

The Perpetual Virginity Of The Blessed Virgin Mary Scripture Study



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Icon¹

Welcome to this study on the topic of the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In this study we will look at Mary, who is “the handmaiden of the Lord”, and is explicitly described in Scripture as “a Virgin”.

Let’s open now in a word of prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful;
And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray . . .

O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit, we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, Full of grace the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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NOTES PAGE²

Why We Will Ignore “The Protoevangelium” For This Study

There is an ancient document called “The Protoevangelium” sometimes called “The Protoevangelium of James” or “The Gospel of James”.

The Protoevangelium purports to give a historical account of the marriage of Mary and Joseph. It is filled with much good and accurate tradition about their marriage ceremony and the Blessed Virgin Mary’s virginal vow.

Frequently Catholics use this to support Mary’s Perpetual Virginity. I absolutely won’t use it here though. I avoid using it in a study like this like the plague. Why? Because the Protoevangelium also has some “poison” so we will NOT be using that document in this study.

What is the “poison”? It has a small section in it where an alleged midwife was supposedly “assisting” Mary’s birth and stuck her hand inside Mary checking things and got an immediate case of leprosy on her hand.

The whole midwife aspect is utter non-sense. **There was no midwife at Jesus’ miraculous birth.** Also God would not allow this common or profane “clinical” practice in such a sublime situation. St. Jerome, clearly alluding to the Protoevangelium warns . . .

ST. JEROME No midwife assisted at His birth; no women's officiousness intervened (officiousness = “**excessive eagerness in offering unwanted services** or advice to others³”).

With (Mary’s) her own hands she wrapped Him in the swaddling clothes, **herself both mother and midwife**, (Luke 2:7) "and laid Him," we are told, "in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn"; a statement which, on the one hand, **refutes the ravings of the apocryphal accounts, for Mary herself wrapped Him in the swaddling clothes⁴**, . . .

— St. Jerome. Against Helvetius. Section 10.

² All Bible passages in this study will be from the Revised Standard Edition, Catholic Edition unless otherwise stated. Catechism quotes are from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (“CCC”) and/or the Roman Catechism. For these documents as well as historical statements, underlining, **bold**, and ALL CAPITAL type will be mine unless otherwise stated.

³ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/officious>

⁴ <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3007.htm>

Introduction

Before adequately studying the Perpetual Virginity of Mary, some background is necessary. We will study what a “virgin” is, because there are three main ways of looking at this. We will see the Blessed Virgin Mary identified as a Virgin in Scripture. We will look at Old Testament consecrated virgins in marriages. This is the equivalent of what we today sometimes call: “Josephite Marriages”. We will study the ancient Hebrew marriage rite too, because it will be Biblically assumed and applied to Mary and Joseph’s situation in the Gospels of Saints Matthew and Luke. We will do an exercise in common sense, then apply it to The Blessed Mother in St. Luke’s Gospel. We will look at several of the main objections (including the “until” and the “brothers” objections). Then we will close with discussion and prayer.

Definition of a Virgin

There are three common ways to define a person who has not had marital relations. One way is a person who has been so from birth and has kept continence, but is awaiting marriage (when that virginity will eventually be voluntarily surrendered to their spouse i.e. Gen 24:16).

GENESIS 24:16a 16 The maiden (Rebekah) was very fair to look upon,
a virgin, whom no man had known.

The second definition we won’t expound upon other than some ancient kings et. al. would FORCE this condition upon men overseeing palace women by cutting off some of their body parts.

The third way to define this is a consecrated virgin, that is, someone who voluntarily keeps continence as a lifelong vow of **extra devotion to God**. A woman taking such a vow would be considered **the “handmaiden of the Lord”**. Jesus summarizes all three of them in Matthew 19 (see also CCC 1618⁵).

MATTHEW 19:12 a 12 For there are **eunuchs who have been so from birth**,
and there are **eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men**, and there are
eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. . . .

The third type here would be the same as a consecrated virgin. A “consecration” is a special and holy dedication by someone who has authority to carry that out. A consecrated virgin is someone who gives themselves in a more complete way, as a “handmaiden of the Lord”. (See CCC 1618 in footnote 3). Such people “follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (Revelation 14:4)

REVELATION 14:4, 5b (DRV) 4 These are they who were not defiled with women: **for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.** These were purchased from among men, the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb: . . .they are without spot before the throne of God.

