

UNDERSTANDING THE MAGNIFICAT

Right before his death, St. John Eudes (1601 – 1680) completed his book entitled, “*The Admirable Heart of Mary*”. This simplified version of his final chapters, explains Our Lady’s Magnificat, because they are easily the most exquisite part and the culmination of his book.

Luke’s gospel (1:46-55) records Mary’s Magnificat which has much greater importance than just her personal prayer. In this song, Mary personifies Israel, God’s virgin daughter, who manifests the highest level of messianic joy.

Mary is the ultimate achievement of Israel and the summit of God’s choices. Mary sings of God’s works in Israel and in fulfilling the mystery of The Word becoming flesh. The Magnificat explains how this great favor takes place among Israel’s lowly people.

The song has three parts:

1. Mary praises God, her Saviour (V 46-50)
2. Mary recalls what God has done for Israel. (V 51-53)
3. Mary sings of God’s plan, foretold in Abraham and perfected in herself. (V 54-55)

OUR LADY’S SONG

BY ST. JOHN EUDES

(THE MAGNIFICAT EXPLAINED)

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1. EXCELLENCE OF THE MAGNIFICAT

After Luke's gospel records Mary singing her Magnificat, Elizabeth said, "Blessed are you who have believed the Lord's words to you would be fulfilled."

Scripture records many saintly women singing inspired canticles. These include the sister of Moses, Deborah (one of the judges of Israel, Judith and Anna (mother of Samuel). However, because of the holiness of its author and the mysteries it contains, the Magnificat is the bible's greatest canticle.

The Power of the Magnificat

Mary prayed the Magnificat after the Holy Spirit had sanctified John the Baptist and Elizabeth. During the centuries, this song has sanctified many. It has cast out demons and performed miracles.

Although Our Lady only sang this canticle publicly once, she recited it privately on numerous occasions. Some writers report that Our Lady has often appeared at the Church's Evening prayer, when the Magnificat is sung publicly. As you sing Mary's song, surrender yourself to the Holy Spirit.

2. THE TRUE CANTICLE OF MARY'S HEART

The Magnificat is truly the canticle of Mary's heart for four reasons.

1. This song originated in her Immaculate Heart.
2. Her bodily heart, filled with joy, compelled her lips to sing with extraordinary jubilation.
3. Her spiritual heart, enraptured by God, brought forth ecstatic words, "My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."
4. Her divine heart, (Jesus hidden in her womb), is the real author of this canticle. He inspired the thoughts and pronounced its prophecies through her lips.
5. This canticle comes from the heart of the Holy Spirit, who possessed Mary and sanctified Elizabeth, Zachary and John.
6. These words "are like so many flames of love darting from the furnace burning in the Immaculate Heart." (St. Bernardine)

O virginal canticle, your origin lies in Jesus and in the Holy Spirit. Only the lips of Mary would dare to pronounce this message. Although the angels are unworthy to do so, we sinners can repeat her words. What veneration we must have! What purity of tongue and holiness of lips are needed. What flames the song should enkindle.

O Mother, share with us the holiness with which you sang your Magnificat. May we sing this canticle for all eternity as we thank you for all your wonders.

3. **MY SOUL DOES MAGNIFY THE LORD**

To magnify God for His great blessings upon our heavenly mother, we will consider each part.

God's Fullness

What does it mean to magnify God? How can we magnify Someone who is infinite? Even God cannot make Himself greater than He already is. His divine perfections are infinite and cannot increase in themselves. However, we can magnify God in ourselves. "Every soul can conceive the eternal Word by faith, can engender God in others by preaching, and magnify the Creator by loving Him. To magnify the Lord is to exalt His infinite excellence."
(St. Augustine)

We magnify God by esteeming Him, by loving Him with all our hearts, by adoring His infinite wisdom, by performing our actions for His glory, by humbling ourselves, by carrying our cross, by accepting our suffering and by exalting Him in our thoughts, words and deeds.

Unfortunately, we do the opposite. We lower God by choosing creatures instead of Him. We seek our own will instead of His interests. O Holy Virgin, you were different. From the beginning of your life to its end, you exalted God in all your thoughts and affections and in your interior and exterior senses.

What is "My Soul"?

Our Lady does not say "I" but "My soul", because she exalts God from the utmost depths of her heart. She uses all her faculties – imagination, memory, intellect and will. She exhausts all her powers in praise. She exalts God for all creatures and for all the graces ever given to man. One author teaches that her soul is Jesus Christ.

