THE DAILY BREAD

The Fiat of the Beloved



Our Mother

Mary at the Heart of the Faith

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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Who Mary Is, and Why She Changes Everything

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INTRODUCTION

She Has Been Waiting for You

Many Catholic women have a curiously distant relationship with Mary. They know the prayers, they may have a statue, they say the Hail Mary, and yet Mary remains for them a figure at the edge of the faith, an optional devotion, a pious extra, rather than what she actually is, a real mother who loves them and has been waiting, patiently, for them to come to her. Others keep their distance for a different reason, a quiet fear that to love Mary too much is to take something from Christ, to verge on worship, and so they hold her at arm's length out of a misplaced caution. Both have missed something, for Mary is not an add-on to the faith but is woven into its very heart, and she has been waiting all along to be a mother to them.

This book is an invitation into a real relationship with Mary, grounded not in sentiment but in the truth of who she is and what she was given to do. It will show that Mary is at the heart of the faith and not an optional extra; that she is woven through the whole of salvation history; who the Church says she is in the four great dogmas, each a word about the dignity of every woman; that she is the New Eve and the Ark of the New Covenant; that her intercession does not compete with Christ but leads to Him; that she is the model of everything a woman is called to be; and that she is the woman the enemy most fears. A woman who comes to know Mary truly gains not a distant figure but a mother, and one of the most transformative relationships available to her.

And he came to her and said, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you. — Luke 1:28

The angel greeted Mary as full of grace, and this is who she is, the woman uniquely filled with God's grace and chosen for a role at the center of salvation. This book will introduce her: showing that she is not an add-on but at the heart of the faith; tracing her thread through salvation history from the first promise to Pentecost; unfolding the four Marian dogmas and what each says about every woman; revealing her as the New Eve; explaining how she leads a woman to her Son; presenting her as the model of the feminine genius a woman is called to live; and showing her as the one through whom the enemy is defeated. Mary has been waiting for you, and this book is an invitation, at last, to come to her.

CHAPTER ONE

Not an Add-On

Mary Is at the Heart of the Faith

The first thing a woman must understand about Mary is that she is not an optional add-on to the faith, a pious extra one may take or leave, but is woven into the very heart of the Gospel, given by Christ Himself to be the mother of all who follow Him. Two errors keep women from Mary, treating her as optional piety or avoiding her from fear of seeming to worship her, and both must be corrected, for Mary is at the heart of the faith and is given to every believer as a mother, so that understanding her true place is the beginning of a real relationship with her.

Then he said to the disciple, Behold, your mother. And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. — John 19:27

Two Errors About Mary

Two opposite errors keep women from a real relationship with Mary, the error of treating her as an optional devotion and the error of avoiding her from fear of worshipping her, and both misunderstand her true place in the faith. The first error regards Mary as a pious extra, a devotion for those who like that sort of thing, optional and peripheral, not really essential to the faith; the second error, often found among those influenced by objections to Marian devotion, avoids Mary from a fear that honoring her too much verges on worship and takes something from Christ. Both errors misunderstand Mary, the first by underestimating her central place in the faith and the second by misunderstanding the honor due her as something it is not, so that both keep a woman from the real relationship with Mary that the faith offers. The woman who recognizes these two errors can move past them toward the true understanding of Mary's place, neither dismissing her nor fearing her. Two errors about Mary, treating her as optional piety and avoiding her from fear of worship, keep women from a real relationship with her, both misunderstanding her true place in the faith, so that recognizing and moving past them opens the way to knowing Mary rightly.

Given to Us From the Cross

Mary is not an add-on because Christ Himself, from the Cross, gave her to be the mother of His disciples, entrusting the beloved disciple to her and her to him, so that Mary is given to every believer as a true spiritual mother by Christ's own word. In His dying moments, Jesus looked at His mother and the beloved disciple and gave them to each other, behold your mother, and the Church has always understood this as Christ giving Mary to be the mother of all His disciples, so that Mary is not a figure a woman may choose to honor or ignore but a mother given to her by Christ Himself from the Cross. This means a woman has Mary as a mother not by her own choosing but by Christ's gift,

for He entrusted His mother to His disciples and His disciples to His mother, making Mary the spiritual mother of all who follow Him, a gift of Christ to be received rather than an option to be weighed. The woman who understands Mary as given to us from the Cross receives her as a mother given by Christ Himself, not an optional devotion but His gift. Given to us from the Cross, Mary was entrusted by the dying Christ to be the mother of His disciples, so that she is a true spiritual mother given to every believer by Christ's own word, not an add-on a woman may take or leave.

