

The Immaculate Conception

THE DOCTRINE of the Immaculate Conception is one of the most sublime mysteries of the Christian Religion, and perhaps for that reason it has suffered more from being dragged down into materiality than any of the other mysteries. It has suffered alike from the interpretation of its clumsy supporters and the sneers of the skeptics.

The popular, but erroneous idea, is that about 2,000 years ago an individual named Jesus Christ was born of a mother without the cooperation of an earthly father, and this incident is regarded as unique in the history of the world. In reality it is not unparalleled; the Immaculate Conception has taken place many times in the history of the world and will become universal in the future.

The periodical ebb and flow of the material and spiritual forces which invest the Earth are the invisible causes of the physical, moral, and mental activities upon our globe. According to the hermetic axiom, "As above, so below," a similar activity must take place in man, who is but a minor edition of Mother Nature.

The animals have twenty-eight pairs of spinal nerves and are now in their Moon stage, perfectly attuned to the twenty-eight days in which the Moon passes around the zodiac. In their wild state, the Group Spirit regulates their mating. Therefore there is no overflow with them. Man, on the other hand, is in a transition stage; he is too far progressed for



Fresco (1460), Piero Della Francesca (1422-1492), Chapel of the Cemetery, Monterchi

Madonna of the Confinement

Mary deeply ponders the fruition of the mystery of the holy immaculate conception as two angels create a womb of security and nurture for her and her forming Child.

the lunar vibrations for he has thirty-one pairs of spinal nerves. But he is not yet attuned to the solar month of thirty-one days, and he mates at all times of the year; hence the periodical flow in woman, which under proper conditions is utilized to form part of the body of a child more perfect than its parent.

Similarly, the periodical flow in mankind becomes the sinew and backbone of racial advancement; and the periodical flow of the Earth's spiritual forces, which occurs at Christmas, results in the birth of Saviors, who from time to time give renewed impetus to the spiritual advancement of the human race.

There are two parts to our Bible, the Old and the New Testaments. After briefly reciting how the world came into being, the former tells the story of the "Fall." We understand the "Fall" to have been occasioned by man's impulsive and ignorant use of

the sex force at times when the interplanetary rays were inimical to conception of the purest and best vehicles. Thus man became gradually imprisoned in a dense body crystallized by sinful passion and consequently an imperfect vehicle, subject to pain and death.

Then commenced the pilgrimage through matter, and for millennia we have been living in this hard and flinty shell of body, which obscures the light of heaven from the Spirit within. The Spirit is like a diamond in its rough coat, and the celestial lapidaries, the Recording Angels, are constantly endeavoring to remove the coating so that the Spirit may shine through the vehicle which it ensouls.

When the lapidary holds the diamond to the grindstone, the diamond emits a screech like a cry of pain as the opaque covering is removed; but gradually by many successive applications to the grindstone the rough diamond may become a gem of transcendent beauty and purity. Similarly, the celestial beings in charge of our evolution hold us closely to the grindstone of experience. Pain and suffering result, which awaken the Spirit sleeping within. The man hitherto content with material pursuits, indulgent of sense and sex, becomes imbued with a divine discontent which impels him to seek the higher life.

The gratification of that aspiration, however, is not usually accomplished without a severe struggle upon the part of the lower nature. It was while wrestling thus that Paul exclaimed with all the anguish of a devout, aspiring heart: "O wretched man that I am!...The good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do....I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Romans 7:19-24)

When the flower is crushed, its scent is liberated and fills the surroundings with grateful fragrance, delighting all who are fortunate enough to be near. Crushing blows of fate may overwhelm a man or woman who has reached the stage of efflorescence; they will but serve to bring out the sweetness of the nature and enhance the beauty of the soul till it shines with an effulgence that marks the wearer as

with a halo. Then he is upon the path of Initiation. He is taught how unbridled use of sex regardless of the stellar rays has imprisoned him in the body, how it fetters him, and how by the proper use of that same force in harmony with the stars he may gradually improve and etherealize his body and finally attain liberation from concrete existence.

A shipwright cannot build a staunch oak ship from spruce lumber; "men do not gather grapes of thorns"; like begets like, and an incoming Ego of a passionate nature is drawn to parents of like nature, where its body is conceived upon the impulse of the moment in a gust of passion.

The soul who has tasted the cup of sorrow incident to the abuse of the creative force, and has drunk to the dregs the bitterness thereof, will gradually seek parents of less and less passionate natures, until at length it attains to Initiation. Having been taught in the process of Initiation the influence of the stellar rays upon childbirth, the next body provided will be generated by Initiate parents without passion, under the constellation most favorable to the work which the Ego contemplates. Therefore the Gospels (which are formulae of Initiation) commence with the account of the Immaculate Conception and end with the crucifixion, both wonderful ideals to which we must sometime attain, for each of us is a Christ-in-the-making, and will sometime pass through both the mystic birth and the mystic death foreshadowed in the Gospels. By knowledge we may hasten the day, intelligently cooperating instead of as now often stupidly frustrating through ignorance the ends of spiritual development.

