

## **“The Holy Family Flees to Egypt”** (Mary of Agreda)

609. On the fifth day of the novena at the Temple in Jerusalem after the presentation and purification, while the heavenly Lady was in the temple with the Infant on Her arms, God revealed Himself to Her. She was wholly raised and filled by the Spirit. It is true, that this had been done to Her before; but as God's power and treasures are infinite, He never gives so much as not to be able to give still more to His people. In this vision the Most High visited anew His only Spouse, wishing to prepare Her for the labors, that were awaiting Her. Speaking to Her, He comforted Her saying; “My Spouse and My Dove, Your wishes and intentions are pleasing in My eyes and I delight in them always. But You will not finish the nine days devotion, which You have begun. I have in store for You other exercises of Your love. In order to save the life of Your Son You must flee. You must leave Your home and Your country, fly with Him and Your spouse Joseph into Egypt. You are to remain until I shall ordain otherwise. Herod is seeking the life of the Child. The journey is long, most laborious and most fatiguing. You shall suffer it all for My sake; for I am, and always will be, with You.

610. The most prudent and obedient Mother advanced no objection or doubt. She said: “My Lord and Master, behold Your servant with a heart prepared to die for Your love if necessary. Over look My

lack of merit and gratitude and I ask You not to permit My Son and Lord to suffer. You turn all pains and labor upon Me, who am obliged to suffer them.” The Lord referred Her to Saint Joseph, bidding Her to follow His directions in all things concerning the journey. She issued from Her vision, which She had enjoyed without losing the use of Her exterior senses and while holding in Her arms the Infant Jesus. She had been raised up in this vision only as to the superior part of Her soul. From it flowed other gifts, which spiritualized Her senses and testified to Her that Her soul was living more in its love than in the earthly habitation of Her body.

611. On account of the incomparable love, which the Queen bore toward Her most holy Son, Her motherly and compassionate Heart was somewhat sad at the thought of the labors which She foresaw in the vision impending upon the infant God. Shedding many tears, She left the temple to go to Her lodging-place, without revealing to Her spouse the cause of Her sorrow. Saint Joseph therefore thought that She grieved on account of the prophecy of Simeon. As the most faithful Joseph loved Her so much, he was troubled to see his Spouse so tearful and afflicted, and that She should not reveal to him the cause of this new affliction. This disturbance of his soul was one of the reasons why the holy Angels spoke to him in sleep when

speaking of the pregnancy of the Queen. While saint Joseph was asleep, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and spoke to him as recorded by saint Matthew:

Mt 2:13 Now when they (Three wise men.) had departed, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the Child and His Mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him."

2:14 And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt,

2:15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son."

Immediately the holy spouse arose full of sorrow. He went to Holy Mary and said: "My Lady, God wills that we should be afflicted; for His holy Angel has announced to me the pleasure and the decree of the Almighty that we arise and fly with the Child into Egypt. Herod is seeking to take away His life. Encourage Yourself, My Lady, to bear the labors of this journey and tell me what I can do for Your comfort, since I hold my life and being at the service of Your Child and of You."

612. "My husband and My master," answered the Queen, "if we have received from the hands of the Most High such great blessings of grace, it is meet that we joyfully accept temporal afflictions. We bear with us the Creator of heaven and earth. He has placed us so near to Him, what arms shall be able to harm us, even if it be the arm of Herod?

Wherever we carry with us all our highest treasure of heaven, our Lord, our guide and true light, there can be no desert; but He is our rest, our portion, and our country. All these goods we possess in having His company; let us proceed to fulfill His will." Then most holy Mary and Joseph approached the crib where the Infant Jesus lay; and where He, not by chance, slept at that time. The heavenly Mother uncovered Him without awakening Him; for He awaited those tender and sorrowful words of his Beloved: "Fly away, O My Beloved, and be like the gazelle and the young stag upon the mountains of aromatic spices. Come, My beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us ride in the villages."