A Mother Who Has Been Waiting

Mary, given as a mother to every believer, has been waiting for each woman to come to her, ready with a mother's love to draw her closer to Christ, so that a woman who has kept Mary at a distance has a mother waiting to be known. Because Mary is truly a mother given to every disciple, she waits for each one with a mother's love, ready to care for her, to pray for her, to lead her to Christ, so that a woman who has treated Mary as optional or kept her at arm's length has all along had a mother waiting for her, longing to be known and to mother her in the faith. This means coming to Mary is not adopting a new devotion so much as coming home to a mother who has been waiting, receiving the maternal love she has been ready to give, entering a relationship that was offered from the Cross and has awaited only a woman's response. The woman who understands that Mary has been waiting comes to her as to a mother long ready to receive her, entering a relationship offered all along. A mother who has been waiting is what Mary is to every woman, given as a mother from the Cross and ready with maternal love to draw her to Christ, so that coming to Mary is coming home to a mother who has awaited her all along.

CHAPTER TWO

Woven Through the Story

Mary in Salvation History

Mary is not a figure who appears only at Christmas but a thread woven through the whole of salvation history, present from the first promise after the fall through the Annunciation, Cana, Calvary, and Pentecost, so that her role spans the entire story of redemption. Tracing Mary through salvation history, from the first prophecy of a woman whose offspring would crush the serpent to her presence as the Church was born at Pentecost, reveals how deeply she is woven into God's plan and how central her role truly is.

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with Mary the mother of Jesus. — Acts 1:14

Promised From the Beginning

Mary was promised from the very beginning, foreshadowed in the first prophecy of redemption after the fall, when God spoke of a woman whose offspring would crush the serpent, so that she stands at the opening of the whole story of salvation. In the aftermath of the fall, God spoke a first promise of redemption, declaring enmity between the serpent and the woman and promising that her offspring would crush the serpent's head, and the Church has long seen in this woman a foreshadowing of Mary, whose Son would defeat the devil, so that Mary is present, in promise, at the very beginning of salvation history. This means Mary is not a latecomer to the story but was foreshadowed from the first, woven into God's plan of redemption from its opening, the woman whose offspring would crush the serpent, so that her role was anticipated from the beginning of the long story that led to Christ. The woman who sees Mary promised from the beginning understands her as woven into salvation history from its very opening, foreshadowed in the first promise of redemption. Promised from the beginning, Mary was foreshadowed in the first prophecy after the fall, the woman whose offspring would crush the serpent, so that she stands at the opening of salvation history, woven into God's plan of redemption from its very start.

Present at the Great Moments

Mary is present at the great turning points of the Gospel, the Annunciation where she gave her yes, Cana where she prompted Christ's first sign, Calvary where she stood by the Cross, so that she is woven through the central moments of redemption. From the Annunciation, where she received the Word and gave her fiat, to Cana, where her intercession occasioned Christ's first miracle, to Calvary, where she stood faithfully by the Cross as her Son died, Mary is present at the decisive moments of the Gospel, not at the margins but at the heart of the events that accomplished redemption, woven into the central drama of salvation. This means Mary's role is not incidental but integral, for she is found at the great turning points of the Gospel, giving her yes, prompting the first sign, standing at the Cross, present and participating in the central moments of redemption. The woman who sees Mary present at the great moments understands how integral she is to the Gospel, woven into its decisive turning points. Present at the great moments, Mary is found at the Annunciation, at Cana, and at Calvary, woven through the central turning points of the Gospel, so that her role in redemption is integral and not incidental.

