



### 33. The Immaculata Spirit

*The text presented here should complement the previous one and deepen what has been said about the Blessed Mother. The previous text gave a discursive explanation of the truth about the Immaculate Mother of God and her importance for our image of the human person. The following text has the same message, but the style is different.*

*It has been taken from the “Hirtenspiegel – Shepherd’s Mirror”, which Fr Kentenich composed in the concentration camp at Dachau from 9 April 1943 to February 1944. It is a didactic poem with 5870 verses that offer instruction and inspiration originally intended for the superiors of the Sisters of Mary – hence its name.*

*The last part of the Shepherd’s Mirror, from verse 4002-5870 – where it breaks off because other projects had to be tackled – are devoted to the Blessed Mother. It is from this section that we have taken the meditation printed here about the special graces given to the Blessed Mother, her significance for our image of human beings in general, and of women in particular, and our relationship to God.*

*The verse form of the Shepherd’s Mirror creates a special climate and is therefore able to deepen our love for the Blessed Mother, and/or encourage us to study the whole work. Besides this a study of the Shepherd’s Mirror will greatly increase our admiration for the founder, who could compose such a work with such profound concentration and love for the Blessed Mother and his foundation in the “hell of Dachau”.*

*The text is written in four-line rhyming verse, so the translator has to make a choice: to try to reproduce the verse while perhaps (necessarily) departing somewhat from the original text, or making a prose translation that closely reproduces the founder’s thoughts. I have chosen the latter course. The effect of the two approaches can be clearly seen in verse 5791.*

*The text is taken from the “Hirtenspiegel”, Berg Sion 1977.*

#### [XXIII. Gifts of grace: The Immaculate Conception]

5774 Eternal Love freed you from the bitter disgrace that sin brings in its wake, and preserved you from the curse of original sin. You never knew even the least breach with God.

- 5775 Just as Eve once entered into life without the least original sin, free from the anguish of sin, so from the beginning of your life you were free from guilt, because of the Eternal Father's benevolence.
- 5776 On account of your Son's death on the Cross, God dammed up before you, the pure figure of light, the powerful stream of original sin, which we see flowing with tremendous force through the millennia.
- 5777 Already at the first moment of your existence at your conception you were borne by the breeze of grace; the WORD mercifully united himself to you,
- 5778 He made himself one with you as your Bridegroom, and gave you a share in the lustre of his purity, granting you the wonderful crown of immaculateness;
- 5779 he so filled you with God's rich graces that the devil's cunning could never harm you. Together with your Son you were to crush the devil's head, whose envy robbed us of God's favour.
- 5780 The Protogospel shows how you oppose him implacably. If you had been even slightly touched by the flood of original sin, friendship with the devil would have been in your blood.
- 5781 So you stride with your Son through time, and with him you may lead the crowds of the elect. You both lead the battle against Satan's realm of death until he is chained up by your march of victory.
- 5782 You shine out radiantly in the beauty of your immaculateness. In you God's favourite music resounds to us in this vale of tears, and awakens in us the longing to escape from the torment of sin.
- 5783 When I look at your image, I learn to understand the things that grieve God so deeply, and warm myself for the lustre of immaculate purity in the midst of today's collapse of values, which resembles a great dance of the devil.
- 5784 In you I see God's wisdom reigning; in you his omnipotence is powerfully triumphant. In you God's image shines out so radiantly that the world in its course sinks down before him.
- 5785 You restore to creation its correct consecration, you stand at its summit, [you are] in the front row, indeed, in yourself you are already "a whole world on its own", the brightest reflection of God's beauty.
- 5786 In you the fullness of the image of humankind glows brightly, just as the Father wisely willed it. You are the remnant of Paradise in the prison of our poor vale of tears on earth.
- 5787 In you the great and noble dignity of womanhood shines through the anguish and nakedness of all Eve's daughters. You are the woman who fulfils God's plan and reveals to me the whole nobility of woman.
- 5788 Grant that I may immerse myself each day in this image, and give it all the warmth of my love. Through this image let me find a home in God's world, into which the bright light of faith places me.

**[Immaculata Spirit, sinlessness]**

- 5789 I see how all the greatness and riches of God's grace, which are and remain incomparable, constantly enkindle your love – you are a thrice admirable miracle of love.

- 5790 This love urges you to serve us in such a way that each day we are on earth we may increasingly gain more of the Immaculata spirit and sinlessness as a treasure from Paradise.
- 5791 I build upon your power and your goodness, trusting in them with the heart of a child; I believe and trust in every circumstance in you, Thrice Admirable, and your Child.  
(I trust your might, your kindness, Mother dear, I do believe that you are always near. Whatever happens, Mother mild, I blindly trust in you and in your Child.)
- 5792 In Paradise grace was connected with integrity from the wounds of the drives. So your image, which was never disfigured by original sin, rises warmly before my eyes.
- 5793 What we lost through Adam's guilt, we now hope to be given one day as the gift of salvation. Even now, however, grace struggles for that great good which was taken from us by the outrage of sin.
- 5794 [Of course, grace will only be able] to gain [the grace of sinlessness] in full measure [for us] when we reach eternity, heaven, which is full of joy, and without envy attain the eternal, blissful vision of God.
- 5795 Yet God's grace wants to reconquer for us already here on the winding ways on this earth at least a bit of this holy good of integrity, if we generously follow him with a childlike spirit.