

## THE VIRGIN MARY'S ROLE IN REDEMPTION AND IN OUR LIVES

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Mary's role in salvation history is totally unique, as is that of her Son.

Our Savior Jesus Christ began His work of redemption at the precise moment of His conception in the virginal womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary was eternally exclusively selected by God the Father to receive in Her womb His only begotten Son. Therefore, the conception of Jesus was completely supernatural. It is impressive how God before entering into human history, asked for humanity's consent. The Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary and She gave birth to Christ our Lord.



Mary's faith Redeems Eve's disobedience, that is why She is known as the new Eve. This doctrine of Mary as the new Eve has great importance in understanding Mary's role in the history of salvation. Because just as Eve is associated with Adam, so is Mary associated with Christ.

And, perhaps, Saint Irenaeus can give us the best explanation for this in his own words: *"Just as the original sin was not the work of Adam alone, but of Eve and Adam together, it is fitting then that the Redemption of Original Sin be worked not by Christ alone (known as the new Adam), but rather by the New Eve, Mary, as well.* And, this makes total sense. Mary as the New Eve cooperates with the work of Redemption (the work of Christ, the new Adam). The human race fell by a man and a woman, now the human race rises by a man and a woman.

This was God's special plan, to redeem humanity from Original Sin, through the Incarnation of God the Son, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity. Christ accomplished the redemption of all humanity when He offered Himself with a sacrificial death on the cross. By His Passion and Death on the cross (His crucifixion), He rescued humanity from our sins and He reconciled our sinful humanity to God, the Father. Christ won for us heaven. He opened the doors for us. He paid a debt He didn't owe because He knew we couldn't pay it.

Mary's unique role of being the Mother of God is what has traditionally enlightened a pleasant, healthy devotion to Her in all Catholics around the world. Precisely, because She leads us to Christ. Blessed John Paul II (soon to be Saint John Paul II, as He will be canonized this coming April 27<sup>th</sup>) repeatedly invoked our Lady and had a special relationship with the Blessed Virgin Mary. As a matter of fact, He visited many of Her shrines around the world, including Lourdes, Fatima, and Guadalupe, just to name a few. In all the approved Marian apparitions, we can see how Mary continues to cooperate in bringing us to her Son. **That is what She wants to do, to bring all souls closer to Her Son.**

In the book Fundamentals of Catholicism, by Father Kenneth Baker, He tells us that in an effort to rekindle the flame of devotion to the Mother of God, our own American bishops in 1973 published a Pastoral letter on her entitled: **"Behold Your Mother: Woman of Faith"**.

*"We desire with all our hearts, the Bishops said, "that this letter be received into homes and rectories and seminaries, into schools and institutes of higher learning, into adult education groups, confraternity centers, campus ministries and religious communities".*

*Blessed John Paul II was extremely devoted to Our Lady, especially through the daily praying of the Most Holy Rosary, as were many Saints.*

St. Bernard of Clairvaux defined Mary's role by the statement that *the Virgin Mary is "the neck of the Body of Christ."* She is without a shadow of a doubt an important link between Christ and His Church. As a spiritual mother and as a virtuous Christian.

St. Jerome (d. 420) wrote of Mary, *"By a woman the whole world was saved."*

St. Thomas Aquinas (who died in 1274) wrote of her, *So full of grace was the Blessed Virgin that it overflows to all mankind.*

St. Irenaeus (177-202 Bishop of Lyons) also recognize her faith and obedience when he wrote, *So Mary...was obedient and became to herself and to the whole human race a cause of our salvation."*

*One of my favorite bible passages is the Wedding at Cana, because we can see Mary's maternal mediation, we can see how Mary's intercession is clearly seen in Jesus' first miracle. What does Mary tell us in this passage? DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU! And, She continues to tell us this today: DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU! But What else do we see in this passage? We see Mary's blind faith in her Divine Son, for She had never seen Him perform any miracles in the 30 years He lived with her. This was Jesus first miracle ever, converting the water into wine, and He did it (precisely) at the request of His own Mother.*

*We should follow our Lady's blind faith in Christ. She believed in Him. She always believed in Him.*

God has given Mary the greatest possible honor He could have ever given to anyone. And, that is He chose Her from all eternity to be His Mother, the Mother of our Savior and the Mother of our Redeemer. We didn't chose our Mothers, God did. If God gave the Blessed Virgin Mary that special recognition, who are we not to give her the reverence She totally deserves?

For us (as human beings) not to give the Blessed Virgin Mary the honor She is entitled to is to go against Sacred Scriptures as well as to go against all of Christian tradition and history. We must honor Her and love her with all of our hearts for Who She is.