What is this "soul" that the virgin calls her own? The word pertains first to Mary's natural soul that gives life to her body. Second, it refers to the soul of Jesus, whom she is carrying in her womb. (In a sense, they form a single soul). Also, it means all created souls who have ever been or will be. Mary is well aware when God gave Christ to her, he gave her everything. She knows her sacred obligation to use every gift for God's honor. In saying, "My soul magnifies the Lord" she speaks for all souls and exalts Christ through them.

Magnifying the Lord

Our Lady magnifies "the Lord". This Lord of Lords, is the Father, Son and Spirit Who have a single essence. She exalts the Father for sharing with her His divine paternity. She magnifies the Son for choosing her as His mother. She praises the Holy Spirit who accomplished this work in her. She magnifies them for the infinite graces which they have given to her and will give to mankind.

Let us imitate the Virgin, saying often, “My soul does magnify the Lord.” To unite all souls into the one great heart of Jesus, we must praise God with all our strength.

4. **MY SPIRIT HAS REJOICED IN GOD, MY SAVIOUR**

These words reveal the incomprehensible joy which completely enraptured Mary from the moment she conceived Jesus until the end of her life. When she conceived Jesus, her body would have left her soul if God had not miraculously kept her alive. History recounts people who died of joy at receiving some news. How much greater was Mary’s joy to see herself as God’s inexpressible choice to be His mother.

Reasons For Rejoicing

She rejoiced in God, Who is infinitely good and merciful. She rejoiced in the Saviour who redeemed her by preserving her from original sin and made her the mediatrix in saving all mankind. She rejoiced because God took His greatest pleasure in her humility. “Mary rejoiced because God loved her humility.” (St. Augustine). She rejoiced that God’s wonders in her were greater than all the preceding centuries and all the centuries which would follow. She rejoiced in God’s favors to the humble and in His justice toward the proud.

A Complete Delight

Mary delighted completely in God, because she saw the countless millions who would have a special love for her and would be numbered among the predestined. This inconceivable joy brings forth her shout, “My spirit rejoices.” (St. Antonius)

This mother loves her children as if they were her own spirit. St. Bernard wrote, “I exhort you to love our Blessed Lady so you are safeguarded from all dangers and temptations. Cultivate a special veneration in order to find comfort and never to be overcome. She is a tender mother, who despises no one. She never ignores those who seek her aid. She desires only to place God’s graces at the disposal of sinners. Love her and you will be chaste. Honor her and you will be devout. Imitate her and you will be holy.

Snatching Sinners From Hell

Lanspergius the Carthusian wrote, “No one who loves her can perish. All who imitate her gain eternal life. She has taken into her arms many sinners who have one foot in hell, and led them to goodness. She snatched them from the Evil One and placed them on the road to paradise. Jesus gave her power to gain penance for the sinner, grace for her followers, and glory for those who imitate her.”

Mary’s Ecstasy

When Mary conceived Jesus, God filled her with heavenly joys. He took her to the third heaven where she saw God face to face. St. Paul, while still on earth, was lifted to the third heaven and saw God’s essence. Did not God’s mother enjoy this privilege on many occasions as St. Bernard, St. Albert and St. Antonius have written? “O Mother, a torrent of heavenly delights burst upon you, inebriated you, and made you experience what no eye has ever seen.” (Abbot Rupert)

Peace of God

The children of this world believe (quite erroneously) that those who serve God experience only afflictions on this earth. This hateful delusion comes from the Father of Lies. Paul wrote “Tribulation comes upon all who do evil, but glory and peace to all who do good.” (Rom 2:9-10)

The heart of a sinful person is an always-agitated sea. “The wicked are like a raging sea.” (Is 57:20) but the fear of God changes our hearts into joy. “The fear of the Lord shall give joy and length of days.” (Sirach 1:12) Paul was filled with joy amid all his tribulations. (2 Cor 7:4)

O Virgin, give us a detachment from the false pleasures of earth. Help us to seek our happiness in honoring your Son and yourself with all our heart. By renouncing the misleading delights of this world, every soul can “Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.” (Ps 34:9).

5. **HE HAS REGARDED THE HUMILITY OF HIS HANDMAID**

Humility is the only virtue that never becomes aware of itself. In her lowliness, Mary knew the blessings bestowed by God but returned all glory to Him. As Mary lowered herself, God exalted her. “Mary’s humility is the heavenly ladder by which God descended to earth. God saw and approved this humility. Many times, people seem humble but they seek men’s praises and not God’s approval.” (St. Augustine)

Two Kinds of Humility

St. Bernard wrote, “There are two kinds of humility. The first is cold and consists of knowledge. The second is warm and consists of love. We learn the first from our sinfulness. We learn the second from Jesus Christ who fled earthly glory and accepted death”.

