

“I WILL PLACE ENMITY BETWEEN YOU AND THE WOMAN”

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Foundress

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In the first pages of the Book of Genesis, immediately after the narration of the creation and the fall of our first parents, we are told what the history of humanity will be: a battle between the reign of God and the reign of darkness, a great battle between grace and sin. However, also revealed to us is the promise of salvation given by God the Father who, in His great love for humanity, immediately offers a Savior after the fall. Together with the figure of the Savior, we find the figure of a Woman who will be the Mother of the Savior. To her, the promise of triumph is also given because, in a singular and particular way, she participates in the battle and, thus, will also participate in the triumph.



God told the serpent, “I will put enmity between you and the Woman, between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head while you will strike at his heel” (Gen 3:15).

The Second Vatican Council, in its document Lumen Gentium, tells us that the Woman of whom Genesis speaks is the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Redeemer (no.55). As it tells us in Scripture, She plays and will continue to play a fundamental role in the spiritual battle against Satan and his demons, against sin, against the rebellious world, and against the flesh that is inclined to evil and selfishness.

FROM WHERE DOES THIS BATTLE COME?

When God created Lucifer (“bearer of light”, “morning star”), He created a magnificent creature that could participate in His liberty and power. Moreover, God respected His creature and did not violate His liberty and power even if those powers were abused. Many Church Fathers agreed and said that the future manifestation of the Incarnation of the Word - being born of a woman by the power of the Holy Spirit and bringing about the salvation of humanity from sin in such a humble state - was what Lucifer rebelled against. The Incarnation would have forced Lucifer to lower himself, first, before a woman who would be the Mother of God-made-man and, additionally, in front of her offspring who are all those who follow Jesus Christ. Lucifer considered that this mission would be too humiliating for him and did not want to do it. That is when he gave his cry of rebellion, “I WILL NOT SERVE,” and together with him, many other angels refused to continue to serve God and His plan of love. They separated themselves from the light, and immediately, without any possibility of going back, they became darkness because of their pride, selfishness and disobedience. By opting for darkness they were thrown out of Heaven and out of the light. “How have you fallen from the Heavens, O morning star, son of the dawn! How are you cut down to the ground, you who mowed down the nations! You said in your heart: I will scale the heavens; above the stars of God I will set up my throne; I will take my seat on the Mount of Assembly...Yet down to the nether world you go to the recesses of the pit” (Is 14:12-13,15).

Satan made himself, from that moment on, bearer of darkness, rebellion, lies and pride. It is his plan to destroy humanity and to bring us down into the pit. He is in enmity with God forever; in battle against the woman that brings God-made-man to the world; in battle against the followers of Christ that obey His commands and who have Mary as their spiritual mother.

In his hatred towards God and humanity, he approached our first parents, Adam and Eve. They, being seduced by Satan, freely chose rebellion, distrust and disobedience, and they also abandoned the reign of love and light, preferring the darkness and lies of the devil. Through the sin of Adam, sin entered into the world; and with this sin came death; now all his descendents are born with original sin and are affected by this darkness.

We are born under the dominion of the prince of this world with inclinations to pride, selfishness, and disobedience. We have all been born this way, except for our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the second Person of the Trinity made man, and our Blessed Mother who, because of Her Immaculate Conception, was preserved from all original sin and who, by Her own will, maintained Her Heart free from all personal sin.

SHE IS AT THE VERY CENTER OF THE BATTLE

“In the salvific design of the Most Holy Trinity, the mystery of the Incarnation constitutes the superabundant fulfillment of the promise made by God to man after original sin, after that first sin whose effects oppress the whole earthly history of man (cf. Gen. 3:15). And so, there comes into the world a

Son, 'the seed of the woman' who will crush the evil of sin in its very origins: 'he will crush the head of the serpent.' As we see from the words of the Protogospel, the victory of the woman's Son will not take place without a hard struggle, a struggle that is to extend through the whole of human history. The 'enmity,' foretold at the beginning, is confirmed in the Apocalypse, the book of the final events of the Church and the world. Mary, Mother of the Incarnate Word, is placed at the very center of that enmity, that struggle which accompanies the history of humanity on earth and the history of salvation itself. In this history Mary remains a sign of sure hope" (Redemptoris Mater (RM), no. 11).

We can see that from the beginning of the Scriptures (Genesis 3) to the end (Revelation 12), the Blessed Virgin Mary is in enmity and in battle against Satan, his demons, his works, his attacks, his distortions, and his lies.