There When the Church Was Born

Mary was present and praying with the apostles when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and the Church was born, so that she stands at the beginning of the Church as she stood at the beginning of Christ's life, woven into the whole story to its new chapter. After the Ascension, Mary was gathered with the apostles in prayer, and she was present when the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost and the Church was born, so that she who was present at the Incarnation was also present at the birth of the Church, praying in its midst as it received the Spirit and began its mission. This means Mary's thread runs through the whole story, from the first promise to the birth of the Church, present and praying as the Church came to life, so that she is woven into salvation history from beginning to new beginning, a mother present at the birth of her Son and at the birth of His Church. The woman who sees Mary there when the Church was born understands her as woven through the whole story, present at its every great beginning. There when the Church was born, Mary was present and praying with the apostles at Pentecost, so that she stands at the birth of the Church as she stood at the birth of Christ, woven through the whole of salvation history to its new chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

Who the Church Says She Is

The Four Great Truths About Mary

The Church has defined four great truths about Mary, the Marian dogmas, which are not pious exaggerations but revealed truths about who she is, and each of them, rightly understood, is also a word about the dignity and destiny of every woman. Understanding the four Marian dogmas, that Mary is the Mother of God, ever-virgin, conceived without sin, and assumed into heaven, reveals who the Church says Mary is and what each truth means not only for her but for every woman who shares her nature.

And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? — Luke 1:43

Mother of God and Ever-Virgin

The first two dogmas declare that Mary is the Mother of God, the one who bore the divine Son, and that she is ever-virgin, a perpetual virgin before, during, and after the birth of Christ, truths that establish her unique dignity and total consecration to God. The Church teaches that Mary is truly the Mother of God, not in the sense of originating the divinity but as the mother of the one person Jesus Christ who is God, so that she bore God in her womb, a dignity beyond all others; and that she is ever-virgin, consecrated wholly to God

in a perpetual virginity that signifies her complete belonging to Him. These two dogmas establish Mary's unique place, the woman who bore God and who belonged wholly to Him, and they speak also to every woman of the dignity of bearing God within through grace and of belonging wholly to Him. The woman who understands Mary as Mother of God and ever-virgin sees her unique dignity and her total consecration, a word also about every woman's call to bear God within and belong to Him. Mother of God and ever-virgin, Mary bore the divine Son and belonged wholly to God in perpetual virginity, truths that establish her unique dignity and consecration and speak also to every woman of bearing God within through grace and belonging wholly to Him.

Conceived Without Sin

The third dogma, the Immaculate Conception, declares that Mary was conceived without original sin, preserved from the first moment of her existence by the grace of Christ, a unique privilege that fitted her to bear the sinless Son of God. The Church teaches that Mary, alone among human persons, was conceived without original sin, preserved from its stain from the first instant of her conception by a singular grace won by Christ, so that she was prepared, pure and full of grace, to be the worthy mother of the sinless Son of God. This dogma reveals the depth of grace at work in Mary and the fittingness of her preparation to bear Christ, and it speaks to every woman of the power of grace to cleanse and prepare, of the beauty of a soul filled with grace, of the destiny of holiness to which every woman is called. The woman who understands Mary conceived without sin sees the depth of grace in her and the call to grace-filled holiness it speaks to every woman. Conceived without sin, Mary was preserved from original sin from the first moment of her existence by the grace of Christ, a unique privilege fitting her to bear the sinless Son of God, which speaks to every woman of the power of grace to cleanse and the destiny of holiness to which she is called.

Taken Up Into Glory

The fourth dogma, the Assumption, declares that Mary was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory at the end of her earthly life, a truth that reveals her share in her Son's victory and foreshadows the destiny of every woman. The Church teaches that Mary, at the end of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into the glory of heaven, sharing already and fully in the resurrection and glory that await all the redeemed, so that she is in heaven now in the fullness of her person, body and soul, reigning with her Son. This dogma reveals Mary's complete share in Christ's victory and, crucially, foreshadows the destiny of every woman, for what Mary enjoys now in fullness is the destiny promised to all the redeemed, the glorification of the whole person, body and soul, so that Mary's Assumption is a word of hope about every woman's own destiny. The woman who

understands Mary taken up into glory sees her share in Christ's victory and the foreshadowing of her own destiny in Mary's glorification. Taken up into glory, Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven at the end of her earthly life, revealing her full share in her Son's victory and foreshadowing the destiny of every woman, whose own glorification Mary's Assumption anticipates.