Sg 8:14 Make haste, My Beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag upon the mountains of spices.



Sg 8:11 Come, My beloved, let us go forth into the fields, and lodge in the villages;

And the tender Mother added: "Sweetest Love, meekest Lamb, Your power is not limited by that of earthly kings; but You wish in Your exalted wisdom, to hide it for love of men. Who among mortals can think of taking away Your life, O My

God? Is it not in Your power to destroy all life? Since You give life to all, why should men take away Yours? Since You visited them in order to give them eternal life, why should they wish to give You death? But who shall comprehend the secrets of Your Providence?

Rom 11:34 “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”

Allow Me, then, O Lord and light of My soul, to awaken You; for when You sleep Your heart is awake.”

613. Some such sentiments were also expressed by Saint Joseph. Then the heavenly Mother, falling upon Her knees, awakened the sweetest Infant, and took Him in Her arms. Jesus, in order to move Her to greater tenderness and in order to show Himself as true man, wept a little. (O wonders of the Most High in things according to our judgments so small!) Yet He was soon again quieted; and when the most holy Mother and Saint Joseph asked His blessing *He gave it them in visible manner*. Gathering their poor clothing into a container and loading it on the beast of burden which they had brought from Nazareth, they departed shortly after midnight, and hurried without delay on their journey to Egypt.

614. I (Mary of Agreda) will here add what I have been made to understand as to the agreement between the Gospel of Luke and Mathew. All of them were wrote under guidance and light of the Holy Spirit, *each of them knew what the other three had written, and what they had omitted to say in their Gospels.*

According to God's Plan some of the events of the life of Christ were described by all four of the Evangelists, while again some other things mentioned by one were omitted by the others. Saint Matthew describes the adoration of the Kings and the flight into Egypt, while these events were not mentioned by saint Luke. However Luke writes about the Circumcision, Presentation and Purification, which are omitted by Matthew. Thus Saint Matthew, after referring to the departure of the Magi, immediately, without speaking of the Presentation, relates that the Angel appeared to Saint Joseph commanding him to fly into Egypt. The flight occurred after the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Thus, likewise, although Saint Luke, after describing the Presentation and Purification, immediately mentions that the holy Family lived in Nazareth, we must not conclude that that the trip to Egypt didn't happen.

615.

616. In this sweetness of God's Providence He gives sinners time, hoping for their conversions. Therefore, miracles must happen but rarely, and on special occasions for particular reasons, or when some end is to be served. *Therefore, God reserves them for the revelation of His power at certain times.* He makes Himself known as the Author of His works by bringing them into existence. Neither must we wonder that He should consent to the death of the innocent children which Herod murdered; for it would not have been to their benefit to save them through a miracle. By their death they were to gain eternal life, which vastly repays them for the loss of

their physical life. If they had been allowed to escape the sword and die a natural death, many would eventually not have been saved. The works of the Lord are just and holy in all particulars, although we do not always see the reasons why they are so. But we shall come to know them in the Lord when we shall see Him face to face.

617 & 618 See Chapter 21A

619. Our heavenly Pilgrims left Jerusalem in the silent night. Although faith and hope strengthened them (for in no other beings could these virtues be more firmly and securely established than in our Queen and Her most faithful spouse), nevertheless the Lord caused them occasion for anxiety. Their love for the Infant Jesus would naturally create in them anxiety and suffering. They didn't know what would happen during such a long journey, or when it should end, or how they would survive in Egypt. They would be strangers. How would they be able to fend off great sufferings for the baby Jesus? The hearts of these holy Parents were filled with many doubts and anxious thoughts as they quickly left Jerusalem. Their sorrow was much relieved when the ten thousand heavenly Angels again appeared to them in human forms with their former splendor and beauty. They again changed the night into the brightest day. As they set forth from Jerusalem the holy Angels humbled themselves and adored the Word of God who was in the arms of the Virgin Mother. They also encouraged Her by again offering their homage and service, stating that it was the will of the Lord that they guide and accompany Her on the journey.

