

Mary Is My Master Educator in Virtue

Daily Gospel / Liturgical Cycle C

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Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 11: 27-28.

While Jesus was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed." He replied, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."

Luke 11:27-28

Introductory Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you are the master of the universe, and yet you wish to listen to me and guide me. You know all things past, present and future, and yet you respect my freedom to choose you. Holy Trinity, you are completely happy and fulfilled on your own, and yet you have generously brought us into existence. You are our fulfillment. Thank you for the gift of yourself. I offer the littleness of myself in return, knowing you are pleased with what I have to give.

Petition:

Lord, help me to imitate Mary.

1. Mary's Masterpiece:

The woman in this passage has a great insight. She senses the greatness of Jesus. Probably she intuitively that he is the Messiah. It is doubtful if she has guessed that he is also God-made-man. But from Jesus' greatness, she is able to infer the greatness of Mary. It is obvious to her that whoever produced this masterpiece of humanity must have been a masterpiece of humanity herself. And she is right. The humanity of Jesus is Mary's masterpiece. All of what she is, she imparted to him. While we cannot credit Mary with the perfections of Jesus' divinity, we would be doing her a grave injustice to think that Jesus' human virtues and perfections were not positively impacted by her example.

2. The Immaculate Conception:

God desired Jesus to come into this world like every one of us, as an infant, and so Jesus needed a mother. God wanted him to have the finest mother, a perfect mother, and so he gave Mary many gifts, starting with her Immaculate Conception, preserving her from original sin. Who could imagine Jesus pure and innocent wrapped in flesh polluted by sin for the first nine months of his existence? Would such an innocent child ever have been able to stop crying while being tended to by a sinner? The Father wanted the best for his Son and gave him the best, even though he had to provide the miracle of the Immaculate Conception in order to do it.

3. Jesus' Educator:

Being truly human, Jesus had to learn just like any one of us. Because of his divinity, his human capacities were untainted by sin, but it was Mary who taught him how to use them, who honed them in the everyday life of the family until they were perfect just as any mother would. Mary was the perfect one to bring out all the perfections in Jesus' human nature. Being immaculately conceived, Mary's mind was not wounded by sin and so was always able to discover ways of parenting and teaching that were perfectly suited to Jesus' human nature. To educate doesn't mean to just give knowledge. In its fullest sense, it means to train in virtue. Mary's continuous example of virtue ñ hearing the word of God and observing it ñ was certainly compelling for Jesus in his educational upbringing.

Conversation with Christ:

Dear Jesus, it's hard for me to understand that, as human, you needed education just like anyone else. Help me to see that you were truly and fully human like me. Moreover, since you have already given me Mary to be my Mother, ask her to educate me too, to form me in all the virtues the way she formed them in you.

Resolution:

Do I really think of Mary as my educator in the full sense, in the sense of teaching me virtue? What is the virtue I need the most? I will ask Mary to educate me in it in a special way today.