Agenda

May 2, 2020

Welcome

Franciscan Reading from

**FRANCISCAN JOURNEY Additional Readings – Chapter 17 p. 2**

With the conception of Mary, the Great Plan, the book before Genesis, begins. A human person is conceived in *full* humanity. Mary is who we really are: freely, fully soul and body, her humanity *for* Christ, *in* Christ, *of* Christ. It would be better to give a different name to this doctrine. It is the doctrine of Mary-who-was-conceived-without-sin. But why define someone by what they are *not*? This could be named the doctrine of Mary, Fully Human. For in God’s logic, that is what all of us are to be, ultimately, and what we are in God’s design.

Was she conceived without sin? I saw this answer in the crude lettering on a shrine at the friary of Belmonte in Northern Italy. Mary is painted there, Scotus on the left beside her crude image and Francis on the right. Above her, the words badly lettered, is the Scotist’s explanation of God’s reasons – *Potuit, Decuit, ergo Fecit*: it could be done, it should be done, so God did it.’ A traditional hymn, sung on

Saturday evenings in Franciscan houses around the world, has brought this Scotistic message home over the centuries:

*Tota pulchra es, Mari*a Mary, you are the most beautiful  
*et macula originalis Non est in te.* No stain from the beginning is in you.  
*Tu, Gloria Ierusalem!* You, glory of Jerusalem!  
*Tu, laetitia Israel!* You, Israel’s joy!  
*Tu, honorificentia populi nostri!* You, our people’s pride!  
*Tu, advocata peccatorum!* You, the sinners’ advocate!  
*Oh, Maria! Oh, Maria!* Oh, Mary! Oh, Mary!  
*Virgo prudentissima,* Wise virgin,  
*Mater clementissima,* Merciful mother,  
*Ora pro nobis,* Pray for us,  
*Intercede pro nobis,* Intercede for us,  
*Ad Dominum Jesum Christum.* With the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Amen !

Opening from Ritual pg. 35-36

Opening Prayer: Litany to Mary, Mother of Life:

Let us now move into our Formation:

Closing: **Intercession Let us offer up our personal intentions and conclude with this:**

May our Blessed Mother draw women facing unexpected or challenging pregnancies close to her heart.

**Prayers**

*Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be*

**Reflection**

In the Blessed Virgin Mary, we are given the model of motherhood. When the angel Gabriel appeared to her, Mary accepted the invitation to be the mother of Jesus, who is “the way and the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6). Her unexpected pregnancy presented many challenges. Yet while the path laid before her was not easy, Mary chose to give of herself in sacrificial love.

Mothers with unexpected or challenging pregnancies can likely relate to the experience of our Blessed Mother, as they, too, often face difficulties in answering God’s call to welcome new life. Now, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, even more challenges arise.

Especially during this and all times of difficulty and anxiety, we pray that Our Lady will draw pregnant mothers close to her heart and, through her intercession, bring comfort, encouragement, and joyful hope. In bravely living out their vocation, mothers reflect the sacrificial love of Christ on a daily basis. With the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Life as our guide, may we work to support all mothers, especially those who are most in need.

Amen !

Closing from Ritual. Pg. 36-37