CHAPTER FOUR

The New Eve

Undoing What Was Done

Among the richest truths about Mary is that she is the New Eve, the woman whose obedience undoes the disobedience of the first Eve, and the Ark of the New Covenant, who bore within her the presence of God, typological truths that illuminate her unique role in redemption. Understanding Mary as the New Eve, whose yes reverses the first woman's no, and as the Ark who carried God within her, reveals the depth of her place in God's plan and the dignity of the womanhood she perfectly embodies.

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head. — Genesis 3:15

The First Eve and the New

Just as the first Eve, by her disobedience, shared in bringing sin and death into the world, so Mary, the New Eve, by her obedience, shared in bringing the Savior and life, undoing by her yes what the first woman's no had done. The early Church saw a profound parallel between Eve and Mary, for as the first Eve, through her disobedience and her part in the fall, shared in humanity's ruin, so Mary, the New Eve, through her obedient yes to God, shared in humanity's redemption, bringing forth the Savior who would undo the ruin, so that Mary reverses Eve, her obedience answering Eve's disobedience. This means Mary is the New Eve, the woman whose cooperation with God undoes the first woman's cooperation with the serpent, her fiat reversing Eve's fall, so that womanhood, which had a part in the ruin, has in Mary a part in the redemption, the New Eve undoing what the first Eve did. The woman who understands the first Eve and the New sees Mary as the woman whose obedience reverses the fall, restoring what was lost. The first Eve and the New stand in parallel, for as Eve's disobedience shared in the fall, Mary's obedience as the New Eve shared in redemption, undoing by her yes what the first woman's no had done, so that womanhood has in Mary a part in the restoration of what was lost.

The Ark of the New Covenant

Mary is also the Ark of the New Covenant, for as the ancient Ark carried the presence of God among His people, Mary carried God Himself, the Word made flesh, within her, becoming the living Ark who bore the divine presence. In the Old Covenant, the Ark of the Covenant was the sacred vessel that held the presence of God and the signs of His covenant, the holiest object of Israel, and the Church sees Mary as the Ark of the New Covenant, for she carried within her not the signs of God's presence but God Himself, the Word made flesh, becoming the living vessel of the divine presence, the true Ark who bore God into the world. This means Mary is the Ark of the New Covenant, the woman who carried God within her, a dignity foreshadowed by the ancient Ark and fulfilled in her who bore the living God, so that she is the holy vessel of God's presence, the Ark of the new and eternal covenant. The woman who understands Mary as the Ark of the New Covenant sees her as the living vessel who carried God Himself, the dignity of bearing the divine presence. The Ark of the New Covenant is Mary, who carried God Himself within her as the ancient Ark carried the signs of His presence, becoming the living vessel who bore the Word made flesh, the true Ark of the new and eternal covenant.

The Dignity of Womanhood Restored

In Mary as the New Eve and the Ark, the dignity of womanhood is revealed and restored, for the woman who had a part in the fall is answered by the woman who had a part in redemption, so that Mary lifts up the dignity of every woman. The fall involved a woman, and so, fittingly, did the redemption, for God chose a woman, Mary, to be the New Eve and the Ark who bore the Savior, so that the dignity of womanhood, wounded in the first Eve, is restored and exalted in Mary, who shows what a woman can be and do in God's plan, lifted to the highest place among creatures. This means Mary restores and reveals the dignity of womanhood, for in her a woman stands at the center of redemption, the New Eve and the Ark of God, so that every woman can see in Mary the exalted dignity of her own womanhood, restored and glorified in the woman God chose. The woman who understands the dignity of womanhood restored sees in Mary the exaltation of her own womanhood, lifted and glorified in the New Eve. The dignity of womanhood restored is revealed in Mary as the New Eve and the Ark, for the woman who had a part in the fall is answered by the woman who had a part in redemption, so that Mary lifts and glorifies the dignity of every woman.

