



The Cathedral of  
**ST. EUGENE**

2323 Montgomery Drive  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
(707) 542-6984

### PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Frank Epperson, Rector  
Rev. Alan Acevedo, Parochial Vicar  
Rev. Jeffrey Keyes, In Residence  
Deacon Mike Heinzelman  
Deacon Gary Moore  
Deacon Russ Bowden

### TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Email Comments/Suggestions to:  
[cathedralresponse@gmail.com](mailto:cathedralresponse@gmail.com)

Parish Office Phone	542-6984
Parish Office Fax	542-1621
Religious Education	326-3408
Finance Council – Marty McCormick	526-1700
Choir Directress – Pam Zieminski	578-8848
School Office – Sharon Jeffrey	545-7252
Preschool Office – Sharry Caesare	528-9133
Homeschool Academy– Jessica Warner	206-5579

### PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Entrance is located at SW corner of Rectory

### WEBSITES

Parish: [www.steugenes.com](http://www.steugenes.com)  
School: [www.steugenesch.org](http://www.steugenesch.org)

### REGISTRATION IN THE PARISH

Our warmest welcome to all who worship in our community. If you are not registered in the parish, please complete a registration card. Cards are available at church entrances or at the parish office.

### MARRIAGES & BAPTISMS

Please contact the office at least 12 months in advance for weddings and 3 months in advance for baptisms. Check the parish website for more information.

### ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the parish office when a parishioner is home bound or hospitalized to arrange for Holy Communion and Anointing of the Sick.



### MASS TIMES

Daily Mass: 6:45 and 8:00 a.m.  
Saturday: 8:00a.m; 4:30 p.m. & Sp.6:30 p. m.  
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.  
12:00 noon and 5:30 p.m.  
Tuesday Latin Mass: 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday Latin Mass: 1:30 p.m.

### CONFESSIONS

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Saturday or by appointment

### PERPETUAL ADORATION

**Perpetual Adoration** is in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To sign up for your hour with our Lord, call Annette (English) at: 542-3635 or Maria Vega (Spanish) at: 710-5094

**Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament** is held in the chapel every First Friday following 8:00 a.m. Mass. *During this time of Covid-19, Benediction is not being held.*

### DEVOTIONS

**Recitation of the Rosary** is Monday – Saturday at 7:30 a.m. in the Cathedral

**Chaplet of Divine Mercy** is Saturday after the 8:00 a.m. Mass in the Cathedral

### CATHEDRAL SHOPS

**Cathedral Thrift Shop** Hours: Tues & Wed. 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

**Cathedral Books & Gifts** Hours: Wed-Sat 8:30-4:30 & Sun 8:30-1:30, Closed Mon/Tues - Phone: 542-0250

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT – DECEMBER 19, 2021

### PARISH CALENDAR

#### SUNDAY DECEMBER 19

Masses – Cathedral – 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00, 1:30 pm (Latin) & 5:30 pm  
RCIA & RCIF – Becker Center and School -10:30 am

#### MONDAY DECEMBER 20

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

#### TUESDAY DECEMBER 21

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am  
Women of the Word – PLC (Hope Rm) – 9:30 am  
PSR – School – 3:45 pm  
Latin Mass – Cathedral – 5:30 pm

#### WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 22

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am  
School Mass – Cathedral – 9:20 am  
Parish Penance Service – Cathedral – 7:00

#### THURSDAY DECEMBER 23

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

#### FRIDAY DECEMBER 24

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am  
Decorating the Cathedral – 8:45 am  
Christmas Carols with Choir – Cathedral – 8:30pm & 11:30 p.m.

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#### Christmas Eve Masses:

4:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m. (Spanish), 9:00 p.m. (Latin), 12:00 Midnight Mass with Bishop Vasa

#### SATURDAY DECEMBER 25 – CHRISTMAS

#### Christmas Day Masses:

7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. with Bishop Vasa, 12:00 noon, 1:30 (Latin)

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Sunday Vigil Masses (for December 26):

4:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. (Spanish)

#### ~JOB OPENING~

Cardinal Newman High School is looking for a Campus Ministry Coordinator to work closely with the Chaplain in organizing faith-based programs and activities throughout the school year. Especially noteworthy are the annual student retreats, monthly school-wide Masses, and various activities around the liturgical calendar. If Please apply at <https://www.edjoin.org/Home/DistrictJobPosting/1506169>. For more information, please contact Fr. Plass at [frplass@cardinalnewman.org](mailto:frplass@cardinalnewman.org).

