

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 17, 2010 A.D.

Connection between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Priesthood Benedict XVI

I wish to speak of the link between Our Lady and the priesthood. This connection is deeply rooted in the Mystery of the Incarnation. When God decided to become man in his Son, he needed the freely-spoken "yes" of one of his creatures. God does not act against our freedom. And something truly extraordinary happens: God makes himself dependent on the free decision, the "yes" of one of his creatures; he waits for this "yes"....

Mary's "yes" is therefore the door through which God was able to enter the world, to become man. So it is that Mary is truly and profoundly involved in the Mystery of the Incarnation, of our salvation. And the Incarnation, the Son's becoming man, was the beginning that prepared the ground for the gift of himself; for giving himself with great love on the Cross to become Bread for the life of the world. Hence sacrifice, priesthood and Incarnation go together, and Mary is at the heart of this mystery.

Let us now go to the Cross. Before dying, Jesus sees his Mother beneath the Cross, and he sees the beloved son. This beloved son is certainly a person, a very important individual, but he is more; he is an example, a prefiguration of all beloved disciples, of all the people called by the Lord to be the "beloved disciple" and thus also particularly of priests. Jesus says to Mary: "Woman, behold, your son!" (Jn 19: 26). It is a sort of testament: he entrusts his Mother to the care of the son, of the disciple. But he also says to the disciple: "Behold, your mother!" (Jn 19: 27). The Gospel tells us that from that hour St. John, the beloved son, took his mother Mary "to his own home". This is what it says in the [English] translation; but the Greek text is far deeper, far richer. We could translate it: he took Mary into his inner life, his inner being,... into the depths of his being. To take Mary with one means to introduce her into the dynamism of one's own entire existence—it is not something external—and into all that constitutes the horizon of one's own apostolate. It seems to me that one can, therefore, understand that the special relationship of motherhood that exists between Mary and priests constitutes the primary source, the fundamental reason for her special love for each one of them. In fact, Mary loves them with predilection for two reasons: because they are more like Jesus, the supreme love of her heart, and because, like her, they are committed to the mission of proclaiming, bearing witness to and giving Christ to the world. Because of his identification with and sacramental conformation to Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary, every priest can and must feel that he really is a specially beloved son of this loftiest and humblest of Mothers.

General Audience of Wednesday, August 12, 2009

