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THE MYSTICAL  
**CITY OF GOD**

THE DIVINE HISTORY AND LIFE  
OF THE  
VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD

MANIFESTED TO MARY OF AGREDA  
FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF MEN

—VOLUME ONE—  
**The Conception**





# BOOK ONE

**Treats of the Divine Fore-Ordainment of Christ and His Mother as the  
Highest Ideals of all Creation; of the Creation of the Angels and  
Men as their Servants; of the Lineage of the Just Men,  
Finally Resulting in the Immaculate Conception and  
Birth of the Queen of Heaven; and of Her Life  
up to Her Presentation in the Temple.**

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## CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING TWO SPECIAL VISIONS VOUCHSAFED TO MY SOUL BY THE LORD AND CONCERNING OTHER ENLIGHTENMENTS AND MYSTERIES, WHICH COMPELLED ME TO WITHDRAW FROM EARTHLY THINGS AND RAISED MY SPIRIT TO DWELL ABOVE THE EARTH.

1. I confess to Thee (Matth. 11, 25) and magnify Thee, King Most High, that in thy exalted Majesty Thou hast hidden these high mysteries from the wise and from the teachers, and in thy condescension hast revealed them to me, the most insignificant and useless slave of thy Church, in order that Thou mayest be the more admired as the omnipotent Author of this history in proportion as its instrument is despicable and weak.

2. After I had overcome the above mentioned reluctance and disorderly fears which caused so much timid hesitation, lest I suffer shipwreck in that sea of marvels, the most exalted Lord caused me to feel a virtue from on high, strong, sweet, efficacious and gentle; an enlightenment which illumined the intellect, subjected the rebellious will, tranquillizing, directing, governing and attracting the whole range of interior and exterior senses, thus

subjecting my entire being to the will and pleasure of the Most High and directing it in all things toward his honor and glory alone. Being thus prepared, I heard a voice from the Almighty, which called me and raised me up toward Him, exalting my dwelling-place on high (Ecclus. 51, 13) and strengthening me against the lions, that hungrily roared about me in order to snatch my soul from the enjoyment of great blessings in the boundless mysteries of this holy Tabernacle and City of God. Surrounded by the sorrows of death and perdition (Ps. 17, 5) and beset by the flames of Sodom and Babylon, in which we live, it liberated me from the portals of sorrow, into which I was enticed to enter. My enemies, forming visions of fallacious and deceitful delights for the misleading of my senses and the capture of them by pretended pleasures, set their allurements about me, in order that I might blindly turn toward these flames and be consumed by them. But from all these snares, laid for my footsteps (Ps. 56, 7), the Most High has delivered me, elevating my spirit and teaching me by the most efficacious admonitions the way of perfection. He invited me to a life spiritualized and angelic, and obliged me to live so cautiously, that in the midst of the furnace, the fire touched me not (Eccli. 51, 6). He often liberated me from the impure tongue, when it sought to communicate to me its earthly fables (Ps. 118, 85). His Majesty invited me to rise from the dust and littleness of the law of sin, to resist the defections of sin-infected nature and restrain its disorders, combatting them by his enlightening inspirations and raising myself above myself (Lam. 3, 28). He called me repeatedly, sometimes by the power of his omnipotence, sometimes with the correction of a Father, and at others with the love of a Spouse, saying: Arise, my dove, creation of my hands, make haste and come to Me (Cant. 2, 10),

who am the light and the way (John 8, 12), he that follows Me, walks not in darkness. Come to Me, who am the secure truth, and unchangeable holiness, to Me, who am the Powerful and the Wise, and the Teacher of those that follow wisdom (Wis. 7, 15).

3. These words were like arrows of sweet love, which filled me with admiration, reverence, knowledge and dread of my sins and of my vileness, so that I retired from his presence, shrunken and annihilated in the knowledge of my nothingness. And the Lord spoke to me: "Come, O soul, come to Me, who am thy omnipotent God, and although thou hast been a prodigal child and a sinner, arise from the earth and come to Me, thy Father; receive the stole of my friendship and the ring of a spouse."