### Hearing Aid Users, Switch to T-Coil

#### ADMINISTRATION

#### For the Week of: 12/05/21

Sunday Donations Received:	\$15,310.
Collection Revenue Received for: No Second Collection	N/A

#### ~CATHEDRAL BOOKS & GIFTS~

December is the month of the Immaculate Conception and the Nativity of the Lord. It is also the month in which we celebrate the Feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In honor of this day, everything in the store related to Our Lady of Guadalupe will be 25% off. The shop hours are: Wed-Sat from 8:30 am-4:30 pm & Sun 8:30 am-1:30 pm. We are closed Mon./Tues. Call us at 542-0250.

#### ~LOOKING FOR LECTORS~

We are in need of Lectors who can read at our Sunday Masses, most particularly, the 5:30 p.m. Mass. If you feel called to this ministry, please contact Tony Nelson at: [opsmanager@steugenes.com](mailto:opsmanager@steugenes.com) for information about signing up and undergoing a brief training session.

#### ~KRINGLES CHRISTMAS TREE REBATES~

Buy your tree at Kringle's Korner Christmas Trees at the Luther Burbank Center and earn a 15% rebate for St. Eugene's. To get the 15% rebate, just tell your sales clerk that you are from St. Eugene's and want to participate in the rebate program. The parish uses the rebates to help offset the cost of church Christmas greenery.

#### ~TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM~

The Second Collection this weekend, December 18 & 19, will be for our Tuition Assistance Program. On Christmas Eve/Day our Second Collection will be for the Becker Ctr. Upgrades.

#### ~BECKER CENTER UPGRADES~

Recently, we were notified by the County Health Department that the flooring in the kitchen of the Msgr. Becker Center needs to be replaced. The Finance Council, as well as the Parish Council, have also recommended that we do much needed upgrades to the kitchen and bathrooms, for they are also in poor condition. To take care of all of these upgrades, we will need to raise approximately \$100,000 (the kitchen floor alone will cost upwards of \$20,000.) The Becker Center is used for a multitude of parish activities. For example: school lunches, fundraisers and social activities for the Knights of Columbus, the Italian Catholic Federation, ceremonies, etc. As your pastor, I am asking for your consideration in making a year-end, tax deductible donation to help the parish complete this work. Thank you so much for your prayerful consideration of this endeavor!  
– Fr. Epperson

## MASS INTENTIONS

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>December 18</b>
5:00 am	TBA
8:00 am	McShane & Stronge Families, living & deceased
4:30 pm	Meghan McCurry, living
6:30 (Sp)	Pablo Fernandez, deceased
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>December 19</b>
7:30 am	Luigi Fabiano, deceased
9:00 am	George Skikos, deceased
10:30 am	Alaee Pennette, living
12:00 pm	People of St. Eugene's
1:30 pm (EF)	Julie A. Tomlinson, deceased
5:30 pm	Maureen Ann Flanagan, living
6:00 pm (Newman Ctr.)	Gregory Ivovic, deceased
<b>Monday</b>	<b>December 20</b>
6:45 am	Ruiz Family, living
8:00 am	George Skikos, deceased
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>December 21</b>
6:45 am	Paul Wallace, deceased
8:00 am	George Skikos, deceased
5:30 pm (EF)	Goretti Sanchez-Barba, living
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>December 22</b>
6:45 am	Jaime Jauregui, living
8:00 am	George Skikos, deceased
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>December 23</b>
6:45 am	George Skikos, deceased
8:00 am	Carlos Sarmiento, 3rd, living
<b>Friday</b>	<b>December 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE</b>
6:45 am	Leo Pimentel, deceased
8:00 am	George Skikos, deceased
<b>4:30 pm</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>6:30 pm (Sp.)</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>9:00 pm (Latin)</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>12:00 Midnight</b>	Bishop's Intention
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>December 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY</b>
<b>7:30 am</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>9:00 am</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>10:30 am</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>12:00 noon</b>	Priest's Intention
<b>1:30 pm (Latin)</b>	Priest's Intention
4:30 pm	Monalisa Douglas, living
6:30 pm	Mayra, Martin & Alejandra Gomez, living

## SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

### ~PARISH PENANCE SERVICE~

Prepare for Christmas by coming to our Parish Penance (Confession) Service at 7:00 p.m., this Wednesday, December 22nd, in the Cathedral. Individual Confessions will be heard at this time. This will be your last chance to have your confession heard before Christmas, as there will be no Confession scheduled for this Saturday.