⁵ **CCC 1618** Christ is the center of all Christian life. The bond with him takes precedence over all other bonds, familial or social.¹¹³ From the very beginning of the Church there have been men and women who have renounced the great good of marriage to follow the Lamb wherever he goes, to be intent on the things of the Lord, to seek to please him, and to go out to meet the Bridegroom who is coming.¹¹⁴ Christ himself has invited certain persons to follow him in this way of life, of which he remains the model:

"For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."¹¹⁵

The Blessed Virgin Mary Is Explicitly Described In Scripture As “A Virgin”

In Luke 1:27 and Matthew 1:23 Mary is explicitly described as a “virgin”.

LUKE 1:26-27, 38a 26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a **virgin** betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

I would suggest that the meaning of “virgin” in Luke 1 (and Matthew 1) is a **consecrated virgin**.

WHAT Does This Description Of Mary As “Virgin” Mean?

Virginité is a grace from God, just as Holy Matrimony is a grace from God. Both should be highly regarded as coming from Christ (CCC 1620).

CCC 1620b . . . Esteem of virginity for the sake of the kingdom¹¹⁸ and the Christian understanding of marriage are inseparable, and they reinforce each other . . .

We don't get to have EXPLICIT statements on something like this subject concerning the Blessed Mother. This is a very HOLY and sublime topic and needs to be treated as such—especially as it concerns Mary the Mother of God (Jesus is God).

1st CORINTHIANS 2:7-8 7 But we impart a **secret** and **hidden wisdom** of God, which **God decreed before the ages** for our glorification. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH "And from the prince of this world were **hidden Mary's virginity and her child-bearing**, in like manner also the death of the Lord."

— St. Ignatius of Antioch Letter To The Ephesians

St. Basil (in the 300's A.D.) almost certainly alluding to St. Ignatius of Antioch (in the 100's A.D.) . . .

ST. BASIL An ancient author offered another reason. The marriage with Joseph was planned so that **Mary's virginity might remain hidden from the prince of this world. For the external forms of marriage were adopted by the Virgin, almost as if to distract the Evil One, who has always preyed on virgins, ever since he heard the prophet announcing: "Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a son" (Is 7:14).** With this marriage, then, the tempter of virginity was deceived. For he knew that the coming of the Lord in the flesh would entail the destruction of his dominion.

— St. Basil. On The Holy Generation of Christ 3; PG 31 From Luigi Gambero. Mary and the Fathers of the Church pp. 147

Later on, the world DID know about this. The Jews implicitly mock it in John 8 and later in their Talmud⁶.

⁶ I have read *Jesus in the Talmud* by Jewish author Peter Schafer cover to cover who expounds on the Jews reviling not just Jesus but also the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in their Talmud. The book is sold on Amazon.com if you want to read it for yourself. I don't recommend it.

This teaching on Mary's Perpetual Virginity is found primarily in the Oral Tradition of the Church. But secondarily there are also suggestions in Sacred Scripture that we will see. Also Mary is described as *Aeiparthenos*, the "Ever-virgin" in the Liturgy (the Mass).

In the Blessed Virgin Mary's case, "Ever Virgin" means (see CCC)

CCC 510 Mary "remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin" (St. Augustine, *Serm.* 186, 1: PL 38, 999): with her whole being she is "**the handmaid of the Lord**" (*Lk* 1:38).

- **A Virgin in conceiving Jesus**
- **A Virgin in the act of bearing ("giving birth to") Jesus (this is miraculous)**
- **A Virgin after Jesus is born and forever ("Ever-Virgin")**

CCC 499 The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man.¹⁵⁴ In fact, Christ's birth "did not diminish his mother's virginal integrity but sanctified it."¹⁵⁵ And so the liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as *Aeiparthenos*, the "Ever-virgin".¹⁵⁶

Virginity As "Undivided Devotion To The Lord"—Extolled By The Church

LUKE 1:38a 38 And Mary said, "Behold, **I am the handmaid of the Lord** . . .

The Church extolls virgins⁷ for their "undivided devotion to the Lord (handmaid of the Lord).

For the man or woman that is called to married life, having children is the highest order FOR THEM (morality in the subjective order) because they have discerned marriage and children as God's will.

But in the objective order, virginity for the sake of the kingdom, is a higher calling than marriage⁸ (both are high callings). Virgins are free to be totally committed to God or a "**handmaid of the Lord**."

This external renouncing, is a reflection of that virginity interiorly. St. Paul puts it this way . . .

1st CORINTHIANS 7:7a, 34b-35, 38 7 I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God . . . **An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit.** But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world--how she can please her husband. 35 I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you **may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.** . . . **38 So then, he who marries the virgin does right, but he who does not marry her does even better.**

This is important because if the Blessed Mother had other children, the ancient Jews wouldn't mock Mary this way. They would just point out all of these other children. But of course there were no other children from Mary biologically. The ancient Pharisees ("the Jews") serve as a backhanded testimony or at least suggestion, to the Blessed Virgin Mary having no other children.

