

OUR NEW EVE

*Hail to Mary,
the Mother of all the living,
we ask you to intercede on our behalf.*

Theotokia of Tuesday.

New Eve:

The Church calls St. Mary, “the mother of all the living”, “mother of the New Life” and “the Second Eve”.

Eve lost the meaning due to her name:- “mother of every living” (), - for by her disobedience to God she obtained only death for her children instead of life, and became the mother of the dead. Her daughter, St. Mary, took her place; for by her faith, obedience and humility she became, through the Holy Spirit, the mother of “Life”. She offered to Adam’s children the “Tree of life” to eat, and thereby live forever.

Through the mystery of the divine Incarnation St. Mary became “the mother of the Head of the mystical body and also the Mother of its members, as St. Augustine says”.[\[1\]](#) She received universal motherhood to all the believers.

The holy Fathers consider St. Mary’s holy womb as the [bridal](#) chamber, the meeting place where the heavenly Bridegroom is united mystically with the Bride, i.e. the whole Church. There we accept Christ, her Son, as our Bridegroom and the Firstborn Brother; and we accept St. Mary, His mother, as our own mother.

- The Word is joined to flesh;
the Word is wedded to flesh,

and the [bridal](#) chamber of this exalted marriage is your womb.

Let me repeat, the [bridal](#) chamber of this exalted marriage between the Word and the flesh is your womb, whence “He, the Bridegroom, goes forth from His bridal chamber”.

St. Augustine[\[2\]](#)

- God the Father arranged the nuptials for God, His Son, when, in the womb of the Virgin, He united Him to humanity, when He willed that He who is God before all the ages should, at the end of the ages, become Man.

He united the Holy Church to Him, through the mystery of the Incarnation.

Now, the [bridal](#) chamber of this Bridegroom was the womb of the Virgin Mother. That is why the Psalmist says, “He has set His tabernacle in the sun: and He is as a Bridegroom coming out of His bridal chamber” (). And it was as a Bridegroom is in fact that He came forth from His bridal chamber, because to unite the Church to Himself, the Incarnate God went forth from the inviolate womb of the Virgin.

Pope Gregory (the Great)[\[3\]](#)

This relation between the New Eve and all believers is declared officially by the Second Adam on the Cross, when He says to the New Eve, “Woman, behold your son!”, and to His believers “John, behold your mother!”

Through the Cross we received our New Eve from God. In this effect Tertullian says:

“God knew that it is not good for man to be alone, and He knew how good it would be for him to have a woman with him, first Mary and then the

Church”.[\[4\]](#)

We received St. Mary as our New Eve, to say with Adam to our God: “New Eve, the woman whom you gave me to be my helpmate, gave me to eat from the Tree of Life, i.e., the Cross of her Son!”

Origen sees that every perfect Christian can, like St. John, receive from the Crucified Son, St. Mary as his own mother. He explains the words “Behold, Your Son!”, “Whoever is perfect, no longer lives only himself, but [Christ](#) also lives in him. Since Christ lives in him, it is said to Mary of him: “Behold, Your Son, Christ!”[\[5\]](#)

Eve - St. Mary Parallel:

It is possible that the remote origins of the “Eve - St. Mary parallel” may be traced far back to Papias, [Bishop](#) of Hieropolis, in [Asia](#) Minor, at the turn of the first century[\[6\]](#) .

At the second century, St. Justine the Martyr (c. 165) draw attention to this Eve - St. Mary parallel in his dialogue with Trypho, as he says:

“(The Son of God) became man through the Virgin, that the disobedience caused by the serpent might be destroyed in the same way it had originated..”.

For Eve, an undefiled virgin, conceived the word of the serpent and brought forth disobedience and death. But the Virgin Mary, filled with [faith](#) and joy when the angel Gabriel announced to her the glad tidings that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her and the Most High would overshadow her, and that therefore the Holy One born would be the Son of God , that she replied: Let it be done to me according to your word ().[\[7\]](#)

It is clear that St. Justine’s thought - in the abovementioned parallel - is

focused not on St. Mary, but on the Saviour, her Son.

St. Irenaeus (c. 172), the father of Mariology, had developed the above-mentioned passage, that the Eve - St. Mary analogy combined, for the first time, with a theology:[\[8\]](#)

“Just as Eve, while wife of Adam, was still a virgin. . and became by her disobedience the cause of death of herself and of the whole human race; so Mary too, espoused yet a virgin, became by her obedience the cause of salvation of both herself and the whole human race..

The knot of Eve’s disobedience was loosened by Mary’s obedience. For what the Virgin Eve had bound in unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened through faith.” [.\[9\]](#)

According to St. Irenaeus, St. Mary has a distinctive function in God’s plan towards our salvation. For she offered her free consent to God, i.e., her obedience, issued through her faith.. He also calls her “Eve’s Advocate”:

“Whereas Eve had disobeyed God, Mary was persuaded to obey God, that the Virgin Mary might become the Advocate of the Virgin Eve ”

Similarly, Tertullian, writes in his book “The Flesh of Christ”:

“For into Eve, as yet a virgin, the word of the [devil](#) had crept, to erect an edifice of death.

Thus, through a virgin, the Word of God was introduced to set up a structure of life.

What had been lost by one sex, was by the same sex restored and saved.

Eve had believed the serpent;

Mary believed Gabriel.

