



PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.pamphletstoinspire.com

Marian Mariology

Chapter 12



The veneration of Mary, when properly understood, permeates the entire life of the Church; it is a dimension of dogma and of piety, of Christology and of ecclesiology. This dimension needs to be made explicit today in connection with the problems of humanity. Mariology expresses something fundamental to the Christian life itself, to the Christian experience of the world.

Sound Mariology has always been understood in Christological terms. If the Gospel revealed nothing more than the fact that Jesus Christ, God and man, was born of Mary, this alone would be sufficient for the Church to love her and to draw theological conclusions from pondering this relationship of Mother and Son. We need no other revelations. Mary is a self-evident and essential *datum* and dimension of the Gospel.

Chapter one centers on Catechesis flowing from Byzantine Marian spirituality with commentary by Brother John M. Samaha, S.M. Chapter 2 discusses Mariology today with commentary by Rev. Professor Michael Lapierre, S.J. The remaining chapters are commentaries on various Marian topics by Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J. (1914– 2000).

Chapter 12

The Blessed Virgin and the Eucharist-Part II

by Fr. John A Hardon, S.J.

ANNOUNCER: Astronomers tell us there are 400 billion stars in our galaxy and there are 100 billion other galaxies. How enormous is the universe, how mind-boggling, and it will all pass away. In comparison, how microscopically insignificant we are, yet we're far more important. We are destined to live forever, either in Heaven or Hell. Our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of the universe, took on a human nature from His mother Mary, and became one like us to suffer, die and save us from eternal damnation. How much should we love Jesus and His and our Mother? How can we spend eternity thanking and praising them? Let's find out from Father Hardon.

FATHER HARDON: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

FATHER: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

ALL: Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, amen.

How do we grow in charity? No less than our progress in sinlessness, so our role in charity depends on the Holy Eucharist. It is mainly from the sacrifice of the Mass, mainly from Holy Communion and the Real Presence that we obtain the means that we need to practice the virtue of selfless love of others, which is the principal way we show our love for God. It was not, dare I say, coincidental, but divinely providential, that Christ at the Last Supper both gave us what He called the New Commandment. Why new? The Old Testament told the Chosen People to love their neighbor as much as they love themselves, and my friends, that's a lot. What did Christ tell His followers? Oh, no, you are to love one another not only as much as you love yourselves; you are to love one another as much as I, Who am your God become man, have loved you, even to lay My life down out of love for you. Needless to say this kind of charity is (what a safe statement), impossible! That is why Christ instituted the Eucharist at the same Last Supper at which He commanded His followers to love one another, even to the heroism of laying down their lives out of love for one another.

All of this is locked up in our profession of faith in the Holy Eucharist. But notice what we're saying. The profession of our faith in the Holy Eucharist is only a means to an end. The means is to obtain the grace we need to grow in sinlessness and become more and more like Mary Immaculate. The grace we need is to grow in charity, selfless love of God and of others. Like Our Lady, following her example in loving her Divine Son as she did with her whole heart. Without the Eucharist, no one can have the ambition (intention) of avoiding sin. Without the Eucharist, there is not, I don't say selfless charity, there is not even, not *even*, the most basic form of justice. Without the Eucharist, there is no way, no way that our self-adoring world can practice the virtue that God became man to teach us and tell us to follow His mother and Himself in imitating their example.

Prayer

We close with a prayer. Mary, Mother of God, except for you, we would not have Jesus, and except for you, we would not have the Holy Eucharist, Which is Jesus in our midst today. Obtain for us something of your deep faith in the Blessed Sacrament. Grant that we may follow your example here on earth, so that we may share in the joy that you now experience in the visible company of your Divine Son and Our Lord. Amen.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

End

FATHER: Seat of wisdom

ALL: Pray for us.

FATHER: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

FATHER: Good evening. Our conference this evening is on the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Eucharist. After some prayerful reflection I thought I would somewhat define the subject and speak on the Most Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Before we begin, however, to explain how the Holy Eucharist and Our Lady are related, I would like to give you a brief resume of this immense subject. My plan is to cover three areas of the relationship between Mary and the Eucharist. The plan is to make three statements, statements of our Catholic faith, and then proceed, if I can use the word, to prove each statement in sequence.