⁷ The Church also extolls confessors and martyrs in addition to virgins.

⁸ **SESSION 24 COUNCIL OF TRENT CANON X** - If any one saith, that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginity, or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony; let him be anathema

What Is A “Josephite Marriage”?

Today we sometimes hear about what is called, “Josephite marriages”. Admittedly this is a rare situation, where both husband and wife before being married, agree to remain virgins even in marriage. They freely decide to lay down that aspect of their lives as a sacrifice to God. They choose to “follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (Revelation 14:4) in a more radical way than most couples.

Some Israelites probably had a few marriages of couples who have taken vows of laying down their gifts of procreation as a sacrifice to God too. Where would the Israelites get this? Probably from Numbers 30 in the context of “afflicting” oneself. Numbers 30 discusses such vows but they have to be ratified by the girl’s father and later, if she gets married, must ALSO be approved by her husband.

NUMBERS 30:3-4 3 Or when a woman vows a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by a pledge, while within her father's house, in her youth, 4 and her father hears of her vow and of her pledge by which she has bound herself, and says nothing to her; then all her vows shall stand, and every pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand.

Numbers 30:4-5 tell us her father may overrule her vow. Granted this type of vow can include many forms of abstinence (i.e. fasting from food more than usual).

Some would say Numbers 30 is at least POSSIBLY discussing merely “temporary” abstinence. Possibly for some. But when you read on, it seems to make more sense if it was a “permanent” vow because if she marries, her husband later has to ratify the same vow as her father, but there may have been BOTH.

What does “afflict” mean? Rabbi Sonsino states this vow to “afflict” can take several forms including abstinence in regards to marital relations!⁹

Admittedly, the Hebrew word for “afflict” frequently has to do with fasting (i.e. Psalm 35:13), but can ALSO carry over to intimate relations as we see with Samson and Delilah (Judges 16:19 has the exact same Hebrew root word as Numbers 30:13 to “afflict”¹⁰) and can apply to Numbers 30:13 too¹¹.

NUMBERS 30:13 13 Any vow and any binding oath to afflict herself, her husband may establish, or her husband may make void.

The Church recognizes these couples who enter into virginal marriages as still being validly married.¹²

⁹ “Food and drink, and the other pleasures of the sense of touch, arouse the physical self to be drawn after desire and sin; and they can interrupt the form of the spirit of wisdom from seeking after the truth, which is the service of God and His good and sweet moral lessons.”

[8] Even from Ps. 35:13, “I afflicted myself with fasting” [inneti batzom nafshi], we can learn that “fasting” was only one way of expressing regret. . . . In the early rabbinic period, the Mishna [10] specified that on Yom Kippur “self-denial” covered not only eating and drinking, but also bathing, anointing, wearing sandals, and sexual intercourse. Rabbi Rifat Sonsino, Emeritus at Temple Beth Shalom, Needham, MA. <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=435>

¹⁰ **JUDGES 16:19b (KJV)** . . . and she (Delilah) began to afflict him (Samson). . .

JUDGES 16:19b (DRV) . . . and began to drive him away, and thrust him from her. . .

¹¹ Here is what Dr. Pitre¹¹ has to say concerning “afflict”: The key is in the final section; *the chapter is concerned with a woman's vows to “afflict herself,” which, as the great Torah scholar Jacob Milgrom points out, was interpreted by ancient Jews as referring to **fasting and refraining from sexual intercourse***. Similar terminology is used in descriptions of the Day of Atonement, when Jews were expected to fast and refrain from sexual intercourse (see Milgrom, Harper Collins Study Bible n. Lev 16:29; citing Targum Pseudo-Jonathan; cf. also Exod 19:15)¹¹. <http://www.thesacredpage.com/2008/03/biblical-basis-for-marys-perpetual.html>

¹² **SESSION 24 COUNCIL OF TRENT CANON VIII** - If any one saith, that the Church errs, in that she declares that, for many causes, a separation may take place between husband and wife, in regard of bed, or in regard of cohabitation, for a determinate or for an indeterminate period; let him be anathema.

Ancient Hebrew Marriage Rite

In today's marriage, it is often seen in two parts.

Preceding or BEFORE the actual marriage: Engagement. Then . . .

One: The actual marriage rite (public exchange of vows etc.). You are already validly married now.

Two: Later that night the marriage is physically ratified or "consummated".

The ancient Hebrew marriage likewise consisted of two parts.

BEFORE the actual marriage: Engagement. The Hebrew term for this is **shidukhin**. Then . . .

One: The actual marriage rite. In Hebrew this is called **Kiddushin** (kidd-oooh-sheen) and involved the public exchange of vows, etc. They are already validly married now after Kiddushin. Kiddushin is NOT mere "engagement" (as many articles [and Google AI] wrongly try to assert).