620. Comforted with the Angels presence our Queen and Her spouse Joseph entered upon their journey with good heart. The heavenly Mother longed to visit again the place of the Nativity, in order to venerate the sacred cave and the crib. For that place had offered shelter and hospitality, the birth place of the Child Jesus. But the holy Angels, knowing of Her unspoken desires, said to Her: "Our Queen and Lady, Mother of our Creator, it's to our benefit to hurry on our journey without any delay. On account of the magi Kings and their failure to return to Jerusalem, Herod is looking for You. Also on account of the words spoken by the priest Simeon, and by Anne, the people now know. Some of them have begun to say that you are the Mother of the Messiah. Others that You know of Him; and others say that Your Son is a Prophet. Various rumors are also spread about concerning the visit of the Kings in Bethlehem. Of all these things Herod has been informed. Herod has commanded that You be found. A very careful and a most diligent search is being made to find You. On this account the Most High God has commanded You to fly quickly at night."

621. The Queen of heaven yielded to the words spoken by the holy Angel. She therefore venerated from afar the sacred place of the birth of God's Son. She also renewed the memory of the mysteries and the favors received. The holy Angel who is was assigned and stands guard at the sacred cave was permitted to leave the cave and met the Holy Family on their journey in visible form. This Angel adored the Christ Child who was in the arms of His Mother. The Holy Mother

was allowed to see the Angel and She spoke to Him. This caused the heavenly Lady to rejoice and be comforted. She would have also preferred to travel by way of Hebron; since it was only a short distance from Her cousin Elisabeth and her son John the Baptist. But the anxiety of Saint Joseph prevented this detour also. He said to Mary “My Lady, I think it is extremely important that We do not delay our journey even for one instant; and that we hurry as much as possible to flee from the place of danger. Therefore it will not be prudent to go to Hebron. Our enemies will find us more easily there than in any other parts of the country.” His Spouse Mary answered, “Let it be according to your pleasure, yet I wish you give Me permission to send one of these heavenly Angels to Elisabeth, in order to inform My cousin of the cause of our flight and to protect her son. The wrath of Herod is so roused that it will extend to them.”

622. The Queen of heaven knew of the Herod's plan to murder the children in Bethlehem; but prudently didn't inform Joseph.

Here I (Mary of Agreda) must marvel at the obedience and humility of most holy Mary, for She obeyed Saint Joseph but also asked permission, namely in sending an Angel to Saint Elisabeth. Although She could have sent the Angel by a mere wish, without even expressing it in words, She nevertheless preferred not to do so without permission and in obedience to Her spouse. With the permission of Saint Joseph, Mary dispatched one of the Angels of Her guard, in order to notify Saint Elisabeth.

623. The Angel, according to the order and pleasure of the Queen, proceeded to inform the fortunate and blessed Elisabeth of all these events as far as was proper. He told her that the Mother of God was fleeing the wrath of Herod to Egypt. This tyrant was now searching for the Child in order to kill Him. He warned her to see to the safety of her child John by hiding him in some place of safety. He also revealed to her other mysteries of the Word become Man according to the command of the heavenly Mother. The holy Elisabeth was filled with joy and wonder at this message, and she expressed her desire to meet and adore the Infant Jesus, and to see His Mother. The holy Angel answered that His King and Lord was passing with His Mother at a distance from Hebron and could not wait for Her visit. With these words Elisabeth gave up her request. Overflowing with tender and tearful affection, she asked the Angel to bring affectionate greetings to the Son and Mother. The Angel then returned with his message to the Queen. Saint Elisabeth immediately dispatched a servant with some gifts consisting in provisions, money and clothes. She foresaw their needs in Egypt and instructed the servant to find the Holy Family. He met them in Gaza, which lies a little less than twenty hours from Jerusalem, on the river Besor, and on the road from Israel to Egypt, not far from the Mediterranean Sea.