4. Still remaining in that secure retreat of which I have spoken, I saw on a certain day, six angels, whom the Almighty had appointed to assist and guide me in this undertaking and in other dangers. Coming toward me, they purified and prepared my soul, and then presented me before the Lord. His Majesty gave to my interior being a new light and, as it were, a participation in glory, by which I was made capable and desirous of seeing and understanding the things, which are above the powers of a mere terrestrial creature. Soon after, two other angels, of a still higher order, appeared to me and I felt within me the power of the Lord by which they called me. I understood that they were most mysterious envoys and that they wished to reveal to me high and hidden sacraments. Eagerly I responded, and desirous of enjoying the blessing which they pointed out to me, I declared to them, how ardently I longed to see what they wished to show me and yet so mysteriously concealed from me. Then they at once answered with great seren-

ity: "Restrain thyself, O soul." I turned to the great princes of heaven and said: "Princes of the Almighty and messengers of the great King! Why do you now detain me contrary to my will and why do you defer my joy and my delight, after you have called me? What force is this of yours, and what power, which calls me, fills me with fervor, which allures and yet detains me, which attracts me to follow after the odor of my beloved Lord and of his ointments, and yet restrains me with strong bonds? Tell me the cause of all this!" They answered: "Because, in order to be instructed in all these mysteries, thou must needs, O soul, come with bare feet and despoiled of all thy desires and passions; for these mysteries do not accommodate or lend themselves to disordered inclinations. Take off thy shoes like Moses (Exodus 3, 5), for such was the command given to him before he could see the wonderful bush." "Princes of heaven and my lords," I answered, "much was asked of Moses, when he received the command to perform the works of an angel while yet living in mortal flesh: but he was a saint, and I am but a sinner full of miseries. My heart is disturbed and I am in conflict with the slavery and the oppression of sin, which I feel in my members, and which are opposed to the law of the spirit" (Rom. 7, 23). To which they rejoined: "Soul, it would indeed be for thee a most difficult enterprise, if thou hadst to execute it merely with thy own power; but the Most High, who wishes to see in thee this disposition, is powerful, and He will not deny to thee his help, if from thy heart thou ask his assistance and thou prepare thyself to receive it. And his power, which caused the bush to burn and at the same time prevented it from being consumed, can prevent also the fire of the passions which encompass and beset the soul, from consuming it, if it

truly desires to be saved. His Majesty asks for that which He desires, and can execute what He asks. Strengthened by Him, thou canst do that which He commands (Phil. 4, 13); take off thy shoes and weep in bitter sorrow, call out to Him from the bottom of thy heart, in order that thy prayers may be heard and thy desires fulfilled."

5. Presently I saw a most precious veil covering a treasure and my heart burned with desire to see it raised and to look upon the sacred mystery which I understood was hidden beneath. My desire was answered in the following manner: "Obey, O soul, in what was enjoined and commanded thee; despoil thyself of thyself, and then this mystery will be revealed to thee." I resolved to amend my life and to overcome my appetite; I sighed and wept with many aspirations from my inmost soul for the manifestation of this blessing. While I made my good resolves, the veil which covered the treasure, began to be lifted. Presently the veil fell entirely and my interior eyes saw what I shall not know how to describe in words. I saw a great and mysterious sign in heaven; I saw a Woman, a most beautiful Lady and Queen, crowned with the stars, clothed with the sun, and the moon was at her feet (Apoc. 12, 1). The holy angels spoke to me: "This is that blessed Woman, whom Saint John saw in the Apocalypse, and in whom are enclosed, deposited and sealed up the wonderful mysteries of the Redemption. So much has the most high and powerful God favored this Creature, that we, his angelic spirits, are full of astonishment. Contemplate and admire her prerogatives, record them in writing, because that is the purpose for which, according to the measure suitable to thy circumstances, they will be made manifest to thee." I was made to see such wonders, that the

THE MYSTICAL  
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MANIFESTED TO MARY OF AGREDA  
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—VOLUME TWO—

The Incarnation



# BOOK ONE

## BOOK III, I OF II PART

**Contains the most Exquisite Preparations of the Almighty for the Incarnation of the Word in Mary most Holy; the Circumstances Accompanying this Mystery; the Exalted State, in which the Blessed Mother was placed; her Visit to Saint Elisabeth and the Sanctification of the Baptist: Her Return to Nazareth and a Memorable Battle of the Virgin with Lucifer**

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### CHAPTER I.