CHAPTER FIVE

She Leads You to Her Son

Mary's Intercession and Christ

A common fear about Mary is that devotion to her competes with Christ, drawing love and attention away from Him, but the truth is the opposite, for Mary's whole role and all her intercession lead to her Son, flowing from His mediation and pointing always to Him. Understanding Mary's intercession, what the Church actually teaches, and how it does not compete with Christ's unique mediation but flows from it and leads to Him, frees a woman from the fear that loving Mary takes anything from Christ.

His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you. — John 2:5

Her Intercession Flows From Christ

Mary's intercession does not compete with Christ's unique mediation but flows from it, for whatever power she has to intercede is given by Christ and depends entirely on Him, so that her mediation is not a rival to His but a participation in it. The Church teaches that there is one mediator between God and humanity, Christ, and that Mary's intercession does not rival or diminish this but flows from it, for Mary intercedes not by her own independent power but by a share in Christ's mediation given to her by Him, so that her role depends entirely on His and takes nothing from it. This means a woman need not fear that honoring Mary's intercession detracts from Christ, for Mary's intercession flows from Christ's, depends on Him, and exists only as a participation in His unique mediation, so that honoring her role honors the Christ from whom it flows. The woman who understands that Mary's intercession flows from Christ sees that it does not compete with Him but depends on and points to Him. Her intercession flows from Christ, for Mary intercedes not by independent power but by a share in Christ's unique mediation given to her by Him, so that her role does not rival His but participates in it and takes nothing from it.

She Always Points to Him

Mary never draws attention to herself but always points to her Son, as at Cana she told the servants simply to do whatever He tells you, so that her whole role is to lead a woman to Christ, never away from Him. The character of Mary's role is seen at Cana, where she noticed the need, brought it to her Son, and then told the servants to do whatever He tells you, pointing away from herself and toward Christ, and this is what Mary always does, directing attention and obedience not to herself but to her Son, so that she leads a woman to Christ rather than drawing her away. This means devotion to Mary, rightly understood, always leads to Christ, for Mary herself always points to Him, bringing a woman closer to her Son, teaching her to do whatever He tells her, so that the closer a woman draws to Mary the closer she is drawn to Christ. The woman who understands

that Mary always points to Him finds that drawing near to Mary draws her nearer to Christ, to whom Mary always directs her. She always points to Him, for Mary draws no attention to herself but directs it to her Son, as at Cana she said do whatever he tells you, so that her whole role is to lead a woman to Christ and devotion to her always draws nearer to Him.

A Mother's Help Toward God

Mary helps a woman toward God as a mother helps her child, with a maternal love and intercession that draws her closer to Christ, so that seeking Mary's help is not a detour from God but a mother's assistance toward Him. Because Mary is truly a mother given by Christ, her help is a mother's help, drawing her children toward God, interceding for them, caring for their souls, leading them to her Son, so that a woman who seeks Mary's help receives the assistance of a mother whose every care is to bring her closer to Christ. This means seeking Mary's intercession and help is not a distraction from God but a drawing nearer to Him through the love of a mother who leads her children to her Son, so that a woman is helped toward God by Mary's maternal care rather than diverted from Him. The woman who understands a mother's help toward God seeks Mary's intercession as the care of a mother drawing her to Christ, helped toward God rather than away. A mother's help toward God is what Mary's intercession offers, a maternal love that draws a woman closer to Christ, so that seeking her help is not a detour from God but a mother's assistance toward Him, leading her children to her Son.

CHAPTER SIX

The Model of All You Are Called to Be

Mary and the Feminine Genius

Mary is not only a mother and intercessor but the perfect model of everything a woman is called to be, embodying in her life the full flowering of what it means to be a woman before God, so that in her a woman sees the pattern of her own calling. Understanding Mary as the model of the feminine genius, her fiat the template of receptivity, her Magnificat the model of praise and courage, her presence at Cana the model of intercessory love, and her standing at the Cross the model of faithful endurance, reveals in Mary the pattern of everything a woman is called to be.

