

Immaculate Wisdom

Sermon Transcript • August 23, 2026

This week's installment of our mini-catechesis on the Immaculate Heart of Mary takes as its cue and its voice the sayings of so many saints and sages that it may be properly characterized as an extended paraphrase of wisdom distilled through numerous hearts and minds. I have minimized the use of explicit references within the oral form of the sermon, but not in the written manuscript, which I will gladly provide to anyone who asks of it.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He had made anything from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"And Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart."

She is the wisest of mothers, the Mother of True Wisdom. She becomes a scholar, the disciple of the Child, yielding to Him not as to a boy, nor as to a man, but as unto God. She pondered His divine words and works. Nothing that was said or done by Him was lost to her.

As the Word Himself was before her in her womb, so now she conceived His ways and His words and, as it were, nursed them in her heart. Mary conceived the Word in the ear of her heart and the womb of her soul before she conceived Him in the flesh. The pondering about which St. Luke writes is a continued, lifelong form of that same intellectual conception.

Wisdom remains seated in her intellect as she ruminates over the events in her heart. During the thirty hidden years of Our Lord's life, Mary lived a continual conversation with Incarnate Wisdom. Her pondering bespeaks her continual interior conversation.

The knowledge that Our Lady acquired in this way made her the greatest among the theologians. Such close and continued intimacy with her Son created in the Virgin a sanctity inconceivably great. And the knowledge which she gained from conversing with Him is so large, so profound, so diversified, and so thorough, that, though she was a poor woman without human advantage, her knowledge of creation, the universe, and of history excelled the greatest of philosophers; her theological insight, the greatest of theologians; and her prophetic discernment, the most favored among the prophets of old.

The very words with which the Sacred Scriptures speak of Uncreated Wisdom, and by which it speaks of His eternal origin, the Church has been accustomed to apply to the origin of the Blessed Virgin. For God, by one and the same decree, established the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of Divine Wisdom.

Did you catch that? God established Mary's origin and the Incarnation of Wisdom by one and the same eternal decree. And what is said of Wisdom can be understood of Mary too, in her own manner. He is the Wisdom of God, and she Wisdom's Seat.

This Wisdom, which was the Logos of God, and which was God, coming to us from the bosom of the Father, has built for Himself a dwelling, and her name is Mary. His Virgin Mother—and this Domus Sapientiae, this dwelling—He has made strong and stable, beautiful and true in every way.

Mary is the created Sedes, in whom Uncreated Wisdom is seated, contemplated, and made accessible to the rest of the Church. The august Virgin is the spotless Dove, the Holy Jerusalem, the exalted Throne of God, the Ark and House of Holiness, which Eternal Wisdom Himself built.

She is the living throne upon which Uncreated Wisdom sits. This Wisdom of God, first carried in her womb, is laid as Babe upon her lap. She is the Mother who physically bears Wisdom, and the disciple whose heart is the place where Wisdom is contemplated and seated.

Thus the ancient sage sings of her:

“She is a vapor of the power of God, and a certain pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty God. Therefore no defiled thing cometh into her. She is the brightness of eternal light, the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness.”

The work of His Wisdom became the Mother of God.

“And His Mother kept all these things in her heart.”

Dearest friends, during this August month, Holy Mother Church bids us consider Our Lady's studied wisdom—a wisdom that was continuous and progressive. From the Annunciation through the hidden years at Nazareth, the Blessed Virgin lived face to face with Eternal Wisdom, enjoying an intimacy with the Trinity which surpassed even the close friendship with God which Moses of old enjoyed.

A wisdom that was illuminated by divine gifts—gifts which gave her a uniquely fitting and harmonious, quasi-experiential knowledge of divine things, turning every event into an object of loving contemplation.

A wisdom that was redemptive: a wisdom born of contemplation that refused to draw back from the Cross, but which was taken up into it.

Thus Blessed Mary of Agreda hymns the Virgin:

“She felt in her body and pure soul all the pains of the Savior. She ordered her life so as to preserve continually the image of her crucified Son. She desired to be crucified with Him.”

And at Calvary, in wisdom, Our Lady's contemplation of the Passion gave rise to a will more perfectly united to that of her Son.

Finally, friends, Holy Mother Church bids us gaze upon the Blessed Virgin because Wisdom has formed her and cast her as a model for all states of life. In the life of this treasured Daughter of the Father, born of and formed in Wisdom, were combined the ordinary duties of motherhood and household life and the highest contemplation.

For this reason, Our Lady is become the pattern for those living in the world and those called to the religious life, consecrated and contemplative. Put another way, Eternal Wisdom forged within Our Lady a truly maternal heart, and it is with this wise Mother's heart that she approaches the problem of your salvation and mine.

"And Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart."

So, as you come to receive upon your tongues and in your persons the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, I beg you: entreat God the Father to grant you the grace to imitate Our Lady; the grace to ponder with her the divine words and works of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may enjoy something of the Immaculate Wisdom of the Blessed Virgin Mary, saying:

"Almighty everlasting God, who in the Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary prepared a dwelling place worthy of the Holy Ghost, graciously grant that we who have devoutly kept the feast of her Immaculate Heart may be able to live according to Thine."

"Almighty, eternal God, grant us an increase of faith, hope, and charity, and make us love what Thou commandest, so that we may be made worthy to attain what Thou dost promise. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen."

Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, pray for us.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.