

***“...and the Virgin’s name was Mary.” Lk 1:28***  
***Who is MARY?***

***Shrine and Sanctuary of God...***

St. Andrew of Crete wrote for the feast of the Nativity of Mary Sept. 8: “On this day a shrine is built for the Creator of the universe.” Later on St. Louis de Montfort would write: “Not even in His abode where He rules over the cherubim and seraphim, not in any place in the whole universe, is God more magnificently and more divinely present than in Mary, His sanctuary: and only by a mighty privilege is it granted to any creature however pure, to enter that sanctuary.” (Treatise on True Devotion) Fatima is God’s ‘Sanctuary’, His ‘Shrine’... From here, Mary wishes to form every heart into a shrine and sanctuary for Her Son.



***Mediatrice of all graces...***

St. Bernard exclaims in his sermon on the Aqueduct: “Life everlasting! A never-failing fountain which irrigates the whole extent of the paradise of God! ... Now, what is this fountain of life if it be not Christ the Lord? ... This stream from the heavenly source descends to us through an Aqueduct ... The Aqueduct itself is always full, so that all may receive of its fullness (Jn 1:16), yet not the fullness itself. You have already divined ...to whom I allude under the image of an Aqueduct which, receiving the fullness of the Fountain from the Father’s heart, has transmitted the same to us, at least in so far as we could contain it. Yes, for you know to whom it was said, ‘Hail, full of grace’. (Lk 2:28) And from St. Louis de Montfort:



“God has chosen Her for the treasurer, steward, and dispenser of all His graces, so that all His graces and all His gifts pass through Her hands..” And finally, St Maximillian Kolbe: “Truly, your presence alone attracts the graces which convert and sanctify souls, since grace flows into all of us from the Divine Heart of Jesus by passing through your maternal hands.” (Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Virgin, 16 Oct 1917).

From *Fatima in Lucia’s own Words* we read: “We stopped, astounded, before the Apparition. We were so close, just a few feet from her, that we were bathed in the light which surrounded her, or rather, which radiated from her... Our Lady opened her hands for the first time, communicating to us a light so intense that, as it streamed from her hands, its rays penetrated our hearts and the innermost depths of our souls, making us see ourselves in God, Who was that light, more clearly than we see ourselves in the best of mirrors.” (May, June, July and October 1917)

Fatima is a place of Grace...a place of Mercy... where Living Waters flow through God’s ‘Sanctuary’, His ‘Shrine’ the heavenly Aqueduct, the one who is “full of grace”.

***And Mary said... The “I am” of Mary...***

In the book of Exodus we read that Moses asked God to tell him his name as he feared the Israelites would not believe him. God replied: “*I AM WHO I AM*. Tell the Israelites ‘*I AM*’ sent me to you.” (Ex 3:14) Thus God revealed His name, His identity to His People. In the Gospel of St. John we find the “*I am*” of Our Lord seven times beginning with “*I am* the Bread of life” (Jn 6:3). In St Luke’s Gospel we find the “*I am*” of Mary. “How can this be since *I am* a virgin?” (Lk 1: 34) and then: “Behold, *I am* the handmaid of the Lord...” (Lk 1: 38 ) Each “*I am*” of Mary is enfolded in the ‘*I AM*’ of God. Apart from God we are not, our identity and consequently our dignity cannot be known.

In various Apparitions of Our Lady, again we find Her *I am*. To St. Juan Diego Mary said: “*Am I* not your Mother...?” and to St. Bernadette Soubirous Our Lady announced: “*I am* the Immaculate Conception” In Fatima, the Servant of God Sr. Lucia, began a dialogue with the Mother of God at the first Apparition when she was just 10 years old. This dialogue with the Queen of Heaven continued and grew until her death at the age of 97. Lucia asked Our Lady first of all “Where do you come from?” “*I am* from Heaven.” (May 1917). Later on Lucia asked the Lady to tell them Her name and to work a miracle so that all may believe. Our Lady replied: “In October I will tell you who *I am*...” And so She did. “***I am* the Lady of the Rosary.**” Mary’s “*I am*” is always Her revelation of identity in God, Who said to Moses: “*Tell them I AM sent me to you.*”

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