



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

Chancellor's Update

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An explanation of a Virgin Birth

Before discussing the topic of a virgin birth a very quick review of the six sciences is necessary. The sciences of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics make up what are known as the Natural or Physical Sciences. They appeal to the five senses. They try to answer the questions of **What and How** something happens. The fifth science is the science of Reasoning called Philosophy. This science allows us to study both the material and the non-material world: as for example, animals and/or fairness. If you can reason to fairness then you can reason to God, thus Natural Theology. Here the scientists try to answer the questions of **What and Why** something happens. This brings us to Supernatural Theology. You **CANNOT** reason to this; it must be revealed, for example, the Trinity or Virgin Birth. It is time to turn to the topic namely, A Virgin Birth!

In Genesis 3: v 15 God cursed the devil and said: *I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.* Mary, the woman, would crush Satan because it would not be humiliating to Satan if God crushed him. To be destroyed by a superior force is not humiliating, but to be destroyed by an inferior force (Mary is only a human person –not a pure spirit) is humiliating.

We now apply the lessons from the six sciences – God's plan for the redemption of the human race begins here. The Triune God sends His Son, Jesus – The God-Man through Mary. Jesus is *NOT* a human person but a divine person. Jesus is a human being but *NOT* a human person. Jesus will take His humanity from Mary.

Remember that an infinite person had been offended –The Triune God. Therefore, an infinite sacrifice would be necessary to amend for the sin of Adam. All the sacrifices of the Old Law (Testament) were of no avail because they were finite. But Jesus being an infinite Person offers an infinite sacrifice back to the Father that is acceptable.

Now in Isaias 7 v 14, we find God promising to send the messiah through a virgin: *Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.* Now, in Luke 1 v 35: *The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God.* In similar fashion, Matt.1 v 18-25 tells the story of the virgin birth. Please note that Mary conceives from a divine person – The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity- *NOT* from a human person. Therefore, the Child Jesus will have all the powers of the

Most High and have a human nature from Mary. Hence we can comprehend that Jesus, the God-Man has two natures – Divine and Human. Being divine, His sacrifice is acceptable to God the Father, because it is an infinite sacrifice and being human He can offer it on our behalf.

Reason for Veneration of Mary

From the foregoing we see that Mary holds a unique position in God's Plan of redemption.

Mary is: The Daughter of God The Father, The First Person of the Blessed Trinity
The Mother of God The Son, The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity
The Spouse of God Holy Spirit, The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Hence, Mary is venerated by all Catholics as she foretold in the Magnificat (Luke 1 v 46 –55) *My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior because he has regarded the lowliness of the 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 generations on those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts. 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 of our fathers- to Abraham and to his posterity forever.*

Mary's perpetual virginity as foretold in Exodus 3 v 2 & 3 is the symbol of the burning bush that is not consumed nor burnt. V2. V3. And Moses said: *I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush on fire and was not burnt.*

This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh (Gen. ii. 23).

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 men 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)

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