Our Heavenly Father prepared a fitting Mother for His divine Son. She was immaculately conceived and full of grace. This means that She was born without sin. It had to be this way, God planned it this way, if Jesus is sinless, he had to be born from a sinless woman. Furthermore, the Church has always taught us that the Blessed Virgin Mary was a Virgin during, before, and after the Birth of Christ, therefore, confirming her perpetual virginity. God granted Her this precious gift of being immaculate because He chose her to be the Mother of His only begotten Son.

Without her free consent we would not have Jesus. It was Her fiat, Her unconditional 'fiat', Her Yes to God (on behalf of all of humanity) which made the Incarnation possible. She was a free human person who fully COOPERATED with God in the divine plan of salvation. She freely consented to be the Mother of God, when she said: "BEHOLD THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD", Let it be done to me according to your word. (Luke 1:38)

Mary, as our Heavenly Mother, is *the loving gift from Jesus Christ* (Her Son) to humanity. Sacred Scriptures tells us that Mary possessed the fullness of grace: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women'. (Luke 1:28) It is precisely from Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation that we receive one of our favorite Catholic prayers, '*The Hail Mary*'.

As my Mother Foundress, Mother Adela teaches us in her letter: "*The Virgin Mary, Mother and Teacher of the Human Heart*": The Holy Virgin has the mission, as a Mother, of engendering us for the life of grace; of forming us and teaching us to live like Jesus; of indicating to us the way of sanctity; of correcting us and taking us through the necessary purification and maturation; of preventing and protecting us from the dangers which threaten us, the world, the devil and the flesh.

The Church has always educated us that God endowed Mary with all the gifts according to Her specific role in the plan of eternal salvation.

Saint Thomas said: "Everything that is most perfect is to be found in the Blessed Virgin Mary".

When God predetermined to become man in order to save us, He knew He had to be born of a woman; He knew He had to have a human Mother. And, not just any woman, it had to be a special chosen woman. This is where the Blessed Virgin Mary comes into play in the history of salvation.

Our Lady comes to tell us that She is our Mother, that She is not only the Mother of Christ, but our Mother as well. As She herself said it when She appeared to Saint Juan Diego in Mexico as our Lady of Guadalupe: "*Do*

*not be afraid, am I not here who am your Mother?"*

Our Lady comes to us as our Mother, our Teacher, our Guide, our Formator. In Her great simplicity She comes to teach us the beauty of our faith and Her great love for God. She wants to form us in Her love, so we can in turn love Jesus with all of our hearts like She loves Him.

In one of the Marian Apparitions, one of the visionaries asked our Lady, why was she so beautiful? And, Our Lady said: "Because I love".

Imagine this for a moment; our Lady is so beautiful because She loves!!!

And, we are called to be just as beautiful in God's eyes, just like our Lady. We are called to live out all of her virtues. And what will make us beautiful will be to love as our Lady loves. To love Jesus and others with the purity of Her heart, her humility, her kindness, her self-giving.

**She is the Perfect Model of a Mother.** Who can better teach us, teach our hearts how to be like Jesus and love like Jesus than Her? Who lived with Him for 30 years of His life. Who protected Him, nurtured Him, and loved Him to the extreme. It is Mary who intercedes for us. Mary is our Spiritual Mother, the Mother of Compassion and Mercy.

She is a Mother who heals, who protects, who nurtures us, who intercedes for us.

In our daily practical lives, we need to have Her by our side, just as we have our Lord by our side.

Our hearts need to be expanded by Her immense love of God, so we can love like She loves.

Let us allow Her to take us into Her Immaculate Heart.

Do not be afraid to love Her.

Do not be afraid to allow yourself to be loved by our Lady.

Do not be afraid to become Her beloved child.

Allow Her to be your Mother and your Teacher.

Allow yourselves to be guided by Her maternal Heart.

Allow Mary's maternal love to touch your hearts tonight.

Do not be afraid to enter into the Immaculate Heart of our Lady to find the deepest mysteries of Christ, our Lord.

Do not be afraid to let Her love through you.

Who better than Her to teach us the beauty of the God-made-man?

If you feel that your life is crumbling before your eyes, ***Turn to Mary!***

If you feel that you cannot go on anymore, that you are tired of running, tired of everything the world has to offer you, ***Turn to Mary!***

If your friends have abandoned you or the ones you trusted have betrayed you, ***Turn to Mary!***

If you are looking for the truth, ***Turn to Mary!***

If you are questioning your purpose in life, ***Turn to Mary!***

If you are asking the same, overall life questions that so many young people your age are asking today, ***Turn to Mary!***

If you are yearning for true love and for true happiness, ***Turn to Mary!***

You want to learn to love God with all of your heart, mind, body and soul, ***Turn to Mary!***

She wants to have a personal relationship with each one of us. And we should desire this also. This is the very essence of her motherhood, to be a Mother to us, just as Jesus entrusted Her to us as our most tender loving Mother. Our Lady needs us, but we need Her even more. She needs us to join forces in extending God's Kingdom by bringing others to Christ. She needs an army of faithful disciples, true followers of Christ. ***And, what would be our only weapon in this army of Christ, in this army of our Lady, the most holy rosary!***

When Our Lord entrusted Our Lady to Saint John at the Foot of the Cross (we were all represented in Saint John). We all took Her into our lives at that moment. Christ gave us (precisely at the Foot of the Cross) ***His most precious treasure, His most loving Mother.***

What an undeserved gift? The gift of the Maternity of our Lady.