Why would God regard Our Lady’s humility rather than her other virtues? “Because it was more pleasing to him than any of her other virtues.” (St. Albert the Great) “Virginity is praiseworthy but humility is necessary for salvation. Without humility, even Mary’s purity would not have pleased God and the Holy Spirit could not have descended on her. She pleased God by her virginity but conceived God’s Son by her humility. Her humility made her virginity pleasing to God.” (St. Bernard)

Source of Divine Favors

O humility, you have given us a God-Man and a Mother of God. You are the source of all the divine favors which we have on earth and which we hope to have in heaven. You destroy all evil and bring forth all good. We should esteem you and use every means to gain you.

A person without humility has nothing, but a soul with humility possesses everything. The Word became Flesh to teach us humility. “O eternal God, Our Saviour took flesh and died, so we might imitate his example of humility.” (Prayer on Palm Sunday) “What the devil destroyed by pride, the Saviour regained by humility.” O Mary, you have crushed the proud

head of Satan. Crush pride in our hearts. Share fully with us your humility which led the Trinity to make you the Mother of the Saviour.

6. **FROM NOW ON ALL GENERATIONS WILL CALL ME BLESSED**

These words contain one of the greatest prophecies ever spoken. They announce the infinite blessings which God will accomplish so that every age honors Mary.

All Call Her Blessed

The Father sent the Archangel Gabriel, (the prince of His empire), as His ambassador to tell Mary that she was full of grace. This exalts her above all the angels. God makes her the most blessed among women and gives her powers surpassing all the powers of heaven and earth. The Son of God proclaims her as blessed among all the nations. The Holy Spirit chooses her as His worthy spouse and makes her the Queen of all saints.

All the angels, upon seeing her assumed into heaven, wonder, “Who is she?” After adoring God, they proclaim unending praises to their Queen. The Church perpetually says, “Blessed is the womb that bore the Saviour and the breasts which nourished Him.” Our Lady told St. Brigid that she eases every pain in purgatory and that these souls gain their freedom through her intercession. Even the souls who died before Christ were blessed by Mary. She gave them the redeemer to set them free.

The demons rage against her, because, so many times, she snatches a soul from their grasp. This is her inconceivable charity toward them. When Mary’s name is pronounced, the devils must leave their prey and return to hell. Thus all generations, (angels, saints, souls in purgatory, lost souls and even the demons) fulfill these words, “All generations shall call me blessed.”

All the World

Finally, every person in every country in the world must proclaim that the Mother of the Saviour is the most blessed, powerful and admirable of all creatures because she thinks only of blessing the world and making everyone a sharer in her heavenly glory.

“O Mary, you are blessed because you believe, because you are full of grace, because God has done great things in you, because you are both a mother and a virgin, and because no creature is your equal.” (Gerson)

St. Germanus writes, “Who does not admire and love you? You are our firm hope, our vigilant guardian, our strongest defense, the treasure of our joy, the garden of our delight, the port for those in danger, the salvation of the lost, and the source of every good. O Queen of Heaven, your praises are sung everywhere in the world.”

O Mary, may your divine prophecy be fulfilled more and more. May every beat of my heart be a continual voice proclaiming you blessed. O blessed Mother, temple of the Lord, you have no rival in pleasing the Lord. Pray for your people!

7. HE THAT IS MIGHTY HAS DONE GREAT THINGS FOR ME

In this verse, Our Lady reveals why all generations will call her blessed. What are the great things? The saints explain this mystery. “It is a great thing for a virgin to become a mother, for her to carry the Word of God in her womb and to clothe Him with her own flesh. The handmaid of the Lord has become His mother.” (St. Augustine)

St. Antoninus writes, “It is a great thing to create the heavens and the earth, to bring down manna from heaven, and to give the Israelites their Promised Land. It is great to give sight to the blind, to drive out demons, to cure the sick and to restore the dead. However, the Spirit overshadowing Mary to form the Word made Flesh surpasses all of these.”

St. Thomas of Villanova explained it this way. “God elevated Mary so high, that men and angels cannot even see her. He transformed a daughter of Eve into His own Mother. She brought forth a new prodigy, a God who became man. This is the miracle of miracles.”

