



Our Lady's Greatest Privilege: Mother of God

The greatest privilege of Mary is Her selection to be the Mother of God, or, as it is also called, the *Divine Maternity*.

1) The Divine Maternity in the Scriptures

The Divine Maternity was already foreshadowed in the prophecy of Isaias: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel." (Is. 7:14) Emmanuel means "God with us." Therefore this prophecy means that a virgin shall be the Mother of God.

The Divine Motherhood is more clearly indicated at the Incarnation when Gabriel tells Mary that the Child who shall be born of Her "shall be called the Son of the Most High." (Luke 1:32) It is recognized by Elizabeth when she greets Mary as "the Mother of my Lord." (Luke 1:43)

2) The Divine Maternity Infallibly Defined

It was because of the heresy of Nestorianism that the Church clearly defined this doctrine of the Divine Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin. Nestorius, the patriarch and bishop of Constantinople, had objected to calling Mary *Theotokos* (i.e., the God-bearer). He claimed that Mary was only the mother of Christ — a "mere man", and therefore, he said, She could not be called the Mother of God.

The whole Christian world was outraged by this heretical blasphemy, and at the famous Council of Ephesus in Asia Minor in 431—the Third Ecumenical Council, under the leadership of that courageous and learned Greek Doctor, St. Cyril of Alexandria—the heresy was condemned

and the true doctrine which the Church had always taught was proclaimed, to the tumultuous joy of the people. The Council declared: "If anyone confess not that Emmanuel is God in strict truth and that therefore the Blessed Virgin is Mother of God, *let him be anathema.*"



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The Queenship of Mary and Fatima

St. Alphonsus Liguori tells us that Mary is indeed a Queen. The Church itself honors Her with this glorious title. Her Queenship proceeds from the very nature of Her Divine Maternity – of the fact that She is indeed Mother of God. “And whence is this to me”, marvels St. Elizabeth at Our Lady’s visitation, “that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:43).

Throughout the ages, the Saints have honored Our Lady as Queen. Saint Athanasius said, “If He who was born of the Virgin is a king, then the one who bore Him is rightly called a lady and a queen.” Saint Bernadine of Sienna further explains that at the moment that Mary consented to be the Mother of God, She deserved to be called Queen of the world and of every creature in it.

Saint Bernadine further assures us that all creatures who serve God must also serve Mary. “All angels”, he teaches, “all men, all things in Heaven and on earth in as much as they are subject to God’s dominion, are also subject to Mary.”

Saint Alphonsus explains that Mary may be Queen of Heaven and earth, yet “She is a most sweet, a most merciful Queen, completely dedicated to the well-being of the sinner.” This is why in the beautiful *Salve Regina* prayer, we begin: “Hail Holy Queen, *Mother of Mercy*.” Her Queenship and Her boundless compassion for sinners go hand in hand. Outside of the Incarnation, She is God’s greatest gift to mankind.

Pope Pius XII, when he instituted in 1954 the feast of the Queenship of Mary to be celebrated each year on May 31, spoke glowingly of Our Lady’s title of Queen. “From the documents of ancient

Christianity,” wrote the Pope, “from all the prayers of the liturgy, from the innate religious sense of the Christian people, from works of art, from all sides we gather witnesses which assert that the Virgin Mother of God excels in queenly dignity.”

At Fatima Our Lady demonstrated in a spectacular manner both Her royal Queenship over Heaven and earth and Her great compassion for mankind.

She told us that man must cease offending God; She warned of the eternal consequences of sin; and She even showed three children of Fatima a vision of hell to reinforce the reality and the unspeakable gravity of eternal damnation.

She also gave us the means to appease the just wrath of God: obedience to Her requests for the daily Rosary, sacrifices, and Five First Saturdays of Reparation.

She said She would come to ask for the Consecration of Russia; a simple request that is yet to be heeded.

But as a true mother, She warned us of God’s punishment if we do not obey: famine, war, persecution of the Church, persecution of the Holy Father, the martyrdom of the good and the annihilation of nations.

Then on October 13, 1917, She manifested Her universal Queenship over Heaven and earth by making the sun dance in the sky, to the gasping astonishment of 70,000 witnesses.

The Apostles said of Our Lord when He calmed the sea, “Who is this that both wind and sea obey Him?” (Mark 4:40).

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OUR LADY’S GREATEST PRIVILEGE:
MOTHER OF GOD

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3) The Divine Maternity in the Liturgy

The Church’s belief in the Divine Maternity is everywhere visible; in the liturgy of Advent and Christmas, in the Creed which says that Christ, the Son of God, was born of the Virgin Mary, in the Hail Mary; and the invocations of the Litany of Loreto: “Holy Mother of God, Mother of Christ,” and in the Angelus.

The Feast of the Divine Maternity, celebrated on October 11, was made a feast of the first class for the Universal Church in 1932.