### ~CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE~

For those of you who did not receive our Christmas Mass schedule in the mail, please see the **schedule of our Christmas Masses in our Parish Calendar Section** of this bulletin. Please note that our last Christmas Mass on Saturday, December 25th, will be the 1:30 p.m. Latin Mass. To fulfill your Christmas Obligation, you will need to go to Mass either in the afternoon/evening of Friday, December 24th, Christmas Eve, or during the Daytime on Christmas Day. The two Masses held on Saturday afternoon/evening at 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. fulfill your *Sunday Obligation* for December 26th, Feast of the Holy Family.

### ~BIBLE STUDY~

We will be starting an 8-week Bible study beginning on Wednesday, January 5th. The study will focus on how fourteen narrative books of the Bible tell the complete story from Adam and Eve to Christ and the Church. *Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible* will help you discover the story of salvation history and understand how you fit into God's plan. The class will meet every Wednesday at 6:00 pm in the Hope Room (upstairs) of the Parish Life Center (PLC). All students are required to purchase a study guide at a cost of \$16.95 due by check on the first day of class. Please contact Steve for more information or to reserve a seat in the class. 707-292-0054.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITY

### ~EPIPHANY BREAKFAST~

Save the Date for the Knights of Columbus annual Epiphany Fundraiser Breakfast that will take place on Sunday, January 2, 2022, in the Becker Center, from 8am till noon. Menu includes pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, coffee, hot chocolate & orange juice. Kids can whack the piñata at 10:15 and 11:45am. Please join us!

## IN NEED OF PRAYER

### ~PLEASE PRAY FOR~

Those who are ill need your support and prayers: Tristan Humble, Samuel Agius, Sandy Torti Wilcox, Marjorie Miles, Amelia Lansangan, Gail Brown, Leo Del Santo, Emeline Jane Smith, Rosalind Britto, Ken Davis, Rita Wyatt, Karen Mills, Eileen Carol, Nancy Amador, Patrick Welter, Cristeta Marentes, Jesus Navarro, Michael Boland, Stephen Warner, Thomas Patrick, Aida Catapang, Bob Goldman, Pat Davenport, Joan Cosgrove, Paulita Castro, Jean L. Alfano, Theresa Pham, Rainey Olson, Michele Otten, Pauline Goslovich, Mary Gonzales and Nick Sidjakov.

# MY CATHOLIC FAITH

## **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

### **~FROM THE PASTOR~**

We have less than one week to go before our true celebration will begin! Christmas Day, the Nativity of the Lord, is the most joyous day of the year for us all. As this is the last Sunday before that joyous day, let us take a look at our readings and what they tell us in a homily from the monks at the Monastery of Christ in the Desert, and then we will read about the divine maternity and fullness of grace of the Blessed Mother from a selection by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (1877-1964), eminent French theologian and Thomistic scholar. Let us read on ...

## **SCRIPTURE POINTS TO JESUS**

### **~UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE~**

“Christmas is almost here. Just a few more days! The word of God is seeking to open our hearts to the great mystery that we will be celebrating in the Birth of the Savior. In order to understand a bit more about Jesus, we have to understand a lot more about all the Scriptures that went before Him and point to Him.”

