The Immaculata, Model for the New Man

On the next December 8th, we celebrate with the entire Church, a great feast of the Most Blessed Virgin: her Immaculate Conception. We know the profound mystery of this day: She, as the only human being, is conceived without original sin in the womb of her mother, Ann. We understand that it is the result of an extraordinary privilege which is given to her in order to be the Mother of God.

Today, more than ever, our way as Christians is difficult. Infidelity, doubt, disorientation and insecurity, even amidst the Church itself, make our Christian life difficult. We need more clarity and security. We search for a light in order to guide ourselves in the darkness of our times. For us, this light is Mary. She is the vital model and the intuitive teaching for the life of the Christian, for the lives of us all.

Mary, our vital model. She stands out as the reverse of Eve, as our Eve. We know that Eve is the companion and helpmate of Adam in original sin, in the ruination of the human race. Mary is not a mere passive instrument, rather, she is a companion and helpmate of Christ for the salvation of the world. Eve’s disobedience and unbelief are compensated by the obedience and faith of Mary. Eve brought us death, Mary brought us life.

Thus the immaculate Virgin, the new Eve, reveals herself to us as a being from paradise. In this world of evil, God preserves the original ideal of purity and sanctity of paradise in the person of Mary. Conceived without sin, thus enters the Blessed Virgin into life and radiates a beauty proper to paradise.

The creature, into which the redemption of Christ is condensed in all its fullness, is the Blessed Virgin. In her, God can document the perfection of his work. Mary is the human person who most fully fulfills the ideal of the new Christian man (person). Therefore, the Angel Gabriel greets her as “full of grace.” Truly, her entire being is saturated with grace.

She shows us with her being and her acting that all perfection and redemption comes from God, from Him who has done wonders in Her.

When we see thus the image of the Immaculata, many feelings, desires and hopes are awakened in us. They are the results of the desires from paradise lost, that is, of the perfect harmony between body and soul, between instinct and spirit.

As Christians, we were all converted into new men (persons) on the day of our baptism. At that moment, God infused into our souls the divine life of Christ. But many baptized men (persons) return to being “old” men (persons) because – through sin – they shut themselves off from this life.

What was a gift for the Immaculata, for us is a life-long battle.

Therefore, always anew, we are all called to be converted into new men (persons) according to the image of Christ and Mary. We are all invited to receive the Lord within ourselves as Mary did. Daily, we can all open ourselves to His Will. Each time that we – in imitation of the Virgin – say anew “Be it done unto me according to thy word,” the Word (moreso) becomes flesh among us. Thus, the new man (person) is born and grows in us…..the new man (person) we so admire in Mary.

The Blessed Virgin is a model for the new man (person), but She is also Mother and Educator of new men (persons). Her womb, in which Christ was formed, is the best mold to forge men (persons) into the image of Christ.

The Fathers of the Church called her not only creature from paradise, but also door to paradise. Door to paradise because she attracts us and educates us toward that ideal, and she introduces us into paradise.

Questions for reflection

1. Is Mary a model for me?
2. Do I have a favorite prayer to Mary?
3. What does the name Door to Paradise say to me?

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