Two: This second liturgy was called Nissuin (Nis-ween). Recall the couple is **already validly married** after Kiddushin.¹³ (Later the wife is brought into the husband's home several weeks or even **months later!**).

The bridegroom first goes off to prepare a place for his bride and him. Then the bridegroom comes back to get his bride, takes his bride into the **chuppa** (pronounced "**hoopah**"; [the marital tent], and he then takes her into his home.

Knowing this, can you think of when THE Bridegroom (Jesus) talks about coming back to get His Bride¹⁴ (the Church)? In John 13/14, Jesus the Bridegroom is using Nissuin language with His Church.

JOHN 13:33b, 36b, 14:2-3 . . . 'Where I am going you cannot come.' 36b . . . "**Where I am going you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow afterward.**" . . . 2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that **I go to prepare a place for you?** 3 And **when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am** you may be also.

Q: Why is it important for us to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the ancient Hebrew marriage rite? **A:** Because we're going to see that knowledge is assumed in Scripture concerning Mary and Joseph. The Angel is telling St. Joseph to take Mary his **wife** (they have already been "Kiddushined") into his home (now they will be "Nisuiued"). Mary is already Joseph's "wife", but not yet in Joseph's home.

MATTHEW 1:18b, 20b, 24 18 When his mother Mary had been **betrothed** to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; . . . 20 behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear **to take Mary your wife**, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; . . . 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took **his wife** . . .

Mary was already Joseph's "wife". (Mary was never an unwed mother.) St. Joseph "took his wife" in Nissuin (into his home). There would almost certainly have been no chuppa tent, and they would need to explain to their wedding guests beforehand WHY there would be no chuppa tent here.

¹³ <https://www.etzion.org.il/en/halakha/even-haezer/marriage-and-divorce/marriage-and-prohibited-sexual-relations>

¹⁴ Jesus is talking about the end of time here. The "Eschaton". When He comes back to earth to take His bride spiritually into His home when they die, but a MORE complete fulfillment when He takes the Church **bodily** into their new home at the end of time. (The Bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a prefigurement of that great event).

A Brief Exercise In Common Sense

If you got married at 1:00 PM on Saturday and you were at your wedding reception at 4:30 PM dancing and having fun with your new spouse and friends, and one of your friends, who you KNEW was a real PROPHET and everyone else knew he or she was a REAL PROPHET too

And this prophet came over to your and your spouse's table and said: "Thus saith the Lord. Next year at this time you and your spouse will have a new little baby!"

How would you react?

But how WOULDN'T you react too? What would be nonsense to reply to the prophet. Remember. You are married. You're going to have a baby.

You might reply . . . "Will it be a boy or a girl?" You might reply: "Will it be healthy?"

But you would NEVER ask . . . "How can this come about?" That would be nonsense in all married cases . . . except one. That is EXACTLY the question you would ask if you had a marriage where both you and your spouse took a vow of perpetual continence. Then it not only makes sense, but it is the ONLY THING that makes sense.

With that let's proceed to the Annunciation

LUKE 1:26-28 26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to **a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph**, of the house of David; and the **virgin's** name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!"

Mary is almost certainly already married here. We know this because of St. Matthew's Gospel. Mary has already undergone Kiddushin (that's WHY Mary is described as Joseph's "**wife**"¹⁵). Then in verses 31-33 St. Gabriel the Archangel tells Mary about Jesus the Messiah. Then in verse 34 Mary replies

LUKE 1:34 (DRV) 34 And Mary said to the angel:
How shall this be done, because I know not man?

Mary asking "**How shall this be done, because I know not man?**" only makes sense in the context of a virginal vow Mary and St. Joseph had already agreed upon keeping. The early Church knew this too . . .

ST. AUGUSTINE "Surely, she would not say, 'HOW shall this be?' unless she had already **vowed** herself to God as a **virgin** If she intended to have intercourse, **she wouldn't have asked this question!** "In being born of a Virgin who CHOSE to REMAIN a Virgin even BEFORE she KNEW who was to be born of her, Christ wanted to approve virginity rather than to impose it. And He wanted virginity to be of FREE CHOICE even in that woman in whom He took upon Himself the form of a slave."

— St. Augustine. Holy Virginity 4:4. 401 A.D.¹⁶

¹⁵ Matthew 1:24

¹⁶ Bold, underline, and all caps mine.

Mary had a vow of virginity even before She married St. Joseph and St. Joseph knew and approved of that vow before and during their marriage. It is implicit (but reasonably obvious) in the Scripture texts.

Terrible Translation Alert!!