624. In Gaza the Holy Family remained two days, for Saint Joseph and the beast of burden which carried the Queen were worn out by the fatigue of the journey. From that place, the servant was sent back to Saint Elisabeth, taking care to caution him not to tell any one of their whereabouts. But God provided a miracle; for He took away from this man all remembrance of what Saint Joseph had charged him to conceal, so that he only remembered his message to saint Elisabeth. Most holy Mary used the presents sent by Elisabeth in giving alms to the poor. Mary was Mother of the poor and she could not bear to pass them by unassisted. Of the clothes sent to Her She made a cloak for the divine Infant, and one for Saint Joseph. The cloaks protected Them from the discomforts of the season's weather. The most prudent Virgin would not rely on miraculous assistance whenever She could provide for the daily needs using Her own labor. God's will was to subject Herself to the natural order and depend upon Her own efforts. During the two days which they spent in that city the most pure Mary, in order to enrich it with great blessings, performed some wonderful deeds. She

freed two sick persons from the danger of death and cured their ailments. She restored to another person, a crippled woman, the use of her limbs. In the souls of many, who met Her and spoke with Her, She caused divine effects of the knowledge of God and change of life. All of them felt themselves moved to praise their Creator. But neither Mary or Joseph spoke a word about their native country, or of the destination or object of their journey. No need for the public to know anything of their flight. Herod's agents might have been drawn toward them.

625. Words fail me (Mary of Agreda) to describe what I have been made to understand concerning the events during this journey of Jesus and Mary. I fall short of the reverence which such mysteries require. The arms of the most pure Mary continually served as a delightful bed for the new and real King Solomon.

Sg 3:6 What is that coming up from the wilderness, like a column of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the fragrant powders of the merchant?

3:7 Behold, it is the bed of Solomon! About it are sixty mighty men of the mighty men of Israel,

3:8 all girt with swords and expert in war, each with his sword at his thigh, against alarms by night.

As Mary penetrated into the Spirit of the most Holy Humanity of Christ, it happened sometimes that the Son and Mother interchanged sweet discussions and songs of praise in honor especially of the infinite attributes and perfections of

God. On these occasions the Son of God favored His Holy Mother with new visions of intellectual clearness, in which She perceived the unity of the Three Persons of God. Holy Mary was enlightened how the Three are from eternity, and how the Word is generated from the eternal Intellect, and the Holy Spirit is breathed forth in the operation of the Will. How all are from eternity. She also perceived how these three Persons comprehended each other by one and the same act of understanding, and how this comprehension includes the Divinity of the Word become Man, forming one Person.

626. Filled with this exalted knowledge, the great Lady allowed Her thoughts to compose new songs of praise and thanksgiving for the creation of this Sacred Humanity. The Christ Child was perfect in Soul and Body. His Soul created with infinite wisdom, gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. His Body, most pure, and in the highest possible degree well composed. She contemplated the exalted activity of all His faculties and *Mary imitated them.* The Child gave thanks for having made Her His Mother and caused Her to be conceived without sin. He chose Her out of thousands, enriched Her with all the favors and gifts of His powerful right hand as far as was possible. The Child spoke to His Mother and She responded in words which are beyond the tongue of Angels and beyond the conception of any other created being. To all this the heavenly Lady never neglected the care and comfort of Her Child, giving Him nourishment at Her Breast three times a day, tenderly

caressing Him as a Mother, above all mothers

627. At other times She said to Him: “My sweetest and most beloved Son, permit Me to speak to You and to reveal to You My desires, although You, My Lord, already know them; permit Me to be delighted in the sound of Your voice. Tell Me, life of My soul and light of My eyes, whether the labors of this journey are fatiguing You, whether the rigors of the season and of the weather cause You affliction. What I can do for Your service and for Your relief.” And the divine Infant answered: “All the labors, O Mother, and all fatigue are most light and sweet to Me, since I undergo them for the honor of My eternal Father and for the instruction and Redemption of men, especially in Your company.” The Child wept a few times, yet in the manner of a grown-up and a perfect man.