Saint Irenaeus said, "Mary is directly involved in the victory of Christ" (cf. Against Heresies, 3:22). In a unique and particular manner, the Blessed Virgin Mary is united to and participates in the victory of Christ "who will crush his [Satan's] head." As John Paul II states in Redemptoris Mater, "In an entirely special and exceptional way Mary is united to Christ" (RM, no. 8); and if She participates totally in the victory of Christ, it is because She also participates in the totality of the battle. "If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Rom. 6:8).

I WILL PLACE ENMITY...

The word "enmity" signifies mutual opposition. The enmity is absolute, irrevocable and complete because that is the nature of the opposition between the offspring of the Woman (Jesus) and the offspring of the devil (sin, the fallen angels and those who consciously and voluntarily propagate sin, evil and death). For this reason, the lineage of the Woman and the lineage of Satan must be in complete opposition, which is made clear by the word "enmity."

It is interesting to note that it is God Himself who tells the serpent in Gen. 3, "I will put enmity between you and the woman." It is God Himself who introduces the Blessed Virgin Mary to this battle, who makes Her the enemy of Satan, of sin and of evil; and if She is made enemy of the devil, then She is also given the necessary powers to triumph in the battle and have victory. Pope Paul VI tells us in Signum Magnum that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the woman who has been prepared for battle, as it is prophetically described in the Song of Songs: "terrible as an army in the field of battle" (cf. 6:10).

She was prepared for the battle, and this is why She was preserved and conceived Immaculate. In Her, there could not have been the slightest stain of sin because then She would not have been able to be in total opposition and enmity against Satan. She is "full of grace," as She was called by the Angel (Lk.1:28), because only one "full of grace" - one who possess the fullness of grace - could be the Mother of the Savior and Redeemer who will crush the head of the serpent and defeat sin and death. She is full of grace because it is only in this manner that She could be the enemy of the devil who is the Father of sin and darkness.

Let us remember that the word enmity means mutual opposition. In other words, the devil also makes war on the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Church, the reign of Christ, and those who keep the teachings of the Lord: "and you will strike at its heel." The book of Revelation speaks further on this:



"A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars...Then another sign appeared in the sky; it was a huge red dragon...the dragon stood to devour her child when she gave birth... the woman fled into the desert... It [the dragon] pursued the woman...but the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly to her place in the desert, far from the serpent...The serpent however, spewed a torrent of water out of his mouth after the woman to sweep her away...and went to war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus" (Rev. 12:1-17)

It is very important to reflect upon, in this Scripture, how Satan tries to attack, in many different ways, the woman who is about to give birth. Satan hates the Blessed Virgin Mary for four reasons:

1. **She is conceived without sin** and remains always immaculate by the grace of God and her personal decision. The devil never had power over her; she is the only creature that has never been under the dominion of Satan. If the Ark of the Covenant which contained the tablets of the Law was constructed with wood that was incorruptible, how could the Mother of the Word-made-flesh not be immaculate and incapable of corruption when She bore Him, not in an ark of wood, but in an ark of flesh? It is interesting to note that in Lourdes -

where the Blessed Virgin called Herself the Immaculate Conception and opened a scientifically proven miraculous fountain of water - the water contains a particular characteristic: bacteria cannot live within it.

2. She is the bearer of light of the world: Jesus. He hates her because she is the Ark of the Covenant who brings in Her womb the One who brings salvation and liberation from sin and who will defeat Satan forever.

3. She is the response of God to Satan's rebellion. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the masterpiece of God, the true star of the morning that takes the place of Lucifer. Who She is and all of Her virtues become the response of God to Satan:

Satan

1. pride
2. rebellion
3. autonomy
4. confusion
5. sin
6. blasphemy
7. atheism
8. resentment
9. selfishness
10. riches
11. avoidance of pain
12. self-glory
13. infidelity
14. hatred

Immaculate Heart of Mary

- humility: "he has seen my lowliness..." (Lk 1:48)
obedience: "let it be done to me..." (Lk 1:38)
submission: "I am the handmaid of the Lord..." (Lk 1:38)
truth: "she kept all these things in her heart..." (Lk 2:51)
grace: "rejoice, o full of grace..." (Lk 1:28)
praise: "my soul rejoices..." (Lk 1:47)
faith: "blessed are you who have believed..." (Lk 1:45)
joy: "when she heard Mary's greeting, the infant leapt for joy..." (Lk 1:44)
service: "she went out in haste..." (Lk 1:39)
simplicity: "they did not have a place in the inn..." (Lk 2:7)
sacrifice: "a sword will pierce your heart..." (Lk 2:35)
glory to her Son: "do whatever He tells you..." (Jn 2:5)
fidelity: "at the foot of the cross..." (Jn 19:25)
forgiveness: "with them (apostles) was the Mother of Jesus..." (Acts 1:14)

