**SATURDAY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

# ALMA REDEMPTORIS MATER

Let us begin the meditation on another very ancient prayer in honor of the Virgin Mary: “Alma Redemptoris Mater.” It reads as follows: “Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia coeli porta manes, et stella maris, succurre cadenti, surgere qui curat, populo. Tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem, Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.” *(“O holy Mother of the Redeemer, gate of heaven, star of the sea, help your people who yearn to rise again. You who, receiving that ‘Ave’ from Gabriel, in the amazement of all creation, gave birth to your Creator, virgin before and after birth, have mercy on us sinners.”)* In ancient prayers, there is a constant pattern: first, the one to whom we are addressing our prayer is announced, and only at the end is the request made. Who is She to Whom we want to raise our supplication, to Whom we turn our prayer? Surely, She is not one of the many saints in heaven, nor one of the thousands upon thousands of friends of God who dwell in His Paradise. She is not even a person from our earthly realm, no matter how noble or exalted. She is more than a queen, more than an empress, more than any other title that mankind could invent to satisfy its thirst for glory and power. The title that today is given to the Virgin Mary is simply magnificent: “Holy Mother of the Redeemer.” It is a unique title. It belongs to Her alone. No other woman will ever bear it. There are no other true Redeemers, and consequently, there will never be any other true Mothers of the Redeemer. To this unique title, the Virgin Mary adds another: the title of her holiness, which is also unique, also non-sharable. No other man or woman will ever reach the holiness of the Mother of the Redeemer.

To enter, even just a little, into the greatness of this title, we must understand who the Redeemer is—of whom She is the Mother. The Redeemer is the Only Begotten Son of the Father, His Eternal Word. Here is the Redeemer: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not accept him. But to those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man's decision but of God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.”* (Cf. Jn 1,1-18). The Redeemer is God, and Mary is the Holy Mother of the God who became flesh in her womb. A greater glory than this has never existed before, and will never exist again. This glory belongs to Her alone—to the Virgin Mary.

Since She was to conceive such a holy life—the human life of the Son of the Most High—and since the most holy Word of the Father was to be born of Her as true man, it would not have been fitting for Mary to possess only an ordinary holiness, like that of the other saints who are now before God in Heaven. She had to be given an exceedingly high holiness, one nearly equal to that of the Son She was to bear. Thus, Mary gave her Son her most pure flesh. The Son, in turn, gave the Mother His eternal holiness. The Mother brought forth the Son in the flesh.
The Son brought forth the Mother in divine grace. In this marvellous exchange of life, they mutually enrich one another with what they do not naturally possess. The Virgin Mary, by nature, does not possess divine holiness. The Only Begotten Son of the Father, by nature, does not possess human nature. He is to receive it entirely from the Mother whom He Himself made entirely holy. One single holiness: the holiness of the Son is the holiness of the Mother. One single flesh: the flesh of the Mother is the flesh of the Son. This is the greatest exchange ever to occur between the Creator and the creature. Before such sublime greatness, could there ever be anything that the Virgin Mary could not obtain for us? Could there ever be a grace so powerful that it might be denied her by her Son—He who has placed everything in the hands of His Mother? Approaching the Virgin Mary with this richness of faith, we may offer her any prayer, in the certainty that she will hear it, answer it, and bring it to fulfilment promptly.

With this faith, we turn to You, Most Holy Mother of the Redeemer—but also Most Holy Mother of Redemption. You began a great and wondrous project to bring the Word of your Son into the world. The world has forgotten it, and You desire that it be brought back to its memory. Most Holy Mother of the Redeemer, You know that this project, both from within and from without, has been handed over to Satan. And Satan, through his followers, has decreed its death out of hatred for You and for Your truth. But You, Most Holy Mother, also know that a great number of people have remained faithful to You—those whom You have brought into the Gospel and into the Church of Your Son. Now we pray to You: descend, come among us, and restore to full life the project You once began. If You come, many hearts will rise again; they will emerge from their catacombs. Even those who were deceived by Satan will come to know and confess that this divine project was Yours, and they will begin to labor to give it the fullness of evangelical life. Most Holy Mother of the Redeemer, come quickly to bring life to Your project of salvation and redemption—for the good of the whole world. **29 June 2025**