My soul magnifies the Lord, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. — Luke 1:46-48

Her Fiat, the Model of Receptivity

Mary's fiat, her yes to God at the Annunciation, is the model of the receptivity that is at the heart of a woman's calling, the openness to receive God's word and will and to let it bear fruit in her. When Mary said let it be done to me according to your word, she modeled the deepest receptivity, the openness to receive God's word, to welcome His will, to let Him work in her, and this receptivity is central to what a woman is called to be, an openness to God that receives His word and lets it bear fruit, as Mary received the Word and bore Him into the world. This means Mary's fiat is the template for every woman's receptivity, her yes the model of the openness to God that a woman is called to live, receiving His word and will and letting them become fruitful in her life as they became fruitful in Mary's. The woman who takes Mary's fiat as her model learns the receptivity at the heart of her calling, the yes to God that receives His word and bears it. Her fiat, the model of receptivity, is Mary's yes at the Annunciation, the openness to receive God's word and will and let it bear fruit, which is central to a woman's calling, so that Mary's fiat is the template for the receptivity every woman is called to live.

Her Magnificat and Her Love

Mary's Magnificat, her song of praise, models the praise and prophetic courage a woman is called to, and her presence at Cana models the intercessory love that notices need and brings it to God, so that in these a woman sees her calling to praise and to loving intercession. In the Magnificat, Mary pours out a praise that is also prophetic and courageous, proclaiming God's greatness and His justice, modeling the praise and the bold, prophetic voice a woman is called to find; and at Cana, Mary notices the need, is moved by love, and brings it to her Son, modeling the intercessory love that attends to others' needs and carries them to God. This means Mary models both the praise a woman is called to offer, prophetic and courageous as the Magnificat, and the intercessory love she is called to live, attentive and active as at Cana, so that in Mary a woman sees the pattern of her praise and her love. The woman who looks to Mary's Magnificat and her love learns the praise and the intercessory love she is called to, modeled in Mary's song and her care at Cana. Her Magnificat and her love model the praise and prophetic courage and the intercessory love a woman is called to, for Mary's song pours out bold praise and her presence at Cana attends to need and brings it to God, showing a woman the pattern of her praise and her love.

Her Standing at the Cross

Mary's standing faithfully at the Cross models the faithful endurance a woman is called to, the staying present in love and faith even when the cost is greatest, so that in Mary a

woman sees the pattern of her own faithfulness through suffering. When all seemed lost and most had fled, Mary stood by the Cross of her Son, remaining faithfully present in the darkest hour, enduring the sword that pierced her heart without abandoning her place, and this models the faithful endurance a woman is called to, the staying present in love and faith when the cost is greatest and everything in her might want to flee. This means Mary's standing at the Cross is the model of a woman's faithful endurance, her perseverance in love and faith through suffering, her staying present when it costs everything, so that a woman learns from Mary to endure faithfully, to stand by her own crosses as Mary stood by her Son's. The woman who takes Mary's standing at the Cross as her model learns the faithful endurance of staying present in love through the hardest suffering. Her standing at the Cross models the faithful endurance a woman is called to, Mary remaining present in love and faith in the darkest hour, so that a woman learns from her to endure faithfully and stay present when the cost is greatest.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Woman the Enemy Fears

Mary in the Spiritual Battle

Mary holds a particular and powerful place in the spiritual battle, for she is the woman at enmity with the serpent, the one through whom the enemy is defeated, so that she is the woman the enemy most fears and a formidable ally to those who are hers. Understanding Mary's role in the spiritual battle, foretold from the first promise and shown in the vision of Revelation, reveals her as a powerful protector against the enemy and the woman through whom his defeat comes.

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet. — Revelation 12:1

At Enmity With the Serpent

From the first promise after the fall, God placed enmity between the serpent and the woman, so that Mary stands in direct opposition to the enemy, the woman whose offspring crushes his head and who shares in his defeat. The first prophecy of redemption declared enmity between the serpent and the woman and between their offspring, promising that the woman's offspring would crush the serpent's head, and the Church sees Mary as this woman, placed by God in direct enmity with the enemy, utterly opposed to him, the mother of the one who would crush him, so that Mary stands against the serpent as his appointed adversary. This means Mary is no neutral figure in the spiritual

battle but the woman set against the serpent, at enmity with him by God's own design, sharing in the victory over him through her Son, so that she is a powerful adversary of the enemy and a protector of those she shields. The woman who understands Mary at enmity with the serpent sees her as the enemy's appointed adversary, a powerful force against him in the spiritual battle. At enmity with the serpent, Mary is the woman God set against the enemy from the first promise, whose offspring crushes his head, so that she stands as his appointed adversary and shares in his defeat, a powerful force against him in the spiritual battle.