4. She was **associated in a singular way** to the redemptive work of Christ. A man and a woman brought ruin to humanity, thus, Christ and the new Eve - Mary - brought salvation. This unique and perfect participation of Mary in the mission of the humanity's redemption has not ceased; it continues to be exercised in favor of Her children, the redeemed, until the end of time. She is the Mediatrix of all graces and our Advocate, as the Second Vatican Council Council tells us (LG, chap.8), and She continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation and the restoration of supernatural life in our souls.

These are the four great reasons for which Satan hates the Blessed Virgin Mary and wants to continually persecute Her. However, in general, her full person is hated for who She is and for Her mission.

As we see in Revelation 12, the woman was given two great wings and She went to the desert, far from the dragon. The devil was not able to touch Her, to make Her fall for She had the wings of the virtues of love and fidelity to God, which are more solid than any attack. Because the devil could not overtake Her, he tried to drown Her in a river. He wanted to hide Her name, making men reject her, hate her, ignore Her, and place Her to the side. In other words, the river of water that was to drown Her represents all the attempts to minimize the truth of who She is and the crucial role she has in the plan of salvation, both in an individual and collective manner. It represents the attempt to make us believe that She is not important in our spiritual lives and in our walk towards Heaven. Venerable Maria de Jesus Agreda, in her famous book *The Mystical City of God*, narrates to us the revelations that she received about the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She tells us that when the devil rebelled, he cried out with blasphemy and hatred towards humanity and towards the Virgin Mary, proclaiming that he would dedicate himself to block and to minimize the position that God gave to the Mother of the Incarnate Word.

Furthermore, the Blessed Virgin Mary asked Sister Lucia, one of the visionaries of Fatima, for the first five Saturdays of reparation. She asked for five because Jesus had asked Saint Margaret Mary for nine, and I am sure that because of Her profound humility, the Blessed Virgin Mary would not ask for the same amount of days as Jesus. When Sister Lucia asked Jesus in prayer why it was necessary to offer five first Saturdays for reparation, Jesus answered, "For the offenses that are committed against the Heart of my Mother." These offenses were further specified:

- For denials concerning the fundamental truths about Her and Her mission (Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity, Divine Maternity and her spiritual motherhood over us)
- For the breaking of and indifference towards Her images, which reveal Her presence.
- For those who make many people forget Her, especially children.

We must be aware that the battle of Satan against the Blessed Virgin Mary will manifest itself in these ways and in many others as well. How much indifference and rejection there is towards Our Mother and Her interventions! How much rejection of Her mission, Her intercession, and the doctrinal truths about Her. How much resistance there is in giving Her that place the Trinity gave to Her and in recognizing it publicly.

Do not believe that these are only personal opinions; behind every rejection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whether it is strong or subtle, we can find the instigation and the attack of Satan. "I will place enmity between you and the Woman." All of this resistance is so grave that Jesus considers it necessary that acts of reparation be made for them.

The Root of the battle

The spiritual battle will always have sin at its root; this sin stains and hardens the heart of man, weakens the Church, and brings about the destruction, not only of the individual, but of nations, peoples, and families. Because sin is the root of the battle, our Mother calls us with urgency to authentic conversion and to renunciation of the sin, indifference, doubt, and rebellion found in man today. As a good Mother, She battles in this decisive hour for humanity - an hour in which eternal salvation is at stake in so many souls, including our own.

Are we in times of battle?

"Oh Virgin Mary, Virgin of all beginnings, with confidence we invoke you, as we fearfully come close to the Third Millennium of the life of the Holy Church of Christ...Most merciful Virgin, accompany our steps toward a redeemed and peaceful humanity and gladden and comfort our hearts in the confidence that the dragon is not greater than Your beauty. Fragile and eternal Woman, you were first one to be saved, and you are friend of all creatures that still cry and hope in the world" (cf. John Paul II, August 15, 1988, Homily at the Closing of the Marian Year).

