



BLESSED FRANCISCO AND JACINTA MARTO

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THE LITTLE SHEPHERDS' JOURNEY (6)

III. Reparation in the Christo-centric Order of the World and of Salvation

3. *The offering of oneself to God and the act of reparation and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary are one and the same thing.*

In view of the fact that, in the human person, the Name of Christ is engraved beneath the “name of a specific vocation” which expresses the glorification of man, sin is an insult to God because an insult to

**Mary,
made one with Christ,
is the co-Redemptrix
of the human race.**

this holy name of an interior vocation. It is for this reason, too, that the cancellation of sin, reparation, and the glorification of the name of God, must be accomplished under the name of this special vocation. Reparation is the living realisation of this name, by which God is glorified.

It is therefore easy to understand the need for, and also the concrete means of, making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. According to the words spoken by Mary in Fatima, this reparation for blasphemies against her Immaculate Heart is the same as a person's dedication in sacrifice to the transcendent God for the salvation of mankind. Hence, a person cannot offer to the Immaculate Heart any other reparation than the total dedication of him- or her-self to God as a sacrifice of adoration. In this consists the reparation for the injuries committed by men against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because they touch God directly in the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Consecration, reparation and sanctification are the same thing, and are accomplished in adoration by the offering of oneself to the transcendent God. “To consecrate oneself to God” is necessarily “to make reparation” and “to sanctify oneself” both interiorly and exteriorly in one's whole being. Hence, a person can only accomplish



this consecration to God bearing in mind the special consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the purification one's own heart, and at the same time, moving from the inside

**Mary
remained on earth
in order to help
her other children
to complete
the redeeming work
of Christ**

out, for the purification of the whole person. This consecration must include purification from all interior stains, and the intention to seek in one's life corporal and spiritual perfection. This consecration to the Immaculate Heart

of Mary must start from the heart, so that the human personality retains no stain. Otherwise, the consecration would be no more than an empty and hypocritical formula. This special consecration to God and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary will also be, at the same time, reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, principally for the blasphemies committed by human beings against this Heart.

Hence, there can never be reparation and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary unless there is, first of all, reparation and consecration to God himself — a consecration which consists in the total dedication of one's person to God in the sacrifice of adoration. [At the same time this will be reparation and sanctification; and there will never be reparation and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary which is not at the same time purification of one's own heart and the interior transformation of the entire human person.]

According to the position of Mary in the divine decree of salvation, reparation and the consecration of man to

God, his dedication to God in the sacrifice of adoration, is also reparation and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. But today it is necessary to stress the point to people, and especially to Christians, that this consecration to God in adoration must penetrate one's whole life and transform it into a "divine worship" in the accomplishment of those aspects of the mystery of Christ that shine in the Immaculate Heart of Mary as in an immaculate and transparent mirror, the aspects that God now wishes to show through Mary and bring close to men. The "Message of Fatima" consists primarily in the purification of the heart, the elimination of all stain in the depths of one's heart.

It is necessary to pay attention to the meaning of this reference to the "Heart of Mary" and internalise the "content" of this Heart. Mary wants to call people's attention to God's revelation, in order to lead them to its meaning, to all that is meant by "heart" in Sacred Scripture.

The heart is the innermost centre of the personality. For this reason, the emphasis is on the spontaneity of the relationship between every human being and God. Here, in one's interior, one does not find any creature "between the two"; here there can be no other creature between God and man. From this centre, however, all will be displayed and penetrated, directed and dominated. The "Law" of God is imprinted in the human heart. God is the judge of our thoughts, feelings, intentions, mindsets, and to God nothing is hidden. From this centre, the Law of God should penetrate and dominate the entire being and life of each person. The heart of man is the seat (Sitz), the "domicile" of the law of the divine Covenant, of which the outward dwelling place of the Ark of the Covenant is only the "image". The Law of God, written on tablets of stone by the finger of God himself, is the sign of that "Law of God" which was written on the living "tablet" of the human heart by Spirit of God. (Prov. 9, 1-3; 2 Cor. 3, 3). Hence, the root of human faith is in the heart, because man believes with his heart (Rom. 10, 10) and from this centre accomplishes his relationship with God, places in God all his trust, accomplishes with a sincere and faithful heart his adoration in faith of a jealous God, who rejects all alien idols. A heart which, being close to God, has no eyes for created idols, a heart which does not combine faith and adoration of the living God with the dead gods of the heart, nor does it place them in front of, or between itself and God under the pretext of "mediating" for his divine worship. Instead, with an immaculate heart, we should commit ourselves directly and totally to God beyond all creatures.

