

Mary's Arm

Sermon October 18 2026

And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.¹

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

***Gaude, Maria Virgo,
cunctas haereses sola interemisti
in universo mundo.²***

*Rejoice, O Virgin Mary,
thou alone hast destroyed all heresies
in the whole world.*

Dear friends, when one considers the manner in which Holy Mother Church has, for two millennia, hymned the Blessed Virgin, it can be asserted without fear that it is nigh impossible to exaggerate the immensity of her glory. With dogmatic force, the rocky gavel of St. Peter and the voice of the Church founded upon him by Our Lord Jesus Christ have bound on earth and in Heaven numerous titles of our humble Maid of Nazareth. Behold: the Mother of God, the Immaculate Conception, the Ever-Virgin, and the Queen of Heaven.

And when, in and through Peter, Our Blessed Lord, the Head and Saviour of the Body, revealed these truths of public revelation, He did not do so in order that they might be relegated to the arena of pious platitudes—to the cluster of things suitable only to, and necessary only for, the more simple among His brethren.

No, each of these titles speaks to, and is endowed with, rights and powers which, when contemplated by her sons of tremendous intellectual gifts, compel those very sons to confess:

*“O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!
How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways!”*

And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.³

¹ Apocalypse 12.1-2 (DR).

² *Responsory Gaude Maria Virgo*, Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the pre-1955 Roman Breviary and Missal. See also Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907), which invokes Mary under this title.

³ Apocalypse 12.1-2 (DR).

Friends, today is the Third Sunday of October, the month in which Holy Mother Church invites us to reflect upon, and to delight in, the mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary. So today, in answer to her call, on the Feast of St. Luke—third amongst the Evangelists, but first amongst the iconographers of the Blessed Virgin Mary—today, in this third installment of our mini-catechesis on the Most Holy Rosary of the ever-glorious Blessed Virgin Mary, we will give pause to consider the doctrines set before us through the Fifth Glorious Mystery. You know, that Mystery which commemorates and celebrates the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Most Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

As St. Alphonsus de Liguori teaches:

“Let those who can comprehend with what love the Most Holy Trinity blessed her, comprehend what a welcome the Eternal Father gave to His Daughter, the Son to His Mother, the Holy Spirit to His Spouse. The Father crowns her by sharing with her His power, the Son His wisdom, the Holy Spirit His love.

And all the Three Divine Persons, establishing her throne at the right hand of Jesus, declare her to be the universal Queen of Heaven and earth, and command angels and all other creatures to recognize her for their Queen and, as Queen, to serve and obey her.”⁴



And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.⁵



Friends, while men in high places seek to diminish the intensity of our devotion to the Woman predestined to Christ by eternal decree, St. Peter’s voice bids us lavish upon Our Lady such honor and devotion that the combined honor and devotion which we offer to the plenitude of all the other saints—honors and devotion which, when considered in isolation, should make the Catholic heart sing—compared to that, compared to our devotion to Our Lady, those should appear weak and paltry.

So, when those men in high ecclesiastical places command our silence regarding the glories of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we must answer with St. Peter, who, speaking through Leo XIII, taught and declared the following:

“Whoever considers the height of dignity and glory to which God has raised the Most August Virgin Mary will easily perceive how important it is, both for public and for private benefit, that devotion to her should be assiduously practised, and daily promoted more and more.”⁶

⁴ Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary*, “Another Discourse on the Assumption of Mary,” Point I and Point II (various pre-1960 English translations; e.g., Catholic Publication Society editions).

⁵ Apocalypse 12.1-2 (DR).

⁶ Leo XIII, *Augustissimae Virginis Mariae* (encyclical letter, September 12, 1897), para. 1, *Acta Sanctae Sedis* 30 (1897-1898): 129-35.

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*And being with child, the Woman cried, travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered. And she brought forth a Man-Child, Who was to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her Son was taken up to God, and to His throne.*⁷

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Friends, behold Mary's arm: the arm in which the Arm of the Lord took refuge; the arm of the Queen of Heaven and earth; the arm that revealed the King to the shepherds, to the Magi, to Simeon, and to the whole world.

