

THE POWER OF ONE HAIL MARY

HAIL, MARY, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

HOLY MARY, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Millions of Catholics often say the Hail Mary. Some repeat it hastily not even thinking on the words they are saying. These following words may help some say it more thoughtfully.

They can give God's Mother great joy and obtain for themselves graces that she wishes to give them.

One Hail Mary well said fills the heart of Our Lady with delight and obtains for us indescribably great graces. One Hail Mary well said gives us more graces than a thousand thoughtlessly said.

The Hail Mary is like a mine of gold that we can always take from but never exhaust.

Is it hard to say the Hail Mary well? All we have to do is to know its value and understand its meaning.

St. Jerome tells us that "the truths contained in the Hail Mary are so sublime, so wonderful that no man or Angel could fully understand them."

St. Thomas Aquinas, the Prince of Theologians, "the wisest of Saints and holiest of wise men," as Leo XIII called him, preached for 40 days in Rome on the Hail Mary, filling his hearers with rapture.

Father F. Suarez, the holy and learned Jesuit, declared when dying that he would willingly give all the many learned books he wrote, all his life's labors, for the merit of one Hail Mary prayerfully and devoutly said.

St. Mechtilde, who loved our Lady very much, was one day striving to compose a beautiful prayer in her honor. Our Lady appeared to her, with the golden letters on her breast of: "Hail Mary full of grace." She said to her: "Desist, dear child, from your labor for no prayer you could possibly compose would give me the joy and delight of the Hail Mary."

A certain man found joy in saying slowly the Hail Mary. The Blessed Virgin in return appeared to him smiling and announced to him the day and hour that he should die, granting him a most holy and happy death.

After death a beautiful white lily grew from his mouth having written on its petals: "Hail Mary."

Cesarius recounts a similar incident. A humble and holy monk lived in the monastery. His poor mind and memory were so weak that he could only repeat one prayer which was the "Hail Mary." After death a tree grew over his grave and on all its leaves was written: "Hail Mary."

These beautiful legends show us how much devotion to Our Lady was valued, and the power attributed to the Hail Mary devoutly prayed.

Each time that we say the Hail Mary we are repeating the very same words with which St. Gabriel the Archangel saluted Mary on the day of the Annunciation, when she was made Mother of the Son of God.

Many graces and joys filled the soul of Mary at that moment.

Now when we say the Hail Mary we offer anew all these graces and joys to Our Lady and she accepts them with Immense delight.

In return she gives us a share in these joys.

Once Our Lord asked St. Francis Assisi to give Him something. The Saint replied: "Dear Lord, I can give You nothing for I have already given you all, all my love."

Jesus smiled and said: "Francis, give Me it all again and again, it will give Me the same pleasure."

So with our dearest Mother, she accepts from us each time we say the Hail Mary the joys and delight she received from the words of St. Gabriel.

Almighty God gave His Blessed Mother all the dignity, greatness and holiness necessary to make her His own most perfect Mother.

But He also gave her all the sweetness, love, tenderness and affection necessary to make her our most loving Mother. Mary is truly and really our Mother.

As children when in trouble run to their mothers for help, so ought we to run at once with unbounded confidence to Mary.

St. Bernard and many Saints said that it was never, never heard at any time or in any place that Mary refused to hear the prayers of her children on earth.

Why do we not realize this most consoling truth? Why refuse the love and consolation that God's Sweet Mother is offering us?

Is it our lamentable ignorance which deprives us of such help and consolation.

To love and trust Mary is to be happy on earth now and afterwards to be happy in Heaven.

Dr. Hugh Lammer was a staunch Protestant, with strong prejudices against the Catholic Church.

One day he found an explanation of the Hail Mary and read it. He was so charmed with it that he began to say it daily. Insensibly all his anti-Catholic animosity began to disappear. He became a Catholic, a holy priest and a professor of Catholic Theology in Breslau.

A priest was called to the bedside of a man who was dying in despair because of his sins.

Yet he refused obstinately to go to confession. As a last recourse the priest asked him to say at least the Hail Mary after which the poor man made a sincere confession and died a holy death.

In England, a parish priest was asked to go and see a Protestant lady who was gravely ill, and who wished to become a Catholic.

Asked if she had ever gone to a Catholic Church, or, if she had spoken to Catholics, or if she had read Catholic books? She replied, "No, no."

All she could remember was that—when a child—she had learned from a little Catholic neighbor girl the Hail Mary, which she said every night. She was Baptized and before dying had the happiness of seeing her husband and children baptized.

St. Gertrude tells us in her book, "Revelations" that when we thank God for the graces He has given to any Saint, we get a great share of those particular graces.

What graces, then, do we not receive when we say the Hail Mary while thanking God for all the unspeakable graces He has given His Blessed Mother?

With Ecclesiastical Approval.

"... One Ave Maria [Hail Mary] said without sensible fervor, but with a pure will in a time of aridity, has much more value in my sight than an entire Rosary recited in the midst of consolations."

—The Blessed Mother to Sr. Benigna Consolata Ferrero

"The holy and learned Jesuit, Father Suarez, was so deeply aware of the value of the Angelic Salutation [Hail Mary] that he said that he would gladly give all his learning for the price of one Hail Mary that had been said properly."

—St. Louis De Montfort, *The Secret of the Rosary*, p. 48