Am I saying here that there is one mystery of our Faith that needs to be understood in our day, and that it is the Holy Eucharist? First statement: Without the Blessed Virgin, we would not have the Holy Eucharist. Second statement: Without the Eucharist, we could not now adore Jesus Christ on earth as the Son of God Who became the Son of Mary. Third statement: From the Eucharist we obtain the graces we need to become more and more like the Immaculate Virgin Mary and more and more loving like the loving heart of Mary.

Over the years in teaching Mariology, I've always tried to distinguish to my students between the two words, Immaculate and Heart, referring to Our Lady. The Immaculate side refers to her sinlessness. The Heart side refers to her extraordinary, unique love of Jesus Christ.

No Eucharist Without the Blessed Virgin

Now, each of our three affirmations. First, no Eucharist without Mary. In order to understand why there would be no Eucharist without the Blessed Virgin, we have to go back to the Old Testament, to the time before the coming of Christ. And let me tell you, the adventus Christi, the coming of Christ, that word coming is crucial for understanding Christianity. We may ask ourselves what happened at the dawn of Christianity. We believe that

God was on earth, and that we were not in [tape unclear] the world, He had to be, from the first moment that anything outside of God existed, from the first moment of creation, God as God, had to be present, continue exercising His almighty, loving power, or His loving omnipotence, to sustain what He brought out of nothing into existence, to sustain it in existence. Otherwise, the world He brought out of nothing, would have, (well, what else?) lapsed back into the nothingness into from which it came.

God is now exercising (I can't overemphasize the statement), God is now exercising the same loving omnipotent power that He exercised when He brought the world out of nothing into being. There will be no being outside of God, unless God were present (what a weak verb), as present to the being that He brought into being, as He had to be present when He brought that being out of nothing into existence.

But (the most important adversative in our faith), is when the angel announced to Mary at the Annunciation, and invited her to become the mother of the Most High, she accepted the invitation by saying, "Be it done to me according to your word," -- "Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum," that statement of Mary changed the whole course of history. At that moment, God became man. The Almighty (Who had been as we've been saying) Who had been present in the world as its Maker and Sustainer, always as God, now began to be present in the world as man.

I've taught -- too many minds too much theology, not to know that -- [structure of sentence unclear] the single most important truth of our faith is to realize that the moment Mary told the angel, "Be it done to me according to thy word," God became present, its Creator, as a creature in the world He made. When, nine months later, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the infinite Word of God by Whose power the world came into existence, this omnipotent Lord became flesh and began to dwell among us as a speechless child. That's what *infant* means. *Infans*: "fans" in Latin means "speaking one"; "in" prefix says "the speechless one." During the years of His hidden life at Nazareth, God walked the streets of our earth, ate our food, drank our water, and breathed our air. The Creator took on the human nature of (well, shall we say), of His own creation, and then lived among human beings as a man.

Why did God become man? God became man so He'd be able to, well, have a human body and a human soul, in both of which He could suffer and thus, not only suffer, but have the body and soul separate and cause His death. God became man so that God could die. But, not only God became man to have indeed a human body and a human soul (oh now my fiftieth year in the priesthood, I have never emphasized too much, and the closer I get to eternity the more I emphasize), God became man to be able to suffer. The last thing, the *last thing* that we professed followers of Christ should run away from is pain. That's why God became man. But (watch it), God became man not only to have a body and a soul in which He could experience pain, God became man so He might have a human free will so He could *choose* to suffer, so He could *voluntarily* accept pain, so He could voluntarily give up what He as man

