

## LUTHER'S DEVOTION TO MARY



Protestant Reformer Martin Luther (1483–1546) retained a lifelong devotion to Mary. His Marian beliefs are very Catholic, and show how much common ground Protestants and Catholics could have about Mary.

### MOTHER OF GOD

“She is rightly called not only the mother of the man but also the Mother of God. ... It is certain that Mary is the mother of the real and true God.”<sup>34</sup>

“It should also be said that Mary is the true natural mother of the child called Jesus Christ, and that she is the true mother of God and bearer of God, ... that Mary suckled God, rocked God to sleep, prepared broth and soup for God, etc.”<sup>35</sup>

### IMMACULATELY CONCEIVED

“In the first place, she is full of grace, proclaimed to be entirely without sin—something exceedingly great. For God’s grace fills her with everything good and makes her devoid of all evil.... Moreover, God guarded and protected her from all that might be hurtful to her.”<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 24, 107.

<sup>35</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 41, 100.

<sup>36</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 43, 40.

### PERPETUALLY VIRGIN

“We ... hold that she remained a virgin after the birth of Christ because Scripture does not state or indicate that she later lost her virginity.”<sup>37</sup>

“A new lie about me is being circulated. I am supposed to have preached and written that Mary, the mother of God, was not a virgin either before or after the birth of Christ ... and had more children after that.”<sup>38</sup>

“When Matthew [1:25] says that Joseph did not know Mary carnally until she had brought forth her son, it does not follow that he knew her subsequently; on the contrary, it means that he never did know her.”<sup>39</sup>

### SPIRITUAL MOTHER OF CHRISTIANS

“Man (if he has this faith) may boast of such treasure as that Mary is his real mother, Christ his brother, and God his father.”<sup>40</sup>

### PRAYING THE “HAIL MARY”

“Our prayer should include the Mother of God.... What the Hail Mary says is that all glory should be given to God, using these words: ‘Hail, Mary, full of grace....’ You see that these words are not concerned with prayer but purely with giving praise and honor. ... We can use the Hail Mary as a meditation in which we recite what grace God has given her. Second, we should add a wish that everyone may know and respect her....”<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 45, 206.

<sup>38</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 45, 199.

<sup>39</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 45, 212.

<sup>40</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 5, 15.

<sup>41</sup> *Luther’s Works*, Volume 43, 39.