"Heart" in Sacred Scripture means primarily an absolute need for truth, for intimate sincerity to the utmost depths before God. In Sacred Scripture, what is emphasised above all is freedom from any kind of hypocrisy, a pure heart, free from any darkening of thoughts, desires, or impure intentions which are directed immediately towards creatures and not exclusively towards God. Freedom from hypocrisy, from any overshadowing of covetousness of heart, brings with it freedom in one's being and one's life, the freedom of virginity, the freedom of the Spirit of Christ. It is this that Christ himself seeks, especially before performing any outward miracle. To begin with, he reads all that is written in the hearts of men, down to the furthest corner, in one's deepest thoughts; he leads men to look first and foremost into their own hearts; he judges and pronounces according to what is in man.

Hence, if Mary reveals and conveys to the men and women of our time an understanding of her Immaculate Heart, she also requires them to withdraw into their own hearts. Thus she wishes that man's first orientation should be to look inward and not outward. In this way, Mary shows to the men and women of our time that the great danger today is that of alienation, because human beings tend generally to look in the wrong direction (Ex. 20, 4). Man's withdrawal into his heart, into himself, must be direct; there cannot be any orientation towards the exterior, nor mediation of the exterior, because man cannot aim for his destiny in two different directions at the same time. In other words, there is no substitution for one's interior, there are not 'two ways'. Apostolic work as an exterior activity can never take the place of interiority. If one takes the other road, one separates oneself from God. This is why Christ tells men so insistently that they must seek first the kingdom of God, and that everything else will be theirs as well; and this kingdom of God is to be found in the interior of each person (Mt. 6, 33; Luke 12, 31; 17, 21). The human heart is the true Kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of his Spirit, the domain of the Law of God. Christ never said that, to begin with, men needed an earthly, natural and cultural basis for their Christian and religious life, and for union with God. The more people think that they need a mixture of earthly things, the more God moves away until 'later', the less they will be aware how close God is to them, they will walk less and less in the light and in the eyes of God and, in their own souls, their awareness of sin will diminish, there will be less 'order' in their lives, and God will be left more and more behind them. Their conscience, too, will become less and less sensitive, their opinion about sin will become uncertain and, consequently, they will begin not to know and not to feel what 'sin' in fact is; they will no longer be able to meet God and be united with Him, as they withdraw more and more from Him. This explains why the 'commandment' to adore God is the first and not the second or the last.

Recollection of heart, spontaneity in one's interior relationship with God and union with God indicate necessarily the exclusivity of an undivided, sincere, true, frank, faithful heart, devoid of all hypocrisy. Alienation and external activity steadily suppress one's interior clarity and sincerity, and lead to the pharisaical hypocrisy of the deceiving heart. If the basis of interiority, the spontaneity of adoration is missing, falsifications will be ever on the increase. A heart that is independent will be independent also in the external things and activities related to divine worship, and this 'divine worship' is identified exclusively with actual ceremonies. Very often, the profane 'means' of apostolic activity are used by a divided heart as pretexts for becoming enslaved to its worldly desires, such as ambition for human honour and power — the sin of Adam — and other desires and covetousness that follow from these.

The heart which wishes to belong entirely to God must be pure and transparent, indeed immaculate.

This total dedication to God and belonging to God also implies renunciation of, and separation from, the world; this is the absolutely essential accompaniment of the dedication of the heart to God. It follows that separation and isolation from the world cannot be falsified, so that it is seen only in the outward visible forms of life while

underneath are hidden the desires of this world and a place is found for its activities. Withdrawal from and separation of the heart from a desire for the things of this world — in the way one thinks, feels, judges and forms intentions — must be the principal and the inner root where one must accomplish and display the separation of the entire personality, body and soul, from any adaptation of covetous desires for this world. This total inner separation from this world that is far from God is true virginity; freedom from the 'eros' of the world, and, with it, from slavery to this world, life according to the Law of liberty, according to the Law of the Spirit of Christ.