THE MOST HIGH BEGINS TO PREPARE IN MOST HOLY MARY THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION ; THE EVENTS OF THE NINE DAYS PRECEDING THIS MYSTERY, ESPECIALLY THE HAPPENINGS OF THE FIRST DAY.

1. In order that her most faultless life might be to all an example of the highest holiness, the Most High had placed upon our Queen and Mistress the duties of a spouse of saint Joseph which was a position requiring more intercourse with her neighbors. The heavenly Mistress, finding Herself in this new estate, was filled with such exalted thoughts and sentiments in the fulfillment of her duties, and ordered all the activities of her life with such wisdom, that She was an object of admirable emulation to the angelic spirits and an unparalleled example for men. Few knew Her and still fewer had spoken with Her : but these happy ones were so filled with that celestial influence of Mary, that with a wonderful joy and with unwonted flights of spirit they sought to express and

manifest the light, which illumined their hearts and which they knew came from Her. The most prudent Queen was not unaware of these operations of the Most High; but neither was it yet time, nor would her most profound humility as yet consent to their becoming known to the world. She continually besought the Lord to hide them from men, to make all the favors of his right hand redound solely to his praise, and to permit Her to be ignored and despised by all the mortals, in as far as his infinite goodness would not be offended thereby.

2. These prayers were accepted by her divine Spouse with great benignity and his providence arranged all things in such a manner, that the very light, which incited men to proclaim her greatness, at the same time caused them to be mute. Moved by divine power, they refrained from expressing their thoughts, inwardly praising the Lord for the light, which they felt within themselves. Filled with marvel they suspended their judgment, and leaving behind the creatures, they sought their Creator. Many turned from sin at the mere sight of Her; others amended their lives; all were affected at seeing Her and experienced heavenly influences in their souls. But immediately they forgot the source of these influences; for if they could have remained in her presence, or could have retained the memory of her image, and if God had not prevented it by a mystery, nothing would have been able to divert their attention from Her and all would have sought Her without wavering.

3. In such fruitful occupations and in augmenting the gifts and graces from which all this good proceeded, our Queen, the Spouse of Joseph, busied Herself during the six months and seventeen days, which intervened between her espousal and the Incarnation of the Word. I cannot pretend to refer even briefly to her great heroic acts of



all the virtues, interior and exterior, to all her deeds of charity, humility, religion, and all her works of mercy, the alms and benefactions; for this exceeds the power of the pen. The best I can do is to sum up and say: that the Most High found in most holy Mary the fulfillment of all his pleasure and of his wishes, as far as is possible in the correspondence of a creature with its Creator. By her sanctity and merits God felt Himself as it were obliged, and, (according to our way of speaking), compelled, to hasten his steps and extend the arms of his Omnipotence to bring about the greatest of wonders conceivable in the world before or after: namely the Incarnation of the Onlybegotten of the Father in the virginal womb of this Lady.

4. In order to proceed with a dignity befitting Himself, God prepared most holy Mary in a singular manner during the nine days immediately preceding this mystery, and allowed the river of his Divinity to rush impetuously forth (Psalm 45, 5) to inundate this City of God with its floods. He communicated such great graces and gifts and favors, that I am struck dumb by the perception of what has been made known to me concerning this miracle, and my lowliness is filled with dread at even the mention of what I understood. For the tongue, the pen, and all the faculties of a creature fall far below any possibility of revealing such incomprehensible sacraments. Therefore I wish it to be understood, that all I say here is only an insignificant shadow of the smallest part of these wonders and ineffable prodigies, which are not at all to be encompassed by our limited words, but only by the power divine, which I do not possess.

5. On the first day of this most blessed novena the heavenly Princess Mary, after a slight rest, according to the example of her father David and according to the

diurnal order and arrangement laid out for Her by the Lord, left her couch at midnight (Psalm 118, 62), and, prostrate in the presence of the Most High, commenced her accustomed prayer and holy exercises. The angels, who attended upon Her, spoke to Her and said: "Spouse of our King and Lord, arise, for his Majesty calls Thee." She raised Herself with fervent affection and answered: "The Lord commands the dust to raise itself from the dust." And turning toward the countenance of the Lord, who called Her, She added: "Most high and powerful Master, what wishest Thou to do with me?" At these words her most holy soul was raised in spirit to a new and higher habitation, closer to the same Lord and more remote from all earthly and passing things.