In connection with the Immaculate Conception misunderstandings prevail at every point: the perpetual virginity of the mother even after giving birth to other children; the lowly station of Joseph, the supposed foster father, etc. We will briefly view them in the light of facts as revealed in the Memory of Nature.

In some parts of Europe people of the higher classes are addressed as "wellborn," or even as "highwellborn," meaning that they are the offspring of cultured parents in high station. Such people usually look down with scorn upon those in modest positions. We have nothing against the expression

“wellborn”; we would that every child were well-born, born to parents of high moral standing, no matter what their station in life. There is a virginity of soul that is independent of the state of the body, a purity of mind which will carry its possessor through the act of generation without the taint of passion and enable the mother to carry the unborn child under her heart in sexless love.

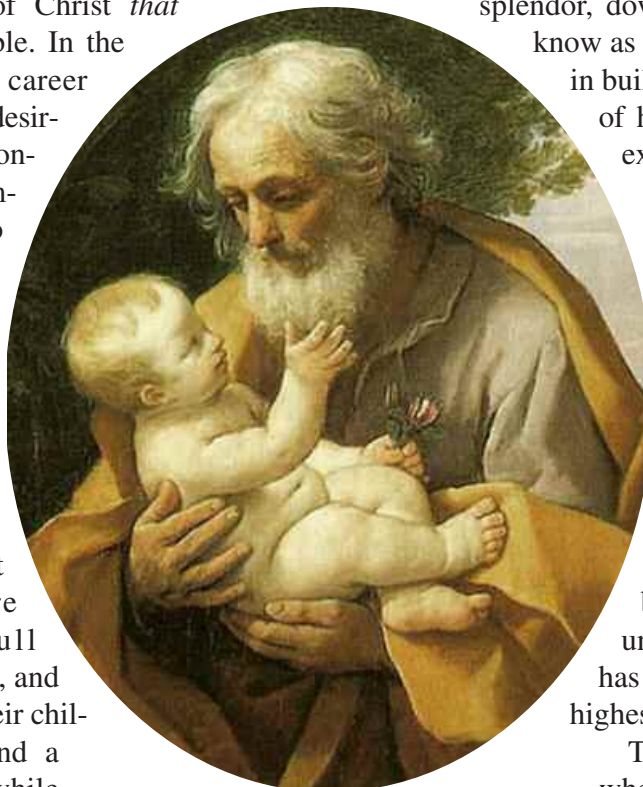
Previous to the time of Christ *that* would have been impossible. In the earlier stages of man’s career upon Earth quantity was desirable and quality of minor consideration; hence the command was given to “go forth, be fruitful, and multiply.” Besides, it was necessary that man should temporarily forget his spiritual nature and concentrate his energies upon material conditions. Indulgence of sex passion furthers that object, and the desire nature was given full sway. Polygamy flourished, and the larger the number of their children, the more a man and a woman were honored, while barrenness was looked upon as the greatest possible affliction.

In other directions the desire nature was being curbed by God-given laws, and obedience to divine commands was enforced by swift punishment of the transgressor, such as war, pestilence, or famine. Rewards for dutiful observance of the mandates of the law were not wanting either. The “righteous” man’s children, cattle and crops were numerous; he was victorious over his enemies and the cup of his happiness was full.

Later, when the Earth had been sufficiently peopled after the Atlantean Flood, polygamy became more and more obsolete, with the result that the quality of the bodies improved, and at the time of of Christ the desire nature had become so far amenable to control in the case of the more advanced among

humanity that the act of generation could be performed without passion, out of pure love, so that the child could be immaculately conceived.

Such were the parents of Jesus. Joseph is said to have been a carpenter, but he was not a worker in wood, he was a “builder” in a higher sense. God is the Grand Architect of the Universe. Under Him are many builders of varying degrees of spiritual splendor, down even to those whom we know as Freemasons. All are engaged in building a temple without sound of hammer, and Joseph was no exception.



Oil on Canvas, Guido Reni (1575-1642), Hermitage, St. Petersburg

St. Joseph with the Christ Child in His Arms

It is sometimes asked why Initiates are always men. They are not. In the lower degrees there are many women. But when an Initiate is able to choose his sex, he usually takes the positive masculine body, as the life which brought him to Initiation has spiritualized his vital body and made it positive under all conditions, so that he has then an instrument of the highest efficiency.

There are times, however, when the exigencies of a case require a female body; such as, for instance, providing a body of the highest type to receive an Ego of superlatively high degree. Then a high Initiate may take a female body and go through the experience of maternity again, after perhaps having eschewed it for several lives, as was the case with the beautiful character we know as Mary of Bethlehem.

In conclusion, then, let us remember the points brought out: that we are all Christs-in-the-making; that sometime we must cultivate characters so spotless that we may be worthy to inhabit bodies that are immaculately conceived; and that the sooner we commence to purify our minds of passionate thoughts, the sooner we shall attain. In the final analysis it only depends upon the earnestness of our purpose and the strength of our wills. □