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# *Marian Mariology*

## Chapter 11



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 11**

### **The Blessed Virgin and the Eucharist-Part I**

*by Fr. John A Hardon, S.J.*

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In every case when believers proclaimed their faith in Jesus Christ, they were speaking to a man who had a human body, human eyes and lips and ears. They were adoring a man indeed but a man who they believed was also 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. In the Holy Eucharist is present the whole Christ, true God and true Man. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who existed in the bosom of the Father from all eternity. But Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is God become-man, who was conceived and born in time of His virginal Mother Mary.

That is why, over the centuries the Church bids us, say the same words to Our Lord in the Eucharist that Thomas said to Him on the Sunday after Easter, "MY Lord and MY God." Why? Because in the Eucharist we adore the same Son of Mary who, we know, is our Creator and Lord.

## Prayer

Mary Mother of God, except for you we would not have Jesus and except for you we would not have the 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.

End

## Grace from the Eucharist to Imitate Mary

We commonly and correctly speak of Eucharistic adoration. This is true. It is also the main reason why Our Lord is with us in the Blessed Sacrament, that we might give Him the faithful adoration He deserves as our Incarnate God.

But during His visible stay on earth, Jesus was not only worshipped and adored. He was also, and fervently asked for every kind of help.

And whenever people asked for what they needed, 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 approach Him in faith.

No less than for the contemporaries of Jesus in the first century in Palestine there is no limit to our needs. As a matter of fact, that is why in God's providence, He makes sure we do have needs. Why is that? So we might come to ask Him for His assistance and receive from His goodness the blessings for which we have prayed.

Keep in mind it's the selfsame Jesus now on earth in the Eucharist who during His visible stay in Palestine healed the sick and gave sight to the blind, speech to the mute and restored hearing to the deaf. It is now the same Jesus who delivered those possessed by the devil and even raised the dead back to life.

Yes, Jesus the Son of Mary is in the Blessed Sacrament not only, or mainly, to provide for our physical or temporal needs. He is here mainly to give us the graces we need for our souls. And what are the graces that we mostly need?

- We need the light and strength that only He can give to enable us to overcome sin.
- We need His supernatural help to practice the virtue of charity, in loving God as He deserves and loving others patiently and mercifully out of love for Him.

What are we saying? We are admitting our sinfulness, that we are always prone to sin, and therefore need divine help to overcome temptation so that we may gain sanctity. We are admitting our selfishness, and therefore need constant divine help to gain in charity.

Where can we obtain this divine help if not from Jesus Christ, and especially from Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

## Growth in Sanctity

All the great Eucharistic saints of history testify to the power available to us to become holy. The secret is to know where to obtain this power. Where is that? In the Blessed Sacrament. Let me quote a short paragraph from Saint Peter Julian Eymard.

*Do not going looking for our Lord in heaven He is much nearer to you. It is a good thing no doubt, to yearn towards His throne from time to time and to desire His glory. But in ordinary practice of life, it is necessary that you should have Him nearer to you. It is in the Blessed Sacrament that you should look for and find Him.*

(The Eucharist and Christian Perfection, I, pp 92-93)

This is the language of those who have learned from experience how important or better, indispensable is prayer before the Blessed Sacrament to obtain the graces we so desperately need to avoid sin and grow in holiness.

## Growth in Charity

No less than our progress in sanctity, so our growth in charity depends on the Holy Eucharist.

It is mainly from the sacrifice of the Mass. Holy Communion and the Real Presence that we obtain the means we need to practice the virtue of selfless love of others which is the principle way we show our love for God. Remove the Eucharist and it becomes impossible to live up to Christ's humanly impossible commandment to love one another as Christ had loved us.

It is no coincidence but part of divine Providence that Jesus did two things on the night before He died:

- He gave us the New Commandment of heroic charity, as the sign of being His followers, and
- He gave us the Holy Eucharist.

The one stands by the other. We shall be only as patient, and kind, and generous, and charitable as we are living Eucharistic lives. We speak of the POWER of selfless love. We could just as well speak of the virtue of the Eucharist. Why? Because it is the Eucharist that mainly gives us the Power to give ourselves to others in self-denying charity.

## The Imitation of Mary

We began this conference by saying that except for Our Lady we would not have the Holy Eucharist. We end the conference by saying that except for the Eucharist we could not imitate Mary who is the perfect model for the imitation of Christ.

We have become so accustomed to use the title "Immaculate Heart of Mary" that we may not fully realize what we are saying.

- We are saying that during her life on earth Mary was immaculate because she was absolutely sinless.
- We are saying that Mary was the most loving human person who ever lived, and because the Heart of Mary was always united with the Heart of her Divine Son.

On both levels, our task in this world is to strive – and struggle – to become more sinless, which means more holy; and become more loving which means more selfless, after the example of Mary.

Like us, and unlike us, her Son, Mary had to live by faith. How was she sustained in her sanctity through life, and in her practice of charity? By the presence of Jesus all through her days on earth.

Jesus was with Mary, in His visible humanity, from the moment of His conception at Nazareth until His glorious Ascension at Jerusalem.

Jesus was with Mary, in His invisible humanity in the Eucharist, from the time of His Ascension until her glorious Assumption into heaven.

We shall become more Mary-like, and therefore more Christ-life, we draw strength from the same source that she did, from Jesus Christ who is with us in the Holy Eucharist.

When Jesus told the disciples "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28), He was speaking to us today. We are laboring and are heavily burdened. Where can we find the grace to be at peace in this valley of tears? In the Holy Eucharist, where Jesus is really present and wants us to be present too.