

***We have a Mother! What mother?***

“In the Gospel,” Pope Francis exhorts us, “we have heard Jesus tell the disciple: **“Behold your mother”** (Jn 19: 26-27). ***We have a Mother!*** A “*Lady so beautiful,*” the three visionaries of Fatima commented on their way home, in that blessed day of June 13, one hundred years ago.<sup>1</sup>

“We have a Mother!” **Yes, we have a Mother, Maximilian Kolbe, the enamored son, repeated with his heart. (cf KW 1145).**

At the end of Jesus’ s earthly existence, Mary receives from the dying Son the commission of spiritual maternity towards the “*beloved disciple,*”<sup>2</sup> the imagine of every disciple who “*takes her in his house*” (Jn 19: 27b.) With Saint Maximilian we go to Calvary to listen once again to the dying Word of God.

V. 25: **“*Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister...*”**

The Gospel tells us that Mary, his mother, was at the cross of Jesus. **“*Mary was.*”**

“*Was*” is the same verb that John uses to say that “*the Word was with God and the verb was God.*” So, when John says: **“*Mary was by the cross,*”** he wants to speak of this great reality: “*Mary is*” in such a way by the cross that she is one with the pain of the Son. Mary is by the cross in an attitude of conformity with the Crucified Son. **Mary stays by the cross in a manner of offering,** not of abasement, not folded up in herself. Mary is offering herself with Jesus for the salvation of the world. An ancient father, Melitone of Sardi, calls Mary with a beautiful image: “*the pure Lamb.*” She is the pure Lamb and offers herself together with Jesus, the Lamb. Jesus, the Lamb offers himself for the salvation of the world and she, the Mother, the Lamb, offers herself with the Son.

“*Standing*” (*Eistecheisan*): the verb is in the imperfect and indicates the continuing presence at the place of execution. Therefore, Mary offers herself with the Son for the salvation of the word not once, but continuously, in the days of all time. She takes care of us. Always! She has us feel her maternal presence so that the hidden presence of God is awakened in us, so as not to let ourselves be fooled by the false myths of egoism, the fear of man, indifference and opportunism.

The Virgin appears at Fatima in a precise time, the beginning of the XX century, that John Paul II called “*The century of the ideology of evil.*” *Mary is by the cross of Jesus.* Mary is by the cross of all the crucified of human history.

Mary’s presence by the cross is the most radical presence of love.

For this, Mary’s *stabat*, at the cross, is the *stabat* of love that overcomes itself. “*Mary lives by the cross of Jesus because,*” says Cardinal Martini, “*she grasps the fecundity of what is*

*happening; the sense of her suffering is the generating of a people of believers.*” In fact, Jesus, before dying, gives life to a community with the beloved disciple with Mary at the center.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, *Homily*, Mary 13 2017, Fatima.

<sup>2</sup> Jesus loves everyone, but the disciple that he loves is the disciple who fully accepts the love of the Master and is “likeness” of all the disciples.

Mary is at the center of this group in journey that, in the course of the centuries, goes on its journey in the footsteps of Jesus. Therefore, the community that is born on Calvary, is a community that is born from the cross. We are a community of Church, a community of parish, a community of family. We are a community that is born of the cross. A community is such for having looked for a long time at the Crucified one and for having welcomed his last words as testimony: **“Behold your son...Behold your mother:** (verses 26-27).

The last words of Jesus recall the words of the covenant: “You will be my people and I will be your God” (Ez 36: 28).

They recall the words of love: “My lover belongs to me and I to him” (SOS 2: 16).

**“Behold your mother! Behold your son!”** are words that mean what they say that the son is entrusted to the mother and mother is entrusted to the son.

**“And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home”** (19: 27b). In the home of his heart, of his inner world. *“He took her into his environment”*<sup>3</sup>. *“From that hour”* doesn’t mean from that moment, but from the hour of Jesus.<sup>4</sup> **As fruit of the hour of maximum giving, Jesus gives his mother.**

**“Behold your son!..Behold your mother!”:** A word that the Lord Jesus, in the course of centuries, continues to repeat to *“the disciple he loves”* and **father Kolbe welcomes the Mother in his life.** He wants to conform himself to the Immaculata to being transformed in her, so to allow that *“She take possession of our heart and of all our being, that She live and work in us and through us, that She love God with our heart, and e belong to her without any limit.”*<sup>5</sup> Saint Maximilian gives himself totally to the Mother and from her is made capable of being transformed according to the heart of her Son Jesus.

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<sup>3</sup> Ugo Vanni, s.j., Dispensa del corso del Vg di Gv, anno accademico 2000-2001, Rome, pg. 80. “Eis ta’ idia” means “One’s environment.” It can also mean one’s home, but from context it’s “environment.”

<sup>4</sup>*ibidem.*

<sup>5</sup> KW 1210

