**SATURDAY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

# Tota pulchra es, Maria

Once we wrote: Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te. All beautiful you are, O Mary, and the original stain is not in you. Tota pulchra is an ancient hymn in honour of the Mother of God and our Mother. The eye of the devoted child of such a great Mother contemplates her image and is taken by her heavenly beauty. His heart, unable to contain the admired splendour within itself, must bring it forth with a song that praises Mary's beauty that envelops it all. Before such beauty, we should all feel in our heart, in our spirit, in our soul, what Jeremiah felt before the Word of God that he would have wanted to stifle in his heart, in his soul, in his spirit: ‘You have seduced me, Lord, and I have allowed myself to be seduced; you have done violence to me and you have prevailed. I said to myself, ‘I will think no more of him, I will speak no more in his name!’ But in my heart was like a burning fire, restrained in my bones; I strove to contain it, but I could not’ (cf. Jer 20, 7-18). Let us ask ourselves then: in what does Mary's beauty consist? Why is She proclaimed all beautiful? Hers is full, whole, entire beauty. Her soul is all pervaded, illuminated, vivified, protected, guarded, by the sanctifying grace that is full in Her. Nothing is lacking in this grace. It is as if her soul were interwoven with grace: created grace and uncreated grace, that is, God himself. God is in Mary's soul to create all the holiness possible for a creature in it. Then, it is not a matter of a privative holiness, that is, of the absence of something, such as the stain of original sin. Instead, it is a holiness brought to the highest of its efficiency, operativity, fruitfulness. Mary is the human highest of divine holiness.

Her spirit is all divine truth. In it there is not even the smallest shadow of falsehood, deception, falsehood, error. Mary sees God according to his purest truth. This is attested by her song that rises up to Heaven and brightens the whole earth with the purest truth of our God and Lord. The difference with our spirit is evident. We speak of God in a false, lying, erroneous, extravagant manner, dishonouring His eternal beauty. We are skillful transformers of the truth of his own revelation. Whereas Mary fed on divine truth. We feed on diabolical lies and falsehood, deception and hypocrisy. Her body was never touched by a vice, a serious sin or even a slight sin. Mary has never allowed her body to taste, see, touch, hear, smell what is evil. Never did She allow it anything too much, much, excessive. Temperance, sobriety, balance were perfect in Her. Never did She allow Herself to be taken in by the smallest sin of gluttony or taste. She always knew how to moderate Herself in everything. Not even by idleness did She allow Herself to be conquered. We should reflect, contemplating the Virgin Mary, especially in this time when excess is made the rule of life, sin the norm of justice, vice modern morality. We should think - we who only know, now, how to drown ourselves in alcohol, drugs, food, smoking, every other transgression. The simple fact that the body is now without any moral rule, any virtue, is a sign that our soul is without God, without his grace, and that our spirit is without heavenly truth. We should reflect. When the corruption of the body reaches its peak - and today it has reached it - then it is time to think that the soul is totally dead in us and that the spirit no longer gives any sign of life. When soul and spirit are dead in man, then prohibitions are no longer needed. True spiritual resurrection is needed. Man needs grace and truth, but only Christ Jesus can give these and He gives them through His one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church.

In the Virgin Mary everything shines with holiness and beauty: heart, feelings, will, desires, aspirations. intentions. We can well say that never did Mary have a single desire that was not holy and never an aspiration that was not in conformity with the Lord's will. Never was her will drawn to the things of earth, because her heart was always turned towards Heaven. Never was a feeling out of place, for She lived by a single purpose: to please her Lord and Father always and only. Mary lived by heavenly beauty and grew in it every day, until She reached the highest beauty. Now She lives in Heaven cloaked in divine and eternal glory, clothed in the light that comes from God. Her beauty enchants and leaves even the most beautiful of all the Angels in Heaven breathless. Before the Virgin Mary Lucifer would have appeared lacking splendour, light, brightness. He would have seen the meagreness of his light. Soul, spirit and body are perfectly harmonious in Mary. Mary's body breathes with the beauty of her soul and spirit. Hers is reflected beauty. In Her, from her body, the Lord of glory is reflected in the purest and holiest beauty of his eternal light. Hers is not an artificial beauty like ours. Hers is supernatural beauty. This is her statute. This is his law. This is his created essence.