That which one destroyed by unbelief the other set straight, by believing..

God, therefore, sent down into the Virgin's womb His Word, our good Brother, to blot out the [memory](#) of evil...".[\[10\]](#)

The Alexandrian Teacher, Origen alludes to St. Mary as restoring the womankind the honour it had lost through Eve's sin; in this way woman "finds salvation in childbearing[\[11\]](#) (:I5). He also says:

"The joy trumpeted by Gabriel to Mary destroyed the sentence of sorrow levelled by God against Eve".[\[12\]](#)

"Just as [sin](#) began with the woman and then reached the man, so too the good tidings had their beginning with the women (Mary and Elizabeth).[\[13\]](#)

In the fourth century, Zeno of Verona, mentioned this parallel but in a new sense, "Because the [devil](#) had wounded and corrupted Eve, creeping in by persuasion through her ear, Christ's entering Mary's ear, eliminates all vices from the heart. He cures the wound of the woman when He is born by the Virgin".[\[14\]](#)

St. Ephram, who said: "This harp of the Holy Spirit never sings sweeter songs than when it has set its strings to sing the praises of Mary"[\[15\]](#), developed the Eve - St. Mary Parallel, saying:

"In her [virginity](#) Eve clothed herself with leaves of ignominy.

Your mother has clothed herself in [virginity](#) with the garment of glory, which is sufficient for all.

A piece of clothing (i.e., the body) she has given to Him who clothes all..

With the eye Eve perceived the beauty of the tree, and the advice of the slay one was fashioned in her mind..

With the ear Mary perceived the Invisible One, who came in the voice.

She conceived in her womb the Power that came to her _{body}".[\[16\]](#)

He also says:

"Let Eve, our first mother, now hear and come to me. Let her lift up her head that was bent low under the garden's shame.

Let her uncover her face and give thanks to you, because you have taken away her confusion.

Let her bear the voice of perfect peace, because her daughter has paid her debt".[\[17\]](#)

"The serpent and Eve dug a grave and thrust the guilty Adam into hell, but Gabriel came and spoke with Mary, and thereupon was laid open the mystery whereby all the dead are raised again".[\[18\]](#)

"God's Eden is Mary;

in her there is no serpent that harms....,

no Eve that kills,

but from her springs the Tree of Life that restores the exiles of Eden".[\[19\]](#)

The insight of those Fathers is repeated in the writing of SS. Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, [Epiphanius](#) of Salamis and others, from which I quote the following passages:

- Eve is called Mother of the human race, but Mary, Mother of

Salvation.

St. Ambrose[\[20\]](#)

- After the Virgin conceived and had born her Son for us... the curse was dissolved: death through Eve, life through Mary!

St. Jerome[\[21\]](#)

- Mary was included in Eve, but it was only when Mary came that we knew who Eve was!

St. Augustine[\[22\]](#)

- Eve looks to Mary, and her very name, “mother of all the living” is a mysterious presage of the future, for “Life” itself was born of Mary, whence she became more fully “the mother of all the living”. Nor can we apply the passage: “I will put enmities between you and the woman” () as to Eve alone; it received its true fulfilment when that Holy and Unique One came, born of Mary without human seed.

St. Epiphanius of Salamis[\[23\]](#)

- The woman found her advocate in a woman.

St. Gregory of Nyssa[\[24\]](#)

Fr. TADROUS Y. MALATY

[\[1\]](#) De Sancta Virginitate 6. [PL](#) 40:399

[\[2\]](#) On the birthday of John the [Baptist](#) 5 [PL](#) 38:1319

[3] Hom. on the Gospels 2:38:3 [PL](#) 76:1283

[4] Adv. Marcion 2:4 [PL](#) 2:289

[5] Origen: In Evengelium Joannis, 1, Praefatio 6 PG 14:32

[6] The passage in question occurs in a fragment of Victorinus of Pettau (De Fabrica mundi, ng C.S.E.L. 49:8) as he states that “the angel Gabriel brought the good tidings to Mary on the day (6th day) whereon the serpent seduced Eve”. Carol: Mariology, vol. 2, p. 88, 89

[7] Dial. 100. PG 6:709-712, 959. 1176

[8] Carol: Mariology, vol. 2, p. 89

[9] Adv. Haer 3:31:1, 5:19:1

[10] De Carne Christi 17:5

[11] Lucan Hom. 7

[12] Ibid 6

[13] Ibid. 8

[14] Tralctatus 1:13:10

[15] Acta apostolicae sedis. commentarium of ficiale, Rome 1920, 12, p. 467

[16] On Nativity 35 : 17

[17] [Hymns](#) on Blessed Mary, 19:19, 20. T. J. Lamy: Sancti Ephraem Syri hymni et sermones, Mechlin, vol. 2, p. 621-625. T. Livius: The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the First Six Centuries, London 1893. p. 430f.

Palmer. p. 10

[\[18\]](#) On the Annunciation of the Mother of God, hymn 3:20. Palmer 21

[\[19\]](#) On the Annunciation..., hymn 3 : 30

[\[20\]](#) Epist. 63.33. [PL](#) 16:1250

[\[21\]](#) Epist. 22:21. [PL](#) 22:408

[\[22\]](#) Sermon 102

[\[23\]](#) Panarion3:2:78. PG42:728

[\[24\]](#) OnCant. Cant.,Hom13. PG44:1052

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