

## 2012 AMU Dec Conference Talk 1

Mary named herself “Beloved Daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, and Spouse of the Spirit”. We are used to thinking of her as Mother of the Son; I’d like to discuss the others a bit.

### “BELOVED DAUGHTER OF THE FATHER”:

- most perfect creation God created
- most beloved creature God created
- most perfect returner of love to God

God created creation as an expression of His love – in order to love creatures – and in order to be loved by them.

Mary is the ultimate “success” of all of creation; the pinnacle of creation itself. God was willing to spare Sodom and Gemorrah if 10 men pleasing to Him were found there; is it imaginable that God was willing to put up with humanity, because He saw how pleasing Mary would be to Him? That because of her, He considered it all “worth it”?

I would like to suggest that Mary was created, in God’s mind, before He began to create the world; and in fact it was the pleasingness of Mary that moved God to go ahead with creation. For God is outside time; although Mary only came into being 2000 years ago, God “saw” her from the beginning.

The fact that in some sense Mary was in God’s mind at the outset of creation was made evident in last Saturday’s liturgy, for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The first reading was

“The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth; before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world.

When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him,... and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men.”

St. Pope Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus* 1854, justifies this claim:

“the very words with which the Sacred Scriptures speak of Uncreated Wisdom and set forth her eternal origin, the Church, both in its ecclesiastical offices and in its liturgy, has been wont to apply likewise to the origin of the Blessed Virgin, inasmuch as God, by one and the same decree, had established the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom.”

Maybe, as 10 pleasing men would have been enough to make God put up with Sodom, the BVM is enough to make Him put up with all of us!

### **“SPOUSE OF THE SPIRIT”:**

We know that Mary is the Mediatrix of all Graces:

- Bernard of Clairvaux: “God has willed that we should have nothing which would not pass through the hands of Mary”
- St Alphonsus Ligouri: “God who gave us Jesus Christ wills that all graces that have been, that are, and will be dispensed to men to the end of the world through the merits of Jesus Christ, should be dispensed by the hands and through the intercession of Mary.”
- Pope Benedict XIV: she is “like a celestial stream through which the flow of all graces and gifts reach the soul of all wretched mortals”
- Pope Pius IX: For God has committed to Mary the treasury of all good things, in order that everyone may know that through her are obtained every hope, every grace, and all salvation”
- Pope Leo XIII: “Nothing of all of the immense treasury of every grace which the Lord accumulated...is imparted to us except through Mary.”

This is not only – or perhaps not primarily -- by virtue of her being the Mother of Christ, but by virtue of her being the Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

Christ was conceived from a (non-physical, of course) spousal union between the BVM and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the MHT.

The union between the HS and Mary was not a passing one – it was a spousal union that brought about a spousal relationship for all eternity.

Even by Jewish law (as evidenced in multiple incidents in the OT), a spousal union brings about a marriage. In fact, it contracts a legal marriage by Jewish law.

Mary was not “only” the mother of Christ, she was – and will be for all time! – the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, the only creature who ever did or ever will enter into such a close bond with the Divinity.

It was not a conception outside of marriage, outside of a true, lifelong Spousal Union. In the union between the Holy Spirit and Mary that conceived Jesus, they were united eternally, in an absolutely unique way, as Spouses. Mary is truly, then, now, and forever, the one and only Spouse of the Holy Spirit. The one and only human being ever fully united to God in the most intimate union, flowing together of souls, that can unite two persons – the Spousal union. A union so profound and unique that it is the source of the creation of life itself – usually in Man of an eternal human soul, in this case of the incarnation of the God Man.

What are some properties of the Spousal Union?

- That it is fruitful, the source of life.
- That it is indissoluble – once made, cannot be ended.
- That everything one spouse owns or controls is also owned or controlled by the other. That nothing that belongs to one does not belong to the other (unless you think that the Holy Spirit had a pre-nuptial agreement!)
- That the two “become one flesh”.

In this light, it is only logical that since every grace that flows from God flows through the Holy Spirit, every grace flows through the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is in a spousal union with God, resulting in her being a sort of bridge between the Godhead and humanity; fully human, but also uniquely united with God as a bridge between human nature and the divine.

St. Maximilian Kolbe:

"The third Person of the Blessed Trinity never took flesh; still, our human word "spouse" is far too weak to express the reality of the relationship between the Immaculata and the Holy Spirit. We can affirm that she is, in a certain sense, the 'incarnation' of the Holy Spirit." (133)

Mary "is united to the Holy Spirit so closely that we really cannot grasp this union. But we can at least say that the Holy Spirit and Mary are two persons who live in such intimate union that they have but one sole life" (June 27,1936).

