



Boston Catholic Journal

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"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." *

St. Luke 1.28

MARY ...



FULL OF GRACE

"**G**race", we are taught by Holy Mother Church, "*is a participation in the life of God*" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §1997) – and Mary, the Angel Gabriel declares, *is filled with it!* Filled with the life of God, *participating in* the life of God as no other human being in history. She alone is **full of grace**, she alone participates consummately in the life of God – *even before* she bore His Son.

Why?

Because she *was* to bear His Son. It was from Mary that Jesus took His Sacred Humanity. It was from Mary that He took His flesh, becoming like unto us in every way but sin.

How much closer can a human being be to God ... than to have given Him His very flesh ... enabling, yes, *enabling* God to become man!

Jesus' flesh was not different from Mary's – *it was Mary's!* ... just as his Divinity was not different from God's, but *was, is,* God's.

Ponder that a while ... and look at Mary anew, and her place in the scheme of things, in what theologians call, "the economy of Salvation."

She was not just "highly favored" as many current translations inexplicably corrupt the text, "*gratia plena*".

Abraham was *highly favored* by God. Moses was *highly favored* by God. David was *highly favored* by God. But neither Abraham nor Isaac, neither Jacob nor David, and not even Moses, were "full of grace" --- that is to say, fully possessed of that participation in the very life of God with which Mary was endowed through her Immaculate Conception in the womb of her mother, St. Anne. She was to bear, to give flesh that was untainted by sin, to the Son of God

Who can possibly be closer to Jesus Christ both in Heaven and on Earth? Who is, ever will be, more *one* with Him ... than Mary, whose flesh is one flesh with Him since the moment of His conception in her womb, His Incarnation --- and will be for all eternity?

Who is like unto Mary? No man. No other woman. Only her Son.

That we should love her, who loved Him most, is loving Christ Himself in His Sacred Humanity, a humanity inseparable from His Divinity. In Him is Mary as she is in no other; in Mary is Christ as He is in no other!

We cannot love Mary enough. Nor can we separate her from her Son any more than we can separate from Jesus his Divinity from His Humanity.

Look at Mary anew! And if you do not stand back in stupefaction, you are a stone.

Hail Mary! She *is* full of Grace!

Ite ad Mariam! Go to Mary!

How like unto the Son, the Mother, and like unto the Mother, the Son!

* **NOT** "favored one" (oddly enough, the *New American Bible* used by the *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops* (USCB), renders it, "Hail, *full of grace!* The Lord is with you" in <http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab/122004.htm> – while translating exactly the same text, from the same version, chapter and verse, "Hail, *favored one!* The Lord is with you." (<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab/bible/luke/luke1.htm#v26>).



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