Surpassing All Wonders

He writes further, “All the wonders witnessed on earth, the parting of the Red Sea, the burning bush, little Moses lying in a basket, the column of fire that guided the Israelites, the manna sent from heaven, the sun which halted at Josue’s command, and Elijah restoring the dead child, are as nothing compared to God coming into Mary’s womb, the virgin bringing forth a child, the King of heaven lying in a manger, the divine fire enclosed in a tiny cloud to guide the world, the Word descending from heaven, a God annihilating himself, the Father restoring His Son after three days in the tomb and Jesus ascending to the very throne of God.” (St. Thomas of Villanova)

God’s Exaltation

St. Cyprian exclaims, “I no longer admire the construction of the world, the stability of the earth, the order of the days, or the course of the sun because I admire a God made man in a virgin’s womb.”

St. Bonaventure puts it this way. “God could have made a larger earth, a more vast sky and a more brilliant sun but he cannot make a mother greater than the Mother of God. To do so, he would need a more excellent Son.”

God exalted this virgin so high that she returned greater gifts to God than what she had been given. Although Mary was finite, the Queen of Heaven gave birth to the Lord. Although she was God’s creature, she allowed God to become Emmanuel (God with us). She allowed Him as man to possess all power on earth, to be universal Judge, to sit at the Father’s right hand, and to forgive sins. If Jesus gave the apostles the power to do works greater than His (cf Jn 14:12), He certainly allowed His mother to give him greater gifts than those she received.

Admiring These Great Things

Who will not admire these “great things” which the Father has done? What a miracle to be a virgin and the Mother of God, to be clothed with virtue by the Most High, to partake of

God's fecundity, to give birth in time to Someone born before time began, to give life to Him who gave her life and to be the Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

These are the marvelous things which God has done. Although the Virgin Mary was great and holy, she humbled herself as the lowliest person. It is a great thing to be a virgin and the Mother of God, but it is much greater that Mary considers herself as nothing.

Furthermore, Mary uses all her powers and privileges to help the sinner (if he just asks). "All power is given to her. Nothing is impossible. She can restore hope to the most despairing sinner." (St. Peter Damian) "O Mary, because the almighty Lord is with you, you are most powerful through and in God." (St. Bonaventure)

O benign Virgin, I give God infinite thanks for making you so great, and I ask you to destroy in me whatever displeases God and to establish His perfect reign in me.

Holy is His Name

Six mysteries are contained in the words "and Holy is His name."

1. The mystery of the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary to form his masterpiece.
2. The mystery of the holy humanity of the Divine Infant, who is sanctified by His union with the Trinity. "He will be called the Son of God." (Lk 1:35)
3. The mystery of this sanctified Infant glorifying the Trinity as It deserves.
4. The mystery of the infant anointed with the divinity and consecrated as Saviour and Sanctifier. He immediately sanctifies both Elizabeth and John the Baptist.
5. The mystery of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary and accomplishing the holiest work ever done. Jesus, by His conception, overwhelms His mother with an ocean of inconceivable holiness.
6. The mystery of the Word becoming flesh, the most inexhaustible fountain of holiness that will ever exist.

These few words pronounced by the mother of the Saint of Saints contain many wonders.

8. **HIS MERCY IS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION, TO THOSE WHO FEAR HIM**

We come to the second part of the Canticle. Having magnified God and proclaimed that all generations would call her blessed, Our Lady gives another prophecy and proclaims God's mercy is from generation to generation.

This mercy “is our bountiful Saviour” (St. Augustine). David begged God, “Show us, O Lord, your mercy and grant us your salvation.” (Ps 85:8) “God is always ready to save by His mercy those whom He cannot save by justice. However, we turn our back even on His mercy.” (St. Jerome). Peter wrote “He has saved us according to His mercy.” (1 Pt 1:3) All of God’s mercy, (from the beginning until the end of time), comes through Jesus Christ.

Three Elements

Mercy has three parts. First, it takes pity on others. Second, it desires to help the outcast. Third, it puts these desires into action. Let us examine these three parts. First, Our Lord was filled with pity and carried us in His heart. He kept His eyes on our misfortunes and tribulations, realizing all that we would suffer to the end of time. Although this tender love caused Him countless deaths, His love was stronger than death.

Secondly, all our tribulations were before his eyes and he always wanted to free us. Jesus did this even though he foresaw our ingratitude. Even our sins could not dampen His ardor.