Immediately the loving Mother sought the interior cause of these tears. *She understood that they were tears of love and compassion for the salvation of men and caused by their ingratitude.* In this sorrow and weeping the sweetest Mother imitated Him. She answered His tearful complaints like a compassionate turtledove lovingly caressing and soothing Him as His affectionate Mother. She kissed Him with matchless reverence. The fortunate Joseph often witnessed these divine mysteries; and shared in some of the enlightenments, thus consoling himself for the hardships of the journey. At other times, he would speak with his Spouse as they journeyed along, asking Her frequently whether She desired any service for Herself or for the

Child, He would approach and adore the Infant, kissing His feet and asking His blessing, and sometimes taking Him in his arms. By these little offices of kindness Joseph sweetened his labors, being at the same time consoled and encouraged by his Spouse Mary. To all things, She attended with a loving heart, not being hindered by Her interior prayer, or by Her exalted and intense contemplation, from attending to the physical affairs of Jesus and Joseph. She was most perfect in all Her actions.

### **Words of enlightenment from Mother Mary.**

628. My dearest daughter, for your instruction and imitation I wish, in what you have written, that you take as an example the affectionate wonder which the divine light caused in My Soul at seeing My most holy Son subject Himself to the inhuman fury of wicked men. Such as was shown by Herod in this occasion of our flight from his wrath and afterwards by the evil servants of the high priests and officials. My understanding, by means of the most exalted inspiration, penetrated so deeply into the very essence of God in the person of the Word united to the Divinity. I knew that My most holy Son was the eternal, all-powerful, infinite Creator and Preserver of all things. That this cruel king Herod sought for the life of My Son, I was particularly struck with wonder to see the most sacred Humanity pray and asked His eternal Father to confer upon Herod a blessing. To see My Son, who had it so much in His power to punish Herod, by His prayers prevent the

full measure of punishment which Herod deserved. Although Herod's purpose to kill His Creator was stopped, yet this obstinate reprobate (Future damned) WAS visited with less punishment than would have been given to him if My holy Son had not prayed for him. All this, and whatever else is contained in this matchless mercy and kindness of Jesus, I sought to imitate. For as a Teacher He taught Me.

Mt 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

5:45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

5:47 And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

5:48 You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

When I perceive how My Son concealed His infinite power, thus a meek and humble Lamb, against the fury of ravenous wolves, My heart was overwhelmed and failed Me in the desire of loving Him, imitating and following Him in His love, charity, patience and meekness.

629. This example I place before you for your constant imitation, so that you may understand to what extremes you must be willing to bear and suffer, forgive and love all who offend you. For neither you



nor other men are innocent and without fault, and many are burdened with numerous and repeated sins. Because of this you have merited all offenses and insults. Now, if persecutions come your way take advantage of imitating Him. Why shouldn't you value them as a great blessing? Why should you not love those who give you occasion to practice this highest perfection. Why not thank the Lord for this benefit. Hold offences not as enemies but as valuable that afford you a chance to obtain what is of so much importance for your benefit? You will not be without guilt if you fall short in this matter.

### **The Journey to Egypt continued.**

630. On the third day after our Pilgrims had stayed in Gaza, they departed from that city for Egypt. Soon leaving the inhabited parts of Israel, they entered the sandy deserts on their way to Egypt. The Holy Family traveled 60 hour journey to Heliopolis, the present Cairo in Egypt. This journey through the desert consumed a number of days, for the distance they could travel each day was but short, not only on account of the laborious journey over the deep sand, but also on account of the hardships occasioned by the lack of shelter. There were many incidents on their way through this desert.

In order to understand how much Mary and Joseph and also the Infant Jesus suffered on their pilgrimage, it must be remembered that the Almighty permitted His Son, with His most holy Mother and saint Joseph, to suffer the inconveniences

and hardships naturally connected with travel through this desert. And although the heavenly Lady made no complaints, yet She suffered, which was also true of Her most faithful husband.

