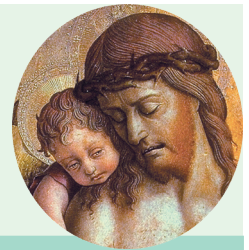


THE TWELVE STEP REVIEW

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A PUBLICATION OF THE WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE

Summer 2016

Dear friends,

This coming year I'm going to be on a semi-sabbatical, working on some new projects while writing new pamphlets and hopefully another book.

In this addition I would like to introduce our readers to an important part of our Christian faith. It has to do with the role of the Mother of the World's Redeemer in the economy of salvation. Because of her role, she

plays an important part in our recovery from the effects of sin.

As you know, baptized in Christ, we are members of His Body. It is one Body of which Christ is the Head and we are all members. What God did in and through His humanity as Christ, He continues to do in and through the humanity of His Body, the Church. Our vocation is to live the mystery of faith, the mystery which saves. This means that in Christ our

own deeds become meritorious. As St. Paul Expresses it: "Now I am rejoicing while suffering for you as I complete in my flesh whatever remains of the Messiah's sufferings on behalf of his body, which is the church" Colossians 1:24). And the Saints, sanctified by grace and called to the life of Heaven, become like Christ who "lives forever to make intercession for" us (Hebrew 7: 25). Foremost in this mission of intercession is the august Mother of God, as we explain herein. ✱

Our Lady of Recovery

As I compose this Summer Newsletter, I do so still in the Easter Season, since I will be moving from the Priory of St. Dominic in Los Angeles to the Priory of St. Albert the Great in Oakland and will be preoccupied with the business of moving and so had to write this now, not wanting to get behind.

The Gospel readings of the Easter Season portray the Risen Lord's appearances wherein He explains the Hebrew scriptures to His disciples, showing them how those sacred writings were a prefigurement of His coming as the Messiah. Then the first readings show St. Peter preaching what the disciples were taught by the Risen Christ—that He was indeed the fulfillment of those Hebrew scriptures. What they heard from the mouth of the Risen Christ the disciples now preach to the people. As the Hebrew Scriptures are brought to their fulfillment in Christ, the disciples now carry the message, first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. The Scriptures of the New Testament are a reflection on

this fulfillment in Christ. And in the economy of salvation as given in and through the community of the Church, the importance of the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary stands out.

Mary's Role

Her role is often lost upon those who look to Scripture apart from its wider context of the Church's lived tradition. As you can imagine, the early Christian disciples did not go off to worship and pray with their Bibles in hand. There were no Bibles to be carried. There was no printing press. There was no New Testament Canon until the 4th century. Furthermore, Jesus never wrote anything, nor did He tell his disciple to get His writings into print. It was the Church herself that made that decision, and it wasn't always clear about which writings should be included in a New Testament Canon. When the Church's charism of interpreting authoritatively the word of Scripture is taken in its fullness, the

*A great sign appeared in the heavens:
A Queen arrayed with the Sun, Moon and Stars.
Rev. 12: 1*

role of the Blessed Virgin Mary stands out. It is something that was seen and taught by the Church for over one thousand and five hundred years. It was expressed in the Liturgy. That is why all apostolic Churches have great devotion to Mary. However, once Christians separated from the Bride of Christ, His Church, they were left to their own devices to interpret Sacred Scripture, which brought about some many divisions (as many as 20,000 Protestant denominations). Would Christ have left His Church in such confusion as to the meaning of Sacred Scripture? My purpose is not to explain this. There is adequate materials that do an excellent job. My purpose here is to show the special role of Mary, and then with that role understand, deepen our understanding of her role for us in



ICON OF OUR LADY OF RECOVERY

This image of our Lady was recently written by New Guild Studios (www.newguildstudio.com) for the Twelve Step Review. The image depicts our Lady as refuge of sinners who are gathered within her mantle for protection against the addictions to which that had a one time surrender themselves. Through her intercession, as at the time Jesus performed His first miracle, His first sign through her intercession for the wedding guests at Cana, so now she intercedes for the addicted. Depicted are symbols of various addictions: needles for drug addiction, food for compulsive over-eaters, cards for compulsive gamblers, and a depiction of a loosley clad young woman symbolic of the life of lust that attracts some men who become lust addicts. We have had this Icon made into holy cards, with the prayer (see below) written on the reverse side. The prayer beseeches our Lady's intercession. If you would like copies, simply contact us. They are free for the asking; we simply ask a donation to cover the cost shipping and handling.

Prayer to Our Lady for Recovery

O Mary, virgin most powerful and Mother of mercy
who interceded with your Son Jesus
on behalf of the wedding guests at Cana,
intercede with Him now for me,
that I may wholeheartedly embrace the path of recovery
from the effects of sin in my life.
Recall, O Virgin most holy, the solemn moment
when Jesus, Your divine Son, dying upon the Cross,
confided us to your maternal care.
You are my Mother; I desire ever to remain your faithful child.

Pray, O holy Mother of God, for my recovery
that I may do the will of your Son
and with faith, share my experience, strength, and hope
with those who still suffer
that from your Motherly intercession
recovery may bring Christ's peace to our souls
and witness to your Motherly intercession.
Holy Mary, help your children in recovery
to feel your motherly help and protection
for you were blessed by God to bear the Savior of the
world, Who lives and reigns forever. Amen.

