

New Brighton, 7^h December 2022

Novena for the Immaculate Conception

Mary, Mother of our creator and our Saviour

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

As we are preparing ourselves, during this time of expectation before Christmas, to receive Jesus in the crib of our heart, the best person who can help us to ornate and decorate our soul is Mary, and particularly under Her title of Mother of our Creator and Saviour.

Those titles she received are a deployment of the same title of Mother of God. These two titles are also helping us to understand, as far as we can with our small spirits, how the two great mysteries of Faith are united: Incarnation and redemption. From the Mother of Bethlehem, who became the mother of the church upon the altar of Calvary, our Lady was the Mother of God in all moments of her life.

She knew from the day of the Annunciation, in the darkness of the light of the Faith, what her fiat would cost her, but also what fruits would happen because of her acceptance.

Jesus wanted to restore the creation in a better way He created it, and desired that humanity would be associated to its redemption. God choose Mary to become the first of all redeemed mankind, the first and only to be preserved from the original sin, the first of many to be associated to the Passion of Our Lord.

St Paul taught us in his epistles to the Romans and Corinthians. But Jesus was the new Adam and because of “the offence of one, unto all men to condemnation; so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification of life.”¹ But “as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just.”²

Being the Mother of God, Mary was closely associated to these mysteries of Incarnation and Redemption. God didn't want Her as just being the woman to take the flesh from, but wanted Her to be the closest possible to the mysteries. As per consequences, She deserved these titles of Mother of our Creator and Saviour. And through Her obedience and participation, She became the new Eve, mother of all mankind through the Redemption.

How could a simple creature become the mother of the Creator? When the Archangel went into Nazareth house, that was the only question of Our Lady, before accepting it. And only Her, following the teaching of Saint Bernard, was given the understanding of that mystery. “The Holy Ghost shall come upon Thine, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow Thee.”³ Saint Bernard explained these words, saying that the way Our Lady received the gift of divine motherhood will remain hidden in God's plan, being revealed to Our Lady only. As if the Angel was saying to her: why asking me what you will learn soon from the Master himself? You will

¹ Rm, V, 18

² Rm, V, 19

³ Luke, I, 35

know, but your teacher will be the author of the miracle himself. This mystery can only be taught by the author, understood by the only person in which this mystery is accomplished.⁴

“And therefore, also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God:”⁵ meaning that as you conceived, not from a man, but from the Holy Ghost, the Holy Being whom you shall give birth will be called the Son of God, but also your son, because taken from your flesh. The Son, second Person of the Holy Trinity, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, Creator of heaven and earth, also belongs to you, Mary. But there is no two sons, one from the Father, and one from you, but One who is truly yours and the Father’s.⁶

Being the created Mother of the uncreated Word who created everything, Mary became also the mother of the Saviour, being united to Him up to the Calvary.

As there is nothing worse for a mother to see her child suffering without her being able to do anything, so was Our Lady with Her Son upon the cross. And the spiritual life they were sharing became even stronger at that moment. The Mother was seeing Her Son suffering for mankind and that made Her suffer. And the Son was seeing the sorrow of His Mother with His own eyes and His divine science, increasing again His own sufferings.⁷ Saint Bernard even says that Jesus suffered more from the sorrow of His mother while He was dying on the Cross, than from the sufferings of His Passion itself. Saint Bernard lets our Mother speak with these words: “I was looking at him. He looked at me too. It was more suffering because of me than because of all the other pains of his body and soul.”⁸

Our Lady, being so closely united to the sufferings of Her Son, deserved also that title of mother of our Saviour.

From the Annunciation to the Calvary, Mary is giving us the perfect example of what a life united with God must look like. Our Mother in Heaven guides us all along our path to Heaven, showing us a way of full acceptance of God's will, being Herself imolated before us with Her Son, for the salvation of humanity and the re-creation of mankind under the shelter of the New Covenant.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

⁴ St Bernard, The praises of the Virgin Mother, 4th Homily

⁵ Luke, I, 35

⁶ St Bernard, The praises of the Virgin Mother, 4th Homily

⁷ St Alfonsus Ligori, *The Glories of Mary*, 3rd part, The 7 sorrows

⁸ St Bernard, quoted by St Alfonsus Ligori, *The Glories of Mary*, 3rd part, The 7 sorrows