Thus, Mary reveals her Heart not as a 'maternal heart' according to the purely natural and human interpretation of this generation of Adam, but as the immaculate 'dwelling place' of the Law of God. The law of the divine covenant is, however, the same as the personal love of God, with his jealous love drawing all men, and, under this aspect of zeal, this love is called 'law' 'commandment'. Hence, the principal conclusion and basis of the law of the Covenant: that a jealous God manifests himself and makes himself known, visibly symbolised by the blazing fire on the mountain, and with his mighty arm frees his property from foreign domination and carries it on the powerful wings of an eagle across the desert binding it to himself in adoration. He identifies himself as 'jealous', and this true name is communicated to men. «You shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God» (Ex. 34, 14). One must remember the true essence of the first commandment of the law of liberty which today is totally unknown to so many because, in fact, the words 'the Lord, our God, is a jealous liberator' are omitted. The prohibition of idolatry does not apply solely to the external forms of images of gods which are nothing other than the visible product of the interior idols of the human heart, and only find their visible expression in external forms. Interior adoration of idols is nothing other than the activity of the desires of wicked men; man honours creatures instead of the personal God and Creator who is the one and only 'I AM'. Adoration of the idols of desires changes its outward forms, and today is known as the «idolatry of nature»; the «cult of nature». «I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a graven image...» (Ex. 20, 4-6).

This is the first commandment of the law which God himself gave in person. The sacrifice of reparation is the content of this first commandment. In it is concentrated the entire law, because it is the commandment of the adoration of reparation: it is the content of the entire law of liberty, of the law of justice and of the love of God which was accomplished in the sacrifice of the cross of Christ. This divine law of the covenant is engraved in the heart of all human beings, because God communicated to them his own name «Jealous», which signifies his jealous Love. It was given to men by the Holy Spirit which is the very love of God and embedded in the heart of man where God cannot tolerate any foreign idol of the heart alongside himself. Hence in the New Testament — and particularly clearly in the texts of the Evangelist St John — «the Word» («Logos») and the commandment of Christ are expressly shown to be the same. To abide in the «Logos», in the «Word of Christ», is the same as fulfilling the

commandment of Christ, and both are the same as abiding in the love of Christ, in the mystical union with Christ in his Holy Spirit, which is Love, is zealous and gives Himself as a gift.

Thus, in Fatima, Mary reveals her Immaculate Heart as the immaculate dwelling place of the jealous love of God, which with consuming fire wishes to draw all men to itself through the sacrifice of adoration. If her Immaculate Heart reminds the people of God of the content of the law of the divine covenant, it also wishes to recall the words of Sacred Scripture:

“Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said: 'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty'. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.” (2 Cor. 6,14 – 7,1). If these contents were vividly carried out in the Church of Christ, in each one of its members in whom the 'mystery' of the Church should be accomplished, this would be, at one and the same time, reparation and sanctification for the salvation of other men, and this reparation will most especially be offered to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The words spoken by Mary in Fatima are no different from the word of God in Sacred Scripture, as her Immaculate Heart calls men and women at this time, especially Christians, so that the name of Christ may be sanctified and all blasphemy done away with. Because Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up for it in the bloody sacrifice of his death, so that it could be sanctified, purified and made reparation for; “He wished to present the church to himself in splendour without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that She might be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5, 27).

The message of Fatima is impressive and moves us deeply when we realise that the Heart of the Mother of God is at its centre. This makes it clear that God wished to communicate to the world at the beginning of the XX Century. Although the human word can be powerful, moving or frightening, when compared with the word of God, it is no more than the song of a sparrow in a wild storm. The word of God possesses infinite power which raises people from the dead and proclaims unquestioned truths. His Word can contain our destiny. The Message of Fatima is a vast judgement of the world which God, through an Angel, made known to the little Shepherds. Take and drink the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, horribly outraged by ungrateful men. Make reparation for their crimes and console your God. This tells us what lies behind the Fatima apparitions and what God wished to say when He showed men the bleeding Heart of the Immaculate Mother, so that we could draw the proper conclusions, namely to break with sin and make reparation for the wounds to the Heart of the Mother of God. During the Apparitions,

the little Shepherds saw the Heart of Mary surrounded by thorns, suffering the torments of her Son on account of sin, and calling for reparation.

