

THE CENACLE
Channel of the Mediation of Grace

We continue with our reflection on the Cenacle.

I have often found it surprising to read the account of the Pentecost Cenacle in the Acts of the Apostles. First, St. Luke listed the Apostles who were present, *who with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren* (Acts: I:13-14). It is almost as if he was concerned simply with the Apostles, the new leaders of the Church which was being born, adding our Mother almost as an afterthought. The truth is quite the contrary. In fact, She was essential to the constitution of the Cenacle, the Mother through Whom the Church would be born. This presence of hers remains essential in our own cenacles, which remain a continuation of that held in Jerusalem, as we have seen, not only in outward structure, but in its interior reality.

In Her messages, our Mother makes this clear:

“ When two or three are gathered in My name, I am in the midst of them”: thus spoke My Son Jesus Where two or more Priests of My Movement are gathered together on My account, I also am in the midst of them. I manifest Myself to them and through them, especially when these Priests are united in prayer.....Where two or more Priests of My Movement come together because of Me, there is the Cenacle. (Let us note: “the Cenacle”, not “a cenacle”) In the Cenacle, there were the Apostles with Mary, the Mother of Jesus. In these Cenacles, I want the Priests of My Movement to be gathered with Me, the Mother of Jesus, and a Mother most specially for them”.
(M.34, 17th. January 1974)

Mediatress of Grace

This brings us to the role of Mother Mary. The Cenacle is, of course, the work of the Holy Spirit, the promised Gift of the Lord Who would infuse a Life which is divine into the Church at the moment of its birth. But these gifts are given by Him to us through the mediation of Mary, Who is the Bride of the Holy Spirit. Let us remember that, if the Holy Spirit is named for us in the hymn we sing here as “*Digitus*

paternae dexteranae" (Finger of God's right hand – through Whom the works of the Blessed Trinity *ad extra* are accomplished), so our Mother has been spoken of as *Digitus Spiritus Sancti dexteræ* – (Finger of the right hand of the Holy Spirit, through Whom He mediates all His activity to us). Her mediation of Grace is, in a real sense, Her Motherhood.

That Grace, which our Mother mediates to us in the Holy Spirit, comes to us from the Holy Trinity, and brings to us the likeness to Christ, in Whom we are destined to take our place in Their life. The task of mediating that Life to us is entrusted to our Mother; as She brought that Life into the world in the form of Her Divine Son, so She is the One to whom it is entrusted to be the channel of that Grace to its ultimate destination in the work of the Redemption, that is, into the souls of Her little ones. She is the perfect transmitter of the Grace of Her Son, as Her pure and Immaculate Heart found its only light in Him: *The Mother kept these things in Her Heart, pondering them* (Lk. II:19,31). Bringing us that Grace is the special work of Her Immaculate Heart, within the Cenacle of that Heart in a continuous way, and also in our occasional cenacles, that is, to bring us into the holiness of Jesus.

All this was most specially described for us in the message "Mediatress of Graces" (M. 204) on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 16th. July 1980. Let us concentrate on that message in this part of our meditation.

"From the bosom of the Father, Grace, in order to reach you, must pass through the divine Heart of the Son, Who communicates it to you in His Spirit of Love. Just as a ray of light, which passes through a window, assumes its shape, colour and design, so too divine Grace, merited by Jesus, can come to you only through Him and it is for this reason that it reproduces in you His own image, the very same image which shapes you ever more and more to His own Person (to be in *Persona Christil*). Divine life can only reach you in the form of Jesus and, the more this increases in you, the more you are assimilated to Him, in such a way that you can really grow as His little brothers".

Here our Mother is taking us into the heart of the spiritual life, namely into that union with Jesus which makes us share in the life of the Most Holy Trinity, participating in His place as Son before the Father.

"By means of Grace, the Father communicates Himself to you ever more and more, the Son assimilates you, the Holy Spirit transforms you, bringing about a relationship of life with the Most Holy Trinity which becomes ever increasingly strong and active. Within souls who are in grace, it is the Most Holy Trinity Itself which takes up its dwelling there".

