



**Tau Maria Franciscan Formation Meditations**  
**Mary's Immaculate Heart - A Way To God**  
**By Gabriel Allegra O.F.M.**

**M Meditation – Franciscan Theology and the Incarnation**

***Hail! True Mother of God!***

Next after the beatific vision, contemplation of the love of the Immaculate Mother for her Son, her God, will be our overwhelming and sweet joy in Heaven. But also on this earth, contemplation of this mystery is for the children-of-adoption a fountain ever-life-giving and fresh, of happiness, strength, and love...

A mother's love for the fruit of her womb is inherent in her human nature, and Mary is without human cooperation the Mother of the Incarnate Word. Here is a true motherhood. Jesus as God's Son has only one Father—our Heavenly Father. Insofar as He was man, He was conceived and clothed with human nature by Mary and born of her... that, therefore made Mary the Mother of God (Theotokos).

St. Bonaventure writes, "There were not in the Virgin any faculties inferior to those of any other woman, but much greater ones inasmuch as she had both a natural and a supernatural power. She could by herself supply the material which every other woman provides with the help of a man so that the entire substance of her Child came from His mother. And, therefore, it is more precise to hold and to say that the Virgin is the Mother of Christ in a truer way than any other mother is in regard to her son" (Sent III, d. 4)...

We must also admit, the Seraphic Doctor goes on to say, "The natural love that a mother has for her son is most wonderful... Well, the Blessed Virgin had this natural love in the highest degree and no other mother has ever loved her son so much as our Lady had loved, even with a natural love" (Sermon on the Assumption, IX, 704 c.).

A mother's love for her son is increased when the son is good, virtuous, and loving, and insofar as he resembles her and the father, even though naturally the resemblance of the son to his parents is always imperfect. But Jesus, who is the Word and the Splendor of the Father, the Living Image of Him, not having had a human father, showed forth in Himself a more perfect image of His Mother alone.

He is more. It is justly said that sons resemble their mother. Well, the Most Holy Heavenly Father filled the Heart of Mary with so much grace, with so many gifts, with so many noble endowments, with such tender and strong feelings, that Mary, almost naturally communicated them to her Son, the Emmanuel.

Therefore, Jesus resembled Mary not only in appearances and speech but most especially in heart. The tenderness, charity, humility, and generosity of the Heart of Jesus are a perfect reflection of those gifts from the Heart of Mary His Mother.

Not only did Mary know that her Son was the Son of the Most High, the Word of God, her God, She understood that, therefore, she had to love her Son-God with all her heart, with all her mind, and with all her strength. On the other hand God is Love and He loves with an ineffable love whoever loves Him. We have, therefore, in the love of the Immaculate Mother for Jesus and of Jesus for His holy Mother two bright flames of divine love, which together form one fire, a fire like that of the burning bush of Mount Horeb that will never burn out but will increase unto all eternity.

...St. John the Apostle, whom Jesus especially loved, sums up the teaching of the Savior in the gift given Him by the Father in these words, "Abide in me as I in you." "God is love and he who abides in love abides in God." "He who keeps my words, he it is who loves me" (Jn15:4;Jn 4:16). I think that those and similar words throw certain light upon the love of Mary for her Son and her God.



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A certain unwritten saying of the Lord is, “He who is near me is near fire.” And St. Catherine of Siena adds, as if to explain that, “That fire has to burn.” How brightly that fire must burn in the Heart of the Savior’s Mother who stood, stands, and will stand for all eternity at the side of Jesus and mystically in Jesus. She was created by the Heavenly Father to be the.. most loving Mother of Jesus!

Let us fix our attention on some mysteries which produced the heat of love: Bethlehem, Nazareth, the public life of the Savior, His Passion, Calvary, the Resurrection, the Cenacle-Upper Room, and the Assumption. In all of these we see the Heart of Mary filled with a love that is tender, gentle, strong, generous, and, finally, triumphant through Jesus and at the same time through her children who are still on their earthly pilgrimage and through the souls who suffer in Purgatory, languishing with the desire to enter as quickly as possible into the abode of the Father...

St. Paul who was afire with love for Christ our Savior wrote, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation...or persecution...or the sword?” And he concludes, “For I am sure that...neither height, nor depth, nor any creature will be able to separate us from the love of God” (Rom :35, 38-39). These words can most appropriately be applied to our Lady...

She alone experienced more vividly that St. Paul great sadness over so many baptized people and even those called to the priesthood or to the religious life, who separate themselves from Christ, do not keep His words in their hearts, do not remain in Him. The Heart of Mary is grieved most terribly by the sins that pollute the earth. Since the sorrow of a mother – the greatest Mother – she who can do it often leaves the glory of God’s House and comes down to earth to bring it the only thing which men truly and greatly need: love.

St. Bernadine speaking of the words of our Lady to Jesus at the wedding at Cana, “They have no wine” says that they mean, “they have no love; give love to men...”

That explains the very simple but profound and tender prayer of St. Paschal Baylon (1540-1592): “ O good Jesus, I thirst for you. Mary, my mother, satiate me.” Who could better explain this longing than our Lord’s Mother as she presents her adorable Son to St. Joseph, to the shepherds, to the Magi, and whom she continues to give to men?...

St. Bonaventure writes, “Mary in her exaltation as well as her humility, devotion, thankfulness, and joy in all the gifts of God exalts the Lord more than all other creatures together.”

St. Bernadine once again throws light on the relationship between Mary Immaculate and the Eternal Father. He says that the good God, Most High and Holy, raised Mary to such great love and so filled her with every other virtue that by becoming the Mother of the Only-begotten Son, she obtained a certain similarity to the perfections of God...

St. Bernadine, the gracious Sienese saint, says also “in a certain sense the Father owed something to Mary: His Son who would become Emmanuel received His human nature from her. In Mary, God the Father had His greatest lover among created beings, thus fulfilling the purpose of the predestination of Christ.” Dun Scotus had said, “God predestined the God-man so that He would be supremely loved by Another.” St. Bernadine concludes, “The measure of gratuitous love corresponds to the measure of grace. The Virgin Mary was full of grace,... Therefore, she was also overflowing with love.” Mary above all creatures fully and perfectly observed God’s command to men, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Dt.6:5). Her Immaculate Heart is like that of Jesus, burning with love for the Father. She alone could in all truth repeat the words of Jesus, “I love the Father...Yes, Father.” Hail, Daughter of God, the Father!