

Week 13: December 8, 2009
EDU 603
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Bonus Question for Final Exam (optional): *What is the Immaculate Conception? What is the biblical basis for this definition? In addition to your treatment of the Immaculate Conception, select two verses discussed in class and briefly describe ways in which Mary takes on the role as mediating the presence of her Son.*

- XVI. Liturgical season as a Catechism:** What the CCC is for Catholics, the liturgical season was for ancient Judaism. All the inherent truth of Judaism was contained within their liturgical feast days. In fact, Judaism is one of the few faiths, if not the only faith, that does not have a catechism.
- a. The great Rabbi Hirsch (1800's) was once asked: "Why don't you have a Catechism?" His response: "Our calendar is our catechism". The catechism of the Jew consists in God's calendar, where he inscribes timeless truths in days, weeks, months, and years...they become heralds of covenant truth.
 - i. In a more than similar way, our own Catholic liturgical calendar is a catechism not written on pages, but written in days, weeks, months, years...timeless truths are carved into the time signature of our calendar.
 1. *"Just as in nature all the seasons are arranged in such ways as to make the humblest daisy bloom on a set day, in the same way, everything works for the good of each soul."*
--St. Therese of Lisieux

- XVII. Immaculate Conception.** In 1854, Blessed Pius IX declared Mary from the first instant of her conception, immune from all stain of sin through the merits of Jesus Christ (cf. CCC, 490-493). There are several scriptural passages that affirm her stainlessness.
- a. Lk.1.28... *"Hail full of grace"* (Gk.) **kecharetomene**. This is a perfect participle, which means it is an action completed in the past. The Latin is **gracia plena**, which actually means *"to grace or to endow."* This angelic greeting points to her Immaculate Conception as she was endowed with the fullness of grace from the beginning. Mary became impregnated with grace through her ear...Lk.1.35.
 - i. Gn.18.3...Sarah *"found grace"* ... Mary was full of grace!!!
 - b. Mt.1.22 ... *"God is with us"*... Mary bringing forth God's son. Jesus is honoring the fourth commandment. Hb. translation for the word honor is "the glory of God," the Immaculate Conception is the glory of God...magnificat.
 - i. Ex.3.1...Burning bush of Moses-holding the presence of God without corruption. The future motherhood of Mary as she holds Jesus without corruption.

- c. Gn.3.15... *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers."* – protoevangelium, or the first gospel. Pius XII remarks that enmity would not be complete if there was the slightest stain of Mary. As Eve was the instrumental cause of the loss of grace, so Mary was the instrumental cause of the restoration of grace.

- XVIII. Mary as mediator.** What is a mediator? The term mediator comes from the Greek *mesites*, meaning “one who is in the middle to resolve differences between two parties, to help them work toward a common end”. This term is seen six times in the NT with two references to the mediation of Moses (cf. Gal.3:19-20). In principle it speaks to the mediation, par excellence, in Christ. Just as Moses was the mediator who stood in the gap between Israel and YHWH, so Christ is a more perfect mediator who stands in the gap between man and Abba, because he unites humanity with divinity. He thus establishes the more perfect covenant with man that Mary has a unique participation in.
- a. Mary’s mediation in Scripture. The citations of Mary in the New Testament reveal the teachings of Mary as evolved over two thousand years. She is not seen more because it was pre-eminent that the message of redemption through Jesus Christ be delivered. I will emphasize the principle of mediation in each passage. Recall, that Mary's mediation is bound by intercession and in this same way we participate in the plan of redemption by interceding on behalf of the Kingdom of God!
 - i. Lk.1.26-38 (Annunciation). Our salvation began with the words *“hail full of grace ”* so it is right we pray these words for our own salvation.
 - 1. a. She is a model in surrender and submission to God's will.
 - ii. Lk.1.39-56 (Visitation). Mary brings her son with her whenever she is called upon in prayer.
 - 1. Lk.1.48 (Magnificat)... *“My soul magnifies the Lord.”* We are called to pray these same words.
 - iii. Lk.2.4-20 (Nativity). Mary brings forth our savior into human history. Mediating his physical presence!
 - iv. Jn.2.1-11 (Wedding Feast at Cana). After Mary's request to *“do whatever he tells you”*, he performs the miraculous.
 - 1. These are her last words, which mediate divinity.
 - 2. *“What have you to do with me?”* This is an idiom- something that cannot be understood from its face value elements...not the literal.
 - v. Jn.19.25-27 (Mary at Calvary). Jesus words *“Woman behold your son, son behold your mother”* reveals that she is to be our spiritual mother .
 - 1. No mother being praised for her son's achievements in battle takes away from her son's achievements. Therefore, it is the same with Jesus and Mary.
 - 2. Rev.12.17 and Gal.3.29...same Gk. Word used which means a spiritual maternity.

3. John's biological mother was at the cross. Why would Christ give John as our mother if it did not take on some cosmic significance? John was a writer that was always considering the bigger picture.
- vi. Acts 1.13-2.4 (Mary in the Upper Room). Mary's presence is bringing down the spirit.
1. Nm. 11.24...elders bringing down the spirit.
 2. 1 Kings 18.24...Elijah bringing down fire.
 3. Gn.11...Reverses the fortunes of the tower of Babel with the gift of tongues.
- vii. Rev.12.1 (Mary clothed with the sun)... “*Mary is clothed with the sun with a moon under her feet and crowned with 12 stars.*” Mary is clothed with the sun of her son and has the moon underneath her feet because she reflects her son without diminishing it.
1. Queenship in antiquity represents one fundamental action-mediation on behalf of her son. She is the queen mother!
 2. Mary is depicted as being clothed with the host of heavens...sun, moon, and 12 stars. These hosts often set the compass to feast days in the Old Testament. Mary mediating the heavenly feast/banquet.
 3. Gn.37.9...Joseph's dream involves the sun, moon, stars, the 12 brothers bowing down...prefigures Mary.