This message deserves the deepest meditation, as it describes the wonderful and merciful destiny for which God created us: to live in the heart of the Blessed Trinity, the "home" of God Himself, that we should, as St. Peter says, *become partakers in the divine nature* (2 Pet. I:4). When "holiness" or the "life of grace" is spoken of by many, it is limited to the degree of virtuousness in our lives, the quality of our correspondence with the law of God. The life of grace is seen as the degree of goodness in our own activity. It is, of course, true that, if we do not strive to live in faithfulness, then we cannot expect the grace of God to live in us. However, it is also true that the gift of grace is far beyond anything we can earn for ourselves by even the best of lives, and remains a pure gift from Heaven.

This union with the Blessed Trinity, which our Mother speaks of, is Her very own home: "I am the Woman clothed with the sun. I am in the heart of the Divine Trinity". (M.201, 14th. June 1980)

Having spoken to us of the nature of sanctifying grace, our Mother speaks to us of Her own part in bringing it to us:

"I want to bring you together in love which must grow constantly greater among yourselves, to the point of making you truly one. Thus, I can give you to My Son Jesus to accomplish, according to His most intimate desire, that which He left you as His testament: 'As I and You, O Father, are one, so also may then be one IN US.' And where can this unity be built up each day if not in the Immaculate Heart of your Mother, Who loves you all and Who is leading, gathering and uniting you?" (M. 194, 11th. February 1980)

No ordinary unity, but unity in the Lord Himself and, in Him, with the Father, in the life of the Blessed Trinity. She is the Mediatress, for those who live in Her, of the very deepest regions of the supernatural life.

"This life of grace has also a relationship with your Heavenly Mother. As I am truly the Mother of Jesus and your Mother, My mediation is exercised between you and My Son Jesus. This is the natural consequence of My divine motherhood. As the Mother of Jesus, I am the means chosen by God by which My Son can reach you. In My virginal womb this first act of mediation of mine is carried out. As

your Mother, I was the means chosen by Jesus that through Me all of you may reach Him. I am truly the Mediatrix of Grace between you and My Son Jesus. My task is that of distributing to My little children that grace which flows out from the bosom of the Father, is merited for you by the Son and is given to you by the Holy Spirit. My task is that of distributing it to all My children, according to the particular needs of each one. Which the Mother is very good at knowing”.

Truly the words of a Mother!

Our entrustment

While it is true that the gift of Mary's mediation of grace to us is totally supernatural, it is necessary, if it is to have its full effect in us, that we cooperate to the full, which we do by our seeking full union with Her in our act of consecration to Her Immaculate Heart. It is not something which we can do partially, but only totally: Totus Tuus, Totaliter Tuus. It is a case of leaving ourselves open to be guided and led by Her.

We have the privilege of living in these times of Mary, in which She has come forward to lead us surely and swiftly to God in the midst of the tribulations of the present moment, has offered us Her hand, and the sad thing is that there are many who turn aside before Her promises, so that many opportunities are missed. Fatima, with its call to conversion (through which the Second World War could have been avoided) in its time was not heeded by many, and the call for the consecration of Russia has not been answered, which would have brought peace and the conversion of that country. The call was answered by the bishops of Russia (and I have had the privilege of being present on one of the occasions when it was made), but the collegial consecration became impossible to John Paul II through lack of co-operation. His own call for the personal consecration of all in the Church, and of the priests in particular, made in his Marian Year, was not followed. How many great graces we have missed!

Then there are the many voices which speak out against our Mother's plan: they reject the messages, saying that “There is no need to accept private revelations”, and the idea of the consecration to Her Immaculate Heart, claiming that Her place in God's plan is exaggerated. She is rejected by many.

But, as Her Movement of Priests, we have to appreciate that we live in the midst of a very great privilege. When he beatified Jacinta and Francisco, Pope John Paul II reminded us that Mary is, for those who place themselves into Her hands, the swiftest and surest way to God.

