**SATURDAY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

# Vessel of Honour

The Tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting, was the place where the Lord descended with his cloud. He came down, remained there, spoke to Moses from the propitiatory which was the lid of the ark of the covenant. Thus the Lord manifested to his people his glory, which is transcendence, infinite holiness, eternal truth, love for his people. The Tabernacle was the most precious thing existing among the people of the children of Israel: *“"The Dwelling itself you shall make out of sheets woven of fine linen twined and of violet, purple and scarlet yarn, with cherubim embroidered on them. The length of each shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width four cubits; all the sheets shall be of the same size. Five of the sheets are to be sewed together, edge to edge; and the same for the other five. Make loops of violet yarn along the edge of the end sheet in one set, and the same along the edge of the end sheet in the other set. There are to be fifty loops along the edge of the end sheet in the first set, and fifty loops along the edge of the corresponding sheet in the second set, and so placed that the loops are directly opposite each other. Then make fifty clasps of gold, with which to join the two sets of sheets, so that the Dwelling forms one whole. "Also make sheets woven of goat hair, to be used as a tent covering over the Dwelling. Eleven such sheets are to be made; the length of each shall be thirty cubits, and the width four cubits: all eleven sheets shall be of the same size. Sew five of the sheets, edge to edge, into one set, and the other six sheets into another set. Use the sixth sheet double at the front of the tent. Make fifty loops along the edge of the end sheet in one set, and fifty loops along the edge of the end sheet in the second set. Also make fifty bronze clasps and put them into the loops, to join the tent into one whole. There will be an extra half sheet of tent covering, which shall be allowed to hang down over the rear of the Dwelling. Likewise, the sheets of the tent will have an extra cubit's length to be left hanging down on either side of the Dwelling to protect it. Over the tent itself you shall make a covering of rams' skins dyed red, and above that, a covering of tahash skins.” (Ex 26,1-14).* At the moment of the consecration, God descends with his cloud and manifests the greatness of his eternal glory*: “Finally, he set up the court around the Dwelling and the altar and hung the curtain at the entrance of the court. Thus Moses finished all the work. Then the cloud covered the meeting tent, and the glory of the LORD filled the Dwelling. Moses could not enter the meeting tent, because the cloud settled down upon it and the glory of the LORD filled the Dwelling. Whenever the cloud rose from the Dwelling, the Israelites would set out on their journey. But if the cloud did not lift, they would not go forward; only when it lifted did they go forward. In the daytime the cloud of the LORD was seen over the Dwelling; whereas at night, fire was seen in the cloud by the whole house of Israel in all the stages of their journey.” (Ex 40,33-38).*

The Virgin Mara is invoked with the title 'Vessel'. She is Vessel because the Lord has decided to dwell in Her in an infinitely more exalted, nobler, holier, truer way than in any other dwelling on earth. Only Christ Jesus is divinely and personally beyond, because He Himself is God and the 'flesh' is assumed by the Person of the Word and made His own flesh, in a wondrous unity that the dogma of the Church has defined as *'hypostatic union'*. It is not only in Mary that God has descended and dwells in Her with his highest presence of grace and truth, holiness and love, charity and mercy, compassion and peace. In Her, God has revealed all the greatness, the power, the majesty of His glory. Not only did He not allow original sin to touch Her even for an infinitesimal instant, He also caused Her to be clothed in grace and holiness more than all the creatures of the universe put together. God's work in Her was exceedingly exalted, great, superlative, at the height of divine possibilities. Beyond Mary, it is impossible for God Himself to create such a holy, sublime, elevated Woman in spiritual perfections. In Mary, God manifested all His glory, His power, His power of holiness, wisdom, science, intelligence, all of Himself.

This Vessel of honour has been given to us as our personal Vessel. Every disciple of Jesus, if one wants to dwell in Christ, if one wants to be his true body, if one wants to be Christ's presence in the midst of his brothers, must always dwell in the Vessel that the Virgin Mary is. Now a very serious problem arises. Just as to enter the tent of meeting one had first to purify oneself and put on the sacred garments, prescribed by the Lord to Moses:

*"From among the Israelites have your brother Aaron, together with his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, brought to you, that they may be my priests. For the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron you shall have sacred vestments made. Therefore, to the various expert workmen whom I have endowed with skill, you shall give instructions to make such vestments for Aaron as will set him apart for his sacred service as my priest. These are the vestments they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a brocaded tunic, a miter and a sash. In making these sacred vestments which your brother Aaron and his sons are to wear in serving as my priests, they shall use gold, violet, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen.*