### **~THE PROPHET MICAH~**

“The first reading today, from the Prophet Micah, speaks about a future ruler of Israel who will come from Bethlehem. This brought about among some of the chosen people an understanding that a Messiah, a Savior, would come from Bethlehem. Thus, when the three Magi ask, they are directed to Bethlehem. Just as today, not everyone believes in Jesus Christ or in His Church, so also in the time before Jesus, not everyone believed that the Jewish prophets had any special insight or understanding of God’s ways. Yet the whole of Jewish Scripture keeps referring to some future figure who will do great things for the people. Of course, there was the hope for a political Messiah, a Savior who would make the chosen people dominant on the earth. That is never the deepest promise of the Scriptures. Even today, secular cultures look for a messiah and a savior in the political leaders. Every election in free countries seems to be about who can give us a better deal. This is just the opposite of the promises of Scripture. The promise of Scripture proclaims this: do God’s will and you will have life eternal. Just as in the time of Jesus, so also today, most people look for something more,

something in this life, something that will give me pleasure, power and control right now. Jesus states: My kingdom is not of this world.”

### **~THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS~**

“The Letter to the Hebrews keeps this reality before us. It is not some external reality that God wants. God wants our hearts and our beings, completely. God wants us to seek Him and to do His will. Not only that, God’s plan is a plan of happiness that the world cannot offer.”

### **~THE GOSPEL OF LUKE~**

“The Gospel of Luke today presents us with Mary’s visit to Elizabeth. This is such a gentle scene and reflects the very best of humanity. One cousin going to help an older cousin as she prepares to give birth. Each will give birth to an important religious figure. It is when we serve others that we encounter Jesus Christ. It is when we give ourselves in love that we find that we are loved. It is the simple and ordinary that we find contemplative delight. Let us live these last days of Advent, waiting, serving, loving and trusting that the Lord is transforming our lives in Christ Jesus.” [www.christdesert.org/2012/12/homily-for-4th-sunday-of-advent-cycle-c-2/](http://www.christdesert.org/2012/12/homily-for-4th-sunday-of-advent-cycle-c-2/)

## **MARY’S ROLE IN REDEMPTION**

### **~MARY’S TWO PREROGATIVES~**

“The two truths which stand out like mountain peaks in the chain of revelation concerning Our Blessed Lady, and around which cluster all other truths we hold about her, are her divine maternity and her fullness of grace, both of which are affirmed in the Gospels and in the Councils of the Church. To grasp their importance it will be well to compare them, asking which of the two comes first, and gives, as it were, the true Pisgah view of all Mariology. In that spirit have theologians enquired which was the greater of Mary’s prerogatives, her divine maternity (her motherhood of God) or her fullness of grace. There have been theologians<sup>2</sup> who have declared Mary’s fullness of grace her greatest prerogative. The words spoken to Jesus by a certain woman as He passed in the midst of the people, and His answer, have led them to adopt this position: “Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the paps that gave thee suck. But He said: Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God

and keep it." (*Luke* 11: 27–28). In their view the Saviour's answer implies that the fullness of grace and of charity which was the principle of Mary's supernatural and meritorious acts was superior to her divine maternity, a privilege in itself of the corporeal order only."

**~MARY'S FIAT VS. ZACHARY'S DISBELIEF~**

"According to many other theologians the reason given just now is not conclusive. Their arguments are many. They say that the woman in question did not speak precisely of the divine maternity: she thought of Jesus less as God than as a prophet whose words were heard eagerly, who was admired and acclaimed, and she was thinking therefore of a natural motherhood according to flesh and blood: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps that gave thee suck." She did not speak of the divine maternity as of something which included a supernatural and meritorious consent to the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation. That was why Our Blessed Lord answered as He did: "Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." For it was precisely by hearing the word of God and believing in it that Mary became Mother of the Saviour. She said her fiat generously and with perfect conformity of will to God's good pleasure and all it involved for her, and she kept the divine words in her heart from the time of the Annunciation onwards. Elisabeth, for her part, expressed this when she said: "Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished which were spoken to thee by the Lord" (*Luke* 1:45). What a contrast with Zachary who was struck dumb for not having believed the words of the Angel Gabriel: "And behold thou shalt be dumb . . . because thou hast not believed my words." (*Luke* 1:20).

