

“Let it be done to me according to your

(Luke 1:38).

-When the Virgin Mary uttered these words, she gave herself up completely to the creative power of the Word of God. In that power she conceived the Word in her womb, and brought Him forth as her Son. She also received the power to proclaim the Word in a new and up to then unknown way. She did this in her Magnificat and so she became a prophet.

-Mary belongs to both Old and New Testaments, and as such she is a prophet. She shows a sensitivity and announces a new meaning which belong to the new age – that age which the Spirit has come to inaugurate in her person.

-The words which the monk receives in order to share them with others have this same quality. The monk too lives on the frontier between two epochs in the history of salvation. Not that he stands between the Old and the New, but between the time of the Church and that of the world to come. The monk is rooted in the former, and already has a foretaste and even almost a vision of the latter in his heart.

-Like the Virgin Mary, the monk is an intermediary figure, standing on the threshold between time and eternity. He is both passing by and waiting.

The old world is still there and the monk belongs to it. But the new world has begun to break through, at least momentarily and in brief flashes.

-Without understanding it clearly the monk has received a sort of illumination of it.

-On his lips, as on those of the Virgin Mary, the words of the psalms have a new taste, the taste of the world to come. In this sense the monk too is a prophet. His life is a prophetic sign at the heart of the world.

-The life of the monk is an image of what we await in eternal life.

-In the Virgin Mary the love of God for His creatures reaches its apogee and fulfillment – the fullness of beauty and of love. The Virgin Mary is the fullness of all beauty and of love. She alone is already the plenitude of the Church. She is the Bride of the Word and His eternal joy.

-She is the joy of God, who through her has assumed all humanity into the Incarnate Word, come to inaugurate the new temple, in the heart of the Trinity, where praise and thanksgiving will be forever sung.

-This heavenly liturgy is even now shared in by the liturgical assembly of the Church. In every liturgy “a door is opened in heaven” (Rev. 4:1), which enables us to see some reflection of the beauty and love which are in God.

-The monk is present to this every day and night. The door is open not only in the community of his brethren gathered for worship but also in his own heart. St. Isaac of Syria says: “Enter into your own heart and find the door that opens on Paradise.”

-The monk has received everything from God, even that beauty which increases in him daily and gradually transforms him into the likeness of Christ. Over the long

years of monastic life he has grown old. Yet he remains ever young, with unquenchable hope and with wonder at the goodness and kindness of God. His eyes are the eyes of a child who never ceases to marvel at the mighty deeds of God.

-He is considered as a good and beautiful old man. Is there any achievement greater or more splendid than this, that a man, humble and unaware, should reflect the goodness and the beauty of God?

-The Blessed Virgin Mary did not fully understand the message of the angel. She has no doubts whether it will happen, but how it will happen. She opens herself to where the message will lead her. She was not afraid to take the responsibility to be the mother of God although she did not understand the full implication of this.

-Mary is the first disciple to receive the Word both in her body and soul. She was already pregnant with the Word of God in her heart before she conceives Him in her womb.

-The contemplatives are constantly covering the world with their co-redeeming prayer. This is what our Lady did in the cenacle. While the first apostles went forth to labor and to die, Mary, silent in prayer, accompanied them to all their battles for Christ.

-Mary is the first living tabernacle where the Father enclosed His Son. Her Immaculate Heart is the monstrance which held Him. Her lap and arms were the first altar and the first throne on which the Son of God made man was worshiped. There the angels, the shepherds and the wise men adored Him.

-“Christ became man by the Virgin so that the disobedience which proceeds from the serpent might be destroyed in the same way as it originated. For Eve, being a virgin and undefiled, having conceived the word from the serpent, brought forth disobedience and death. The Virgin Mary, however, having received faith and joy, when the angel Gabriel announced to her the good tidings...answered: “Be it done to me according to thy word” (St. Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, 100, 5).

-If you want to get to know the Son, you must look at the heart of the Mother. In Jesus as in any other Son we see the plain evidence of maternal influence; that is why we shall go on to contemplate the sweetest heart of the Virgin, His most Holy Mother.