

Lecture #10 Marian Doctrines and the Rosary

1. Mary, Mother of God
 - a. Jesus was completely man and completely God
 - i. Christ is One Person, who is God and man
 1. Mary was the Mother of Christ
 - a. So she was Mother of God
 - b. Luke 1:43
 - i. Elizabeth, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, calls Mary the “Mother of My Lord”
 1. She is Mother of Our Lord, the Son of God
 - c. This is really the most amazing thing we can say about Mary
2. Immaculate (sinless) Conception
 - a. Mary was sinless, from the moment of her conception in her mother’s womb, and from that time on
 - b. Why did she have to be kept sinless?
 - i. Mary has been given a role in God’s family, a role no other person has
 1. God called Mary to be the mother of the Savior as well as our spiritual mother
 - ii. To carry out this role Mary would need to be totally and completely docile to the Holy Spirit
 1. Totally uninhibited by the consequences of original sin such as concupiscence which can spiritually split even the holiest among us
 - a. She couldn’t be at all under the influence of evil
 - c. This does not make Mary less human
 - i. Sin is a part of fallen human nature; it makes us more animal and less human
 - ii. Thus Mary was the most human of any of us – she’s our model
 - d. Luke 1:28: Angel says “Hail, Full of Grace” (“kecharitomene”)
 - i. This verb used by Luke is the past, perfect participle: indicates some action that was done in the past
 - ii. So Mary has already been transformed by grace
 1. Mary has been transformed by the Grace of God so that she is without sin
 - e. How was Mary saved from Original Sin? Jesus didn’t die on the cross until after she was born
 - i. God is outside of time
 1. So He took the graces of Jesus’ death and resurrection, and applied them to the moment of Mary’s conception
 - a. So Mary is still redeemed by Jesus
 - ii. It’s the difference between curing an illness and preventing an illness: Mary was prevented from ever having an illness
 - f. So Jesus saved her in a more perfect way
3. Mary was always a Virgin

- a. What about the “brothers” of Jesus in Matt 12:46, 13:55?
 - i. Doesn’t this prove that Mary had other kids? So she couldn’t be a virgin
 - ii. Actually, in this case, the biblical word for brother means simply “relative” or “kinsman”
 - 1. Genesis 29:15, same word used for Laban and Jacob, who are cousins
 - 2. Gen 13:8, 14:16, used for Abraham and Lot, who are Uncle and Nephew
 - iii. The “brothers” of Jesus are his cousins
 - 1. They are the sons of Mary, wife of Clopas, who is actually at Calvary with Mary the Mother of Jesus
 - 2. John 19:25, Matt 27:55, Mark 15:40
 - b. Remember the Annunciation, when Gabriel told Mary she was going to have a Son, and Mary says, “How can this be, since I do not know man?” (Lk 1:34)
 - i. “Know” means sexual union between a man and a woman
 - 1. So, is she just saying she doesn’t “know” man now? No, she’s talking about a permanent habit, and, in this case, a vow
 - c. Why is it important that we realize that Mary was a virgin?
 - i. Well, there are two ways of life by which we can give glory to God
 - 1. By celibacy and virginity, which is a loving gift to God
 - 2. By marriage, and bearing the beautiful fruit of children
 - ii. Mary embodies both of these vocations, and so she is the perfect model for both
4. The Assumption
- a. Mary was taken up body and soul into Heaven at the end of her earthly life
 - i. She did not have sin, so she didn’t have the consequences of sin, like death and corruption of the body
 - b. Why did the Pope define this Dogma? Because her glory and her triumphant entrance into Heaven provide us with an example
 - i. Her example is the antidote to our self-satisfied, comfortable, and distracted mediocrity
 - ii. We become satisfied with a pathetic, shallow and meaningless existence – this is despair
 - iii. She shows us the great destiny that awaits us, if we seek it
 - 1. She is an Icon of God’s plan for our lives
 - c. Youth always seeks a cause for which to struggle: Mary shows us the most worthy cause to which we can commit ourselves
5. Mary is Our Mother in the Order of Grace
- a. Devotion to Mary dates back to the earliest beginnings of the Church
 - i. Mary depicted in the Roman Catacombs – first century
 - ii. *Sub Tuum Praesidium* “Under Your Protection” – 250AD

- iii. “We fly to your patronage, O Holy Mother of God, despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger, O ever glorious Virgin”
 - iv. In fact, today’s devotion to Mary is weak by the standards of the Early Church – they were extremely devoted to Mary
- b. Motherhood of Mary
- i. “We believe that Mary the Most Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, the Mother of the Church, carries on in heaven her maternal role with regard to the members of Christ, cooperating in the birth and development of divine life in the souls of the redeemed.”
(Paul VI: *Redemptoris Mater*, #47)
 - ii. Remember, what did Jesus do?
 - 1. He entrusted Himself to her totally, became totally dependant on her as her little Child
 - 2. We are called to do the same thing
 - a. Devotion to Mary is to live in imitation of Jesus’ relationship with Mary
 - b. Benedict XVI, (Homily on 8/16/05):
 - i. “Being in God and with God, she is close to each one of us, knows our hearts, can hear our prayers, can help us with her motherly kindness... She always listens to us, she is always close to us, and being the Mother of the Son, participates in the power of the Son and in his goodness. We can always entrust the whole of our lives to this Mother, who is not far from any one of us.”

6. The Rosary

- a. The Benefits of Praying the Rosary
 - i. The goal of the Christian life is to become like Christ
 - 1. How does a little boy become like his father/role model?
By watching him
 - 2. The rosary is a tremendous tool of prayer to watch Christ and meditate on His life and teachings in order to become like Him
 - 3. We all do things that we pick up from those we spend a lot of time around
 - a. The Rosary is to spend time thinking about Christ, so that we can start to take on His characteristics
 - ii. Through the Rosary, Mary cooperates with the Holy Spirit to educate and form us in the image of Jesus
 - 1. Pius X (*Rosarium* #1): Nobody in the world has known Jesus as she has; nobody is a better teacher and better guide to teach Jesus. From this it follows... that neither is anybody equal to her in uniting men to Jesus.”
- b. How to Pray the Rosary

- i. While praying the Rosary, we meditate
 - 1. On the Person of Christ
 - 2. On His Life
 - 3. On His Teachings
 - 4. On the life of a saint
 - 5. On the writings of a saint or Church documents
 - 6. On the book of our lives: the daily events that flow from the hand of the Father as an invitation from Him to grow in likeness to Christ
- c. Mysteries
 - i. Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries of Christ's life
 - ii. It's the whole gospel
- d. Meditation
 - i. We are usually helped by spiritual reading, Sacred Scripture (particularly the gospels), Holy Icons, writings of the Fathers, the lives of the saints
 - ii. It is especially good to meditate on the events of our life
 - iii. God wants to tell you what He is doing in and with our lives, yet we rarely listen
 - iv. What about the repetition of the words?
 - 1. Don't focus on the words of the Our Father or the Hail Mary; let the words of the prayers drop to the background and allow the mystery to come to the front of our minds. Focus on the mystery.
 - a. E.g., Bass guitar drives the music forward, yet few people focus on it
 - 2. Praying the Hail Mary over and over helps us to stay focused on that which we want to meditate upon
- e. Other Practical Advice
 - i. Perseverance and Persistence is the Key
 - ii. Before you begin, offer yourself to Christ and all of your needs and prayers to Him through the hands of Mary

Recommended Readings:

Catechism of the Catholic Church, ##2673-2679

Lumen Gentium, ##52-69

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary (Marialis Cultus), Pope Paul VI

Redemptoris Mater, Pope John Paul II