

Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis: *Ancoratus*, 374 A.D.

DS 44: ...who for us men and for our salvation came down and became flesh, that is, he was completely begotten of the holy, ever-virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit; he was made man, that is, he assumed the complete man, soul and body and mind and all that is man except sin, not from the seed of man or in a man, but he formed in himself one flesh, consisting of one holy unity; not as breathed, spoke and acted in the prophets, but he became fully man (“for the Word became flesh”, without undergoing any change or transforming his divine nature into a human nature...

Council of Ephesus, 431 A.D.

DS 251: For this was not an ordinary man who was at first begotten of the holy Virgin, and then the Word descended upon him: rather, (the Word) united flesh to himself from his mother’s womb and is said to have undergone begetting in the flesh in order to take to himself flesh of his own...For this reason [*the Holy Fathers*] have not hesitate to speak of the holy Virgin as the mother of God, not certainly because the nature of the Word or his divinity had the origin of its being from the Holy Virgin, but because from her was generated his holy body, animated by a rational soul, a body hypostatically united to the Word; and thus it is said that (the Word) was begotten according to the flesh.

Leo the Great, *Tomus Leonis*, 449 A.D.

DS 291: But this same eternal only begotten Son of the eternal Father “was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary”. And this birth in time did not at all diminish that divine and everlasting birth, and it added nothing to it; but it took place entirely for the redemption of man, who had been deceived, so that he might both overcome death and by his strength defeat the devil, who had control over death. For we would not be able to overcome the originator of sin and death if the one whose nature could neither be stained by sin nor grasped by death had not taken on our nature and made it his own. For he was conceived by the Holy Spirit within the womb of the Virgin Mother, who gave birth to him in such a way that her virginity was undiminished, just as she had conceived him with here virginity undiminished...

DS 292: But perhaps [Eutyches] thought that our Lord Jesus Christ was not of our nature because the angel sent to Blessed Mary said: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God” [Lk 1:35], as if to say that, because the conception of the Virgin was a result of divine action, the flesh of the one conceived was not of the nature of the one conceiving. But that begetting—uniquely miraculous and miraculously unique—must not be understand to meant that was is uniquely proper to our race was removed by the novelty of the creation: the Holy Spirit bestowed fertility on the Virgin, but the reality of a body was taken from her body, and “Wisdom was building up a house for” [Prov 9:1]. “The Word because flesh and dwelt among us” [Jn 1:14], that is in the flesh that he took from a human being and which he animated with the spirit of rational life.

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DS 294: ...He is generated, however, by a new birth: because an inviolate virginity, not knowing concupiscence, has supplied the matter of the flesh. From the Mother of the Lord, nature, not

guilt, was assumed. Nor does the Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of a virgin, have a nature different from ours just because his birth was miraculous. For he who is true God is likewise true man, and there is no falsehood in this unity, in which the lowliness of man and the height of divinity coincide.

Leo the Great, *Licet per nostros*, 449 A.D.

DS 299: For, although the birth of the Lord according to the flesh has certain characteristics in which it transcends the beginnings of the human condition, whether because he alone was conceived and born from the inviolate Virgin [by the Holy Spirit] without concupiscence or because he was brought forth from the womb of the Mother in such a way that her fertility gave birth while her virginity remained, nevertheless, his flesh was not of another nature than our own, and his soul was not breathed into him in any other beginning than that of other men...

Anastasius II, *In prolixitate epistolae*, 497 A.D.

DS 357: For this reason we acknowledge the one Christ both as Son of God and as (Son) of Man, as the Only-Begotten of the Father and as the firstborn of the dead; for we know that his is co-eternal with his Father in respect to his divinity, with whom he is the Creator of everything, and that, after the consent of the holy Virgin, when she said to the angel, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" [Lk 1:38], he deigned to build from her, in away beyond the power of words, a temple for himself and united it to himself and he did not bring down this body from heaven as co-eternal out of his own substance, but out of the matter of our substance, that is from the Virgin. In taking this and uniting it to himself, God the Word was not turned into flesh, nor was he like an illusion, but he kept his own essence in an inconvertible and immutable way (and) united the fundamentals of our nature to himself.

Sixtus IV, *Cum praeexcelsa*, 1477 A.D.

DS 1400: When we carefully examine, by exploring with devout contemplation, the surpassing marks of merit with which the Queen of Heaven, the glorious Virgin Mother of God, enthroned in heavenly places, shone like the morning star among the constellations...: we judge it proper, or rather a duty, to invite all the faithful of Christ, for the pardon and remission of their sins, to render thanks and praise for the wonderful conception of this immaculate Virgin to almighty God (whose providence, beholding from eternity the humility of the same Virgin, wishing to reconcile with its creator the human nature subjected to eternal death by the fall of the first man, through the preparation of the Holy Spirit, constituted her as the dwelling place of his only begotten Son, from whom he assumed the flesh of our mortal condition for the redemption of his people, and, nevertheless, she remained the immaculate Virgin even after childbirth): and they should celebrate the Mass and the other divine offices instituted for this purpose in the Church of God and attend them, so that, by the merits and intercessions of the same Virgin, may become worth of divine grace.