6. She felt at once, that She was being prepared by those illuminations and purifications, which at other times She had experienced in some of the most exalted visions of the Divinity. I do not dwell on them, since I have described them in the first part (Part I, 620-629). The Divinity manifested Itself not by an intuitive, but by an abstractive vision; however so clearly, that by it She understood more of this incomprehensible Object, than what the blessed see and enjoy by intuition. For this vision was more exalted and more profound than the others of that kind; since this heavenly Lady made Herself more capable day by day and, because She made such perfect use of graces, She disposed Herself for ever greater ones. Moreover, the repeated enlightenments and visions of the Divinity continually enabled Her to respond more and more befittingly to its infinite operations.

7. In this vision our Princess Mary learned most high secrets of the Divinity and of its perfections, and especially of God's communications *ad extra* in the work of

creation. She saw that it originated in the goodness and liberality of God, that creatures were not necessary for supplementing his Divine existence, nor for his infinite glory, since without them He was glorious through the interminable eternities before the creation of the world. Many sacraments and secrets were manifested to our Queen, which neither can nor should be made known to all; for She alone was the only One (Cant. 6, 8; 7, 6), the chosen One, selected by the highest King and Lord of creation for these delights. But as her Highness in this vision perceived this impulse and inclination of the Divinity to communicate Itself *ad extra* with a force greater than that which makes all the elements tend toward their center, and as She was drawn within the sphere of this divine love, She besought the eternal Father with heart aflame, that He send his Onlybegotten into the world and give salvation to men, since in this manner He should satisfy, and, (speaking humanly), execute the promptings of his Divinity and its perfections.

8. These petitions of his Spouse were very sweet to the Lord, they were the scarlet lace, with which She bound and secured his love. And in order to put his desires into execution He sought first to prepare the tabernacle or temple, whither He was to descend from the bosom of the eternal Father. He resolved to furnish his beloved and chosen Mother with a clear knowledge of all his works *ad extra*, just as his Omnipotence had made them. On the first day therefore, and in this same vision, He manifested to Her all that He had made on the first day of the creation of the world, as it is recorded in Genesis, and She perceived all with greater clearness and comprehension, than if She had been an eye-witness; for She knew them first as they are in God, and then as they are in themselves.

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—VOLUME THREE—  
**The Transfixion**



# BOOK ONE

BOOK V, III OF II PART

Concerning the Perfection with which the most Holy Mary copied and imitated the Activity of the Soul of Christ; how the Incarnate Word instructed Her in the Laws of grace, the Articles of Faith, the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments; and with what Alacrity and Noble Promptitude She Corresponded. Also concerning the Death of Saint Joseph, the Preaching of Saint John, the Fasting and the Baptism of our Redeemer, the call of the First Disciples and the Baptism of the Virgin Mary, our Blessed Lady

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## CHAPTER I.

THE LORD STILL FARTHER TRIES THE MOST HOLY MARY BY ACTING TOWARD HER WITH A CERTAIN DISTANCE AND SEVERITY; THE REASONS FOR THIS BEHAVIOR ARE EXPLAINED.

1.\* Already Jesus, Mary and Joseph had settled in Nazareth and thus changed their poor and humble dwelling into a heaven. In order to describe the mysteries and sacraments which passed between the divine Child and his purest Mother before his twelfth year and later on, until his public preaching, many chapters and many books would be required; and in them all, I would be able to relate but the smallest part in view of the vastness of the subject and the insignificance of such an ignorant woman as I am. Even with the light given me by this great Lady I can speak of only a few incidents and must leave the greater part unsaid. It is not possible or befitting to us mortals to comprehend all these mysteries in this life, since they are reserved for the future life.

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\*To find corresponding paragraphs in the new Spanish edition add 711 to each of the paragraph numbers of this volume.