Let us listen to what St. Maximilian Kolbe prophesized:

St. Maximilian was a Franciscan Priest who died in the concentration camps during the Second World War in 1941 when he took the place of another man who was condemned to death. Before his death he said, "Modern times are dominated by Satan, and this will grow in the future. The conflict with hell cannot be embraced by men, not even the most intelligent. Only the Immaculate, the Virgin Mother, has the promise, given by God, of victory over Satan."

The message of our Lady of Fatima - supported and confirmed by the writings and the presence of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II at Her shrine - calls us to be aware of the urgency of our times. We need to know that it is only in the Heart of Mary that we will be able to confront this great battle against Satan who, as a roaring lion, is seeking to devour us. This is why **Mary is so necessary for the battle** and told us in Fatima, "Do not be afraid, my Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the sure path that will lead you to God."

We see how the Blessed Virgin Mary, in Her many apparitions, begins by telling to us not to be afraid. These were the same words that John Paul II spoke when he initiated his pontificate (Oct. 22, 1978). The Pope of Mary invites us to the same confidence in God to which our Lady always tries to direct us; for She tells us, "Do not be afraid!" Let us listen to the Holy Father speak these words, "do not be afraid," in relation to the Blessed Virgin Mary as he explains them in his book, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*:

"'Be not afraid!' Christ said to the apostles and to the women after the Resurrection. According to the Gospels, these words were not addressed to Mary. Strong in her faith, she had no fear." (p.220)

The Holy Father then continues to tell us of his experience in Poland during its great tribulations: "Jasna Gora became part of the history of my homeland in the seventeenth century, as a sort of 'Be not afraid!' spoken by Christ through the lips of His Mother...'The victory, if it comes, will come through Mary.' During my pastoral ministry in Poland, I saw for myself how those words were coming true. After my election as Pope, as I became more involved in the problems of the universal Church, I came to have a similar conviction: **On this universal level, if victory comes it will be brought by Mary. Christ will conquer through her, because He wants the Church's victories now and in the future to be linked to her**" (ibid).

The Blessed Virgin Mary has been crowned as Queen of Heaven and earth, and this is why She exercises Her mission in our hearts and the life of the Church. Also, she intervenes in the life of the world and nations, although in our present times, this reality is often forgotten. For most, it is easier to understand her mission as Mediatrix of races and Advocate in our personal lives; we have seen Her help free us from evil, sin, and situations of rebellion, in order to help us return to the Heart of Christ. But today, I would like us also to understand, even if it is just a little, the power that the Lord has given the Blessed Virgin Mary to intervene in the life of the Church and nations, a power that always seeks to protect and direct us, to promote the

extension of the Kingdom, and to avoid great disgraces.

Let us examine the meaning of the text from Revelation. She appeared as a great sign in the sky dressed in the sun. This "dress of the sun" is the light of Christ. As well, the moon was under her feet; the moon represents time. Therefore, She has authority, and she exercises it over time; in fact, she is its patron. Even though She lived in time, She is superior to the vicissitudes of time and is not conditioned by it. In other words, She has the power, given to Her by God, to crush the battles that take place in history at specific times. The fact that she is crowned signifies her participation in the royalty of Her Son; She is Queen of Heaven and earth. Finally, the twelve stars symbolize the triumph of the Church in Mary.

We have 2000 years of history in which we have seen the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary many times in key situations in the life of the Church and the world. Here are some examples:

Pillar: In the year 40 AD, She appeared in Spain to the Apostle James in order to animate him in his efforts of evangelization of that country, as he was not having much success. After the apparition, the Blessed Virgin Mary left a Pillar with a small statue as a proof of Her presence and to manifest the fact that She intervenes in history to sustain and support our faith. She asked Him to construct a chapel, and upon its completion, it became the first church dedicated to the Virgin Mary during the Christian era. It is from this faith that Spain received that we receive our faith as well.

Guadalupe: In 1531, when the evangelization of the Indians seemed almost impossible for the Spanish missionaries, the Virgin Mary appeared as a mediator of unity between them, utilizing, as a mother, all that would touch the heart of the Indians as well as support the spiritual authority of the missionaries and the bishop. She made possible the evangelization of eight million Indians.

Covadonga: Here, we see the intervention of the Virgin Mary in the re-conquest of Spain. The re-conquest from the hands of the Muslims began by on the mountain of Covadonga. Our Lady appeared in a cave there and animated them to battle, thus bringing about victory and the establishment of Christianity in the new Spain. Here, we can see that the Virgin intervened in the mission of the Church and in the expansion of the kingdom.

