of His miracles, which she prompted. (Wedding at Cana John 2:3)
- Jesus death on Calvary (John 19:26)
- The birth of the Church at the Pentecost (Acts 1:14).

■ MARY AS THE MOTHER OF GOD

The word Theotokos is Greek which means "God-bearer". The Council of Ephesus in A.D. 431 declared Mary the Mother of God. This was to safeguard the divinity of Christ, which was being attacked by the Nestorians heretical group. Mary is the Mother of God the Son since Jesus Christ was God in the flesh. "The unique and altogether singular event of the Incarnation of the Son of God does not mean that Jesus Christ is part God and part man, nor does it imply that He is the result of a confused mixture of the divine and the human. He became truly man while

remaining truly God. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. During the first centuries, the Church had to defend and clarify this truth of faith against the heresies that falsified it."

(464, CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH)

Some Scripture proves of this include:

- "And whence is this to me [Elisabeth], that [Mary] the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" (Luke 1:43, ASV)
- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1, ASV)
- "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am." (John 8:58, ASV)
- "Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." (John 20:28, ASV)
- "[Jesus] who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped" (Philippians 2:6, ASV)
- "for in him [Jesus] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9, ASV)

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

Scripture says "for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and also "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

The word for "all", in the above passages are πάντες (pantes, Greek) as it occurs in the ancient authorities or πας (pas, Greek) as in the case of the KJV. It literally means "all, any, each, every, the whole, many." We know from Scriptures that not

“all” people died, for example Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11).

Also Scripture tells us that the man Jesus Christ was without sin, hence He was an exception for the “all have sinned” argument. The word “all” has been demonstrated not to mean all in the above passages, rather it means “many. Just as the man Christ Jesus is an exception from original sin (cf. Hebrews 4:15), so is Mary. One well-known verse that shows this is Luke 1:28

In a papal encyclical *Ineffabilis Deus* (The Ineffable God, Latin) issued in 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed that: "The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin."

To support this dogma, attention is drawn to the Annunciation in Luke 1:28, in which the Angel Gabriel greets Mary with the words "Hail [Mary], full of grace." "And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." (Luke 1:28,)

We should note that angels speak on behalf of God; here it is God revealing through Sacred Scripture that Our Lady is full of grace, because of her extraordinary role to God the Son and Holy Spirit.

Scripture again indicates the blessedness of Our Lady: "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.' And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.'" (Luke 1:41-48,) We read that Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

MARY AS THE ARK OF THE NEW COVENANT

It is very clear from Sacred Scripture that the closer one is to God, the holier one must be.

♦ "And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where on thou standest is holy ground." (Exodus 3: 5,)

♦ "for Jehovah thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he may not see an unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee." (Deuteronomy 23:14,) The presence of God imparts holiness: "If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye." (1 Corinthians 3:17,)

♦ "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." (1 John 3:9,) The Jewish high priest entered the "Holy of holies" in the Tabernacle or Temple only once a year, under pain of death: • "and Jehovah said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." (Leviticus 16:2,) The Ark of the Covenant was so holy only a few could touch it:

♦ "And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the furniture of the sanctuary, as the camp is set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch the sanctuary, lest they die.

These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting." (Numbers 4:15,) "And when they came to the threshing-floor of Nacon, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his

error; and there he died by the ark of God." (2 Samuel 6:6-7,) Sacred Scripture compares Mary to the Ark (Luke 1:35 and Exodus 40:34-8 / Luke 1:44 and 2 Samuel 6:14-16 / Luke 1:43 and 2 Samuel 6:9).

Question: If mere inanimate objects can be so "holy" due to closeness with God; how much more our Lady Mary, who bore God the Son?

MARY OUR MOTHER & MOST POWERFUL INTERCESSOR

The idea of our Lady Mary as the Mother of all believers is derived from the Crucifixion account of our Lord Jesus Christ where He tells St. John to "Behold, thy mother!" "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home." (John 19:26)

Mother Mary is also the symbol of the Church as shown in the Apocalypse or the Book of Revelation:

- (Revelation 12:1)
- (Revelation 12:5)
- (Revelation 12:17)

Mother Mary neither takes the place of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor any of the Saints.

Their mediatorship is secondary to Jesus Christ; and is only possible because of Jesus Christ, and their relationship to us through His Mystical Body, the Church. Scripture shows this: (1 Timothy 2:1-5) and (1 Tim 2:5-6). The maternal duty of Mary toward men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its power.

For all the saving influences of the Blessed Virgin on men originate, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. They flow forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rest on His mediation, depend entirely on

it, and draw all their power from it. In no way do they impede the immediate union of the faithful with Christ. Rather, they foster this union.”

Our Lady intercessory role was demonstrated in Sacred Scripture. (John 2:1-5) We Catholics believe that our Mother Mary is our most powerful intercessor because of her sinlessness. (James 5:16) (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2) (Romans 15:30-32) Our Lord Jesus Christ must particularly approve of our going to Him through Mary, His Blessed Mother, because He chose to come to us through her.