



Marian Doctrine and Devotion

Chapter 10



Marian devotions are those prayers and acts undertaken to honor Mary and with the intent of seeking her intercession with her Son, Jesus, and his Father. Devotion to the Virgin Mary does not, however, amount to worship - which is reserved for God alone. Catholics view Mary as subordinate to Christ, but uniquely so, in that she is seen as above all other creatures. In 787 the Second Council of Nicaea affirmed a three-level hierarchy of *latria*, *hyperdulia* and *dulia* that applies to God, the Virgin Mary and then to the other saints.

The Roman Catholic Church holds many teachings associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary. Four of these specific doctrines have been raised to the level of dogma, meaning in technical terms that they must be held by the faithful as essential to participation as Roman Catholics. The four Marian dogmas have been defined by the magisterium over the course of Christian history, using both Scripture and Sacred Tradition, the two elements of the one source of Revelation, as evidence for these proclamations. These four dogmas are: Mary the Mother of God, Perpetual Virginity of Mary, The Immaculate Conception, and The Assumption of Mary into Heaven. The twentieth-century has seen a significant drive to establish a fifth and final Dogma-Mary as Co-Redemptrix.

Commentary on the book of Isaiah is by noted theologian Rev. William G. Most (1914-1999). His contributions to theology have been recognized all over the world. He published 12 books and a host of articles on topics ranging from biblical studies to Mariology and Latin grammar.

Chapter 10

End

The Loss of Jesus and Finding in the Temple:

a) Reasons for the conduct of Jesus:

Some, unfortunately, have called His action of staying behind disobedience, in obedience to the higher command of His Father. But this is very unsuitable. In Mat 3. 15 when John the Baptist was unwilling to baptize Him, Jesus said that it was right to fulfill everything that righteousness calls for. Strictly, there was no command of Mary or Joseph not to do as He did.

Why did He do so? There is a widespread pattern, revealed in Scripture, in which God wills to put people into situations in which they must, as it were, hold on to His will in the dark, i.e. , without being able to see why or how it is possible. For example, Abraham had been told he would be the father of a great nation through Isaac. But then, when Isaac was still a little boy, God told him to offer Isaac in sacrifice. This seemed to conflict. Abraham did not question: he just went ahead, in the dark. If we would hold the majority opinion that the Jews did not know of retribution in the next

life until the 2nd century B. C. , we would say that they had to hold on in the dark: they knew God was just, but so often they saw that His justice did not work out even to the end of the life of an individual: the wicked would continue to prosper, the just to suffer. There are numerous other instances. The conduct of Jesus at age 12 is one, where Mary and Joseph had to hold on in the dark. At Cana it will be similar. And there are many other instances, cf. Wm. G. Most, Our Father's Plan, Trinity, 1988, chapter 14. The basic idea is this: The only thing free in a person is the free will. If one then aligns that will perfectly with the will of the Father, that is complete perfection. To align that will with the will of the Father in cases where it seems impossible—that requires a most intense holding to the will of God. That gives room for greater spiritual growth. (Cf. also the factor of somatic resonance, Our Father's Plan, chapter 16). Now Our Lady was full of grace even at the start. But her capacity, as it were, could grow. To put her in situations where she had to hold on in the dark was a sign of great love.

b) The question of Mary's knowledge:

Luke 2. 30 reports " And they did not understand the word he spoke to them." This does not mean that she did not know who He was. We already saw in a study of the Old Testament prophecies and Targums that she did. What she would not grasp was the strange change in the pattern of His conduct: previously, always thoughtful, now quite different.