No Bible translation is adequate. There is always something lost in any translation. I love the RSVCE. But Luke 1:34 in the RSVCE is embarrassingly bad.

LUKE 1:34 (RSVCE) 34 And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, **since I have no husband?**"

The phrase "no husband" doesn't exist in the Greek here. The word "husband is NOT IN THE TEXT! Mary **HAS a husband**—Joseph. (But even an engaged woman would KNOW where babies come from.)

Objections Against Mary's Perpetual Virginity

Objection: But HOW can a virgin bear a child in the act of bearing a child?

Answer: Only miraculously that's how.

ISAIAH 7:14 (DRV) Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin¹⁷ shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.

Notice the language of Isaiah 7:14 tells us a virgin conceives a child AND a virgin bears a child.

- A Virgin Conceives A Son (Virginal Conception)
- **A Virgin Bears A Son**

This was FULFILLED in Jesus' birth.

MATTHEW 1:18, 20b-25 18 Now **the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.** When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; . . . behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; 21 she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place **to fulfil** what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "**Behold, a virgin shall conceive AND bear a son**, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; **he took his wife**, 25 but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

This brings us right into the next objection. The "until" objection which is commonly brought up.

The argument **ASSUMES a change in (Mary's Virginal) status AFTER the word "until" is used.**

The problem with that is, it is a made-up presupposition and has no biblical basis.

Also notice the angel never said for St. Joseph to "not know" Mary until her birth. Married men and their pregnant wives have marital relations. St. Joseph KNEW and understood the special situation.

¹⁷ Sometimes translated as a "young woman". Sometimes Jewish apologists try to make hay out of this trying to attack Jesus' Divinity, but it doesn't work. It is beyond the scope of this study for me to go into such detail. It is BOTH "virgin" AND "young woman". Since it is a "great sign" and merely a "young woman" having a baby is NOT "a great sign", it would have to include "virgin" just as the Greek did too.

The denial of Mary's Perpetual Virginity is frequently referred to as, "the Helvidian Heresy"¹⁸

If "until" always denotes a change in status, did people stop dying after Moses?

ROMANS 5:14 14 Yet **death reigned** from Adam **to** (same Greek root word as "until") Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

If "until" always denotes a change in status, does God the Father push Jesus off of his throne AFTER "thy enemies" are made a "footstool"?

LUKE 20:42-43 42 For David himself says in the Book of Psalms, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, 43 **till** I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.'

If "until" **always** denotes a change in status, does this mean Michal started having kids **AFTER** she died?

2nd SAMUEL 6:23 (RSV) 23 And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child **to** (Greek Old Testament = "until) the day of her death.

For further examples and details on this issue please see Table 2.

If you can understand WHY St. Joseph "knew her not" BEFORE "she had borne a son", you should be able to figure out WHY St. Joseph "knew her not" AFTER "she had borne a son" too.

St. Jerome says the same thing against the heretic Helvidius whom he publicly referred to as an "ignorant boor" and pointed out Helvidius could cite nobody in history to uphold his heresy calling it "blasphemy".¹⁹ Please see Table 3 for more details.

ST. JEROME In short, what I want to know is why Joseph refrained until the day of her delivery? Helvidius will of course reply, because he heard the angel say, "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." And in turn we rejoin that he had certainly heard him say, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto you Mary your wife." The reason why he was forbidden to forsake his wife was that he might not think her an adulteress. Is it true then, that he was ordered not to have intercourse with his wife? Is it not plain that the warning was given him that he might not be separated from her? And **could the just man dare, he says, to think of approaching her, when he heard that the Son of God was in her womb? Excellent! We are to believe then that the same man who gave so much credit to a dream that he did not dare to touch his wife, yet afterwards, . . . Helvidius, I say, would have us believe that Joseph, though well acquainted with such surprising wonders, dared to touch the temple of God²⁰, the abode of the Holy Ghost, the mother of his Lord?**

— From St. Jerome. Against Helvidius²¹, 383 A.D. Section VIII

¹⁸ Sometimes spelled "the Helvetian Heresy" and also called the "Antidicomarite heresy".

¹⁹ "Pray tell me, who, before you appeared, was acquainted with this **blasphemy**?" (St. Jerome reminds Helvidius in advance, that he cannot appeal to Tertullian because he was a heretic). NOT ONE of the Church Fathers opposed the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

²⁰ **EZEKIEL 43:4-5, 44:1-2** 4 As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east, 5 the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. . . . 1 Then he brought me back to the outer **gate** of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. 2 And he said to me, "**This gate shall remain shut**; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore **it shall remain shut**."