**~WHICH IS THE HIGHER PREROGATIVE?~**

"Nothing said so far, therefore, is sufficient to solve the problem: which was the greater, the divine maternity as realized in Mary or her fullness of grace and charity? We must search deeper for a solution. To make the terms of the problem still more precise, it should be noted that the maternity proper to a creature endowed with reason is not the maternity according to flesh and blood which is found in the animal kingdom, but something which demands by its very nature a free consent given by the light of right reason to an act which is under the control of the will and is subject to the moral laws governing the married state: failing this, the maternity of a

rational being is simply vicious. But the maternity of Mary was more than rational. It was divine. Hence her consent needed to be not free only, but supernatural and meritorious: and the intention of divine providence was that in default of this consent the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation would not have taken place—she gave her consent, St. Thomas says, in the name of mankind" (*Ilia*, q. 30, a. 2).

**~THE HIGHER OF THE TWO PREROGATIVES~**

"Hence the maternity we are discussing is not one which is merely of flesh and blood, but one which by its nature included a supernatural consent to the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation which was about to be realized, and to all the suffering it involved according to the messianic prophecies—especially those of *Isaias*—all of which Mary knew so well. There can, in consequence, be no question of any divine maternity for Mary except a worthy one: in the designs of God she was to be a worthy Mother of the Redeemer, united perfectly in will to her Son. Tradition supports this by saying that her conceiving was twofold, in body and in soul: in body, for Jesus is flesh of her flesh, the flame of His human life having been lit in the womb of the Virgin by the most pure operation of the Holy Ghost: in soul, for Mary's express consent was needed before the Word assumed our nature in her. To the problem so stated the great majority of theologians answer that tradition teaches that the divine maternity, defined in the Council of Ephesus, is higher than the fullness of grace, and that Mary's most glorious title is that of Mother of God." Excerpted from: <https://www.ecatholic2000.com/lagrange/saviour/mother.shtml>

**~SIMILARITIES~**

*Similarities between today's Gospel and the ascent of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:1-15). 1. As the ark is brought to Jerusalem, King David is overcome with awe saying, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (v. 9) 2. The ark remains three months in the hill country near Jerusalem, bringing great blessings to the house of Obed-edom. (v.11) 3. King David leaps for joy -- dancing before the ark. (v. 13) (Tim Staples, All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed) In today's Gospel, Elizabeth says to Mary, "Who am I that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" She tells how the babe (John the Baptist) leaped in her womb as she became filled with the Holy Spirit. Finally Mary remains three months with her kinswoman before returning to her home. This Sunday, so close to Christmas, the Church invites us to focus our attention on Mary, round-wombed because of the God-child. [www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2003-12-21](http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2003-12-21)*

**MI FE CATOLICA**

~ DEL PASTOR ~

¡Tenemos menos de una semana antes de que comience nuestra verdadera celebración! El día de Navidad, la Natividad del Señor, es el día más alegre del año para todos nosotros. Como este es el último domingo antes de ese día alegre, echemos un vistazo a nuestras lecturas y lo que nos dicen en una homilía de los monjes en el Monasterio de Cristo en el Desierto, y luego leeremos sobre la maternidad y plenitud divina de la gracia de la Santísima Madre de una selección del P. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (1877-1964), eminente teólogo francés y erudito tomista. Sigamos leyendo ...

**LAS ESCRITURAS SEÑALAN A JESÚS**

~ ENTENDIENDO LAS ESCRITURAS ~

“La Navidad ya casi está aquí. ¡Solo unos días más! La palabra de Dios busca abrir nuestro corazón al gran misterio que estaremos celebrando en el Nacimiento del Salvador. Para entender un poco más acerca de Jesús, tenemos que entender mucho más acerca de todas las Escrituras que le precedieron y señalarlo”.

~ EL PROFETA MIQUEAS ~

“La primera lectura de hoy, del profeta Miqueas, habla sobre un futuro gobernante de Israel que vendrá de Belén. Esto hizo que algunos de los elegidos entendieran que un Mesías, un Salvador, vendría de Belén. Por lo tanto, cuando los tres magos preguntan, se dirigen a Belén. Así como hoy, no todo el mundo cree en Jesucristo o en Su Iglesia, así también en el tiempo antes de Jesús, no todo el mundo creía que los profetas judíos tuvieran una percepción o comprensión especial de los caminos de Dios. Sin embargo, toda la Escritura judía sigue refiriéndose a alguna figura futura que hará grandes cosas por la gente. Por supuesto, existía la esperanza de un Mesías político, un Salvador que haría que el pueblo elegido dominara la tierra. Esa nunca es la promesa más profunda de las Escrituras. Incluso hoy, las culturas seculares buscan un mesías y un salvador en los líderes políticos. Todas las elecciones en países libres parecen tener que ver con quién puede ofrecernos un mejor trato. Esto es todo lo contrario de las promesas de las Escrituras. La promesa de las Escrituras proclama esto: haz la voluntad de Dios y tendrás vida eterna. Al igual que en la época de Jesús, también hoy en día, la mayoría de la gente →