Saint Dominic: She obtained the conversion of the heretical Albigensians by means of the Holy Rosary which was given as a sure remedy against heresy.

Battle of Lepanto: In the 16th century, the Muslims were invading Europe and imposing their religion by force, thus destroying Christianity. They threatened to invade Rome, and Pope Pius V called upon Catholics to defend the faith. An army was formed and they set out after their enemy. On the 7th of October of 1572, the two armies faced each other in the Gulf of Lepanto. Between them, they had more than 400 ships and 80,000 soldiers. The Christians, however, were outnumbered. Before beginning the battle, they confessed, had Mass and prayed the Rosary, singing to the Blessed Mother. At the beginning, the battle was unfavorable for the Christians as the winds were blowing in the opposite direction, which kept their ships still. Then the Pope, with a great multitude of people, began to walk the streets of Rome praying the Rosary. In a miraculous manner, the wind changed its course and the sails of the ships took form and propelled the ships forward against their enemies, achieving victory. For this reason, the date of Oct. 7 is celebrated as the day of the Rosary.

Napoleon: We know that through the intervention of Mary, Help of Christians, Pope Pius VII, who was arrested by Napoleon, returned to Rome on the 24th of May, 1814. As well, through her intercession, the army of Napoleon was defeated, and he was imprisoned for life.

Brazil: During the second half of the 20th century, the Communists took power. Therefore, a rosary and procession was organized in which 600,000 women went through the streets praying the rosary. Twenty-one days later communism was thrown out of the country.

Philippines: In 1986 they celebrated a local Marian year. There was a great confrontation between the army and the people, who were in danger of being killed. A beautiful woman appeared, described by the guards as a religious, who told them, "Why do you want to kill my children?" The guards put down their weapons and liberation came to the Philippines. Cardinal Sin openly declared that this victory was the work of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Fruits of Consecration: After the consecration of the world in 1984 and the Marian year of 1987, Europe experienced the peaceful fall of communism. The Holy Father said in his encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* that the Marian year was an anticipation of the jubilee, and that the fruits of it would be expressed fully in the year 2000 (no.3).

Holy Father John Paul II: His assassination attempt was on the 13th of May, 1981 - the feast of the Virgin of Fatima. The Holy Father publicly proclaimed that his life was protected directly by the intervention of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that the messages of Fatima, at the end of the century, seemed to have been fulfilled. Fatima: The Virgin asked for the consecration of Russia in order to avoid the promotion of its errors.

Other Various Occurrences:

- The signing of peace with Japan at the end of World War II was on the 15th of August, 1945. Six years later, on Sept. 8, 1951, a more formal treaty was signed.
- The signing in Washington of a treaty regulating the use of short range nuclear weapons was on Dec. 8, 1987.
- On January 1, 1990, the Berlin wall came down.
- On August 22, 1991, the communist party in Russia fell apart, and the Soviet Union was dissolved. A new nation was created on Dec. 8, 1991.

Sadly, the interventions of our Mother in these world events are not recognized or known; they are seen simply as political situations. This could also happen with the coming of the Holy Father to Cuba, where the Pope of the Virgin publicly crowned the image of Our Lady of Charity. He crowned the love that ought to reign in Cuba. Why? Because only love has the power to destroy evil.

Conclusion

The Virgin Mary spoke to us in Fatima of a great battle that we face against Satan and his demons in these times. The Holy Father has called this battle the "culture of death" that includes the general loss of faith, the loss of many souls, wars, destruction, abortion, rebellion, euthanasia, violence, etc. However, the worst "death" is the loss of faith, for the Lord tells us, "Do not fear those who can kill the body, but those who can destroy the soul" (cf. Mt. 10:28). The worst death is that of the soul that loses its faith; falls away from God, His love, and His commandments; and is lost in a life of sin, running the risk of eternal condemnation and eternal death.

In Fatima, the Blessed Virgin Mary left us a promise: "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph." If She speaks of triumph, this implies that there is a battle that needs to be fought. The instrument of this victory will be the Immaculate Heart.

As St. Maximilian said, "Only the Immaculate, the Virgin Mary, has the promise given by God of the victory over Satan."

[Return to Main Page of Teachings of Mother Adela, Foundress SCTJM...](#)



Return to main page
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