We have been given the gifts of the consecration to Her Immaculate Heart, the messages and the cenacle and it is for us to treasure these things, as they are the expression of one of the greatest graces the Church has known in its history: its total renewal in the Heart of our Mother and life in Her, close to God. The Marian Movement of Priests offers a rescue to the Church in the midst of all its present tribulations and those who live its spirit to the full are our Mother's instruments in that renewal, just as She is Herself the instrument of the Most Holy Trinity. Those who reject Mary's way are foolish. They are like those who, in the midst of great dangers, are shown a road which is free and safe, and choose instead to follow another road, with all its dangers. Our Mother says:

“I am carrying out this duty of mine.. However, I can carry it out fully only in the case of those children who entrust themselves to Me with perfect abandonment. I am above all able to carry it out in respect to you, My favourite sons, who by your consecration, have entrusted yourselves completely to Me. I am the way which leads you to Jesus. I am the safest and shortest way, the necessary way for each one of you. If you refuse to go along this way, you run the danger of being lost in the course of your journey. Today many have wished to put Me aside, considering Me an obstacle in reaching Jesus, because they have not understood My function as Mediatrix between you and My Son. And so, never before as in these times, are so many of My sons running the risk of not being able to reach Him. The Jesus Whom they meet is often only the result of their human research, and corresponds to their aspirations and desires: He is a Jesus formed according to their measure; He is not Jesus, the Christ, the true Son of God and of your Immaculate Mother. Entrust yourselves to Me with confidence and you will remain faithful, because I will be able to carry out fully My Work as Mediatrix of Graces. I will take you each day along the way of My Son, in such a way that He may increase in you to His fullness”.

(ibid.)

In this way, our Mother offers us Her Mediation of Graces as the way which leads us to fulfil our priestly vocation of being “*in persona Christi*”. It is a most precious message.

Our Mother's Word is our Formation

One of the principal channels of the Mother's Mediation of Grace lies for us, especially in the Marian Movement of Priests, in Her Word. When I first came in contact with the Movement, one of the great joys it offered for me was the fact that the Mother of God was actually speaking to me! Yes, I had learned about Her great apparitions in Lourdes and Fatima, with their encouraging messages, but it was a quite different matter to know that She had a word for me personally, for She was speaking to Her Priests, and I was one of them. What a precious gift is this book of the Messages!

In the Cenacle, we enter into the School of Mary, to be taught by our Mother through Her Word. It is a word which comes from the Heart of a Mother, with all its warmth and richness, but also has the function of *sealing us in Truth*. It is not in contrast with the Word which is Her Son Who, as St. John of the Cross tells us, is the one word uttered into the world by the Eternal Father, but our Mother's is a word which contains the spirit and interior reality of that Son, Whom She learned throughout Their life on earth together and which She longs to place in the hearts of Her little ones. She speaks of this in a message given at Castelmonte on 9th. February 1985, which enables us to continue our reflection of Her as Mediatrix of Graces in the heart of the Cenacle:

"In this House, the Heavenly Mother consoles and encourages, forms and leads you, strengthens you and leads you through the word which She gives you to show you the way. Oh! How necessary My motherly word is for you today! For this reason, I cause it to pour from My Heart in an increasingly abundant way. Feel its deep desire: welcome it with humility and docility: meditate it in your hearts, put it into practice in your lives. My Word is above all a flower of Wisdom, which I cause to come down from Heaven. It comes from the eternal Wisdom, from the Word. He is uncreated Wisdom, Who reveals the plan of the Father Whose perfect Image He is. This Wisdom, incarnate in My virginal womb, from being the Word, became man, and has the task of always giving men the gift of eternal Truth". (M. 304, 9th. February 1985)

Underlying these words lies the wonderful secret of the Heart of Mary, *Who kept all these things in Her Heart, pondering them*, all that He did, all that He said, received into a soul which sought no other light, and saw everything in a vast grace of the Holy Spirit, which enabled Her to see everything with Divine Wisdom. Her Heart

is Immaculate, containing nothing which can impede the totally faithful transmission of the Word of God in the Holy Spirit. She speaks of Her "virginal womb", but we may also speak of Her "virginal Heart", in which there is total purity, and from which we can, in perfect safety, find God's word in hers. She has been entrusted to form us in that Word., as the Heavenly Prophetess of our day.