2. Shortly after their return from Egypt to Nazareth the Lord resolved to try his most holy Mother in the same manner as He had tried Her in her childhood and as was mentioned in the second book of the first part, chapter twenty-seventh. Although She was now vastly grown in the exercise of her love and wisdom, yet as the power of God and the object of divine charity is infinite, and as moreover the capacity of the Queen exceeded that of all creatures, the Lord wished to raise Her to a higher level of holiness and merit. Moreover, being a true Educator of the spirit, He wished to form of Her a disciple of such exalted knowledge, that She would truly be for us a consummate Teacher and a living example of his own doctrines. For such was to be her office after the ascension of her Son and Redeemer, as I will relate in the third part. It was also befitting and necessary for the honor of Christ, our Redeemer, that the teaching of the Gospel, by which and on which He was to found the law of grace, holy, immaculate and without a wrinkle, should give full evidence of its efficacy and power in a mere creature, and that all its adequate and supereminent effects should be exhibited in some one, who could be a standard for all men. It is clear, that this creature could be none else than the most blessed Mary, who, as his Mother, stood so close to the Master and Teacher of all holiness.

3. The Most High therefore resolved that the heavenly Lady should be the first disciple of his school and the first-born Daughter of the new Law of grace, the most perfect copy of his ideals and the most pliant material, upon which, as on liquid wax, should be set the seal of his doctrine of holiness, so that the Son and the Mother might be the two true tablets of the new law of the world (Exod. 31, 18). For this purpose of the infinite

wisdom He manifested to Her all the mysteries of the evangelical law and of his doctrine; and this was the subject of his instructions from the time of their return from Egypt until his public preaching, as we shall see in the course of this history. In these hidden sacraments the incarnate Word and his holy Mother occupied themselves during the twenty-three years of their stay in Nazareth. As all this concerned the heavenly Mother alone (whose life the holy Evangelists did not profess to narrate), the writers of the Gospel made no mention of it, excepting that which was related of the Child Jesus, when, in his twelfth year, He was lost in Jerusalem. During all those years Mary alone was the disciple of Christ. In addition therefore to the ineffable gifts of grace and holiness, which He had conferred upon Her until their arrival in Nazareth, He infused into Her new light and made Her a participant in his divine knowledge, depositing and engraving into her heart the whole law and doctrine of grace, which to the end of the world was to be dispensed by his holy Church. This was moreover effected in such an exalted manner that no human thought or words can express it; and the great Lady was thereby filled with such wisdom and knowledge, that it would suffice to enlighten many worlds, if there were more than one.

4. In order to rear in the heart of the purest Virgin this edifice of holiness to a height beyond all that is not God, the Lord laid its foundations accordingly, trying the strength of her love and of all her other virtues. For this purpose the Lord withdrew Himself, causing Her to lose Him from her sight, which until then had caused Her to revel in continual joy and delight. I do not wish to say, that the Lord left Her bodily; but, still remaining with Her and in Her by an ineffable presence and grace,

He hid Himself from her interior sight and suspended the tokens of his most sweet affection. The heavenly Lady in the meanwhile knew not the inward cause of this behavior, as the Lord gave Her no explanation. Moreover her divine Son, without any forewarning showed Himself very reserved and withdrew from her society. Many times He retired and spoke but few words to Her, and even these with great earnestness and majesty. But what was apt to afflict Her most, was the eclipse of the light by which She was wont to see reflected as in a crystal the human operations of his most pure soul. This light was suddenly dimmed so much, that She could not thenceforth distinguish them as a living copy for her own actions.

5. This unannounced and unexpected change was the crucible in which the purest gold of the love of our Queen was cleansed and assayed. Surprised at what was happening, She immediately took refuge in the humble opinion She had of Herself, deeming Herself unworthy of the vision of the Lord, who now had hidden Himself. She attributed it all to her want of correspondence and to her ingratitude for the blessings She had obtained from the most generous and exalted Father of mercies. The most prudent Queen did not feel so much the privation of his delightful caresses, as the dread of having displeased Him and of having fallen short in his service. This was the arrow that pierced her heart with grief. One filled with such true and noble love could not feel less; for all delight of love is founded in the pleasure and satisfaction given by the lover to the one beloved, and therefore He cannot rest, when he suspects that the beloved is not contented or pleased. The loving sighs of his Mother were highly pleasing to her most holy Son. He was enamored with Her anew and the tender



affection of his only and chosen One wounded his heart (Cant. 4, 9). But whenever the sweet Mother sought Him out in order to hold converse with Him He continued to show exterior reserve. Just as the flame of a forge or a conflagration is intensified by the application of insufficient water, so the flame of love in the heart of the sweetest Mother was fanned to an intenser blaze by this adversity.