The Woman of Revelation

The Book of Revelation shows a woman clothed with the sun, in conflict with the dragon, a vision the Church sees fulfilled in Mary, revealing her glory and her role in the cosmic battle against the enemy. In Revelation, John sees a great sign, a woman clothed with the sun, crowned with stars, who bears a son destined to rule and who is pursued by the dragon, and the Church sees in this woman both the Church and Mary, revealing Mary's glory, her role in the great battle, and her victory, through her Son, over the dragon who opposes her. This means Mary is shown in Revelation as a glorious figure in the cosmic spiritual battle, clothed with the sun, opposed by the dragon yet victorious through her offspring, so that she stands revealed as a powerful figure in the warfare against the enemy, glorious and victorious. The woman who understands the woman of Revelation sees Mary's glory and her role in the great battle, a powerful and victorious figure against the enemy. The woman of Revelation, clothed with the sun and in conflict with the dragon, is seen by the Church as fulfilled in Mary, revealing her glory and her role in the cosmic battle, a powerful and victorious figure against the enemy.

A Mother Who Protects

Because Mary is the enemy's great adversary, she is a powerful protector of those entrusted to her, shielding her children in the spiritual battle, so that a woman who takes refuge in Mary has a mighty defender against the enemy. Mary's enmity with the serpent means she is a powerful protector of her children, for the woman the enemy fears is a mighty shield to those who are hers, defending them in the spiritual battle, interceding against the enemy's attacks, covering them with her maternal protection, so that a woman who takes refuge in Mary gains a formidable defender. This means a woman is not left defenseless in the spiritual battle but has in Mary a mother who protects, a powerful ally against the enemy, so that she can take refuge in Mary, call on her protection, and shelter under the care of the woman the enemy most fears. The woman who understands Mary as a mother who protects takes refuge in her maternal defense, sheltered in the spiritual battle by the woman the enemy fears. A mother who protects is

what Mary is in the spiritual battle, a powerful defender of those entrusted to her, so that a woman who takes refuge in Mary shelters under the protection of the woman the enemy most fears, a mighty ally against him.

CONCLUSION

Come to Your Mother

The woman who kept Mary at a distance, as an optional devotion or out of misplaced caution, now knows who Mary truly is and why she changes everything. We have seen that Mary is not an add-on but at the heart of the faith, given as a mother from the Cross; that she is woven through salvation history from the first promise to Pentecost; who the Church says she is in the four great dogmas, each a word about every woman; that she is the New Eve and the Ark of the New Covenant; that her intercession does not compete with Christ but leads to Him; that she is the model of everything a woman is called to be; and that she is the woman the enemy fears.

Through all of it runs a single invitation: come to your mother. Mary is not a doctrine to be acknowledged at a distance but a mother to be known and loved, given to you by Christ Himself, waiting with maternal love to draw you closer to her Son. To come to Mary is not to take anything from Christ but to receive the mother He gave you from the Cross, a mother whose every care is to lead you to Him.

So come to your mother. Receive Mary as the mother Christ gave you, not an optional devotion but a gift from the Cross. Know her story, woven through the whole of salvation. Understand who she is in the great truths the Church proclaims, each one a word about your own dignity and destiny. See in her the New Eve who restores the dignity of your womanhood. Let her lead you to her Son, for she always points to Him. Take her as the model of everything you are called to be, in her fiat, her Magnificat, her love, and her faithful endurance. And take refuge in her protection, for she is the woman the enemy fears. She is not an add-on to your faith but at the very heart of it, and she has been waiting, all this time, for you. Come to your mother, and let her draw you to her Son.

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