631. During all this journey they had no night-shelter than the sky and open air. It was in the time of winter, for this journey took place in the month of February, only six days after the Purification at the Temple in Jerusalem.

In the first night on these sandy plains they rested at the foot of a small hill, this being the only protection they could find. The Queen of heaven with the Child in her arms seated Herself on the earth, and with her husband She ate from the food They brought with them from Gaza. The Holy Mother also nursed the Infant Jesus at Her breast. In order to furnish them with some kind of shelter against the open air saint Joseph formed a tent for the divine Word and most holy Mary by means of his cloak and some sticks. During that night the ten thousand Angels who, full of marvel, assisted these earthly Pilgrims in visible human shapes, formed a guard around Their King and Queen. The great Lady perceived that Her divine Son offered up to the eternal Father the hardships and labors both of Himself and of Mary and Joseph. In these prayers and in the other acts the Queen joined Him for the greater part of the night. The divine Infant slept for a short time in Her Arms, while She continued wakeful and engaged in heavenly theological contemplations. Saint Joseph slept upon the ground, resting his head upon the chest, which

contained the clothing and other articles of their baggage.

632. On the next day they pursued their journey and their little store of fruit and bread was soon exhausted, so that they began to suffer great want and to feel the hunger. Joseph was deeply concerned. On one of the first days of their journey they ate no food until nine o'clock at night. As nature demanded water after the long walk and fatigue of travel, with no natural means in the desert, the heavenly Lady addressed Herself to the Most High in these words:

"Eternal, great and powerful God, I give You thanks and bless You for Your endless treasures. Without My merits, only on account of Your mercy You gave Me life and being and preserve Me in it, though I am but dust and a useless creature. I have not made a proper return for all these benefits. Therefore how can I ask for Myself what I cannot repay? But, My Lord and Father, look upon Your Son, the Word become Man, and grant Me what is necessary to maintain life and also that of My spouse, so that I may serve You and Your Word made flesh for the salvation of men."

633. The Most High permitted the weather to afflict them more than at other times and in addition to the sufferings caused by their fatigue and hunger. For there arose a storm of wind and rain, which harassed and blinded them by its fury. This hardship grieved still more the tender-hearted and loving Mother on account of the Child Jesus, which was not yet fifty days old. Although She tried to cover and protect Him as much as possible, yet She could not prevent Him

from feeling the harsh weather. As a consequence the Child Jesus shed tears and shivered from the cold in the same way as other children would do. Then the very concerned Mother, making use of Her power as Queen and Mistress of everything, commanded the weather not to afflict their Creator, but instead gave the Child shelter and directed the cold and wind upon Her alone. In return, the infant Jesus commanded His Angels to assist His kindest Mother and to serve Her as a shield against the harsh weather. They immediately obeyed and constructed a beautiful globe round about and over their God-Man, His Mother and Her spouse. In this they were protected and defended far better than all the wealthy and powerful of the world in their palaces and rich garments. This occurred several times during the journey through the desert.

634. Nevertheless, they were without food. But the Lord allowed them to fall into this need. The Almighty sent His Angels and They brought them delicious bread and fresh fruits. In addition a most delicious drink; all of which Angels served with their own hands. Mary, Joseph and the Angels together sang hymns of praise and thanks giving to the Lord, who gives food to all creatures at opportune times, in order that the poor may eat and be filled. This desert was the same wilderness in which Elijah, who was fleeing from Jezebel, was given the hearth cake, brought to him by the Angel in order that he might travel to Horeb Mount.

<sup>1 Kg 19:1</sup> Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done—that he had put all the prophets to the sword.

<sup>19:2</sup> Jezebel then sent a messenger to Elijah and said, “May the gods do thus and so to me if by this time tomorrow I have not done with your life what was done to each of them.”

