

Virgo, the Divine Healer

IN LATE MARCH we will enter the holy week of preparation for the greatest festival of the Christian Year, Easter, the festival of Life triumphant. "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin...But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

But before we can witness the glory of the risen and victorious Christ on Easter morning, we have to see him crucified on Good Friday. And together with us at the foot of the Cross stands Mary, His mother.

When we came to worship Him on Christmas Night, we saw Him, a small earth-born child on His mother's lap. On Good Friday we hear our self-sacrificing Saviour speaking to his mother from the cross. According to the Gospel of St. John: "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold your son! Then said he to the disciple, behold, thy mother."



Mary and John at the Sepulcher

And as we arrive at His grave on Easter morning, the first rays of the rising sun reveal a glorified woman standing by the stone which the Angel has rolled away from the empty tomb. The fallen door of death now appears as an altar step; by the altar of life stands life's priestess. Her face is turned toward the rising sun; behind her the empty grave. In her arms, which at Christmas held the child, she now clasps a sheaf of golden wheat, tenderly, lovingly as if she held a baby; lilies bloom at her feet; her garb is blue as the skies; soft-eyed rabbits play about the hem of her garment; her motherly lips repeat the Easter message which the Angel proclaimed to her. She, the mother—our Master's mother, the Mother of Man, the mother of all living things—she, mother Mary, Mother Earth, was the first one to receive the Easter news of life's triumph over death. "Seek not the living amongst the dead. Thy son is not here. He is risen!"

Thus spoke the Angel. He was the same who thirty-four years before came to her at the first full

moon after the spring equinox and greeted her: "Hail Mary, full of grace, joy be to you, favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women; you will conceive and bear a son, and you are to call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and of His kingdom there will be no end. And He shall heal His people of all their sins."

Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Jehoshua*, *Jeho-Shua*, which means *God saves*, or *God heals*. "He shall heal His people of all their sins." His people are symbolized by the disciple at the foot of the cross, John, whom he loved. The Spanish language has a wonderful expression to signify the people, the broad masses of toiling and suffering, sinning and dying humanity. These are in Spanish called *John of the Cross*. They are the Master's people, for He loves all the sick who need His healing hand, all the sinners who need His saving grace.

And these people who groan under the cross of disease and death in consequence of their sins, are they not all Mother Nature's children? "Behold, they are thy sons," O Mother Earth, who art as pure as thou art bountiful, as loving as thou art just. They suffer because they have not heeded thy laws, O pure, virgin Mother. Thou decreest that man seek woman and woman know man at thy season, without lust or passion, from pure and selfless love alone, so that thy holy purpose might be served and bodies built for the Egos returning from heaven into thy care. But man has disobeyed thee and uses the sacred creative function for the gratification of the lowest self.

Thou weepst at the cross, Mother Mary, O pure one, whose mind is chaste as thy white lilies, though thy body conceived and gave birth. Thou weepst, Mother of Man, because thy pure son had

to give his life to save the impure ones. Thou weepst, mother of all earthly creation, because of the wrongs done by man to thy younger children. Thy love is all-enfolding, all-embracing; it encompasses not only humankind but all living things. The animals, gentle and trusting, dumb and dependent, the animals whom man betrays and tortures, abuses and slaughters, are thy younger children.

Thou hast ordained that man should eat pure food, the fruit of thy trees, the green herbs and the golden grain of thy fields. Thy garden, O Mother Nature, is as boundless as it is beautiful, and provides pure food in abundance for all thy children,

if they work in harmony with thee and tend and cultivate it so that it may yield ever-increasing abundance. But thy fallen sons prefer to defile the fruitful purity of thy garden by hunting, trapping, and slaughtering thy defenseless creatures. The animals are brought forth by thee for purposes of their own evolution, yet man in disobedience to thy laws claims greedy and cruel mas-

tership over them.

The plant is constituted of a physical body and a vital body; it has not developed the desire body in which emotion and feeling, the sensations of pleasure or of pain, originate. It has no nervous system by means of which the sensations prompted by the desire body are felt in the physical body. The animal has a desire body and a nervous system which in the higher domestic animals is more sensitive than that of man in the Lemurian period or of certain Lemurian peoples surviving today. For man to kill these highly sensitive animals; to cause them intense suffering; to cut short their possibility for experience and evolution; and then to fill his body with the agonized flesh of his younger brothers is a desecration of Mother Nature, who provides

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humans with all the pure food which they need to nourish their bodies and make them pure, strong, and healthy.

The evolutionary laws governing the plant kingdom are such that the plants benefit by being gathered and by having their fruits plucked and their seeds scattered. Grain and herbs and fruit are nurtured with the sweetness of the earth and filled with the life-giving splendor of the sun. But man's desires are coarsened by passion; his self-centered mind, which ignores the rights of others, leaves him in ignorance of his own true welfare; he

prefers putrefaction to sweetness, poison to purity, and imagines that he nourishes his body while he destroys it. For Mother Earth, who gives so lavishly and lovingly, becomes a stern, avenging, relentless goddess when her children are wronged and her laws disobeyed. Woe unto man who despises her sweet foods and gorges upon the flesh of his brothers whom he has tortured and killed.