Books of Interest:

THE VERBALLY ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP by Patricia Evans. In this bestselling classic, you learn why verbal abuse is more widespread than ever, and how you can deal with it. You'll get more of the answers you need to recognize abuse when it happens, respond to abusers safely and appropriately, and most important, lead a happier, healthier life. \$16.95, plus shipping and handling.

DELIVERED: TRUE STORIES OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO TURNED FROM PORN TO PURITY by Matt Fradd. After experiencing a profound conversion at World Youth Day in Rome in 2000, Matt has worked through full-time lay ministry in Australia, Ireland, Canada, and Texas. He has served as an apologist for Catholic Answers and has traveled all over the world, speaking to tens of thousands of teens and young adults. He and his wife Cameron have four children and live in North Georgia. \$15.95, plus shipping and handling.

HEALING THE UNAFFIRMED by Doctor Conrad Baars. What the unaffirmed person needs is affirmation therapy, which involves the healing of the whole person—body, mind and spirit. Recognizing emotional deprivation disorder is the first step in correcting, through affirmation, many grave individual and global ills. Authentic affirmation brings about peace, self-confidence and joy. \$13.95, plus shipping and handling.

RECOVERY HOLY CARDS, set of eight: Our Lady of Recovery, The Heart of Recovery, The Spirit of Recovery, The Cross of Recovery, The Guardian of Recovery, The Chalice of Recovery, and Prayer Before Communion for Recovery, and Prayer After Communion for Recovery. A free set, with any order.

Order from The Twelve Step Review

recovery from the effects of sin, personal and original.

The writings of the New Testament clearly show that the concern of the Father of Christ is the same concern as the Mother of Christ. Both Father and Mother tell the disciples to listen to the Son (John 2:5; Luke 9:35, etc.).

It is Luke who gives us the beautiful passage of the Annunciation. When the angel Gabriel greets Mary, he does so with a greeting that is used only for royalty (as in “Hail Caesar”), and then using a word that occurs nowhere else, neither inside nor outside the Bible, he calls her (in our English translation) “full of grace”, thus indicating that Mary is one whose very person has been endowed with the fullness of grace in anticipation of her role as Mother of the Redeemer and then as Mother of all those redeemed by her Son.

Since Mary had no other children, she is entrusted to the ‘beloved disciple’ at the foot of the Cross, where Scripture tells us, “From that moment onward he took her into his care.” Furthermore, it is the beloved disciple, John, who has a vision in which is seen a Queen—clothed with the Sun and crowned with 12 stars (Rev. 12:1). The devil seeks first the destruction of her Son. Unable to do so, he tried to destroy her, again unsuccessfully. But John warns, now he is after her other children: “Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God’s commandments and bear witness to Jesus” (Rev. 12:17). In this is seen a fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 where we read God addressing the Serpent: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers...”

Again, it is John who stresses the importance of Mary’s role in Jesus’ ministry in the episode of the Marriage feast at Cana in Galilee: “There was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the Mother of Jesus was there.” It is not an accident that Jesus performs the first of His signs at a wedding feast, and that He does so through the intercession of Mary. When Catholic children make their first communion, the boys dress as grooms and the girls as brides because the Mass is the wedding feast of the lamb, as John tells us (Rev. 19:9). We can understand, then, the meaning of Jesus’ response to those who complain about the absence of fasting on the part of His disciples:

Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. (Mark 2:18-20).

The primary image expressing God’s relationship to His people in the Old Testament period is a *spousal* one. The God of the Hebrews was one God and He had no goddess consort (as the pagan gods did). He had espoused Himself to His people (see, for example, Isaiah 54:5). Now He

appears in the flesh and has come for the salvation of His bride (Rev. 19:7-9; cf. Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 11:2). Jesus through this spousal image makes known His divinity.

The focus of the passage of the wedding feast in Cana is Mary. The passage does not say, “There was a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee and Jesus and His disciple were there. Mary, too, was there.” No, Mary is given the focus. Remember, at this point Jesus had not yet begun His public ministry. He will begin it at a wedding feast and through the intercession of “Woman.” The apostolic fathers of the early church see in this designation of Mary as “woman” a reference to Eve, who is called “woman” in Genesis. The devil preys upon Eve and through her Adam. And the Fall occurs. Jesus is the new Adam (I Cor. 15:45) who came to do what the first Adam should have done. Mary, the new “woman” or “Eve” is chosen to do what the first Eve failed to do, and so is fulfilled in and through her the proto-Gospel of Genesis 3:15:

“I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

We as Christians see in this verse God’s provision for a Savior who would save His people, giving them the power to crush evil in and through the grace of redemption, as St. Paul explains to the Church in Rome (Romans 16:20):

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”

Our victory over Satan comes by means of God’s power in Christ. Some very early scriptural manuscripts have, “**she** will crush your head” and as such was translated by St. Jerome. In truth, as St. Paul shows, it is the Church herself by the power of her Spouse who crushes Satan. And Mary is the most preeminent member of the Church. Satan hates the Blessed Virgin Mary, as John shows in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 12: 12ff.). Unable to destroy her, “the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God’s commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus” (Rev. 12:17).

The angel Gabriel treats Mary with the greatest of respect, with a greeting used only for royalty, and he gives her a title that is specifically her own, “she who has been given the fullness of grace.” John, the beloved disciple, takes her into his care after the death of Jesus and tells us of Satan’s war against us, her other children. We have a Mother who loves and is prepared to intercede for us with her Son as she guides our way home to heaven. Let us implore her powerful intercession. ✨

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