



The Blessed Mother

MOTHER CLELIA

*“I implore upon you the maternal blessing of Most Holy Mary
so that your hearts, blessed by her, may become fertile
with the flowers and fruits of true sanctity.”*

(MOTHER CLELIA)

FROM THE WRITINGS OF MOTHER CLELIA

INTRODUCTION

Mary has always occupied a singular place in the history of Christianity. Her “yes” given at the Annunciation makes her a collaborator in the plan of salvation of God the Father, who sent his Son for the salvation of the world. With her “yes,” the Virgin Mary became the mother of Christ and all his disciples, for all time and for all humanity.

We can contemplate her maternal presence in the Gospels. She is the mother who accompanies her son from the Annunciation to Calvary: as a frail child in the cave of Bethlehem, as He matures in the hidden Life of Nazareth, as an adult as He publicly proclaims the Good News and heals soul and body, as Savior in His Passion and suffering, and in the joy of the Resurrection and His return to His Father.

At the wedding of Cana, Mary is present as an active mother who intercedes and helps others to grow in faith. In the upper room, she is a prayerful woman who accompanies the nascent church in accepting the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1. MARY AS MOTHER

Looking closely at Mother Clelia's writings with the heart of a daughter, we perceive a purely maternal sensitivity in her, a sensitivity that leads us to believe that the influence of the Virgin Mary in her life had been very keen. Through her writings she exhorts us: "Entrust yourself to your dear Mamma Maria; Tell her that you want to love her Jesus, and that you want to love him very much: ask her to lend you her maternal heart, so that you can love him sincerely." If we, as disciples of Jesus, turn to Mary, we can be certain that she will teach us to love Jesus in a new way. Mother Clelia understood this reality and embraced it in her life.

Witnesses state:

"She loved Our Lady very much and never separated her from Jesus. When she had to enkindle a flame of hope in some depressed heart, she found the right words to spark the peace and trust of God in them by recommending recourse to Mary. She herself had personally experienced the efficacy of this devotion."

"All the Sisters who knew her agreed that Mother Clelia was detached from everything and from everyone; she was strongly united to Jesus Crucified and to His Immaculate Mother."

2. MARY AS A MOTHER OF SERVICE

Mother Clelia's contemplative gaze sees in Mary a model of the practice of the virtues, among them service to and love of neighbor.

The evangelist Luke, in recounting the story of the Visitation, shows Mary walking in haste to be of service to her cousin Elizabeth. Love is always ready to serve others! The "yes" pronounced at the Annunciation puts Mary on the path of service. This reality of Mary—a woman in service to her neighbor—shines through the writings of Mother Clelia.

In a letter explaining how the Virgin Mary, since childhood, put herself at the service of others, Mother Clelia writes: "... she always had a sweet, gracious and warm welcome for everyone, because she was always willing to serve in a way befitting of her faith and out of love of God, whom she loved and served in the person of her neighbor... In this way, Mary teaches us to practice charity." We need a contemplative gaze in order to cultivate and discover, as Mother Clelia did, the beauty and depth of love that always puts us on the path of service.

Witnesses reveal:

"Mother venerated the feasts of the Saints, especially those of Our Lady; I remember that she was always punctual in reciting the Holy Rosary from the chapel balcony."

"She had great zeal for the spread of the gospel and said that she prayed much for missionaries because she too would have liked to be one, to make Jesus and Mary known."

3. MARY AS A WOMAN OF PRAYER

The evangelist Luke, both in the Infancy narratives his Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles, paints a picture of Mary as a prayerful woman, even if indirectly:

- in the Cenacle, praying with the disciples, and
- in the Infancy narratives, cherishing in her heart all the events of the Jesus' birth, thus witnessing to her journey of intimate union with God.

In the Gospel of John, we observe two significant moments:

- at the wedding feast of Cana, interceding for the newlyweds, and
- on Calvary, standing faithfully under the Cross.

Certainly, in the contemplation of every scene of the Gospel, the heart of Mother Clelia beat strongly in seeing the Holy Virgin not only as a model of prayer, but as someone whose intimate experience of God the Father confirmed the beauty and depth of her mission as Mother and Mediator.

In fact, Mother Clelia writes:

Pray, pray very much and, distrusting yourselves, place a filial and total confidence in the Heart of Jesus and in the patronage of the Most Holy Virgin who was the most fervent Apostle, the first of the martyrs, for although she did not shed the blood of her veins, she did shed the blood of her soul rent by the Passion of her Son on Calvary. Holy Communion and the Rosary. These are two devotions I recommend to you with all my heart. Will you listen to me?"

Witnesses note:

"Mother Clelia accepted the ordeal of her exile with resignation and heroism. I always say that if our Institute has grown, it is because Mother Clelia accepted that great cross, offering herself as a victim to the Sacred Heart and to Our Lady."

"She prayed always and willingly, with joy; prayer was the breath of her soul that was in love with the Sacred Heart and Our Lady."

CONCLUSION

For Mother Clelia, Mary is the mother who is constantly present, who intuits the sentiments of her children, who protects and cares for us and who warms our hearts, making us grow in love for her Son, Jesus.

We can see in her writings that the Virgin Mary is not only a model of prayer, but a profound and meaningful example of a loving mother, a most fervent Apostle, and one who gives to God without reservation. Mother Clelia was a daughter who was very attentive and open, in the likeness of her heavenly Mother and, thanks to this dedication, she became Marian in all her being. Her entire life was marked by this Marian experience, so much so that, looking at the end of her earthly existence, our attention is drawn to the date of her death—the 21st of November—the liturgical feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple. Mother Clelia, on that day, left this earth for her Father's house; in this, we see the symbolic crowning of her filial love of Mary. Now she is with the Virgin Mary in heaven, whom she loved so much here on earth.

For personal reflection:

1. What lessons can we take for our devotion to the Virgin Mary, considering Mother Clelia's great love for her?
2. Both Mary and Mother Clelia put themselves in the dynamic of service to others. How am I living this dimension of charity in my daily life?