<sup>19:3</sup> Elijah was afraid and fled for his life, going to Beer-sheba of Judah. He left his servant there

<sup>19:4</sup> and went a day’s journey into the desert, until he came to a broom tree and sat beneath it. He prayed for death: “This is enough, O LORD! Take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”

<sup>19:5</sup> He lay down and fell asleep under the broom tree, but then an Angel touched him and ordered him to get up and eat.

<sup>19:6</sup> He looked and there at his head was a hearth cake and a jug of water. After he ate and drank, he lay down again,

<sup>19:7</sup> but the Angel of the LORD came back a second time, touched him, and ordered, “Get up and eat, else the journey will be too long for you!”

<sup>19:8</sup> He got up, ate and drank; then strengthened by that food, he walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb.

Yet neither this bread, nor the bread and meat, the ravens had miraculously brought Elijah every morning and evening at the torrent of Cherith, nor the manna which fell from heaven for the Israelites couldn’t compare to this relief given to the Holy Parents of Jesus.

<sup>1 Kgs 17:1</sup> Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the LORD the God of Israel lives, before

whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.”

<sup>17:2</sup> And the word of the LORD came to him,

<sup>17:3</sup> “Depart from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, that is east of the Jordan.

<sup>17:4</sup> You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.”

<sup>17:5</sup> So he went and did according to the word of the LORD; he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan.

<sup>17:6</sup> And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook.

<sup>17:7</sup> And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

For these favors were not given to a prophet, or upon an ungrateful and unthinking people; but they were intended for the nourishment and protection of His true Mother. But if this food was worthy of the excellence of those who were invited, so was also the thanksgiving and gratitude from the Holy Family.

635. Let the poor rejoice in this example, let the hungry take new courage, let none complain of divine Providence no matter how afflicted and needy they may find themselves to be. When has the Lord ever failed him who hoped in his assistance? When has He ever turned away His face from His afflicted and needy children? We are brothers of His only Son who became Man. We are children and heirs of His blessings, and also children of His kindest Mother.

Why, then, children of God and of this most holy Mother, do you continue to distrust such Parents in your poverty? Why do you deprive them of this honor, and yourselves of the privilege of being assisted and sustained by Them? Come, come to Them with humble confidence, so that They may look upon you with the eyes of Parents and listen to your crying needs. The arms of this Lady are stretched out toward the poor and Her hands opened for the needy. And you, rich of this world, why will you trust so much in your uncertain riches? By your love for wealth you fail to conduct yourselves as children of God or of His Mother. For legitimate children trust in the care and love of their Parents, and dislike trusting in others, who are not only strangers but enemies. These truths are revealed to me and charity compels me thus to speak.

636. The most high Father not only provided nourishment for the Holy Family, but also visible relief against the fatigue of this journey and its isolation in the desert. It happened a few times, when the heavenly Lady rested on the ground from Her fatigue, that, as on other occasions, a great multitude of birds came flying towards Her from the mountains. By the sweetness of their singing and the beauty of their feathers they provided entertainment. Perching on Mary's shoulders and Her hands, these birds showed signs of great joy. The most prudent Queen gently received them and invited them to acknowledge their Creator by their songs and to be thankful for His having created them so beautiful. Given them the air and the earth for their enjoyment, and provided

them with daily food. The birds responded with joyous movements and sweet songs, while the loving Mother joined them songs for the Infant Jesus. She acknowledging Him as Her God and Her Son, and as the Author of all these wonders. Also the holy Angels took part by alternating their offerings of praise with that of the great Lady and of these simple birds. All this produced a harmony more enjoyable for the soul than by the senses.