Thirdly, our Redeemer did everything possible to save us from eternal suffering. His actions, His trials, His sacrifices, fasts, vigils, and especially His cruel death, were to free us from evil and give us an eternal empire. O my Savior, you are a God of mercy. O my human heart, what shall you love if you do not love Jesus Christ.

On Those Who Fear Him

“From generation to generations, to them that fear Him” means that our Savior pours His mercy upon those who fear Him. God experiences a sovereign pleasure in bestowing blessings upon His children. “Divine mercy belongs to the Trinity but is particularly attributed to the Son because the Incarnate Lord delivered us from the torments of hell and acquired an eternal empire.” (St. Bernard)

In this great work of mercy, Our Lord decided to associate His mother. “It is not good for man to be alone.” (Gen 2:18) and Christ chose His helpmate. The Father gave Him Mary to cooperate in saving the world.

St. Catherine’s Description

In 1379, St. Catherine of Sienna called Our Lady, “Bearer of Fire, Peaceful Ocean, Fiery Chariot and Administrator of Mercy.” She is bearer of fire because she carried Him who cast the fires of love upon mankind; Peaceful Ocean because her sea of grace is always calm and peaceful, transporting all to eternal salvation; Fiery Chariot because she is inflamed with love for her children and with terror to all demons. Her followers will ascend to Paradise in a fiery chariot; Administrator of Mercy because with extraordinary kindness and unparalleled power she will comfort all who have recourse to her. She continually does this for the whole world “Heaven and earth would long ago have been reduced to nothing if Mary had not prayed.” (St. Fulgentius)

Let us acknowledge her as the Mother of Mercy because her Son shared with her His works of clemency. May all the saints and angels sing forever of your mercy.

9. **HE HAS SHOWN POWER IN HIS ARM**

Having praised the Saviour's mercy, our mother now exalts God's divine might. What arm does God use? All the saints say that Jesus Christ is the arm of the Father because man performs his deeds with his arms. "Just as man's arms extend his body, so the Son of God extends the power of the Father." (St. Albert the Great)

Jesus Christ

"He has shown His might" means that God has created all things through Jesus, who has redeemed the world, vanquished the devil, opened heaven to us and performed numberless miracles. What a miracle to have two natures, divine and human, (infinitely removed from each other), united in one Person, coming forth from a virgin. What a miracle! God makes a woman the Queen of Heaven.

Sometimes, God's works are attributed to his hands and his fingers. "The heavens are the work of your hands." (Ps 9:4) The miracles for Moses are "done by the finger of God" (Ex 8:19) But the incomparable work of the Word becoming flesh is attributed to God's arm because it surpasses all His other works.

The Saints Say

"Perfect God becomes perfect man. He is the only new being that has ever appeared or can appear. In him, the infinite power of God is more manifest than in any other part of the universe. What is greater to behold than God made man?" (St. John Damascene)

"How good is this child who wills to become the son of Mary. What a dignity for Mary to have both the fruit of fertility and the flower of virginity. The Son of God "descends like rain upon the fleece." (Ps 72:6) Where does He descend? Into the virginal womb of Mary." (Richard of St. Victor)

"Sing to the Lord a new song because he has done wonderful things." (Ps 98:1) "These wonderful things are God becoming man through a virgin, delivering up His Son for sinners, giving the Judge over to criminals and the Innocent to the evil ones." (Cardinal Hajues)

God's shows His greatest might in destroying sin. The Church prays, "O God you show your greatest power in forgiving us our sins." Sin offends God so much that only infinite might can forgive it and only the Almighty's arm can crush it. His might is also shown in the strength given to martyrs and to all who suffer extraordinary afflictions with great patience.

This is a brief summary of the countless miracles performed by God's arm. Our Lord performs these deeds daily for His Father's glory and His mother's honor.

10. **HE HAS SCATTERED THE PROUD IN THE CONCEIT OF THEIR HEART**

Who are these proud persons? They include the rebellious angels cast out of heaven, the biblical enemies of Israel (like Pharaoh), the demons driven out by Jesus, those who scorned

Jesus' teachings, sinners who rebel against the divine will and all who are dominated by pride. The proud are princes, wise men, and tyrants who opposed the preaching of the gospel. The words extend from the beginning until the end of time.

“God destroyed the proud by a secret determination that he would become man and redeem the guilty. The devil could never discover this secret decision.” (St. Augustine) Other writers say “God exterminated those with high esteem for themselves” and “He scattered their inner thoughts and resolutions.”