Pius IV, *Cum quorundam hominum*, 1555 A.D.

DS 1880: [Desiring] to warn all those and each individually who have up until now asserted, taught, or believed that the almighty God is not three in persons and entirely simple and

undivided in the unity of substance and one in the unique simple essence of divinity; or that our Lord is not true God and of the same substance in every way with the Father and the Holy Spirit; or that our Lord is not true God and of the same substance in every way with the Father and the Holy Spirit; or that the same (Lord) was not, according to the flesh, conceived in the womb of the most blessed and ever virgin Mary by (the power of) the Holy Spirit but, like other men, from the seed of Joseph, or that our same Lord and God, Jesus Christ, did not submit to the most bitter death of the Cross in order to redeem us from sins and from eternal death and to reconcile us with the Father for eternal life; or that the same most blessed Virgin Mary is no the true Mother of God and did not always persist in the integrity of virginity, namely, before giving birth, in giving birth, and perpetually after giving birth; we demand and warn on behalf of Almighty God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and by Apostolic authority...

Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*, 1854 A.D.

The Excellence of the Blessed Virgin Mary in General

DS 2800: God ineffable...from the beginning and before the ages chose and ordained a mother for this only begotten Son, from whom he would become incarnate and be born in the blessed fullness of time. And God honored her above all other creatures with such love that in her alone he was pleased with a most singular benevolence. Therefore, he wonderfully filled her, far more than all the angels and saints, with an abundance of all the heavenly gifts taken from the treasury of his divinity. In this way she, being always and absolutely free from every stain of sin, completely beautiful and perfect, would possess such a plentitude of innocence and sanctity that, under God none greater could be known and, apart from God, no mind could ever succeed in comprehending.

DS 2801: And indeed, it was altogether fitting that so venerable a mother, aglow with radiance, ever adorned with the splendors of a most perfect holiness and entirely immune from the stain of original sin, should have the most complete triumph over the ancient serpent. It was she to whom the father willed to give his only Son, generated from his heart and equal to himself and whom he loves as himself. (And he wished to) give him in such a way that he would be, by nature, one and the same common Son of God the father and of the Virgin. And as the Son himself actually chose her to be his mother, just so the Holy Spirit will and ordained that she should conceive and give birth to the one from whom he himself proceeds.

The Homogenous Nature of Dogmatic Evolution

DS 2802: Indeed, the Church of Christ, watchful guardian and protector of the dogmas deposited within her, never changes anything, never diminishes anything, never adds anything to these, but with complete diligence, she faithfully and wisely draws upon those things shaped from antiquity and sown by the faith of the Fathers; and in this way, she strives to refine and polish them so that these ancient dogmas of heavenly instruction may attain clarity, light, and precision, but they still retain their fullness, integrity, and proper character, and they grow according to their own nature, namely, within the same dogma and in the same sense and the same meaning.

Definition of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

DS 2803: ... To the honor of the holy and undivided Trinity, to the glory and distinction of the Virgin Mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the increase of the Christian religion, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul and Our (own), We declare, pronounce, and define: that the doctrine that maintains that the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception, by the singular grace and privilege of almighty God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved immune from all stain of original sin, is revealed by God, and therefore firmly and constantly to be believed by all the faithful.

Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, 1950 A.D.

DS 3900 - 38. All these proofs and considerations of the holy Fathers and the theologians are based upon the Sacred Writings as their ultimate foundation. These set the loving Mother of God as it were before our very eyes as most intimately joined to her divine Son and as always sharing his lot. Consequently it seems impossible to think of her, the one who conceived Christ, brought him forth, nursed him with her milk, held him in her arms, and clasped him to her breast, as being apart from him in body, even though not in soul, after this earthly life. Since our Redeemer is the Son of Mary, he could not do otherwise, as the perfect observer of God's law, than to honor, not only his eternal Father, but also his most beloved Mother. And, since it was within his power to grant her this great honor, to preserve her from the corruption of the tomb, we must believe that he really acted in this way.

DS 3901 - 39. We must remember especially that, since the second century, the Virgin Mary has been designated by the holy Fathers as the new Eve, who, although subject to the new Adam, is most intimately associated with him in that struggle against the infernal foe which, as foretold in the *protoevangelium*, [Gen 3:15] would finally result in that most complete victory over the sin and death which are always mentioned together in the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles. [Rom 5 and 6; 1 Cor 15:21-26, 54-57] Consequently, just as the glorious resurrection of Christ was an essential part and the final sign of this victory, so that struggle which was common to the Blessed Virgin and her divine Son should be brought to a close by the glorification of her virginal body, for the same Apostle says: "When this mortal thing hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory." [1 Cor 15:54]

DS 3902 - 40. Hence the revered Mother of God, from all eternity joined in a hidden way with Jesus Christ in one and the same decree of predestination, [see *Ineffabilis Deus*] immaculate in her conception, a most perfect virgin in her divine motherhood, the noble associate of the divine Redeemer who has won a complete triumph over sin and its consequences, finally obtained, as the supreme culmination of her privileges, that she should be preserved free from the corruption of the tomb and that, like her own Son, having overcome death, she might be taken up body and soul to the glory of heaven where, as Queen, she sits in splendor at the right hand of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages. [cf. 1 Tim 1:17]...