²¹ <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3007.htm>

The “Brothers Of Jesus” Objection

The Bible uses “brothers and sisters” in a Semitic manner. That is to say “brothers” in Hebrew has a BROAD sense. It CAN BE uterine siblings but often it is not! In ancient Hebrew there was not even a word for “cousin” etc.! Let’s go to the objection . . .

The Hebrew word²² “ach” or “ah” (Aramaic, a Semitic language variant) meant not only uterine brothers, but also cousins, second cousins, third cousins, fellow tribesmen²³, etc. etc.

- ***ach = brothers***
- ***ach = cousins***
- ***ach = second cousins***
- ***ach = third cousins***
- ***ach = distant relatives***
- ***ach = fellow tribesmen***

Some people who deny the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary would insist that brothers of Jesus in the New Testament MUST be sons of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is wrong. The best you can do with those passages is say they were relatives of Jesus. The Church doesn’t even say these “brothers” were Jesus’ “cousins”—just “close relations”.

CCC 500b . . . In fact James and Joseph, "brothers of Jesus", are the sons of another Mary, a disciple of Christ, whom St. Matthew significantly calls "the other Mary".¹⁵⁸

They are close relations of Jesus, according to an Old Testament expression.¹⁵⁹

A passage often cited to DENY Mary’s Perpetual Virginity is from Matthew 13²⁴. Let’s take a look at it and a closely related passage in Mark’s Gospel.

MATTHEW 13:55-56a 55 Is not this **the carpenter's son**? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his **brethren James** and **Joseph** and **Simon** and **Judas**? 56 **And are not all his sisters with us?**

This doesn’t work either.

NOT MATTHEW 13:55-56a 55 Is not this **ONE OF** the carpenter's **SONS**? Is not **THEIR** mother called Mary? And are not his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all **Mary and Joseph’s DAUGHTERS** with us?

Let’s also look at the parallel passage in Mark’s Gospel and see that also won’t work for their denial despite having the brothers named as well.

²² The words “ach” (Hebrew) or “ah” (Aramaic), mean “brother” but “brother” in an ancient Hebrew culture had a very wide meaning. There was no Hebrew or Aramaic word for “cousin” or “distant relative”.

²³ In Jesus’ case the tribe of Judah.

²⁴ There are other Gospel passages too that talk of the “brothers” of Jesus but they are not as specific. These other passages include: MT 12:46-50, MK 3:28-35, and LK 8:19-21.

MARK 6:3 3 Is not this the carpenter, the SON of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

NOT MARK 6:3 3 Is not this the carpenter, ONE OF the SONS of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not Mary's DAUGHTERS here with us?"

SAINT JEROME The Mary which in Mark and Matthew is called the mother of James and Joses was the wife of Alpheus, and sister of Mary the mother of our Lord: which Mary John here designates of Cleophas, either from her father, or family, or for some other reason. She need not be thought a different person, because she is called in one place Mary the mother of James the less, and here Mary of Cleophas, for it is customary in Scripture to give different names to the same person.

— St. Jerome quote from Catena Aurea on John 19

St. John's Gospel tells us of at least THREE MARYS at the foot of the Cross. St. John quite naturally mentions the Blessed Virgin Mary first. "Mary the wife of Clopas" is The Blessed Mother's "sister" (Greek "adelphae"²⁵). Mary's mother, St. Anne, would not name TWO of her daughters the same name (Mary).

JOHN 19:25 25 So the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, MARY the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Throughout Scripture, "Brother" has a BROAD Semitic sense. Listen to Uncle Abram talk to NEPHEW Lot:

GENESIS 13:8 a, c, 14:14a, 16a (KJV) 8 And Abram said unto Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, . . . for we be brethren (Hebrew word for BROTHERS²⁶). 14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, . . . 16 And he brought back all the good, and also brought again his brother Lot, and . . .

Some people try to make a big deal out of "the Greek" again (ignoring the Greek-speaking Fathers and the "adelphae" example we just looked at above in John 19).

They admit "brothers" can be broad in a SEMITIC sense but they insist you have to go to the GREEK to really see uterine siblings! This is wrong too . . .

Some New Testament examples where the Greek word Adelphos/Adelphae is used and HOW it is used. . .

1. Children of the same parents (Mt. 1:2, 14:3)
2. Male descendants of the same parents (Acts 7:23, 7:26, Heb. 7:5)
3. People of the same nationality (Acts 3:17, 3:22, Rom. 9:3)
4. Any man, a neighbor (Lk. 10:29, Mt. 5:22, Mt. 7:3)
5. Persons united by a common interest (Mt. 5:47)
6. Persons united by a common calling (Rev. 22:9)
7. All mankind (Mt. 25:40, Heb. 2:17)
8. The disciples (Mt. 28:10, Jn. 20:17)
9. Believers (Mt. 23:8, Acts 1:15, Rom. 1:13, 1st Thes. 1:4, Rev. 19:10)

²⁵ Female form of the male, "adelphos" in the Greek.

