

Scripture reading

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (Genesis 3:15)

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection – After the Blessed Trinity, Mary has the greatest power against evil

Mary's role in salvation history is enshrined in Scripture. Immediately after the Fall of Adam and Eve, God said to Satan hidden under the appearance of a serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers..." (cf. Genesis 3:15). Undoubtedly, the two enemies of Satan pronounced by God are Jesus and Mary. To Jesus, the only begotten Son of the Most High God, Satan is less than a speck of dust in the face of His infinite power. Though Mary is a mere creature of God, we can be sure that since God named her an enemy of Satan, she would be given all the necessary power to have a final, resounding victory over Satan and to help her children attain their glorious eternal inheritance. Fr Gabriel Amorth, Vatican Chief Exorcist wrote in the March-April, 2003 issue of *Echo of Mary, Queen of Peace*: "One day a colleague of mine heard the devil say during an exorcism: 'Every Hail Mary is like a blow on my head. If Christians knew how powerful the Rosary was, it would be my end.'" Such is the immense power of Mary over evil!

Immaculate Conception of Mary. *The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.* (cf. CCC 491). As a key rival of Satan, Mary must never, even for a moment, be under the influence of evil or stained by its fruit, sin. God bestowed upon Mary this singular grace and privilege not accorded to any other creature: freedom from Original Sin. This situation was referred to in Luke 1:28 when Archangel Gabriel addressed Mary as "full of grace". God's grace is completely opposed to the reign of the Kingdom of Darkness. It is inconceivable that Jesus was borne of a sinful woman. Mary was perfectly redeemed by Jesus in anticipation of the graces that He merited for our salvation through His Life, Death and Resurrection, in the sense that Mary was redeemed before she fell into sin. Through the Immaculate Conception Jesus also honors His Mother as in the 4th commandment. Mary herself confirmed the doctrine of Immaculate Conception through St Bernadette of Lourdes, France on 25 March 1858 after Pope Pius IX proclaimed it a dogma in 1854 (cf. CCC491).

God wills that Mary is not just the mother of Jesus but also the mother of all His children. *When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home (John 19:26-27).* When He was dying on the Cross, Jesus gave His Mother to John the Evangelist who represented all of God's children. It was not a private gift to John. It was meant for the whole of humanity. This is so that as a mother, Mary can lead us by the hand to walk on the path of salvation safely to our birthright – the glorious eternal inheritance God the Father has lovingly prepared for each and every one of His precious children. Thus, Mary, fully equipped with grace and power against evil, has been given a divine mandate to help her children to return home safely to God the Father.

Mary is the mold of God. To be fit for heaven we have to be molded to be like Jesus in love and holiness. St. Augustine calls Mary the living "mold of God". It was in her alone that Jesus was made a true man without losing any feature of the Godhead. It is also in Mary that a soul can be perfectly molded into the likeness of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. A mold is the most efficient way to produce a perfect shape. However, the material to be molded has to be molten. We are invited to be "molten", to open our hearts to have a true devotion to Mary, to imitate her sterling virtues. Where Mary is, there Jesus is also. Where Mary is, evil cannot reign or have access.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for the beautiful gift of Your Mother to me. May I love Mary as You love her! You have given her to me so that she can be a real mother to help me in all ways: temporal and spiritual. She is my most secure and safest shortcut to Your Sacred Heart. Help me develop a true devotion to Mary. Give me the graces to imitate her profound humility, steadfast faith and ardent charity, so that I can become more Christ-like. Through my devotion to her, may I enjoy her constant protection, guidance and help. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.