Using Their Own Arrows

By her words, Mary revealed that God annihilates evil thoughts and turns proud thoughts into confusion for His own glory and for the holiness of those who serve Him. God uses their own weapons and turns their own arrows against them. He uses their plans to fulfill His own. Their evil leads to the advantage of God's friends.

The Church says, “O happy fault that merited the envy of so great a redeemer.” Adam's sin merited the great gift of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, Joseph's brothers' envy led to Joseph's gaining power in Egypt. Did not Pharaoh's cruelty towards the Israelites, lead to the miracles of the Red Sea?

Christ's enemies thought, “Let his name be remembered no more.” (Jer 11:19) Although they tried to nullify God's work, God used their evil plans to redeem the world. Have not tyrants tried to destroy the Church and ended up creating hundreds of martyrs?

Destroying The Proud

Concerning King Herod, St. Augustine said, “The cruelty of Herod was more profitable to these Holy Innocents than all the friendships and favors given by others.” The all powerful arm of Jesus Christ overturns the undertakings of the proud.

The proud are destroyed by the Virgin's humble heart which attracted the Eternal Word. She stamps out our own pride for she is “the glory of Jerusalem and the joy of Israel.” (Judith 15:10) This glory of Jerusalem is the voice of the angels and the joy of Israel is the happiness of mankind.

O humility of Mary, you are the source of all blessings. O pride, you are the source of all evils. O my queen, make this virtue reign within us for God's glory.

11. **HE HAS PUT DOWN THE MIGHTY FROM THEIR THRONES AND HAS EXALTED THE LOWLY**

When the moment came for the Father to redeem mankind, He chose an instrument which seemingly had no capacity for this mighty work. He sent His Son in the weakness of mortal flesh and He became “the most abject of men.”

He wanted His eternal Son to be born of a woman who was humble in her own eyes and saw herself as the lowliest of all creatures. Wishing to find coworkers for His Son, the Father chose fishermen with no learning or eloquence and He sent them forth to establish a worldwide religion.

Surprising Results

When they went forth, how were they received? Everyone rose up against them. Men used every effort to oppose the gospel. The disciples were cast into prison, suffered the worst atrocities and killed.

What happened? They triumphed gloriously. They overturned the idols of hell and established Christianity. They became masters of the world. "You will make them princes over all the earth." (Ps.45:17) God overturned the thrones of kings and the pulpits of philosophers. He gave the Kingdom to fishermen. All of this fulfilled the virgin's prophecy "He has put down the mighty and exalted the lowly". This will happen until the end of the world.

Biblical Examples

Did not God humble Saul and exalt David? Did He not destroy Vasthi and exalt Esther? Did not Our Lord deliver us from the demons who ruled the earth? Did He not replace the pagan emperor, Diocletian, with the Christian emperor, Constantine? Did he not replace the high priests with fishermen?

Peter writes, "Be humbled under God's mighty hand, that he may exalt you." (1 Pt 5:6) Christ always acts this way. The anti-Christ lifts himself up above God but "The Lord Jesus shall kill him with the breath of his mouth." (2 Th2:4), casting him into hell. O humble Queen, extinguish my arrogance and place humility in my heart so I can resemble the heavenly Father.

12. **HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS, AND THE RICH HE HAS SENT AWAY EMPTY**

Some say that these words refer to the angels, both good and bad. The good angels are hungry because they return all things to God and keep only their nothingness. They pass from grace into eternal glory. The bad angels, seeing the excellence given to them by God, seek self-satisfaction and glorify themselves. Their pride and arrogance force God to strip away their brilliance and to reduce them to barrenness in the depths of hell.

Applying These Words

Others refer these words to the Gentiles who accepted the gospel. Before Christ, the Gentiles had lived in total spiritual poverty. By embracing Christ, they obtained inconceivable treasures. The Chosen People rejected their Savior and lost their favors.

Other writers apply these words to the good people in the Old Testament who were filled with grace because they had an insatiable hunger for the coming of the Redeemer. On the other

hand, the Pharisees, convinced of their own wealth, scorned the graces offered by God's Son and lost their faith.