²⁶ Aramaic (Hebrew variant) = "Ahim" the plural of Ah.

And while we are at it, let's look St. Paul talking in Galatians 1 (keeping in mind there are only TWO "APOSTLES" named "James"—one who had **Zebedee for a father** and the other who had **Alphaeus for a father**. Notice neither of them had St. Joseph for their father²⁷.

GALATIANS 1:18a-19 18 after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other **APOSTLES** except **James the Lord's brother**.

Does Jesus have "brothers"? Yes. The Bible says so. But only **in a broad Hebrew sense**. Is there any evidence these "brothers" are children of Mary? No! Not ONE VERSE ANYWHERE in the Bible to support that invention. (That being said, all of us are Spiritual Children of Mary²⁸ by grace.)

In Closing

We studied necessary background to the Perpetual Virginity of Mary.
We saw there are three main ways of looking at virginity.
We saw the Blessed Virgin Mary explicitly identified as a "Virgin" in Sacred Scripture.
We saw "binding oaths to afflict" oneself in Numbers 30 and related that to "Josephite Marriages".
We studied the ancient Hebrew marriage rite, and saw how it was Biblically applied to Mary and Joseph's in the Gospels.
We did an exercise in common sense, realizing it violates "common sense" for a married woman to ask **HOW she can have a baby** unless she is in a marriage with a vow of virginity. Then it makes total sense.
We reviewed several of the main objections including the "it is not possible for a virgin to bear a child" and saw it is irrelevant because the Bible teaches it so we KNOW it is a miraculous birth. We also looked at the "until" and the "brothers" objections, and saw how they were not persuasive.
We will now close with discussion and prayer. (See Table 4 for some Patristics. Table 5 on "Reformers".)

If We Have Time . . .

Mystical Theology

We won't spend a lot of time on apparitions, locutions, etc. in this study as I want to focus on "Public Revelation". But there is one area in Mystical theology that will be appropriate here.

If you go to Table 1, you can see a list of five blasphemies that grieve Jesus that Mary discusses with one of the Fatima visionaries. A "blasphemy" is irreverence towards God. But it has a secondary meaning that includes irreverence towards God's Sacred people and even God's Sacred things (just ask King Nebuchadnezzar back in Daniel's day). See CCC 2148 for more details about blasphemy.²⁹

²⁷ But even if both these James' did have St. Joseph for their father, it would not take away from the doctrine of the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary as St. Joseph COULD theoretically have had a prior marriage, his wife could have died, and St. Joseph could have later remarried and the doctrine of Mary's Perpetual Virginity would still stand in harmony with Sacred Scripture.

²⁸ CCC 501 and 968, Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, section 63, John 19:26-27, **Romans 8:29**, and **Revelation 12:17** when teaching the Universal Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary!

²⁹ **CCC 2148** Blasphemy is directly opposed to the second commandment. It consists in uttering against God - inwardly or outwardly - words of hatred, reproach, or defiance; in speaking ill of God; in failing in respect toward him in one's speech; in misusing God's name. St. James condemns those "who blaspheme that honorable name [of Jesus] by which you are called."⁷⁸ **The prohibition of blasphemy extends to language against Christ's Church, the saints, and sacred things.** It is also blasphemous to make use of God's name to cover up criminal practices, to reduce peoples to servitude, to torture persons or put them to death. The misuse of God's name to commit a crime can provoke others to repudiate religion. Blasphemy is contrary to the respect due God and his holy name. It is in itself a grave sin.⁷⁹

One of these blasphemies that greatly **angers God** concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary is attacking the Blessed Mother's Perpetual Virginity.

This is important because we see the Pharisees do just that (attack the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary) not only in their Talmud, but starting right back in Scripture! (But only the prayerful and careful Scripture reader will pick up on it though.)

We will observe this Biblical subtlety between Jesus and the Pharisees in John 8, and see how Jesus' whole demeanor in dealing with the Pharisees changes right on the heels of their insulting blasphemy.

The Pharisees Blasphemy Against The Blessed Mother

In the Talmud there are very bad things said of Jesus and Mary. In societies where that has historically been pushed-back on, the Jewish leaders deny that this is THE Jesus and Mary of the Bible to outsiders.

In societies where it is NOT pushed-back on, and the Pharisees can get away with openly³⁰ saying rotten things about Jesus and Mary, they do.

Today, the modern-day Pharisees DO openly talk about it. I have a whole book filled with this issue written by a Jewish author (Peter Schafer) called ***Jesus in the Talmud***.