6. The single-hearted Dove exercised Herself in heroic acts of all the virtues. She humbled Herself below the dust; She revered Her Son in deepest adoration; She blessed the Father, thanking Him for his admirable works and blessings and conforming Herself to his wishes and pleasure; She sought to know his will in order to fulfill it in all things; She unceasingly renewed her acts of faith, hope and burning love; and in all her actions and in all circumstances this most fragrant spike-nard gave forth the odor of sweetness for Him, the King of kings, who rested in her heart as in his flowery and perfumed couch (Cant. 1, 11). She persevered in her tearful prayers, with continual sighing and longing from her inmost heart; She poured forth her prayers in the presence of the Lord and recounted her tribulation before the throne of the God (Ps. 141, 3). And many times She broke out in words of ineffable sweetness and loving sorrow, such as these:

7. "Creator of all the universe," She would say, "eternal and almighty God, infinite is thy wisdom and goodness, incomprehensible in essence and perfection: well do I know that my sighs are not hidden to Thee and that Thou knowest of the wound that pierces my heart. If as a useless handmaid I have fallen short in thy service and in pleasing Thee, why, O Life of my soul, dost Thou not afflict me and chastise me with all

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# BOOK ONE

## PART III, BOOK VII

**How the divine Right Hand showered upon the Queen of Heaven highest Gifts, in order that She might labor in the holy Church; the Coming of the Holy Ghost; the copious Fruit of the Redemption and the Preaching of the Apostles; the first Persecution of the Church, the Conversion of saint Paul and the arrival of saint James in Spain; the Apparition of the Mother of God in Saragossa, and the Founding of the Pilgrimage of our Lady of the Pillar.**

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## CHAPTER I.

**OUR SAVIOR JESUS REMAINS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE ETERNAL FATHER, WHILE THE MOST HOLY MARY DESCENDS FROM HEAVEN TO THE EARTH, IN ORDER THAT, WITH HER ASSISTANCE AND INSTRUCTION, THE NEW CHURCH MIGHT BE FOUNDED.**

1. In finishing the second part of this history I showed how our great Queen and Lady, most holy Mary, was privileged by God to be miraculously present in body at two places, in the Cenacle as well as in the empyrean heavens, where She was seated at the right hand of her Son and eternal God (Ps. 44, 10) ; how, in order to make his glorious Ascension more wonderful, the Son of God and of the Virgin, took Her with Him for the purpose of putting Her in possession of the ineffable rewards She had until then merited and to assign Her the place, which, for her past and future merits, He had prepared for Her from all eternity. I said also, that the three Persons of the most blessed Trinity left it to the free

choice of the heavenly Mother either to return to the world for the consolation of the first children of the Church and for its foundation, or permanently to establish Herself even then in the most blessed state and remain in the possession of the glory They had conferred upon Her. For, conditional to her choice and in pursuance of the great love They had for this peerless Creature, the will of the divine Persons inclined toward retaining Her in the abyss of their glory and not to restore Her to the banished children of Adam upon earth. In a certain sense justice seemed to demand this; since the world was already redeemed by the Passion and Death of her Son, toward which She had co-operated in all plenitude and perfection. Death had in Her no further claims, not only because She had suffered its pains in that of Christ our Savior (as explained by me in its place); but also because the great Lady never was tributary to death, nor the demon, nor to sin, and therefore was not subject to the common law of the children of Adam (Heb. 9, 27). According to our mode of thinking, the Lord desired that She, without dying like the others, should pass by another kind of transition from the state of pilgrimage to that of comprehension, from mortality to immortality, and that She should not suffer death upon the earth, who, while remaining upon it, had committed no fault to merit death; for the Most High could have passed Her from one state into the other in another way.