busca algo más, algo en esta vida, algo que me dará placer, poder y control ahora mismo. Jesús dice: Mi reino no es de este mundo”.

~ LA CARTA A LOS HEBREOS ~

“La Carta a los Hebreos nos presenta esta realidad. No es una realidad externa lo que Dios quiere. Dios quiere nuestros corazones y nuestro ser, por completo. Dios quiere que lo busquemos y hagamos su voluntad. No solo eso, el plan de Dios es un plan de felicidad que el mundo no puede ofrecer”.

~ EL EVANGELIO DE LUCAS ~

“El Evangelio de Lucas de hoy nos presenta la visita de María a Isabel. Esta es una escena tan suave y refleja lo mejor de la humanidad. Una prima va a ayudar a una prima mayor mientras se prepara para dar a luz. Cada una dará a luz a una figura religiosa importante. Es cuando servimos a los demás que encontramos a Jesucristo. Es cuando nos entregamos en el amor que descubrimos que somos amados. Es lo simple y ordinario que encontramos el deleite contemplativo. Vivamos estos últimos días de Adviento, esperando, sirviendo, amando y confiando en que el Señor está transformando nuestra vida en Cristo Jesús”.

**EL PAPEL DE MARIA EN LA REDENCIÓN**

~ LAS DOS PREROGATIVAS DE MARÍA ~

“Las dos verdades que se destacan como picos de las montañas en la cadena de revelaciones acerca de Nuestra Señora, y alrededor de las cuales se agrupan todas las otras verdades que tenemos sobre ella, son su maternidad divina y su plenitud de gracia, ambas afirmadas en los Evangelios y en los Concilios de la Iglesia. Para comprender su importancia, será bueno compararlos, preguntando cuál de los dos viene primero, y da, por así decirlo, la verdadera visión de toda la mariología. Con ese espíritu, los teólogos han preguntado cuál era la mayor de las prerrogativas de María, su maternidad divina (su maternidad de Dios) o su plenitud de gracia. Ha habido teólogos que han declarado la plenitud de gracia de María como su mayor prerrogativa. Las palabras de una mujer que le dijo a Jesús cuando pasaba en medio del pueblo, y su respuesta, los han llevado a adoptar esta posición: “Bienaventurado el vientre que te dio a luz, y las papillas que te dieron alimento. Pero Él dijo: Sí, más bien, bienaventurados los que oyen la palabra de Dios

y la guardan". (Lucas 11: 27-28). En su opinión, la respuesta del Salvador implica que la plenitud de la gracia y de la caridad, que fue el principio de los actos sobrenaturales y meritorios de María, fue superior a su maternidad divina, un privilegio en sí mismo del orden corporal únicamente".

#### ~FIAT DE MARIA VS. LA INCREDELIDAD DE ZACARIAS~

"Según muchos otros teólogos, la razón dada ahora no es concluyente. Sus argumentos son muchos. Dicen que la mujer en cuestión no hablaba precisamente de la maternidad divina: pensaba en Jesús menos como Dios que como un profeta cuyas palabras se escuchaban con entusiasmo, que era admirado y aclamado, y por eso pensaba en una maternidad natural según carne y sangre: "Bienaventurado el vientre que te dio a luz y las papilas que te dieron alimento". No hablaba de la maternidad divina como de algo que incluyera un consentimiento sobrenatural y meritorio al misterio de la Encarnación redentora. Por eso Nuestro Bendito Señor respondió como lo hizo: "Más bien, bienaventurados los que oyen la palabra de Dios y la guardan". Porque fue precisamente escuchando la palabra de Dios y creyendo en ella que María se convirtió en Madre del Salvador. Dijo su fiat con generosidad y con perfecta conformidad de voluntad con el beneplácito de Dios y todo lo que ello implicaba para ella, y guardó las palabras divinas en su corazón desde el momento de la Anunciación en adelante. Elisabeth, por su parte, expresó esto cuando dijo: "Bienaventurada la que has creído, porque se cumplirán las cosas que te fueron dichas por el Señor" (Lucas 1:45). Qué contraste con Zacarías, que se quedó mudo por no haber creído las palabras del ángel Gabriel: "Y he aquí, serás mudo. . . porque no has creído a mis palabras". (Lucas 1:20).