Behold Mary's arm: the arm upon which the Arm of the Lord placed Its seal; the arm of the Queen of Heaven and earth; the arm which shares in that strength to guard and sanctify the faithful.

Behold Mary's arm: the arm that receives from the Arm of the Lord the fruits of His saving victory; the arm of the Queen of Heaven and earth; the arm entrusted with the distribution of those fruits among men.

So, when they say, "Silence," with *una voce* let us reply in the words of the saints; and with Saints Bernardine of Siena, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Bonaventure, let us proclaim Our Lady's terrible power:

*"As wax melts before the fire, so these wicked spirits remain powerless against the soul in which they find a frequent remembrance of Mary's name, the pious invocation of her aid, and the imitation of her virtues."*⁸

*"The Blessed Virgin is Queen over hell, and ruler of the spirits of evil, for she controls and conquers them. Mary is called terrible against the power of hell, as an army set in array."*⁹

*"At the name of Mary every knee bends, even in hell itself; and not only the demons tremble, but they are filled with terror."*¹⁰

When they say, "Silence," let us remember, then remind them of, the doctrine of St. Louis de Montfort and of its uncomfortable implications for those who resist the power which the Queen of Heaven and earth possesses by the grace of the Almighty:

*"What Lucifer lost by pride, Mary won by humility. The magnificence of the devil is even more humbled to see himself under the feet of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the most humble person who has ever been, than to feel crushed by the arms of the Almighty."*¹¹

⁷ Apocalypse 12.5 (DR).

⁸ Bonaventure, as cited in traditional May meditations and in Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary*.

⁹ Bernardine of Siena, as quoted in Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary*, Part I, ch. 7 (or the section on Mary's power against the devil).

¹⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, as quoted in Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary*, and in standard pre-conciliar collections on the power of the Name of Mary.

¹¹ Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, nn. 52–53 (various pre-conciliar English translations).

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***Gaude, Maria Virgo,
cunctas haereses sola interemisti
in universo mundo.***¹²

*Rejoice, O Virgin Mary,
thou alone hast destroyed all heresies
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My dear friends, we live in perilous times: frightening for the world, but more threatening yet for Holy Mother Church and her would-be sons and daughters. But we are not meant to be alone, and alone we are not. So, while the storms toss the sea about us, let us cry out to Our Lady with Belloc¹³ and say:

*“The twisting tides,
And the perilous sands
Upon all sides
Are in your holy hands.*

*The wind harries
And the cold kills;
But I see your chapel
Over far hills.*

*My body is frozen,
My soul is afraid:
Stretch out your hands to me,
Mother and maid.*

*Mother of Christ,
And Mother of me,
Save me alive
From the howl of the sea.”*

And as we come to receive upon our tongues and in our persons the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, let us implore our Heavenly Father, through the intercession of St. Luke, Evangelist and writer of the icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to grant us the grace to confidently take refuge in Mary’s arm, that we might more readily attain to the salvation of our souls and, perhaps, even assist in the salvation of the souls of those held in our love, saying:

May Luke, Thy holy Evangelist, O Lord, we beseech Thee, intercede in our behalf, who for the honor of Thy name bore continually in his body the mortification of the Cross.

¹² *Responsory Gaude Maria Virgo*, Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the pre-1955 Roman Breviary and Missal. See also Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907), which invokes Mary under this title.

¹³ Belloc, Hilaire. “In a Boat.” In *Sonnets and Verse*, 102–3. London: Duckworth & Co., 1923.

O God, *Who willest that all men should be saved* and should come to the knowledge of the truth, we beseech Thee, send forth laborers into Thy harvest, and grant them grace to speak Thy word with all boldness, so that Thy word may spread swiftly and be glorified, and all nations may know Thee, the only God, and Him Whom Thou hast sent, even Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

St. Luke, pray for us.

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, 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.*