*"The ephod they shall make of gold thread and of violet, purple and scarlet yarn, embroidered on cloth of fine linen twined. It shall have a pair of shoulder straps joined to its two upper ends. The embroidered belt of the ephod shall extend out from it and, like it, be made of gold thread, of violet, purple and scarlet yarn, and of fine linen twined. "Get two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: six of their names on one stone, and the other six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. As a gem-cutter engraves a seal, so shall you have the two stones engraved with the names of the sons of Israel and then mounted in gold filigree work. Set these two stones on the shoulder straps of the ephod as memorial stones of the sons of Israel. Thus Aaron shall bear their names on his shoulders as a reminder before the LORD. Make filigree rosettes of gold, as well as two chains of pure gold, twisted like cords, and fasten the cordlike chains to the filigree rosettes.*

*"The breastpiece of decision you shall also have made, embroidered like the ephod with gold thread and violet, purple and scarlet yarn on cloth of fine linen twined. It is to be square when folded double, a span high and a span wide. On it you shall mount four rows of precious stones: in the first row, a carnelian, a topaz and an emerald; in the second row, a garnet, a sapphire and a beryl; in the third row, a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; in the fourth row, a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper. These stones are to be mounted in gold filigree work, twelve of them to match the names of the sons of Israel, each stone engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes. "When the chains of pure gold, twisted like cords, have been made for the breastpiece, you shall then make two rings of gold for it and fasten them to the two upper ends of the breastpiece.*

*The gold cords are then to be fastened to the two rings at the upper ends of the breastpiece, the other two ends of the cords being fastened in front to the two filigree rosettes which are attached to the shoulder straps of the ephod. Make two other rings of gold and put them on the two lower ends of the breastpiece, on its edge that faces the ephod. Then make two more rings of gold and fasten them to the bottom of the shoulder straps next to where they join the ephod in front, just above its embroidered belt. Violet ribbons shall bind the rings of the breastpiece to the rings of the ephod, so that the breastpiece will stay right above the embroidered belt of the ephod and not swing loose from it. "Whenever Aaron enters the sanctuary, he will thus bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastpiece of decision over his heart as a constant reminder before the LORD. In this breastpiece of decision you shall put the Urim and Thummim, that they may be over Aaron's heart whenever he enters the presence of the LORD. Thus he shall always bear the decisions for the Israelites over his heart in the LORD'S presence.*

*"The robe of the ephod you shall make entirely of violet material. It shall have an opening for the head in the center, and around this opening there shall be a selvage, woven as at the opening of a shirt, to keep it from being torn. All around the hem at the bottom you shall make pomegranates, woven of violet, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen twined, with gold bells between them; first a gold bell, then a pomegranate, and thus alternating all around the hem of the robe. Aaron shall wear it when ministering, that its tinkling may be heard as he enters and leaves the LORD'S presence in the sanctuary; else he will die. "You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, as on a seal engraving, 'Sacred to the LORD.'*

 *This plate is to be tied over the miter with a violet ribbon in such a way that it rests on the front of the miter, over Aaron's forehead. Since Aaron bears whatever guilt the Israelites may incur in consecrating any of their sacred gifts, this plate must always be over his forehead, so that they may find favor with the LORD. "The tunic of fine linen shall be brocaded. The miter shall be made of fine linen. The sash shall be of variegated work. "Likewise, for the glorious adornment of Aaron's sons you shall have tunics and sashes and turbans made. With these you shall clothe your brother Aaron and his sons. Anoint and ordain them, consecrating them as my priests. You must also make linen drawers for them, to cover their naked flesh from their loins to their thighs. Aaron and his sons shall wear them whenever they go into the meeting tent or approach the altar to minister in the sanctuary, lest they incur guilt and die. This shall be a perpetual ordinance for him and for his descendants. (Ex 28,1-43).*

Therefore, in order to enter the Vessel of Honour, every disciple of Jesus is asked to put on the garment of grace and the garment of virtue, but first he must unclothe himself of every garment of sin and every vice. The Christian is asked to divest himself of all the works of the flesh and to put on the fruits of the Holy Spirit, to divest himself of the robes of Satan and to put on the most pure robes of Christ Jesus. Today this has become impossible because of the devastation carried out in both the Law of Christian holiness and the Law of good and evil. There is no longer any objective and universal truth to obey. There is no longer objective moral good and evil. There is a conscience that filters out the gnats and swallows not the camel, but whole herds of buffalo and bison. It is evident that there is no longer access for us to enter this Tabernacle of eternal glory. But if we can no longer dwell in this Vessel, neither can we dwell in Christ, since this Vessel is the way into the Vessel that is Christ Jesus. When the Divine Revelation is taken away from the Holy Spirit, it is taken away from the Sacred Dogmatic Tradition of the Church, it is taken away from the Sound Doctrine of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and it is attached to the conscience of the individual, this conscience does nothing but reduce it to a lie. Separated from the Vessel of Honour, unable to enter it because we lack the necessary garments, there can never be true salvation for us. We are condemned to live according to the world by pursuing its thoughts of sin and death. Mother of God, come to our rescue. Do not let the world, its vices, its sin devour us in eternity. **11 August 2024**