Blessed John Paul II teaches us in the encyclical *Mother of the Redeemer*, # 45 that the *Maternity of Mary is a "gift": "Mary's Motherhood which becomes man's inheritance, is a gift: a gift which Christ Himself makes personally to every individual. The redeemer entrusts Mary to John because he entrusts John to Mary. At the foot of the Cross, there begins that special entrusting of humanity to the Mother of Christ"*.



And, yes, even though we are not worthy of this cherished gift, which God has entrusted to us, what are we supposed to do with this most precious gift? Treasure it, guard it, love it. This is what we are called to do with our Lady. Accept Her into our lives and treasure Her, love Her, cherish Her, abandon ourselves completely into Her immaculate Hands. Our hearts must be wide open to receive this gift and allow Her tenderness to touch the deepest recesses of our stony hearts, so they can be transformed. So, we can become more like our Lady, more like Christ, more pure, more simple. One smile from our Lady and our lives will be healed. That is all it takes, *one smile from our Lady and our hearts will be transformed*.

I would like to show you how our Lady (in Her simplicity of her Heart, in Her most loving, tender Motherhood and utmost care) can be an integral part of your daily practical lives.

First and most importantly, beginning your day by daily consecrating yourselves to Our Lady, by giving Her your entire lives. And, you may ask, but how do we do that? Very simple, every morning as you get up, just pray to our Lady and say: "Mother Mary, today I give you my life, my soul, my body, my heart, all of my actions, in other words, my entire being. Take me Mother of mine, and lead me to your Son. Hide me inside your Immaculate Heart.

Very simple, yet very profound words. And, you will see the positive impact this would have in your life. Your life will have a new perspective. When you make Mary an important part of your life, you will notice how your relationship with Jesus begins to grow. Because Mary always takes you to Jesus, and vice-versa, Jesus always takes you to Mary. They are inseparable. These Two Hearts, the Hearts of Jesus and Mary are integrated. They cannot be divided. Where there is one, there is the other. Always united!

Mary will teach you how to deepen your love for Christ in the Eucharist.  
She will show you how to love the Catholic Church more and more.  
In other words, *Mary will help you fall in love with the Catholic Church*.

Then throughout the day, just have her present. In all of your daily decisions, *ask Jesus and Mary to enlighten you as to what would be the best decision for this particular situation.*

*Ask yourselves; What would Jesus do?*

*What would Mary do in this situation?*

*How would She act?*

*What would She say?*

What would be the dispositions of Her Heart?

Will She listen to this person with an attentive Heart?

Will She be patient with this person?

How will Mary love this person?

To be a Christian means we follow Christ, it means we accept Him as our Lord and Savior, as King of the Universe and as King of our lives. If we have a King, if we follow a King, shouldn't we also have a Queen, shouldn't we also follow a Queen?

*Mary is the Queen of Heaven and Earth and She wants to be the Queen of our lives.*

*We are royalty; we are the adopted sons and daughters of the King of the Universe.*

All the Saints have had a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. And, as my Mother Foundress, Mother Adela teaches us: The Saints have sat at the feet of the Virgin, to learn from the Heart of Mary, in Her Home

and in Her School - not simply to learn about Christ, *but to "learn Christ"*. Who can teach us better the memories of Christ? It is in her maternal heart that we learn to "read Christ", to discover His mysteries, to understand His messages.

Her role in our lives is to form us, to guide us, to instruct us, to correct us, to form our hearts, just as any Mother would do to her child. She wants to take us to Her Son, Jesus always.

*We cannot live without love, we were made for love and we were made to love. Who better than our Lady to show us this kind of love our hearts are yearning for?*

My Mother Foundress, Mother Adela is always inviting us (her daughters) to sit in the School of the Heart of Mary, which is the Home and School of the Human Heart. Tonight, I invite you to do the same, to sit in the School of the Heart of Mary, which is the Home and School of the Human Heart.

Mary wants to present us to our Lord, clean and pure, from Her own Immaculate Hands; She wants to present each one of us to God the Father.

Will you sit in the School of the Heart of our Lady?

Will you allow her to be your Mother?

Will you allow Her to transform your lives?

Will you allow Her to enter into your heart?

Will you let Her love you?

We were made for more.

*[Back to Main Page of Teachings of SCTJM...](#)*



Return to main page  
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