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Coronation and Queenship: Magisterium, Saints, Poets

We celebrate the feast of the Queenship of Mary on 22 August. These texts from the Magisterium, saints, and Christian poets can help us contemplate the crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of the universe.

08/21/2024

From the Magisterium *From the Saints* *From the Poets*

"If you and I had been able, we too would have made her Queen and Lady of all creation" (St. Josemaria, *Holy Rosary*, Fifth Glorious Mystery).

VOICE OF THE MAGISTERIUM

According to ancient tradition and the sacred liturgy the main principle on which the royal dignity of Mary rests is without doubt her Divine Motherhood. In Holy Writ, concerning the Son whom Mary will conceive, we read this sentence: "He shall be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Lk 1:32-33), and in addition Mary is

called "Mother of the Lord" (Ibid., 43); from this it is easily concluded that she is a Queen, since she bore a son who, at the very moment of His conception, because of the hypostatic union of the human nature with the Word, was also as man King and Lord of all things. So with complete justice St. John Damascene could write: "When she became Mother of the Creator, she truly became Queen of every creature." Likewise, it can be said that the heavenly voice of the Archangel Gabriel was the first to proclaim Mary's royal office.

But the Blessed Virgin Mary should be called Queen, not only because of her Divine Motherhood, but also because God has willed her to have an exceptional role in the work of our eternal salvation . . . In the accomplishing of this work of redemption, the Blessed Virgin Mary was most closely associated with Christ; and so it is fitting to sing in

the sacred liturgy: "Near the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ there stood, sorrowful, the Blessed Mary, Queen of Heaven and Queen of the World" (*Festum septem dolorum B. Mariae Virg., Tractus*). Hence, as the devout disciple of St. Anselm. Eadmer, wrote in the Middle Ages: "just as . . . God, by making all through His power, is Father and Lord of all, so the blessed Mary, by repairing all through her merits, is Mother and Queen of all; for God is the Lord of all things, because by His command He establishes each of them in its own nature, and Mary is the Queen of all things, because she restores each to its original dignity through the grace which she merited" ...

Certainly, in the full and strict meaning of the term, only Jesus Christ, the God-Man, is King; but Mary, too, as Mother of the divine Christ, as His associate in the redemption, in his struggle with His

enemies and His final victory over them, has a share, though in a limited and analogous way, in His royal dignity. For from her union with Christ she attains a radiant eminence transcending that of any other creature; from her union with Christ she receives the royal right to dispose of the treasures of the Divine Redeemer's Kingdom; from her union with Christ finally is derived the inexhaustible efficacy of her maternal intercession before the Son and His Father.

Hence it cannot be doubted that Mary most Holy is far above all other creatures in dignity, and after her Son possesses primacy over all. "You have surpassed every creature," sings St. Sophronius. "What can be more sublime than your joy, O Virgin Mother? What more noble than this grace, which you alone have received from God"? To this St. Germanus adds: "Your honor and dignity

surpass the whole of creation; your greatness places you above the angels."

*from Pius XII, "Ad Caeli Reginam,"
October 11, 1954*

Popular devotion invokes Mary as Queen. The Council, after recalling the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin in "body and soul into heavenly glory," explains that she was "exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords (cf. Rv 19:16) and conqueror of sin and death" (*Lumen gentium*, no. 59)

Therefore Christians look with trust to Mary Queen and this not only does not diminish but indeed exalts their filial abandonment to her, who is mother in the order of grace.

Indeed, the concern Mary Queen has for mankind can be fully effective precisely by virtue of her glorious state which derives from the Assumption. St Germanus of Constantinople highlights this very well. He holds that this state guarantees Mary's intimate relationship with her Son and enables her to intercede in our favour. Addressing Mary he says: Christ wanted "to have, so to speak, the closeness of your lips and your heart; thus he assents to all the desires you express to him, when you suffer for your children, with his divine power he does all that you ask of him" (*Horn.1, PG 98, 348*).

One can conclude that the Assumption favours Mary's full communion not only with Christ, but with each one of us: she is beside us, because her glorious state enables her to follow us in our daily earthly journey. As we read again in St

Germanus: "You dwell spiritually with us and the greatness of your vigilance over us makes your communion of life with us stand out" (*Horn. 1, PG 98, 344*).

