

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

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The Mystery of the Incarnation

St. AUGUSTINE in his Sermon 187 wrote:

"He is the revealer of the Father and the Creator of His mother; the Son of God born of the Father without a mother; the Son of man born of a mother without a father. He is the bright daylight of the angels, yet made Himself tiny in the daytime of men; the Word of God before time, the Word made flesh in the fullness of time; the Creator of the sun, and Himself created beneath the sun. He governs the course of the centuries in the bosom of His Father, and consecrates the present day by coming forth this day from the womb of his mother; Creator of heaven and earth, He is born under the heaven and earth; ineffable Wisdom, yet wisely reduced to the silence of infancy. He fills the world and is laid in a manger; He governs the stars and is suckled at his mother's breast. He is so great by His divine nature and so small in the nature of a slave, but without His littleness lessening His grandeur, and without His grandeur effacing his littleness. For by taking a human body He did not cease to accomplish the divine operations, nor to reach forcefully from one extremity to the other, and to dispose all things sweetly. (Wis. 8:1)"

DANTE ALIGHIERI ends his Divine Comedy with St. Bernard's vision of Mary, the Mother of God. It is a contemplation of the mystery and paradox of the Divine Motherhood. The acceptance through faith of God's plan brings inner peace to man and to the whole creation (Paradiso, Canto 33).

(Original Italian)

*"Vergine madre, figlia del tuo figlio, / umile ed alta piu' che creatura,
termine fisso d'eterno consiglio, / tu se' colei che l'umana natura
nobilitasti si', che 'l suo Fattore / non disdegno' di farsi sua fattura.
Nel ventre tuo si riaccese l'amore / per lo cui caldo ne l'eterna pace
cosi' e' germinato questo fiore..."*

(Translation)

"Virgin mother, daughter of your Son, / Humbler and higher than all other creatures,
Fixed aim and goal of the eternal plan, / You are the one who lifted human nature
To such nobility that its own Maker / Did not disdain to be made of its making.
Within your womb was lit once more the flame / Of that love through whose warmth
This flower fully bloomed in everlasting peace... "

SOJOURNER TRUTH, a self-named escaped slave and abolitionist, in 1861, gave one of the great speeches of American history at an Ohio Woman's Rights Convention. Against the argument that women had no rights in civil law, she responded: "*You say that I can not have the same rights as a man since Christ was not a woman. Where did Christ come from? From God and a woman. Man did not have a thing to do with it!*"