

22. August 2022

## The mild reign of Mary

Lk 1:26-38

Reading for the feast Queenship of Mary

*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favor! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Look! You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?' The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. And I tell you this too: your cousin Elizabeth also, in her old age, has conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' Mary said, 'You see before you the Lord's servant, let it happen to me as you have said.' And the angel left her.*

In ancient times, for many peoples the monarchy had a sacred character. The king was regarded as a ruler instituted by God himself. They were even regarded as gods and, in the worst cases, were given a veneration and worship that only God deserves.

Looking at Mary's reign, we can get an idea of how God would want power to be exercised. Furthermore, in Mary's queenship we can better understand the kingship of Christ and our participation in it.

We can immediately notice that Mary's queenship is a dominion of love. When we bow before her and venerate her, we are honouring God who called her to this wonderful

mission and drew her so close to his Heart. Furthermore, we can honour her generous 'yes' to God's will, which has been told to us in today's Gospel. We also honour the precious virtues that are reflected in her life: her fidelity, her heroism, which led her to accompany her Son to death... All this was possible because the Mighty One has done great works for her (cf. Lk 1:49).

In contemplating our Mother and Queen, we also discover the profound dignity of the creature, which is greatly elevated by God and whose highest expression is Mary. In her we can recognise that humility which reveals to us the mystery that true kingship consists in serving God and mankind.

In this context, these words of Jesus come to mind: *"Among the gentiles it is the kings who lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are given the title Benefactor. With you this must not happen. No; the greatest among you must behave as if he were the youngest, the leader as if he were the one who serves"* (Lk 22:25-26).

In the authentic veneration of Mary, mankind can turn with full confidence to his compassionate and gentle Mother, hoping that she will not disregard their supplications. Indeed, countless testimonies confirm that the petitions addressed to her never go unheeded. The image of the gentle Queen has also been reflected in a number of holy queens throughout history. Among them we can mention, for example, St. Helen, Empress, and St. Elizabeth, Princess of Hungary, who always had an open heart for those in need.

Mary's mild reign reveals to us the depths of God's dominion, and also gives us a glimpse of how He wants people to exercise His rulership. Mary is concerned for the material welfare of her children, and even more so for their spiritual welfare. She wants to convey to people her closeness to God, showing us what He is like in His innermost being.

Who will not gladly bow down before her once he has met her? Who will be able to deny her one of her desires? Who will resist being transformed under the sweet dominion of her love? Who will not be moved by her to love God and mankind more? How many men need to learn to truly love their wives and to assume their responsibility as the head of the family! How many women sacrifice their true identity and their dignity, seeking self-realisation in the wrong ways! If all would come to Mary's school

and allow themselves to be formed by her sweet queenship, then the Holy Spirit, the divine Bridegroom of the Virgin, could heal wounds, untangle the tangled, drive away darkness and restore God's order in everything.

In Mary's mild reign is made visible the dominion of the Lord Himself, who *"will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end."* Under the guidance of Our Lady, we will learn to say to God with all our heart: *"Let it happen to me as you have said"*.