Today we add: in this filthy, dirty, unclean world, soiled with all spiritual filth, in this world in which sin is now elevated to virtue, to glory, to the boast of man, in this world in which spiritual ugliness is the daily bread, the nourishment, we might say the new manna of man, manna, however, which does not descend from heaven, but rises from hell, it is more than urgent for one who claims to be a disciple of Jesus and a child of the heavenly Mother, to meditate both on the eternal, divine, supernatural and human beauty of Jesus Christ and on the spiritual, almost divine beauty of the Virgin Mary. Jesus is the Shepherd, the Beautiful. The Virgin Mary is the most beautiful Woman in heaven and on earth. If we could only for a moment fall in love with such beauty, our spiritual life could change. But today there is no more room for heaven on our earth. On our world there is now only room for hell and all its ugliness of hatred, wickedness, wickedness, nefariousness, misdeeds, horrendous crimes, endless wars, genocides without number, ethnic cleansing, hatred that knows no bounds, imposition in the name of an alleged, arbitrary and monstrous right of one's own will to evil, elevation of injustice to the standard of truth and light. If we wanted to enumerate all the spiritual ugliness committed as disciples of Jesus and appealing to our being true Christians, neither could we. Today, the ‘infernal beauty’ is imposed at all costs, and if anyone should rebel against this imposition, he or she will have to be smeared with every slurry of lies, slander, false witness, and even threats to conform to the law of spiritual ugliness elevated to the path of the new Christianity and the new way of living the faith.

Instead, here is how the Psalm proclaims the beauty of Christ Jesus and of his Spouse that is the Church: *“For the director of music. To the tune of “Lilies.” Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. A wedding song. My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer. You are the most excellent of men and your lips have been anointed with grace, since God has blessed you forever. Gird your sword on your side, you mighty one; clothe yourself with splendor and majesty. In your majesty ride forth victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and justice; let your right hand achieve awesome deeds. Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of the king’s enemies; let the nations fall beneath your feet. Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. All your robes are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; from palaces adorned with ivory the music of the strings makes you glad. Daughters of kings are among your honored women; at your right hand is the royal bride in gold of Ophir. Listen, daughter, and pay careful attention: Forget your people and your father’s house. Let the king be enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord. The city of Tyre will come with a gift, people of wealth will seek your favor. All glorious is the princess within her chamber; her gown is interwoven with gold. In embroidered garments she is led to the king; her virgin companions follow her— those brought to be with her. Led in with joy and gladness, they enter the palace of the king. Your sons will take the place of your fathers; you will make them princes throughout the land. I will perpetuate your memory through all generations; therefore the nations will praise you for ever and ever. (Pal 45,1-18)*

Here is how the Apostle John sees the beauty of the New Jerusalem coming down of Heaven: *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them (as their God). He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, (for) the old order has passed away."*

*The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Then he said, "Write these words down, for they are trustworthy and true." He said to me, "They are accomplished. I (am) the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son. But as for cowards, the unfaithful, the depraved, murderers, the unchaste, sorcerers, idol-worshipers, and deceivers of every sort, their lot is in the burning pool of fire and sulfur, which is the second death."*

*One of the seven angels who held the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come here. I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." He took me in spirit to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. It gleamed with the splendor of God. Its radiance was like that of a precious stone, like jasper, clear as crystal. It had a massive, high wall, with twelve gates where twelve angels were stationed and on which names were inscribed, (the names) of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. There were three gates facing east, three north, three south, and three west. The wall of the city had twelve courses of stones as its foundation, on which were inscribed the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

*The one who spoke to me held a gold measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city was square, its length the same as (also) its width. He measured the city with the rod and found it fifteen hundred miles in length and width and height. He also measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits according to the standard unit of measurement the angel used. The wall was constructed of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. The foundations of the city wall were decorated with every precious stone; the first course of stones was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh hyacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made from a single pearl; and the street of the city was of pure gold, transparent as glass.*

*I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God almighty and the Lamb. The city had no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gave it light, and its lamp was the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and to it the kings of the earth will bring their treasure. During the day its gates will never be shut, and there will be no night there. The treasure and wealth of the nations will be brought there, but nothing unclean will enter it, nor any (one) who does abominable things or tells lies. Only those will enter whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev 21,1-27).*

*Then the angel showed me the river of life-giving water, sparkling like crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of its street. On either side of the river grew the tree of life that produces fruit twelve times a year, once each month; the leaves of the trees serve as medicine for the nations.*

*Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will look upon his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. Night will be no more, nor will they need light from lamp or sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever and ever. (Rev 22,1-5).*

Virgin Mary, Mother of Redemption, reveal your splendour of Heaven to us, so that we may let ourselves be conquered by it. Angels and Saints, grant our wish.

**16 February 2025**