#### ~¿CUÁL ES EL PREROGATIVO MÁS ALTO?~

"Nada de lo dicho hasta ahora, por tanto, es suficiente para resolver el problema: ¿cuál fue mayor, la maternidad divina realizada en María o su plenitud de gracia y caridad? Debemos buscar más profundamente una solución. Para precisar aún más los términos del problema, conviene señalar que la maternidad propia de una criatura dotada de razón no es la maternidad de carne y hueso que se encuentra en el reino animal, sino algo que exige por su propia naturaleza un consentimiento libre dado a la luz de la razón correcta a un acto que está bajo el control de la voluntad y está sujeto a la razón correcta a un acto que está bajo el control de la voluntad y está sujeto

a las leyes morales que gobiernan el estado matrimonial: en su defecto, la maternidad de un ser racional es simplemente viciosa. Pero la maternidad de María fue más que racional. Fue divina. Por lo tanto, su consentimiento tenía que ser no solo libre, sino sobrenatural y meritoria: y la intención de la divina providencia era que a falta de este consentimiento, el misterio de la Encarnación redentora no habría tenido lugar; ella dio su consentimiento, dice Santo Tomás, en nombre de la humanidad" (Illa, q. 30, a. 2).

#### ~LA MAS ALTA DE LAS DOS PREROGATIVAS~

Por tanto, la maternidad de la que hablamos no es meramente de carne y hueso, sino que por su naturaleza incluía un consentimiento sobrenatural al misterio de la Encarnación redentora que estaba a punto de realizarse, y a todos los sufrimientos que suponía según a las profecías mesiánicas, especialmente las de Isaías, todas las cuales María conocía tan bien. En consecuencia, no puede haber ninguna maternidad divina para María que no sea digna: en los designios de Dios ella debía ser una Madre digna del Redentor, unida perfectamente en la voluntad de su Hijo. La tradición lo apoya diciendo que su concepción fue doble, en cuerpo y en alma: en cuerpo, porque Jesús es carne de su carne, habiendo sido encendida la llama de su vida humana en el seno de la Virgen por la operación más pura del Espíritu Santo: en el alma, pues se necesitaba el consentimiento expreso de María antes de que el Verbo asumiera nuestra naturaleza en ella. Al problema así planteado, la gran mayoría de teólogos responde que la tradición enseña que la maternidad divina, definida en el Concilio de Éfeso, es superior a la plenitud de la gracia, y que el título más glorioso de María es el de Madre de Dios".

#### ~SIMILITUDES~

*Similitudes entre el Evangelio de hoy y el ascenso del arca a Jerusalén (2 Sam 6:1-15). 1. Cuando el arca es llevada a Jerusalén, el rey David se asombra y dice: "¿Cómo puede venir a mí el arca del Señor?" (v. 9) 2. El arca permanece tres meses en la región montañosa cerca de Jerusalén, trayendo grandes bendiciones a la casa de Obed-edom. (v.11) 3. El rey David salta de gozo - bailando delante del arca. (v. 13) (Todas las generaciones me llamarán bienaventurada) En el evangelio de hoy, Isabel le dice a María: "¿Quién soy yo para que la Madre de mi Señor venga a mí?" Ella cuenta cómo el bebé (Juan el Bautista) saltó en su vientre cuando se llenó del Espíritu Santo. Finalmente, María permanece tres meses con su pariente antes de regresar a su casa. Este Domingo, tan cerca de la Navidad, la Iglesia nos invita a centrar nuestra atención en María, de vientre redondo a causa del Dios-Niño.*

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