DS 3909 - 44. For which reason, after we have poured forth prayers of supplication again and again to God, and have invoked the light of the Spirit of Truth, for the glory of Almighty God who has lavished his special affection upon the Virgin Mary, for the honor of her Son, the immortal King of the Ages and the Victor over sin and death, for the increase of the glory of that same august Mother, and for the joy and exultation of the entire Church; by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.

Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 1964 A.D.

II. The Role of the Blessed Mother in the Economy of Salvation

55. The Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, as well as ancient Tradition show the role of the Mother of the Saviour in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light and draw attention to it. The books of the Old Testament describe the history of salvation, by which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared. These earliest documents, as they are read in the Church and are understood in the light of a further and full revelation, bring the figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, into a gradually clearer light. When it is looked at in this way, she is already prophetically foreshadowed in the promise of victory over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin. (Cf. Gen. 3:15.) Likewise she is the Virgin who shall conceive and bear a son, whose name will be called Emmanuel. (Cf. Is 7:14; cf. Mich. 5:2-3; Mt. 1:22-23.) She stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from Him. With her the exalted Daughter of Sion, and after a long expectation of the promise, the times are fulfilled and the new Economy established, when the Son of God took a human nature from her, that He might in the mysteries of His flesh free man from sin.

56. The Father of mercies willed that the incarnation should be preceded by the acceptance of her who was predestined to be the mother of His Son, so that just as a woman contributed to death, so also a woman should contribute to life. That is true in outstanding fashion of the mother of Jesus, who gave to the world Him who is Life itself and who renews all things, and who was enriched by God with the gifts which befit such a role. It is no wonder therefore that the usage prevailed among the Fathers whereby they called the mother of God entirely holy and free from all stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature. Adorned from the first instant of her conception with the radiance of an entirely unique holiness, the Virgin of Nazareth is greeted, on God's command, by an angel messenger as "full of grace", (Cf. Lk. 1:28.) and to the heavenly messenger she replies: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word". (Lk. 1:38.) Thus Mary, a daughter of Adam, consenting to the divine Word, became the mother of Jesus, the one and only Mediator. Embracing God's salvific will with a full heart and impeded by no sin, she devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under Him and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, serving the mystery of redemption. Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see her as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as freely cooperating in the work of human salvation

through faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenaeus says, she "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert in their preaching, "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith." Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her "the Mother of the living," and still more often they say: "death through Eve, life through Mary."

57. This union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation is made manifest from the time of Christ's virginal conception up to His death it is shown first of all when Mary, arising in haste to go to visit Elizabeth, is greeted by her as blessed because of her belief in the promise of salvation and the precursor leaped with joy in the womb of his mother.(Cf. Lk. 1:41-45.) This union is manifest also at the birth of Our Lord, who did not diminish His mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it, when the Mother of God joyfully showed her firstborn Son to the shepherds and Magi. When she presented Him to the Lord in the temple, making the offering of the poor, she heard Simeon foretelling at the same time that her Son would be a sign of contradiction and that a sword would pierce the mother's soul, that out of many hearts thoughts might be revealed.(Cf. Lk. 2:34-35) When the Child Jesus was lost and they had sought Him sorrowing, His parents found Him in the temple, taken up with the things that were His Father's business; and they did not understand the word of their Son. His Mother indeed kept these things to be pondered over in her heart.(Cf. Lk. 2:41-51.)

58. In the public life of Jesus, Mary makes significant appearances. This is so even at the very beginning, when at the marriage feast of Cana, moved with pity, she brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah.(Cf. Jn. 2:1-11.) In the course of her Son's preaching she received the words whereby in extolling a kingdom beyond the calculations and bonds of flesh and blood, He declared blessed(Cf. Mk. 3:35; Lk. 11:27-28.) those who heard and kept the word of God, as she was faithfully doing.(Cf. Lk. 2:19, 51.) After this manner the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan,(Cf. Jn. 19:25.) grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, uniting herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as a mother to His disciple with these words: "Woman, behold thy son".(Cf. Jn. 19:26-27.)

59. But since it has pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery of the salvation of the human race before He would pour forth the Spirit promised by Christ, we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost "persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren", (Acts 1:14.) and Mary by her prayers imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation. Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords(Cf Rev. 19:16) and the conqueror of sin and death.