It is a sad fact that today there are many who, without rejecting the authenticity of our Mother's messages, feel free to regard them as of no necessary significance in their lives. At the root of this, there is a danger of losing sight of the wonderful dignity (one would say "majesty") of the One Who makes us the priceless gift of speaking to us. In other words, there can be a danger of regarding Her without the honour which is Her due. In approaching Her, while we do so in the simplest human terms of "Mother", it is necessary to keep in mind that we are also speaking to the Queen of Heaven, and listen to Her with the respect that is Her due. Her word comes from the Holy Spirit, Her Bridegroom and mediates to us, not simply intellectual brilliance, but Wisdom, one of the Gifts of that Holy Spirit.

"My Word is a flower of Wisdom, which forms you through the Holy Spirit, given to you by the Father and the Son, and which leads you to an increasingly complete and deep understanding of the Gospel. In the darkness which has come down everywhere today, My Word of Wisdom becomes a ray of most pure light, which shows you the way to be travelled and the road on which you must go in order to remain always in the Truth. Darkness, with a thick, cold fog, has entered the Church, darkening it in the splendour of its Truth".

This is so essential, when we consider that the Word She gives us is that of Her Son, not simply hers. Reject Mother, you reject the Son! True, we are not bound to believe at the level of theological faith which we owe to the Sacred scripture and the Church's magisterium, but we must approach it with the proper dispositions and respect, or we shall never understand. It is for this that we must, above all, preserve the sense of the truth that we are, before Her, little children:

"In order to understand His Truth, you must be little; in order to see it in its true light, you must be poor; in order to keep it in its integrity, it is necessary to be simple; to give it to others in the splendour of its authenticity, it is necessary to be humble. For this reason, with My word, I form you to humility, to simplicity, to littleness. I wish to lead you to be like so many little children, because only them am I able to speak to you". (ibid.)

That word of our Mother is a beacon in the middle of darkness. It is not that it is introducing novelties into the lives of Her children – indeed, Her words are a restatement of the Catholic Faith. But we live in times in which even the deepest truths of the Faith are sometimes disputed and the right of the Holy Father and the hierarchy to govern and teach the Church is challenged and ignored, in which there is a need felt by many of the faithful for a secure direction. Our Mother offers us Her hand as a sure guide.

And so Our Mother's Word takes us to Truth, to Her Son, to the Church. Her Word takes us also to *a newness of life*. She describes it for us as a "drop of dew which She causes to fall on a vast desert". The darkness of the spiritual atmosphere of the present time can create a depression or paralysis: the desert needs to be watered:

"My Word is also a drop of dew, which I cause to fall upon the earth, which has become a vast desert, and on human life rendered so arid by sin and suffering. How many of My sons are like dried-up trees without life; how many in the Church, among My beloved ones, have let themselves be taken by aridity and discouragement! They continue to exercise their ministry, but without enthusiasm and without joy, because they have been blocked by difficulties and have been broken by the enormous weight of the purification which you are living through. You need My Word to cause to fall into your dried-up hearts a rain of motherly tenderness, of filial abandonment, of hope for the beautiful days which are awaiting you in the new era, already about to flower on the desert of the new times".

Our Mother is describing the effect in souls of encouragement and love in the hearts of Her faithful children of Her words. They do not simply appeal to the mind, as would be the case if they were merely informative, but bring new vigour into the heart, a new sense of joy and enthusiasm in the service of God, because of the grace which accompanies them. This brings to mind what the Lord said of His own Word: *The words I have spoken to you are spirit and our life* (John:VI: 63). The same Holy Spirit is in the Word given to us through the Mother.