The Divine Motherhood is a popular theme in art. How often the Madonna has drawn the attention of famous painters. She is also represented in music, and in poetry.

Mary’s office as Mother of God is not only the highest of Her privileges, it is the reason for all the other honors and privileges showered so freely upon Her by God. †

The Brown Scapular's Protection

You hear from us all the time, “please pray for the Fatima Center, pray for our volunteers, pray the Rosary daily, wear your scapulars.” Our Lady has promised graces and benefits aplenty to those who will heed Her requests.

Our recent Rosary Rally in California brought home to us the efficacy of the prayers of our volunteers and friends of Our Lady's apostolate. Father Gruner was traveling separately from his Fatima Center workers, who had rented an SUV to carry all the books, literature and sacramentals they had brought for the rally. The two colleagues were driving across town when they were rear-ended by a cargo van on the freeway. They were hit with such force that the SUV frame crumpled in half. The middle windows were folded inside the car. The glass was shattered.

When the police arrived they could not understand how the two workers could stand there describing what had happened; more to the point, how they had survived at all. ‘You must go to the hospital,’ one officer kept repeating. ‘But we are unhurt. We are fine,’ our staff rejoined.

They attributed their protection to Our Lady, and to the fact that both were wearing their scapulars, and to your prayers.

Thank you, dear friends of Our Lady. †



30 Million Rosary Countdown

Father Gruner has called the year 2008 the year of “The Great Rosary Crusade.”

Do you remember reading this in our recent letter?

He has put a challenge to all of us: to ‘raise’ *30 million Rosaries in 2008*.

The pledges are to benefit all of us! That the Holy Father consecrate Russia, as per Our Lady's instructions; for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart; for the mission of the Apostolate; for our families and our country.

Have you sent in your pledge yet?

You can help us simply by adding these intentions to your own as you pray your own Rosaries and prayers each day.

If you add these intentions, you will be able to pledge 150 decades per month. Your contribution for the rest of the year will mean one-thousand one-hundred and fifty decades for the rest of the year. If you will pledge Rosaries until next Easter, you will have contributed over 1,650 decades!

That would be a tremendous assistance. It would be of more value to all of us than all the contributions ever sent to all the man-centered “charities” around the world.

Would you please find the pledge card that was sent to you – or call the office to request a new one (1-800-263-8160). Return your pledge today, as an oblation to Our Heavenly Mother. †

St. Rita of Cascia, Patroness of the Impossible

B. 1381 - D. 1457 • Feast Day, May 22

As a young girl Rita had her heart set on becoming an Augustinian nun at Cascia, Italy, but her parents induced her to marry. She obeyed, though with a heavy heart, and in fact her marriage meant long years of suffering.

Her husband was dissolute, vile tempered, and abusive, and at times went so far as to beat her. For eighteen long years Rita's prayers rose to Heaven for her husband's conversion.

At last he saw the evil of his ways and asked her forgiveness. Henceforth, whenever he felt a storm of anger rising within him he left the house until it had subsided. Rita's happiness, however, was short-lived; one day her husband was brought home dead, covered with wounds inflicted by some enemies.

Rita grieved sincerely, for despite his faults she had loved him. Her grief was heightened when she learned that her two sons had sworn to avenge their father.

In her anguish she begged God to take her sons by death rather than let them commit murder. Both became ill, and after Rita had tenderly nursed them, they died repentant and forgiving the slayers of their father.

Rita applied for admission into the convent and was finally admitted; during her forty-four years as a religious she was, as her biographer says, "a shining example of every virtue" in her role of infirmarian.

All her life she had fostered an ardent devotion

THE QUEENSHIP OF MARY AND FATIMA

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Likewise, modern man would do well to ask a similar question: "Who is She that the sun dances at Her command?"

Our Lady of Fatima is Queen of everything we desire: She is Queen of mercy for us sinners; She is Queen of peace for a warring world incapable of bringing peace to itself; and She is Queen of Heaven; the eternal homeland for which God made us if we persevere to the end.

Pray for us O Holy Mother of God, O royal Queen of Heaven and earth, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ! †

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to the Passion of Our Lord, and after a sermon by St. James of the Marches she asked Our Lord to give her at least one thorn of His crown as her share of His sufferings.

She received a deep wound in her forehead like that from a thorn, and this became so infected and offensive that her superiors shut her in her cell. She died after a long illness, and her body has remained incorrupt to this day.

The custom of blessing roses on her feast day is based on the tradition that shortly before her death she asked a visitor to go to her former home and bring back a rose from the garden

she had loved so much. Though not the time for roses, one was actually found in full bloom.

Because of the many miracles worked through her, she became known as "The Saint of the Impossible." Her life embraced the several states of maiden, wife, mother, widow, and nun. †



We'd like to hear from YOU! Write or call:
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