Wherever people asked for what they needed, remember, provided they believed, Jesus would grant their request. The gospels are filled with accounts of miracles worked by the Savior in favor of those who approached Him in faith. You'll see much more about this as we go through our conferences on the Eucharist. Jesus Christ is on earth to give us (and I mean every syllable), miraculous graces, always conditioned on our faith. No less than for the contemporaries of Christ from the first century, Christ is now on earth and wants to fulfill our needs. By the way, that's why we are in need. He tells us, "At long last, it's about time. You're in all kinds of desperate need. Finally you come to me and ask Me to help you." I repeat, says He, "It's about time." As a matter of fact, that is why in God's providence He makes sure that we have so many things that we need -- watch it, not so many things we want, but so many things we need, and one of the things we need, is to know what we need. Why is that? So we might come to ask Him for His assistance, and in a word, for the light for the mind, and strength for the will, which He mainly confers through the Holy Eucharist.

Jesus is the Son of Mary. He is in the Blessed Sacrament not only, or mainly, to provide for our physical and temporal needs; He is here mainly to give us what we need for our souls. And what do we need for our souls? We need divine grace! The simplest definition of grace is what we need beyond what we have to reach Heaven. We need the light and strength that only He can provide. Give us here on earth, we need the supernatural help to practice the virtues and especially the virtue of charity in loving God, and that means in loving others out of love for God, even to dying out of love for others. What are we saying? We are admitting our sinfulness. We are always prone to sin and therefore need divine help to overcome temptation so that we may gain our heavenly destiny. We are admitting our selfishness and therefore need, how we need, divine help to reach eternity through the practice of charity.

Where can we obtain this divine help? Mainly from and through the Blessed Sacrament. At this point I could quote (I'm not exaggerating) by the hour from the great devotees of the Holy Eucharist in telling us how important is the Holy Eucharist (watch this), not only to imitate Mary in becoming more and more sinless, as she was, and therefore we might please God *by* immaculate. But also, that like Our Lady, we might practice that selfless love which only a mother can have for the child she conceived and brought into this world at birth. In other words, it is not only without Mary we would not have the Eucharist, but we have the Eucharist precisely so that we may become more Mary-like, especially in the one virtue in the virtue on which both our salvation and sanctification mainly depend, namely, the virtue of charity.

doubting Thomas. Jesus told Him, "Bring me your fingers and your hand, and put it into my side, and be not unbelieving but believing." Then Thomas declared in adoration, "My Lord and my God." In every case then, when believers proclaimed their faith in Jesus Christ, they were speaking to a man who had, well, a human body, human eyes, human ears, human lips. But they were adoring a man because they believed that man was God. As man, they knew Him to be the Son of Mary, but by faith, they recognized Him as the everlasting Son of God.

So we return to our second statement, that there would be no Christ now on earth for us to adore except for His mother, Mary. Let me be clear: It is wanting to adore a God, Who of course, we cannot see, and something far more, far more, far more to adore a *man* who you believe is your God. In the Holy Eucharist, is present, we believe, the whole Christ, true God, and true man. Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist is the second person of the Holy Trinity, but Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament, is God become man. Why? Because a woman conceived Him, a woman carried Him for nine months, a woman, one of His creatures, gave Him birth. That is why over the centuries the Church bids us say the same words to Our Lord that Thomas, remember, after Christ's resurrection, as we quoted the Apostle, "My Lord and my God." He is the risen Jesus Christ who is on earth in the Blessed Sacrament.

No Eucharist Without Mary

Our third statement, which I call a thesis, which we ought to believe, and by believing, we live out our faith: that there be no Eucharist without Mary. In this, our third declaration, is the heart of all authentic devotion to the Blessed Sacrament: grace from the Eucharist to imitate Mary. That is why we find our subject not only the Blessed Virgin and the Eucharist, but the Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate *Heart* of Mary. Because, unlike Mary, we were all conceived in sin. But we should strive to die without sin, in other words, though we were conceived maculate, we should strive to die immaculate. And Our Lady is the great model of what it means to love Jesus Christ, and out of love for Him to love others. Because unlike her divine Son, Mary was a human person. Father, what are you saying? Are you saying that Jesus is not a human person? I sure am! Jesus is a divine person with a human nature. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of imitating Mary in the following of her divine Son.