«Jesus wishes (...) to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate Heart», Mary told them after showing them the vision of hell on 13th July, 1917. Lucia, in her 'Calls' from the Message of Fatima explains ...To establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary means to bring people to a full consecration through conversion, self-dedication, intimate esteem, veneration and love. Thus, it is in this spirit of consecration and conversion that God wishes to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. We all know that a mother's heart represents love in the bosom of a family. In fact, it is love which makes the mother bend over her baby's cradle, sacrifice herself for it, give herself, rush to the defence of her child. All children trust in the heart of their mother, and we all know that we have in her a place of special affection. The same applies to the Virgin Mary. Thus the Message says: «*My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God*». Hence, the Heart of Mary is the refuge and the way to God for all his children. This refuge and this way were proclaimed to all humanity immediately after the fall of our first parents. To the devil, who had tempted the first human beings, and had induced them to disobey the divine order they had been given, the Lord said: «*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel*.» (Gen 3, 15). The 'new generation' that God foretold would be born of this woman, will triumph in the battle against the progeny of Satan, to the point of crushing its head. Mary is the Mother of this new generation, as if she were a new tree of life, planted by God in the garden of the world so that all her children can partake of her fruit.

It is from the heart of their mother that children receive their natural life, their first breath, their life-giving blood, the beating of their heart, as if the mother were the spring of a clock impelling movement to two pendulums. When we see how dependent the child is on its mother in those early months of its formation in the womb, we could almost say that the heart of the mother is the heart of the child. And we can say the same of Mary, when She carried the Son of the Eternal Father in her womb. Hence, it follows that the Heart of Mary is, in some sense, the heart of all that other generation, the first fruit of which is Christ, the Word of God. And it is from this fruit that that other generation of this Immaculate Heart is to be fed, as Jesus said: «*I am the bread of life. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As (...) I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me*.» (Jn 6, 48; 56-57). And to live thus because of Christ is also to live because of Mary, since Jesus had received his Body and Blood from Mary. It was in this Heart that the Father placed his Son, as if in the first Tabernacle. Mary was the first pyx that held Him, and it was the blood of her Immaculate Heart which communicated to the Son of God his life and his human nature, from which we all, in turn, receive «*grace upon grace*» (Jn 1, 16).

This is that new generation born from this wonderful mother: Christ in Himself and in his Mystical Body. And

Mary is the Mother of this progeny chosen by God to crush the head of the infernal serpent. Thus we see that devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary must be established in the world by means of a true consecration, through conversion and self-giving. In the same way, through the consecration, the bread and wine are converted into the Body and Blood of Christ, which were drawn with his very life from the Heart of Mary. Hence it is that this Immaculate Heart must be for us a refuge and the way that leads us to God. We thus constitute the retinue of the new generation created by God, drawing our supernatural life from the same life-giving source, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who is the Mother of Christ and of his Mystical Body. Thus we are truly brothers and sisters of Christ, as He himself said: «*My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God and do it*.» (Lk 8, 21).

This word of God is the bond which links all the children in the Heart of the Mother; there we hear the echo of the word of the Father, because God enclosed his eternal Word in the Heart of Mary; and it is from this Word that life comes to us: «*If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water'*.» (Jn 7, 37-38). In fact, we read in the Book of Isaiah: «*For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring*» (Is 44, 3).

This blessed and watered land is the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and God wants our devotion to take root there, because it was for this very purpose that God placed so much love within the heart of the Mother of all human beings, who consecrates and converts her progeny into the Body and Blood of Christ, her First-born, Son of God, the Word of the Father: «*In him was life, and the life was the light of men (...) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father*.» (Jn 1,4.14).

God began the work of our redemption in the Heart of Mary, given that it was through her «*fiat*» that the redemption began to come about: «*And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word'*» (Lk 1, 38). «*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*» (Jn 1, 14). Thus, in the closest union possible between two human beings, Christ began, with Mary, the work of our salvation. The Christ's heart-beats are those of the heart of Mary, the prayer of Christ is the prayer of Mary, the joys of Christ are the joys of Mary; it was from Mary that Christ received the Body and Blood that are to be poured out and offered up for the salvation of the world. Hence, Mary, made one with Christ, is the co-Redemptrix of the human race. With Christ in her womb, with Jesus Christ in her arms, with Christ at Nazareth and in his public life; with Jesus Christ she climbed the hill of Calvary, she suffered and agonised with Him, receiving into her Immaculate Heart the last sufferings of Christ, his last words, his last agony and the last drops of his Blood, in order to offer them to the Father.

And Mary remained on earth in order to help her other children to complete the redeeming work of Christ, preserving it in her heart as a wellspring of grace – *Ave gratia plena* – in order to pass on to us the fruits of the life, passion and death of Jesus Christ, her Son.»

(Sister Lucia: *Calls from the Message of Fatima*, 13)

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