Because the Blessed Virgin's love was intense, her hunger was much greater than the Old Testament prophets and patriarchs. She ardently sought the Saviour and was overwhelmed with infinite, inconceivable blessings during the nine months He lived in her womb. He continued to pour out graces whenever she received Holy Communion. "The humble realize that they are nothing and stand in extreme need of heaven's help. The proud see themselves as filled with virtues. So, God must bless the humble and deprive the proud." (St. Augustine)

Poverty

These words also refer to the poor of heart who are detached from this world's goods. They embrace poverty because Jesus Christ was poor. Those who voluntarily choose a state of poverty imitate the Saviour who said, "The foxes have their lairs and the birds have their nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Mt 8:20) How blessed is voluntary poverty and how dangerous is having worldly wealth. "Woe to you rich for you have your consolation." (Lk 6:24) "They that become rich fall into temptation and a snare of the devil." (1 Tim 6:9) Set aside the false riches and love the wealth of heaven.

The Salvation of Others

"Those who hunger" are those who seek the salvation of others. Our Lady prophesies this work until the end of the world. In the Old Testament, King David prophesies that all the kings of the world will adore the Messiah King, that all tribes will be blessed in Him and all generations will glorify His name. The Father promises His Son this inheritance of all the nations. (Ps 2) "Let all the earth sing a psalm to your name." (Ps 66:4) Every day, the Church wants her priests to celebrate mass for the world's salvation.

World Wide Conversions

St. Paul promised that after the conversion of the Jews, the whole world will be converted. God refuses His grace to no one. He said to St. Brigid, "The time will come when there will be one fold, one shepherd and one faith, when God will be known by all." And "Pagans will have such a great devotion that Christians will help them spiritually. The scriptures will be fulfilled "The People that knew me not will glorify Me." All the world will say, "Glory to the Father, Son and Spirit and all honor to the saints."

Spiritual writers agree. After the death of the anti-Christ, the whole world will be converted. Many saints have predicted this ultimate, universal conversion when we will see Our Lady's prophecy fulfilled. "He filled the hungry with good things." Even if not all are converted, those who hunger for God will enjoy a great feast, be overwhelmed with inconceivable happiness, see the Saviour and His mother honored throughout the world. They will also see the demons lose all hold upon souls, thus fulfilling the words, "He sent the rich away empty".

This prophecy is fulfilled in heaven where the hunger of all the saints will be satisfied. The psalm says, "I will be satisfied when your glory appears." (17:15) No mind can conceive the blessings which God will shower upon the saints. O Mother of Mercy, hasten this time of

worldwide conversion, so necessary for the salvation of souls who perish daily. Ask your Son to have pity on them because of the precious Blood that He shed.

13. **HE HAS RECEIVED ISRAEL AS HIS SERVANT**

Both angels in heaven and men on earth revolted against their Creator. The Angels' pride was so enormous that Divine Justice sent them to hell. Man was different. Because he was seduced into sin, God promised a Saviour. However, this gift was delayed by man's many sins. During this time, mankind was plunged into an abyss of darkness, always more and more engulfed in evil.

Remembering His Promise

God was known only in Judea. All other nations were clouded in darkness and oppressed by Satan. Moses' law revealed sin but could not cure it. Seemingly, God had abandoned the human race. His mercy was hidden. His anger had swallowed up His enemies in the Red Sea. Fire from heaven had reduced cities to rubble. Suddenly, God remembered His promise to Adam, Abraham and David. He, himself, descended from heaven and united human nature to His Person to save all who are true Israelites.

Mary concludes her Canticle saying, "He has remembered Israel, his servant, mindful of His mercies." This means, "Here is the fulfillment of the prophecies. This is why I sing to my God and rejoice in my Saviour. This is why the nations are blessed and why God's mercies are poured out in every generation. The humble are exalted and the proud ruined because, "He has remembered Israel his servant."

Israel, the Servant

Israel refers to the whole human race, for the Word united Himself to a humanity. The word "servant" (Puer) has two meanings. First, it means a child, an infant. Jesus makes us children of God. Second, it means servant, "He emptied himself and took the form of a servant." (Phil 2:7) Jesus came to serve. O Savior, you became a slave to free us and make us God's children. You call us friends and make us co-heirs. You go even further. You are the spouse of our souls, sharing all your riches with us. You go further. You are our Head and we Your members. You give us Your Spirit and Your life, so we can become one with the Father. You prayed, "That they might be one in Us." (Jn 17:21) "You have loved them even as you loved me." (Jn 17:23)

O Jesus, You will give us the same Kingdom and have us feast at the same table. You will seat us on thrones and make us enjoy your Spirit and life. Should not these gifts soften the hard human heart? If we do not love You, whom shall we love?

