



*Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem*  
*\* Knights of Malta \**

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## **Chancellor's Update**

### **A Few Thoughts on The Holy Family**

During this holy season, it would be nice to stop and contemplate the meaning of the season. Starting with Genesis Ch 2, v 21 -25, God starts the family with Eve coming forth from man, Adam, without a woman. In Ch 3, we learn of Adam's and Eve's disobedience and their punishment. In chapter 3, v 15 -20, God puts forth the decree for each participant. The devil was cursed and told to await his destruction by a woman. A very humbling event for a supernatural person to be defeated by a human person. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crust thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel."

"To the woman He said: I will multiply thy sorrows, and thy conceptions: in sorrow shall thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee."

"And to Adam he said: Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return. And Adam called the name of his wife Eve: because she was the mother of all the living."

The moment was now set for the angel Gabriel to announce to the world the woman, Mary. "Hail Mary" is the highest salutation given to mortals: "Hail Caesar", "Hail Hitler", "Hail to the chief".

"Full of Grace" – Luke Ch 1 v 28 -56 – represents the totality of friendship with God, a singular gift from God to a woman.

One may ponder Mary's relationship to God.

Mary is the Daughter of God, the Father, the First Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Mary is the Mother of God, Jesus Christ the God-Man, Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Mary is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Let us now consider the inequality of the Holy Family.

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God the Son subjects Himself to two of His creatures.

Mary, the most privileged of creatures, subjects herself to Joseph, a mere mortal.

God has given us an example of how we should live.

We now consider Mary's response to Elizabeth. "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid; for behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; because he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name; and his mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and has exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of his mercy- Even as he spoke to our fathers - to Abraham and to his posterity forever. And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her own house."

Next, we shall consider the virgin birth of Jesus. We have from Luke Ch 1 v 23 the following: "Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and they shall call his name *Emmanuel*; which is, interpreted, "God with us." In the Chancellor's Update of March 2017 and May 2019 we developed this thought more completely. See those Updates.

St. John Chrysostom explains the virgin birth in his sermon on Christmas Day in the following quote. "It was fitting that the Giver of all holiness should enter this world by a pure and holy birth. For He it is that of old formed Adam from the virgin earth, and from Adam without help of woman formed woman. For us without woman Adam produced woman, so did the Virgin without man this day bring forth a man. *For it is a man, saith the Lord, and who shall know him.* For since the race of women owed to man a debt, as from Adam without woman woman came, therefore without man the Virgin this day brought forth, and on behalf of Eve repaid the debt to man." (Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers, volume 1, page 113, paragraph 3)

Mary's perpetual virginity as foretold in Exodus 3 v 2 & 3 is the symbol of the burning bush that is not burnt. V2, V3. *And the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he saw that the bush was on fire and was not burnt.* And Moses said: *I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.*

As we have seen from Genesis that from Adam came forth a woman, without the use of a woman, so the Virgin Mary by the grace of God produced man without the use of man.

In conclusion, Jesus is the reason for the season of Christmas.

## Merry Christmas

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