Mother Nature watches in dismay as man's daily food turns to poison in his intestines and kills him slowly, gradually, inevitably, through years of pain and suffering. One-half of mankind's diseases is caused by abuse of the sacred creative function, either in this or in former lives; much of the other half is due to the poisons generated in the human system through decaying animal flesh.

Mother Earth weeps at the cross because her holy son had to give his perfect body so that the diseased bodies of the unholy ones might be healed.

Before the Resurrection the pure and perfect body of Jesus, which was found worthy to serve as the dwelling house of the Christ Spirit, was of the



Giordano Luca. Mid-1670s. Hermitage Museum, Moscow, Russia

Expulsion of the Money Changers from the Temple

The incident portrayed above symbolizes purging the body temple of all elements and processes which violate its integrity and purity.

earth, earthy. It was not a celestial, that is, etheric, body, but a terrestrial or physical body. Jesus was conceived by earthly parents, but their minds were virgin pure, free from passion, free from self, aglow with the chaste fire of sacrifice. The blood and fibre of their bodies was built of the pure foods from Nature's garden. Jesus was born of an earthly mother, yet the materials provided for his body by his parents were so pure and used by him in such a perfect manner that his physical body attained to the highest grade of perfection, namely, the highest rate of vibration possible to physical matter. We have defiled our physical bodies and now speak disparagingly of their imperfection. Jesus, who kept his physical body a temple, a sanctuary for the Christ Spirit to enter, shows the world the perfection of which the physical body is capable. This perfection is not constituted by external beauty. A physical body may be outwardly perfect in face and form and yet through crystallization in self and the consequent low vibration of its atoms, be hopelessly imperfect for the purposes of evolution, which

consider nothing but vibratory speed.

The atoms of a physical body that is free from sex passion and impure food, free from selfishness, anger, and greed, finally reach the high rate of vibration required by the refined atoms of etheric matter. Thus, automatically, the building of the etheric body keeps pace with the perfection of the physical body, and when the latter is laid aside forever, the Ego has a conscious vehicle ready wherein to function.

Every week in our healing service we hear of the golden wedding garment which is built by pure living. This golden wedding garment is the etheric or celestial body. Jesus was the first man who by perfect obedience to Nature's laws, by perfect purity of life, had raised the earthy atoms of his physical body to such a vibratory speed that when they were torn asunder by death, the etheric atoms immediately took their place and the etheric or celestial form stood ready—conscious, radiant, glorious.

The tomb in which the physical body of Jesus had been laid was empty, but the Christ Spirit at once transferred His functions to the etheric body which served as His earthly vehicle until the time of His ascension. "A terrestrial body is sown, a celestial body is resurrected."

The man Jesus, whose earthly body was so pure that it held the Christ Spirit and withstood the tremendous impact of the Christ vibrations, the man Jesus, our Master and example, was born when the zodiacal sign of Virgo was ascending on the eastern horizon. In the language of astrology, the earthy sign of Virgo was our Master's rising sign. Let us meditate upon both the wonderful religious symbolism of astrology and the astrological symbolism of the gospels. Virgo is the sign of health, unless man's self-willed disobedience pervert it into the sign of disease. Virgo is the sign of the healer. Jesus, healthy through purity, healed the ailments of mankind. Virgo is the sign of selfless service such as rendered by Him; of pure food such as nourished His blood; of chastity such as exalted His mind and His body. Virgo is the sign of Mother Nature, Mother Earth, and the sign of obedience to Nature's laws.

*There is a wall of flesh before the eyes
Of John who yet perceives and hails his king,*

Song

For Mercy, Courage, Kindness, Mirth,
There is no measure upon earth.
Nay, they wither, root and stem,
If an end be set to them.

Overbrim and overflow,
If your own heart you would know;
For the spirit born to bless
Lives but in its own excess.

Laurence Binyon

*It is our Lady's painful bliss to bring
Before mankind the glory of the skies.*

Jesus has given us the example that transmutation of the earthy and mortal body into the celestial and immortal one must be accomplished not in superphysical spheres but by a life of purity and service lived on this earth.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was an earthly woman—but "Behold, I tell you a mystery." His body conceived by Mary, carried by Mary, born of Mary, was found perfect enough to receive the Christ Spirit. Thus Mary, mother of Jesus, becomes Mary, mother of Christ. This is the apotheosis of motherhood, so sacred, so wondrously mystical that words are rendered mute.

Mary, whom the Christ Spirit in her son's resurrected celestial body greets on Easter morning, is no longer the mortal woman. She is the Divine Mother, the mother of Life immortal.

In the old Anglo-Saxon tongue the Goddess of Life was called *Eastre*. All living things were sacred to her; her festival was held in spring. Our Christian Easter derives its name from her. Let us take with us into Easter week the mystic words from the deeply religious soul of Joyce Kilmer, the young American poet, whose body was offered for mankind's sins on the battlefields of France during this century's First World War:

*O, Mother Mary, give us Christ to carry
In our hearts, that we may conquer death.* □

—Margaret Wolff