2. Against this, however, stood the charity and humility of this admirable and sweetest Mother; for her love urged Her to come to the assistance of her children and to seek the manifestation and exaltation of the name of the Most High in the new evangelical Church. She desired also to gather into the faith many faithful fol-

lowers by her solicitation and intercession and to imitate her children and brethren by dying upon the earth; though, by reason of her sinlessness, She owed no such tribute (Rom. 6, 23). In her vast wisdom and admirable prudence She knew how much more precious it is to merit a reward and crown, than to possess them gratuitously in advance, even if they happen to be those of eternal glory. Her wisdom and humility were not without their present reward; for the eternal Father made known to all the courtiers of heaven, at the same time both his own desires and the choice of most holy Mary for the good of the militant Church and for the succor of the faithful. All the inhabitants of heaven then began to know what is but just that we should know also on earth; namely: that, as we are told by saint John, the eternal Father so loved the world as to give not only his Son for its Redemption (John 3, 16); but also his Daughter, the most holy Mary, sending Her from her glory to build up the Church, which Christ its Artificer had established; and in like manner and for the same purpose the Son delivered up his most loving and beloved Mother, and the Holy Ghost his sweetest Spouse. To this must be added another circumstance enhancing this blessing: namely that it followed closely upon the injuries which Christ our Redeemer received in his Passion and frightful Death, making the world altogether unworthy of this benefit. O infinite love! O immense charity! How evident is it become, that the multitudinous waters of our sins cannot extinguish thee! (Cant. 8, 7).

3. After most holy Mary had remained in heaven for three entire days and had enjoyed in body and soul the glory of the right hand of her Son and true God, She departed with the benediction of the blessed Trinity from the highest empyrean and returned, according to

her desire, to this nether world of the earth. God ordered an innumerable multitude of angels, selected from all the choirs and from the highest seraphim nearest to his throne, to accompany their Queen. She was enveloped in a cloud or globe of the most resplendent light, which served Her as a couch or reliquary and in which She was borne downward by the seraphim. The beauty and exterior splendor in which this heavenly Queen came to the earth can never be compassed by the human mind in mortal life; and it is certain that no living creature could have looked upon Her in merely natural powers without losing its life. On this account it was necessary, that the Most High should hide her refulgence from those that saw Her, until the splendors of her beauty should have moderated. Saint John the Evangelist alone was privileged to see the Queen in the full redundance of the divine glory which She had enjoyed. The immense beauty of this magnificent Queen and Mistress of the heavens, as She descended from the throne of the blessed Trinity, can easily be understood, when we consider how the face of Moses, after having spoken with the Lord and received the law on the mountain, shone with such light that the Israelites could not bear it or look upon his face. We are not informed that the Prophet saw the Divinity face to face; and if he saw It, his vision of God certainly did not approach in the least to that enjoyed by the Mother of God.

4. The great Lady arrived at the Cenacle as a substitute of her divine Son in the new evangelical Church. In the gifts of grace, which She had received for this ministry, She showed such a plenitude and abundance, that She excited the wonder of the angels and the astonishment of the saints; for She was a living image of Christ our Redeemer and Master. Beneath the

globe of light, in which, unseen, She arrived in the Cenacle, She was restored to her natural existence, in so far as to be thenceforward present only in that place. Immediately the Mistress of holy humility prostrated Herself to the ground and abasing Herself to the dust, said: "Most high God and my Lord, behold this vile worm of the earth, acknowledging itself formed from it (Gen. 2, 7), and coming from nothingness to this existence, which I hold through thy most liberal clemency. I acknowledge also, O highest Father, that thy ineffable condescension, without any merits of mine, has raised me from the dust, to the dignity of being the Mother of thy Onlybegotten. From my whole heart I praise and exalt thy immense goodness in so favoring me. In gratitude for such great blessings I offer myself to live and labor anew in this mortal life, according to all the decrees of thy divine will. I consecrate myself as thy faithful servant and as the servant of the children of the Church. All of them I present before thy immense charity and implore Thee from my inmost heart to look upon them as their kindest God and Father. For them I offer up the sacrifice of being deprived of thy glory and peace, and of having chosen of my own free will suffering rather than joy, denying myself the vision of Thee in order to perform what is so pleasing in thy sight."

5. The holy angels that had come with the Queen took leave of Her to return to heaven, congratulating the earth for again possessing as its inhabitant their great Queen and Lady. I wish to mention, that while I wrote of this, the holy princes asked me, why I did not more frequently call Mary the Queen and Mistress of the angels, and they told me not to neglect the use of that title in the balance of this history, since they derived