Thus far from creating distance between her and us, Mary's glorious state brings about a continuous and caring closeness. She knows everything that happens in our life and supports us with maternal love in life's trials.

*from John Paul II, General Audience,
July 23, 1997*

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VOICE OF THE SAINTS

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you. What joy could surpass this, O Virgin Mother? What grace can excel that which God has granted to you alone? What could be imagined more

dazzling or more delightful? Before the miracle we witness in you, all else pales; all else is inferior when compared with the grace you have been given. All else, even what is most desirable, must take second place and enjoy a lesser importance.

The Lord is with you. Who would dare challenge you? You are God's mother; who would not immediately defer to you and be glad to accord you a greater primacy and honor? For this reason, when I look upon the privilege you have above all creatures, I extol you with the highest praise: *Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you.* On your account joy has not only graced men, but is also granted to the powers of heaven.

Truly, you are blessed among women, because, though a woman by nature, you will become, in reality, God's mother. If he whom you are to bear is truly God made flesh, then

rightly do we call you God's mother.
For you have truly given birth to
God.

*from St. Sophronius of Jerusalem,
Homily on the Annunciation (7th c.)*

Oh, our most sweet Lady and Mother,
thou hast already left the earth, and
hast reached the kingdom, where
thou sittest as queen over all the
choirs of angels, as the holy Church
sings: "She was exalted about the
choirs of angels in the celestial
kingdoms": *Exaltata est super chorus
angelorum ad caelestia regna.*

We know that we sinners are not
worthy of having thee with us in the
valley of darkness. But we know also,
that thou in thy grandeur hast never
forgotten us in our misery, and by
being exalted to such glory hast
never lost compassion for us poor

children of Adam, but rather that it is increased in thee. From the high throne then, where thou dost reign, turn, oh Mary, even upon us, thy pitying eyes, and take compassion upon us.

from St. Alphonsus Ligouri, "The Glories of Mary" (18th c.)

"You are all fair, and without blemish. You are a garden enclosed, my sister, my Bride, an enclosed garden, a sealed fountain. *Veni: coronaberis*. Come: you shall be crowned" (Song of Songs 4:7, 12 and 8).

If you and I had been able, we too would have made her Queen and Lady of all creation.

"A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman with a crown of twelve stars

upon her head, adorned with the sun, and the moon at her feet" (Rev 12:1). Mary, Virgin without stain, has made up for the fall of Eve: and she has crushed the head of hell's serpent with her immaculate heel. Daughter of God, Mother of God, Spouse of God.

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit crown her as the rightful Empress of the Universe.

And the Angels pay her homage as her subjects...and the patriarchs and the prophets and the Apostles...and the martyrs and the confessors and the virgins and all the saints...and all sinners and you and I.

from St. Josemaria, Holy Rosary, Fifth Glorious Mystery

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VOICE OF THE POETS

*"Factum est silentium in coelo quasi
media hora" (Rev 8:1)*

There was silence in heaven, as if for
half an hour--

Isaiah's coals of wonder sealed the
lips

Of Seraph, Principality and Power,
Of all the nine angelic fellowships.

The archangels, those sheer
intelligences,

Were silent, with their eyes on
heaven's door.

(So must our fancy dower them with
senses,

Make them incarnate in a metaphor.)

There was silence in heaven as Mary
entered in,

For even Gabriel had not foreseen

The glory of a soul immune from sin
Throned in the body of the angels'
Queen.

Blessed be God and Mary in whose
womb

Was woven God's incredible disguise.

She gave our Lord his Body. In the
tomb

He gave her hers again and bade her
rise.

Bright from death's slumber she
arose, the flush

Of a chaste joy illumining her cheeks;

Among the motherless in heaven
there was a hush

To hear the way a mother laughs and
speaks.

Eye had not seen, nor ear of angel
heard,

Nor heart conceived--until our Lady's
death--

What God for those that love Him
had prepared

When heaven's synonym was
Nazareth!

Her beauty opened slowly like a
flower,

Beauty to them eternally
bequeathed.

There was silence in heaven; as if for
half an hour

No angel breathed.

Alfred Barrett (1906-1985)

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