Conclusion

For years now, our Mother has been sowing seeds. In the silence and hiddenness, in the spiritual Nazareth in which She formed Her Movement, She has been building a new and wonderful Spring for the Church. At the present time, it is impossible to grasp the breadth of Her work, because much still lies hidden, especially in those countries where the satanic attack has been deepest, namely Europe, Australia, North America. In consequence, there can be the temptation to wonder what has been the effect of the presence of the Marian Movement of Priests. What has been the fruit of the Cenacle? Problems remain, including deep divisions in the Church, rejection of the Magisterium, abuse of the sacramental life, widespread attachment to sin. But a careful look at the scene tells us that the fruits are emerging, the buds which our Mother is putting on the branches of the Church. My recent journey in Australia, where there have been great difficulties, seemed to confirm this. In the south-east, under the lead of the Cardinal, and the Archbishop of Melbourne, formerly a major responsible of our Movement, a drive for reform is taking place, where the principal points of emphasis are on the youth and the seminaries. A new and excellent scheme of catechetics has been introduced, and I was told that there are signs of a new character of seminarians emerging, who want nothing of the abusive ways of recent years, but to be formed in the authentic spirit of the Church. I had the joy of holding a cenacle with seven young priests, all dressed formally as priests and serious in their priesthood. A small sign? Yes, but one of Mother's "buds". Can we see the hand of the M.M.P. and the cenacles in this without presumption? Yes, I believe we can.

Our Mother has planted in the world a huge body of prayer and sacrifice to come to the aid of the suffering Church and the priesthood, with Herself, as Mediatrix of Grace at its heart. It would be only right to see a response to this prayer in these signs of recovery in the Church a fulfilment of Her promises. I have long been convinced that the backbone of the Church in England consists of those who have consecrated themselves completely to our Mother and who try to live according to Her guidance. The results are what we have seen that She has promised: they are faithful to the teaching of the Church, have a sense of Catholic morality and of the sacramental life and are true to prayer, especially to the Rosary and to prayer. Their presence is a sign

of hope, of our Mother's continuing presence and activity.. If only the priests were as enthusiastic as the faithful. It is not a question of numbers, but of depth, flowing from the presence of Mary. Even if they are small, these signs must give us hope. I mention these things because we must have confidence in this Work.

We are in perhaps the most difficult phase of the Movement: that of having to wait quietly for our Mother's victory, without big signs, living in pure faith in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in expectation of the coming of Jesus. What is asked of us is similar to what was asked of the Magi. They saw the star rising in the East proclaiming the coming of the Lord and a road which had to be travelled (for us, that road is Our Mother's messages). They travelled on, apparently without the light of the star ahead of them, in pure faith (despite what the pictures on the Christmas cards seem to suggest), until they reach Jerusalem, their destination. Then the star which they had seen in the East reappeared and led them home. We too travel in the dark, but sure of Our Mother's presence, unseen and unheard, but the day will come when:

"It will be a cause of amazement even to the Angels of God; a joy to the Saints in Heaven; a consolation and great comfort for all the just on earth; mercy and salvation for a great number of My straying children; a severe and definitive condemnation for satan and his many followers. In fact, at the very moment when satan will be enthroned as lord of the world and will think himself now the sure victor, I Myself will snatch the prey from his hands. As if by magic, he will find himself empty-handed and in the end the victory will be exclusively My Son's and mine: this will be the Triumph of My Immaculate Heart in the world".
(M. 29, 19th. December 1973)

For those who make this journey in patience and in faith, we shall come home to Jesus. In the meantime, our faith must be a support to others in their journey, and it is itself the gift of our Mother, Mediatrix of Grace, through the Cenacle of Her Heart. In the meantime, in the Spirit, in the heart of the Church, our Mother, we pray in the words of the Apocalypse:

The Spirit and the Bride say "Come". And let him who hears say "Come". And let him who is thirsty say "Come"... He Who testifies to these things says: "Surely I am coming soon".

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

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MSM
INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUAL EXERCICES
Collevalenza - Santuario dell' Amore Misericordioso
24 Juni-30 Juni 2007