Back to our subject, grace from the Eucharist to imitate Mary. We commonly and correctly speak of Eucharistic adoration. This is profoundly true. It is also the main reason that Our Lord is now with us in the Blessed Sacrament, so we might give Him (hear it), the faith-full adoration, adoration full of faith. Faith in what? Faith in His incarnation, present on earth, and the incarnate God. One more but. As we know during His visible stay on earth, Jesus was not *only* worshipped and adored. No! He was also and fervently, not only adored, but asked for every kind of help. And the perfect synonym for divine grace is help from God.

would naturally want, in order to sacrifice Himself to His Heavenly Father. God became man, I repeat, that He might have a free will to choose to give up what He as man wanted, in order to please God, His Heavenly Father.

Be sure to keep in mind that the body in which Christ suffered and died is the body He received from His mother. Except for her, there would not have been the Crucifixion, and we believe there would have been no redemption. Moreover, there would have been no Sacrifice of the Mass. We pursue the question, why did God become man? He became man, so that as man He would undergo the penalty that a just God demanded in expiation for the sins of the human race. However, and this is where we Catholics differ, as we say in Latin "Toto [spelling?] caelo," By the whole reaches of the heavens, we Catholics differ from Protestants. In this, the only reason why God became man is the teaching of those who do not share our Catholic faith. Is that the only reason that God became man? No! To understand this negative is to understand your faith. Emphatically *no*! God became man not only that He might be able to suffer and die, and thus by His agonizing crucifixion on Calvary redeem a sinful world. God became man so He might after His resurrection remain as man. Christ rose from the dead so He might remain the God-man for all eternity.

Let us be clear, so He might after His resurrection remain as man, not only in Heaven, (where He ascended forty days after Easter Sunday), but also on earth. That is the Catholic faith! And thus, in order that He might be able to fulfill His promise, "I am with you all days, even to the end of the world." That is no figure of speech.

But mind's object to this? Did Jesus not ascend into Heaven, what we call Ascension Thursday? Is Jesus not now seated at the right hand of His Heavenly Father? Of course He's in Heaven! But then again (this conference will be filled with, well, buts), Jesus is not only in Heaven, as the object of the worship of the angels and saints, and, on the last day He will come to judge the living and the dead. But watch it: He will come to judge the living and the dead not because He had been absent from the earth. No! He will come *visibly*. Christ *is* on earth.

I repeat, again I've taught too many, and I have to say "super-minds," and the more clear and penetrating the intellect, the more humbled that mind must be to believe, to accept what is so obviously contrary here to our senses. And that is why in the Tantum Ergo that we sing, say, at benediction, "Praestet fides supplementum sensuum defectui," -- "Let faith supply for what is wanting by the senses." The senses perceive only what looks like bread. They perceive only what, well, tastes like wine. But once the words of consecration are pronounced, there is no longer any bread or wine! That's our Catholic faith! The external (we call them accidents) of

what looks like bread and tastes like wine are there, but no longer any bread or any wine.

Christ's resurrection, therefore, meant that the same Jesus Who was conceived of His virgin mother at Nazareth, having died, was reunited in His body and soul as a man, and is now on earth in the Holy Eucharist. That is why (and I cannot overemphasize), that Jesus, before He died, made sure that He would remain on earth, and that's why He instituted two sacraments on Holy Thursday night, two sacraments: the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and the sacrament of the priesthood. In other words, Jesus wanted to make sure that the night before He died, He would confer the power that He alone as God possessed, on those whom then, on that same Holy Thursday night, He would ordain as bishops and priests, conferring on them the power to do what He had done, by changing bread and wine into His own living flesh and blood, and then conferring the further power on the Apostles to continue ordaining bishops and priests until the end of time.