637. At other times the Holy Mother spoke with the Child and said: "My love and light of My Soul, how can I diminish Your labor? How can I relieve You of Your hardships? What can I do to lighten the sufferings of this journey? O would that I could carry You, not in My Arms, but in My bosom and make for You a soft couch in My Heart, in order that You may rest there without fatigue!" And the sweetest Jesus replied: "My beloved Mother, it's very easily to rest in Your Arms while making this journey, and reclining on Your breast, I am delighted by Your affection, and entertained by Your words." Sometimes the Son and Mother spoke with each other interiorly; and these conversations were so exalted and divine that our words can not express them. Saint Joseph shared in many of these mysteries and was comforted by them. Thus he forgot his hardships, feeling within himself the delight and sweetness of such companionship. Yet he did not hear or perceive what the Child said to his Mother; for at that time of the life of Jesus this favor was reserved for Her alone. In this manner our Holy Family proceeded on their way to Egypt.

### Words of enlightenment from Mother Mary.

638. My daughter, just as those who know the Lord also know how to trust in Him, so those who do not hope in His goodness and immense love have no perfect knowledge of the Majesty of God. On account of the lack of faith and hope, this love also is absent; for we readily place our love in whom we have confidence and whom we value. In this error lies the source of all the damage done to man. They have such a low regard of the infinite bounty, which gave them being and which preserves them, that they fail to place full confidence in their God. Failing in this, they also fail in the love due to Him and they instead go to others. They value in them what they are seeking, namely power, riches, vain honor and applause. Although the faithful can stop these injuries by faith and hope, yet they allow these virtues to remain dead, and unused, and lower themselves to the level of worthless animals. Those who have riches, trust in them, and those who have none, greedily seek after them. Some obtain them by very crooked ways and means. Some seek influential persons, praising and flattering them. And thus it happens that very few seek the Lord in such a way as to deserve His care. Very few trust in God and acknowledge Him as their Father, who is willing to provide for His children, who will provide them without fail in all necessities.

639. This deceitful error has filled the earth with lovers of the world. Has filled it with wealth and pleasure. Has made men insane in their desires; for all of

them commonly strive after riches and earthly possessions; claiming thereby merely to satisfy their needs, which is only an excuse for hiding they have no desire God's thoughts and ways.

Is 55:6 "Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near;  
55:7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that He may have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

55:8 For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD.

55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.

In reality they lie to themselves, since they are seeking the extras; not what is really necessary, but what fits into worldly pride. If men would limit their desires to what is really necessary, it would be unreasonable to put any confidence in others instead of placing it in God alone. I was not alarmed in My exile and prolonged journey. Since I trusted in the Lord, He provided for Me in the time of My need. You also, My daughter, who are aware of this exalted Gospel, should not afflict yourself in the time of need, nor trust in your human efforts, nor in others. After having done what is required of you, the most perfect way is to trust in the Lord, without being disturbed or confused. Hope patiently, even when help is somewhat delayed. It will always be at hand at a time when it will do most good. And when the love of

the Lord can reveal itself most openly. Thus it happened with Me and My spouse in the time of our journey and necessity.

640. Those that do not bear with troubles, but rather trusting in deceit and in the powerful of this world; those that are not moderate in their desires and greedily desire what is unnecessary for survival; those that anxiously cling to what they possess, fearing that it may be disappear, they will withhold the alms due to the poor.

*Jer 2:5* Thus says the LORD: “What wrong did your fathers find in Me that they went far from Me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?”

But the Father in heaven, who lets the sun rise over the just and the unjust and lets the rain fall on the good and the bad, nevertheless helps all, giving them life and food.

*Mt 5:43* “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

*5:44* But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

*5:45* so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

*5:46* For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

*5:47* And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

*5:48* You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

However, just as His blessings are distributed to the good and to the bad, so also it cannot be a rule with God to give greater temporal goods to the good and less to the bad. On the contrary He prefers that the chosen and elect be poor.

*Jas 2:5* Listen, my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him?

There are few who know how to use wealth properly and who can retain it without inordinate greed. Although my most holy Son and I had nothing to fear from this danger, yet He wished to furnish this example to men and to teach them this science, through which eternal life comes to them.