"The Holy Spirit is in Mary after the fashion, one might say, in which the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word, is in his humanity. There is, of course, this difference: in Jesus there are two natures, divine and human, but one single person who is God. Mary's nature and person are totally distinct from the nature and person of the Holy Spirit. Still, their union is so inexpressible, and so perfect that *the Holy Spirit acts only by the Immaculata, his spouse. This is why she is the mediatrix of all graces given by the Holy Spirit....*"

This last writing of Saint Maximilian Kolbe:

"IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. These words fell from the lips of the Immaculata herself. Hence, they must tell us in the most precise and essential manner who she really is...

The Father begets the Son; the Spirit proceeds from Father and Son. And who is the Holy Spirit? The flowering of the love of the Father and the Son. If the fruit of created love is a created conception, then the fruit of divine Love, that prototype of all created love, is necessarily a divine "conception." The Holy Spirit is, therefore, the "uncreated, eternal conception," the prototype of all the conceptions that multiply life throughout the whole universe. [The Holy Spirit is the uncreated Immaculate Conception.]

The Father begets, the Son is begotten, the Spirit is the "conception" that springs from their love; there we have the intimate life of the three Persons by which they can be distinguished one from another. But they are united in the oneness of their Nature, of their divine existence.

The Spirit is then this thrice holy "conception," this infinitely holy, Immaculate Conception.

[Everywhere in this world we notice action, and the reaction which is equal but contrary to it; departure and return; going away and coming back; separation and reunion. The separation always looks forward to union, which is creative. All this is simply an image of the Blessed Trinity in the activity of creatures. Union means love, creative love. Divine activity, outside the Trinity itself, follows the same pattern. First, God creates

the universe; that is something like a separation. Creatures, by following the natural law implanted in them by God, reach their perfection, become like him, and go back to him. Intelligent creatures love him in a conscious manner; through this love they unite themselves more and more closely with him, and so find their way back to him. The creature most completely filled with this love, filled with God himself, was the Immaculata, who never contracted the slightest stain of sin, who never departed in the least from God's will. ]

United to the Holy Spirit as his spouse, [the Blessed Virgin Mary] is one with God in incomparably more perfect way than can be predicated of any other creature.

What sort of union is this? It is above all an interior union, a union of her essence with the essence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in her, lives in her. This was true from the first instant of her existence. It was always true; it will always be true.

In what does this life of the Spirit in Mary consist? He himself is uncreated Love in her; the Love of the Father and of the Son, the Love by which God loves himself, the very love of the Most Holy Trinity. He is a fruitful Love, a "Conception." Among creatures made in God's image the union brought about by married love is the most intimate of all. In a much more precise, more interior, more essential manner, the Holy Spirit lives in the soul of the Immaculata, in the depths of her very being. He makes her fruitful, from the very first instant of her existence, all during her life, and for all eternity.

In the Holy Spirit's union with Mary we observe more than the love of two beings; in one there is all the love of the Blessed Trinity; in the other, all of creation's love. So it is that in this union heaven and earth are joined; all of heaven with all the earth, the totality of eternal love with the totality of created love. It is truly the summit of love.

At Lourdes, the Immaculata did not say of herself that she had been conceived immaculately, but as St. Bernadette repeated it, "I am the Immaculate Conception."

If among human beings the wife takes the name of her husband because she belongs to him, is one with him, becomes equal to him and is, with him, the source of new life, with how much greater reason should the name of the Holy Spirit, who is the divine Immaculate Conception, be used as the name of her in whom he lives as uncreated Love, the principle of life in the whole supernatural order of grace?" (Feb 17, 1941) "

The undersigned Fathers of the Council humbly yet urgently beseechingly pray that the Holy Ecumenical Council of the Vatican come to the aid of the unfortunate nation of Israel with an entirely paternal invitation; that finally exhausted by a wait no less futile than long, the Israelites hasten to recognize the Messiah, our Savior Jesus Christ, truly promised to Abraham and announced by Moses; thus completing and crowning, not changing, the Mosaic religion.

The undersigned Fathers have the very firm confidence that the holy Council will have compassion on the Israelites, because they are always very dear to God on account of their fathers, and because it is from them that the Christ was born according to the flesh.

Would that they then speedily acclaim the Christ, saying “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord!”

*Would that they hurl themselves into the arms of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, even now their sister according to the flesh, who wishes likewise to be their mother according to grace as she is ours!*