Thanks to the priesthood, we have the Holy Eucharist. And thanks to the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is in our midst. He's the same Jesus Who was carried by His mother on her visit to Elizabeth, as Elizabeth, remember, has claimed, "Who am I, that the mother of my Lord should visit me?" Mary was the first tabernacle, and, as the Church teaches, the words of our Lady to Elizabeth, with Christ in Mary's womb, Mary's words sanctified the unborn John in his mother's womb, to insure again as the Church tells us, though conceived in sin, John the Baptist was born without sin, thanks to Mary's greeting at the Visitation.

It is the same Jesus who was born in Bethlehem on Christmas morning, and the same One presented in the Temple forty days after His birth. I recommend reading the seven letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch (died 107 A.D.). Ignatius of Loyola was not Ignatius until after his conversion. He changed his name to Ignatius in imitation of Ignatius of Antioch, hoping like Ignatius he too would die a martyr's death. In the seven letters that Ignatius of Antioch wrote, he speaks in the clearest, unambiguous language about Jesus in the Holy Eucharist being the same identical Jesus Who was born at Bethlehem, and Who died on the Cross. How we need to recover the face of that early Church of martyrs in our day!

So we could go on to the fifteen decades of the rosary, and at each decade, we could say, is the same Jesus Christ, then and now, there and here? What do we mean by now? We mean today, at this moment. Whatever do we mean by here? We mean wherever we have the Blessed Sacrament. God made sure He would be geographically present in a place! As Mary held Him in her arms, well, where was He? Well, there in her arms! Our faith tells us He is the same Jesus here on earth, in the Eucharist, Who is now in Heaven. He is the same Jesus, the same identical Jesus. By now we know so sadly, that in book after book on the sacraments, on the Eucharist, on the liturgy, and in all kinds of statements, that there so many lacking the clarity, the un-qualifying clarity that Jesus Christ is on earth, the same identical Jesus,

who was born Bethlehem, died on Calvary, and is now at the right hand of His Father. The only difference (how this needs to be said!), and in teaching priests, or giving retreats to priests, make sure you understand, I tell these priests, and explain this that people, the only difference between Christ in Heaven and Christ on earth in the Eucharist is in us, and not in Him.

In Palestine, during His visible stay on earth, the people could see only a man, yet they were expected to believe that that man was God. Remember when Jesus had, shall I say the gall to say to His fellow Nazarenes in the synagogue (remember?), in Isaiah foretelling the Messiah, put down the scroll and said, "My dear fellow Nazarenes, what I've just read to you is being fulfilled before your eyes. I'm the Messiah." Do you know what happened? They rushed to the podium, picked Him up (He allowed Himself to be picked up), carried Him to the brow of the hill, you wouldn't know that Nazareth had a hill, except they took Him to the brow of the hill and were going to throw Him down. For believing Jews knew the Messiah, would be God incarnate.

In the Eucharist, we see only what (I repeat), looks like bread, tastes like wine, for faith tells us it is *not* bread and wine. One last word on our statement that except for Mary there will be no Eucharist. Of course unless Mary had given Him His flesh and blood, He could not at the Last Supper have said, "This is My body...This is My blood," and when He had instituted the priesthood to perpetuate the Eucharist, that Jesus Christ would not be now on earth in His human nature except for His mother, Mary. No less than *our* souls, so the human soul of Christ had to be directly and immediately created by God. All our bodies come from our parents. Christ's body (how I need to say this), came uniquely from Mary, because Christ, unlike us, did not have a human father. So much for the first statement.

No Adoration of Christ on Earth Without Mary

Our next affirmation: No adoration of Christ on earth without Mary. As we read the gospels, we are struck by the spontaneous adoration of Jesus by those who believed that He was, indeed, God Himself in human form. At the calling of the Apostles, remember, Nathaniel told Jesus, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel," thus professing both Christ's divinity and His humanity. In Caesarea Philippi, where Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter spoke up for the others and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Before the raising of her brother Lazarus from the dead, when Jesus told Martha if she believed that He was the Resurrection and the Life, she said, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, Who hath come into the world." On Calvary, the moment Jesus expired on the Cross, the centurion who stood facing Him, exclaimed, "Truly, this *man* was the Son of God." Then, on the eighth day after His resurrection, the Savior appeared to the