Mary – The Cause of Blessings

What is the primary cause of these infinite blessings? The Virgin says "You have remembered your mercies." In receiving God's mercy, we are indebted to Mary's maternal heart. What else brought the Divine Word from the Father's bosom? O Mary, your profound

humility gave forth such a sweetness that it attracted God to descend from heaven to redeem the world. “While the King was sleeping, my perfume sent forth its odor.” (Song 1:11)

O Mary, how many prayers, sacrifices and petitions you sent to heaven to have the Word become flesh. After divine mercy, it is your humility and zeal that brought about the Word made flesh. May the angels and saints always sing a canticle of gratitude for what they owe to you.

14. **AS HE SPOKE TO OUR FATHERS, TO ABRAHAM AND TO HIS CHILDREN
FOREVER**

God is faithful and true, infinitely powerful in overcoming all obstacles to His promises and infinitely wise in fulfilling them at the proper time.

God’s Fidelity

Men are quick to promise but their promises often come to nothing. God has only one Word (Jn 1:1) and through this Word, He made all things and preserves all things. (Heb 1:3) God accomplishes even more than He promised. He promised Abraham a son and gave him countless sons. He promised to withdraw mankind from darkness and to free him from Satan. Instead, He Himself descended from heaven to make us children of God.

The Blessed Virgin includes all of God’s promises in the phrase, “As He spoke to Abraham and to his seed forever.” Jesus said, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad.” (Jn 8:56) By revelation, Abraham had seen Jesus saving the world.

Earthly and Heavenly Promises

Seeing God fulfill some of His promises, gives us with infallible assurance that He will keep all of them. There are two kinds. Some promises pertain to earth and others to the life to come. On earth, God promises to preserve us from evil. “No evil shall happen to those who fear the Lord.” (Sir 33:1) He promises that “All things work together for good for those who love God.” (Rom 8:28) He promises to know our every act of service. “He has numbered my steps.” (Job 14:16) and “He cherishes our works as the apple of His eye.” (Sir 17:18)

His promises extend also to heaven. He promises to raise our bodies and to clothe them with immortality, making them like a “body in glory.” (Phil 3:21) He promises that we will dwell with Him in heaven, “Where I am, they also may be.” (Jn 17:24) He promises to make us kings and co-heirs (Rom 8:17), to give us His own glory. (Jn 17:22) We will live with the angels (Mt 24:47), dine at His table (Lk 22:30), sit on his throne (Rev 3:21) and share in His nature (2 Pet 1:4). How can God fulfill such wonders? He will do this just “As He spoke to Our Fathers.”

O Christian, how holy is your call and how exalted your state! How can your heart remain cold amid God’s flames of love? How fearful the furnace of hell if you despise God’s promises and trample on His commandments. O God, I wish to love you from pure love. Take complete possession of my heart.

Faithful Virgin

Our Lady is "Virgin Most Faithful". Concerning this fidelity, Mary helps everyone, (saints and sinners), because she seeks everyone's salvation. The Spirit says, "Come to me all who desire me." (Sir 24:26)

God has given her all power and the greatest tenderness. Mary has given her life to Christ, the head. She will also give herself to His members. She guides us everywhere, comforts us in all sorrows, and defends us from every enemy. She lights the darkness and protects us in temptations, especially at the hour of death. After our death, she will receive our souls and present them to Jesus.

She says, "Blessed is the man who hears me." (Prov 8:34) because she wants us to follow her road of charity, humility and purity. She tells us, "Blessed are they who keep my ways." (Pr 8:32) About her Son, she says "Do whatever He tells you." (Jn 2:5) Jesus and Mary love all who love them and will infallibly fulfill all of their promises.

O Jesus, you willed to be Mary's Son and to accept us as her children. Help us to love her with Your heart and to love You with her heart.

CONSECRATION TO THE ADMIRABLE HEART OF MARY

O ever Immaculate Heart of Mary, you are the image of Jesus Christ's adorable heart where mercy and justice are joined and where peace between heaven and earth began. You experienced our difficulties and suffered for our salvation. You have merited the love of everyone. Please accept my little tribute of love.

I thank you for your feelings of love and mercy toward me. I thank you for all your gifts. I unite with all those pure souls who honor you. They have learned from the Holy Spirit to go to Jesus Christ through you.

From now on, I will venerate your most loving heart. You will be the way that I walk to my Saviour and the way that His mercy will come to me. You shall be my refuge, my consolation and my teacher of every virtue.

I presume to offer you my heart, sullied by thousands of sins. I know you will not despise it. May it be purified from every attachment and penetrated with sorrow for sins. Fill it with the love of Jesus' heart so I might love God forever. Amen.