

“Holy Family Leaves Egypt” (Mary of Agreda)

702. The Child Jesus reached the age of seven in Egypt. In order that Scripture and its prophecies be fulfilled, it was necessary that the Holy Family return to Nazareth. The eternal Father informed His Son of His return, even though Jesus knew this and was equal to the Father, but it was for the benefit of His Mother Mary. She saw the Father's command in the Soul of Her Son and Mary joined Him in obedience. They had become situated in this home in Egypt more so than the home back in Nazareth. Neither the Mother nor the Son made known to saint Joseph this new order, but rather an Angel informed Joseph in his sleep.

Mt 2:19 But when Herod died, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying,

2:20 “Rise, take the Child and His Mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.”

2:21 And he rose and took the Child and His Mother, and went to the land of Israel.

2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee.

2:23 And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

God intended to teach all men, that He wished all things to be governed by the natural order. Thus it was Saint Joseph who was the head of his Family. Even though Jesus and Mary excelled in virtue, God requires men to submit to their superiors.

703. Saint Joseph immediately notified the Child Jesus and His Mother of the command of the Lord. Both of them answered that the heavenly Father command must be fulfilled. Without delay, they distributed to the poor the little furniture They had at Their home. This was done by the hands of the divine Child. Our heavenly Mother many times distributed alms through His hands because He loved to exercise charity. When Mary gave Him these alms the most holy Mother falling on Her knees, said: "Take, My Son and Lord, whatever You desire, in order to share it with the poor, our friends and brothers."

The Holy Family's dwelling was left in the possession of devout and pious persons in Heliopolis. Their virtue and holiness had gained them this favor. On account of what they had seen and experienced, they counted themselves indeed fortunate to occupy the same house as the Holy Family. Their devotion was rewarded with insight and grace for their eternal salvation.

704. The Holy Family departed for Israel in the company of Angels in the same way They had arrived. The great Queen

sat on the ass with the divine Child on Her lap and saint Joseph walked afoot, closely following the Son and Mother. The people who knew the Holy Family were very sorrowful at the news of Their departure. With weeping and sighing they saw Them leave. Knowing and complaining that they were now losing a loving and charitable Family. The holy Family found it difficult leaving Heliopolis because of the people's sorrow. The true Light that had entered Egypt was now leaving. They began to feel within their hearts the parting of the Sun.

Jn 1:9 The true Light that enlightens every man was coming into the world.

In traveling back to Israel the Holy Family passed through Egyptian towns where They blessed the people. The news of Their travels spread and all the sick gathered to seek Them. The sick were cured in body and soul. Many demons were expelled and hurled them into hell, not knowing how.

705. The Egyptians who left the Holy Family's presence were enlightened with truth, assisted by grace and wounded with the love of God. They felt a secret force, which urged and compelled them to pursue virtue. Thus withdrawing them from the paths of death. They came to the Son, drawn to the Son by the Father, sent there by the divine light.

Jn 6:44 No one can come to Me (Jesus) unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

6:45 It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Jesus didn't reveal Himself as the Messiah in Egypt, since it was not yet His time. But the fire which He had come to ignite and spread did produced Holy effects among the Egyptians.

706. Our heavenly Family entered the desert that They had traveled seven years earlier. In it They suffered labors and difficulties similar to those the first time. Hardships and tribulations are permitted by God in order to offer Mary and Joseph merit and give God the opportunity to send relief. As before relief came by the hands of the Angels as in the first journey. Sometimes the Child Jesus Himself commanded the Angels to provide food. Saint Joseph was privilege, to hear some of these commands and he witnessed how the Angels obeyed and readily provided what was needed. This greatly encouraged and comforted him. At other times the Divine Child created all that was necessary out of a crumb of bread. When the Holy Family arrived at the borders of Israel Joseph was informed that Herod's son had been made king after his father died. Joseph was concerned that this man was as terrible as Herod and didn't enter into the land surrounding Jerusalem. Instead the Holy Families passed through the land of the tribe of Dan and Issachar, following the coast of the Mediterranean sea with the city of Jerusalem to Their right.

707. They reached Nazareth, Their home, for the Child was to be called a Nazarene. They found Their former

humble house in charge of the devout cousin of saint Joseph. Before They had left Judea for Egypt, saint Joseph had written to this woman, asking her to take care of the house and what it contained. They found it all in good condition and his cousin received Them with great joy on account of her love for the great Queen, though at the same time she did not know of Her dignity. The heavenly Lady entered with Her Son and saint Joseph. Immediately She prostrated Herself in adoration of the Lord and in thanksgiving for having led Them safe from the cruelty of Herod. And preserved Them in the dangers of Their long and harsh journey. Above all did She render thanks for having returned in company with Her Son.

708. Taking counsel with Her divine Child She proceeded to set up a rule of life and regulate her pious practices. Not that She had failed to observe a rule of life on Her journey; for the most prudent Lady, in imitation of Her Son, had always observed the most perfect order according to circumstances. But being now peacefully settled in Her home She wished to include many exercises, which on the journey were impossible. Her greatest peace was always to co-operate with Her most holy Son for the salvation of souls which was placed upon Her by the eternal Father. Toward this most high end our Queen directed all Her practices in union with the Redeemer, and this was Their constant occupation.

The holy Joseph also ordered his work so to earn food for the divine Child and His Mother as well as for himself. While men are forced to work by the labor of their

hands in the sweat of their brows, saint Joseph was blessed and consoled to know that he had been chosen to support God and His Mother.

709. In return our Holy Mother provided Joseph's meals and attended to his comforts with incredible care and most loving gratitude. She was obedient to him in all things and humbled Herself before him as if She were his servant and not his spouse. She accounted Herself unworthy of existence, for She thought it just, that She should be in need of all things. Having been created out of nothing and therefore unable to make any return, according to Her intelligence, She created within Herself a humility unmatched. She thought Herself less than the dust and unworthy to mingle with it. For the least favor She gave great thanks to the Lord. God is first cause and origin of all blessings. Men are instruments of God's wealth. Mary gave thanks to God and man. She even gave thanks to those who denied Her. (For example when Joseph and Mary were unable to find a place to stay in Bethlehem.) The Mother of God acknowledged Herself as indebted to all of men, though She filled them with the blessings of sweetness and placed Herself at the feet of all.

Words of enlightenment from Mother Mary.

710. My daughter, while journeying at the command of the Lord from one country to another My heart was never troubled nor My spirit cast down. For I always held Myself prepared to fulfill entirely the will of God. Although the Lord made known to Me His high ends,

yet this was not always done at the beginning, thus permitting me to endure so much the greater sufferings. Obeying the Lord requires no further reason than that the Lord Creator so commands. The souls must prepare themselves to look for this motive alone and to learn solely to please the Lord. Must not distinguish between fortunate or unfortunate events. In this kind of wisdom I wish that you advance in imitation of Me and to satisfy your obligations toward My most holy Son. Receive prosperity or adversity and be unmoved in your peace. Do not grieve or vainly rejoice, but attend only to all that which the Almighty determines according to His pleasure.

711. Human life is interwoven with positive and negative events. As the human intelligence is limited, men chase what they love and like. On the other hand, grieving and sorrowing at what they hate and dislike. These changeable moods and fluctuations create an environment unsuitable for practicing the virtues. Recognize this danger and attack it at the root by focusing your heart on the divine Providence. Let the will of the Lord be your only delight and joy. Let neither your desires control you, nor your fears dishearten you. Never allow other men to keep you from holy exercises. Always follow My example by lovingly and diligently follow in My footsteps.