**SATURDAY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

# MOST GRACIOUS ADVOCATE

In the ‘*Salve Regina*,’ the Virgin Mary is invoked, prayed to, and pleaded with as ‘*our Advocate*.’ Now let us ask ourselves: why was the Virgin Mary given the noble and exalted title of ‘Advocate’? What exactly does this ministry of the Mother of God consist of, theologically speaking? What virtue of our heavenly Mother does one seek to highlight? We certainly have a misconceived concept of the meaning of ‘*advocate*’. We think that it is someone who, with his skill, expertise, knowledge and experience gained in the courtroom, is able to defend the accused, turning injustice into justice, guilt into innocence, culpability into righteous behaviour, evil into good, condemnation into absolution. However, when guilt is so obvious that it cannot be denied in any way, here is when the lawyer must ensure that it is as involuntary as possible, a pure accident, a sad coincidence, a fact without full responsibility. The Virgin Mary does not practise this kind of “*advocacy*”. She is a true Advocate, but in a very different way. She is an “*Advocate*” first and foremost because She is our “*Assistant*”, our “*Guide*”, our ‘*Counsellor*’, our “*Expert*”, our ‘*Friend*’, always close to us to enlighten us with her counsel, help us with her discernment, push us on with her exhortation, show us the way to follow with her perfect example, teach us how to obey the Word of her Divine Son promptly, and support us with her great encouragement.

Her first ministry is that of prevention. She must act so that we never fall into evil, transgression, disobedience, or abandonment of the true faith, holy charity, and beautiful hope. Her second ministry is to lift us up in spirit and soul through high morality, sublime spirituality, and perfect ascesis, which leads us to commit not even the slightest venial sin. Her third ministry is to show us the way of repentance, of sorrow for our sins, of the will to no longer offend the Lord, of the desire to always walk in his Law, of the intention to achieve greater holiness after having offended the Lord and returned to his grace and holiness. Her fourth ministry, as our “*Advocate*”, is that of intercession with God. Intercession is twofold: first of all, it is a request to Jesus for every greater grace for our highest sanctification. Secondly, it is an imploration for forgiveness. We are sinners. The Virgin Mary asks Jesus to show us all his mercy, all his pity, all the richness of his love, all his divine compassion. This is her true mission as ‘*Advocate’* in her intercession: to imitate the vine grower in the Gospel parable who asks the gardener not to cut down the barren fig tree because he himself would take greater care of it. The fig tree must be cut down. But only after every effort has been made. For us there will even be eternal hell, but only after our ‘*Advocate*’ has spent all her energy to cure our spiritual barrenness. This is the assistance we must always ask of our ‘Advocate’: that She never spare anything for our conversion, redemption, and salvation. That She work everything for our greater holiness.

To what we wrote in the past, now we must add that, as our Advocate, She must defend us first and foremost from ourselves, preserving us with her teaching and her presence in our lives from falling into sin, which is always lurking at our door. In this sense, I see the Virgin Mary teaching her son before he falls into sin, so that he does not fall into it. This is what the Book of Proverbs reveals: *“My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands. Keep my commands and live, my teaching as the apple of your eye; Bind them on your fingers, write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to Wisdom, "You are my sister!" call Understanding, "Friend!" That they may keep you from another's wife, from the adulteress with her smooth words. For at the window of my house, through my lattice I looked out -  And I saw among the simple ones, I observed among the young men, a youth with no sense, Going along the street near the corner, then walking in the direction of her house -  In the twilight, at dusk of day, at the time of the dark of night. And lo! the woman comes to meet him, robed like a harlot, with secret designs -  She is fickle and unruly, in her home her feet cannot rest; Now she is in the streets, now in the open squares, and at every corner she lurks in ambush - When she seizes him, she kisses him, and with an impudent look says to him: "I owed peace offerings, and today I have fulfilled my vows; So I came out to meet you, to look for you, and I have found you! With coverlets I have spread my couch, with brocaded cloths of Egyptian linen; I have sprinkled my bed with myrrh, with aloes, and with cinnamon. "Come, let us drink our fill of love, until morning, let us feast on love! For my husband is not at home, he has gone on a long journey; A bag of money he took with him, not till the full moon will he return home." She wins him over by her repeated urging, with her smooth lips she leads him astray; He follows her stupidly, like an ox that is led to slaughter; Like a stag that minces toward the net, till an arrow pierces its liver; Like a bird that rushes into a snare, unaware that its life is at stake. So now, O children, listen to me, be attentive to the words of my mouth! Let not your heart turn to her ways, go not astray in her paths; For many are those she has struck down dead, numerous, those she has slain. Her house is made up of ways to the nether world, leading down into the chambers of death. (Pr 7,1-27).* As our Advocate, the Virgin Mary is much more than this Father. Not only must She teach us. She must always be present in our lives, just as Jesus is present in the lives of his flock, and She must always stand between us and the many devils or legions of hell, who are always ready to spy on our weak points so that they can successfully attack our daily lives. This is why it is necessary for Her to be with us always. To be with us, She must dwell permanently and stably in our hearts. Our hearts and the Virgin Mary must be one, indivisible and inseparable for eternity. If She is not with us, even if we feel very holy, there is no escape. The legions of hell will attack us, and with them, sin is inevitable. Without the Virgin Mary, no one will ever overcome a single temptation. Our advocate, help us so that our hearts may always be your home. **21 September 2025**