This book expounds on where in the Talmud the Jews reviling not just Jesus but also the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The book is sold on Amazon.com if you want to read it for yourself. I would not recommend it though unless you are deep into apologetics.

In John 8:37, Jesus politely acknowledges that they are "descendants of Abraham" despite them wanting to kill Him.

JOHN 8:33-37 33 They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to any one. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?" 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35 The slave does not continue in the house for ever; the son continues for ever. 36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. 37 **I know that you are descendants of Abraham;** yet you seek to kill me

In John 8, Jesus implies that Abraham is not their spiritual father after He unveils their plan to murder him.

JOHN 8:39-41a 39 They answered him, "**Abraham is our father.**" Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did, 40 but **now you seek to kill me**, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God; this is not what Abraham did. 41 You do what your father did."

Now listen to the Pharisees response!

JOHN 8:41b They said to him, "**WE were not born of fornication . . .**

What are the Pharisees implying here? Exactly what their Talmud implies about the Blessed Virgin Mary. They are trying to imply the Blessed Mother was a "runaround".

Listen how NOW Jesus throws politeness out the window and openly rips the Pharisees. . . .

JOHN 8:41b, 42a, 44 They said to him, "**WE were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.**" 42 Jesus said to them . . . 44 **You are of your father the devil,** and your will is to do your father's desires. . .

³⁰ Again, I have read ***Jesus in the Talmud*** by Jewish author Peter Schafer cover to cover who expounds on the Jews reviling not just Jesus but also the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in their Talmud. The book is sold on Amazon.com if you want to read it for yourself. **I would not recommend this book** though unless you are deep into apologetics.

TABLE 1

The Five First Saturdays Devotion

Mary's Great Promise at Fatima

"Behold my Heart surrounded with the thorns which ungrateful men place there-in at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console me and tell them that I promise to help at the hour of death, with the graces needed for salvation, whoever, on the First Saturday of five consecutive months, shall:

1. Confess and receive Communion.
2. Recite five decades of the Rosary.
3. And keeping me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary.
4. With the intention of making reparation to me."

Note: The Confession may be made in the 8 days before or after Communion. The Rosary may be recited at any convenient time of the day, and the fifteen-minute meditation may be made at any time of the day, either on all of the mysteries as a whole, or on one special mystery.

The First Saturday reparation is made for the five-fold blasphemies against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

1. Blasphemies against her Immaculate Conception
2. Blasphemies against her perpetual virginity
3. Blasphemies against her divine Motherhood
4. Blasphemies of those who instill in the hearts of children indifference, contempt and hate for Mary
5. Blasphemies of those who dishonor her directly through her images

<http://www.rosary-center.org/firstsat.htm>

TABLE 2

More Of The “Until” Objection

The Inappropriate Eric Svendsen “Heos Hou Argument”

MATTHEW 1:24-25 24 When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, 25 but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

A Protestant apologist (Eric Svendsen) tried to pretend in a Catholic-Protestant debate that because the Greek phrase “heos hou” is used in Matthew 1:25 instead of just “heos” that it just MUST denote a NECESSARY change in status.

This argument was non-sense and ignores its use elsewhere in the New Testament, it ignores the Septuagint (Psalm 112) and ignores voluminous native Greek-speaking patristics which all assert the perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Below we have explicit Scripture references to this (since this was exposed, Protestant apologists have stopped using this at debates but many Protestants don’t know the errors and continue to use this false argument.

The “until” in Psalm 112:8 is **heos hou**.

If “heos hou” ALWAYS necessitates a change in status motif is true, then we have the bizarre conclusion that this “righteous” one in Psalm 112 whose “righteousness endures forever” (in the primary sense this is Jesus) described here is “not afraid” until he vanquishes his adversaries. Does Jesus get “afraid” afterwards??

PSALM 112:7-9a 7 He is not afraid of evil tidings; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. 8 His heart is steady, he will not be afraid, until (heos hou)³¹ **he sees his desire on his adversaries.** 9 He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; **his righteousness endures for ever;**

In the New Testament at the Transfiguration St. Peter reminds us to pay attention to the voice of God as to a shining lamp in a dark place saying

1st PETER 1:18-19 18 we heard **this voice borne from heaven**, for we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to **pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until** (Greek here = heos hou) the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

So when the day dawns, does the status CHANGE and NOW we are NOT to listen to God?

This is the kind of non-sense that crops up when you doctrinally separate yourself from the Magisterium of the Church.

If you want St. John Chrysostom’s extensive quote on this from the 300’s A.D. contact us and we will send you the information electronically. **Catholic Bishop St. John Chrysostom spoke and wrote Greek as his native language and did not have to go off to Protestant Seminary to learn Greek.**

³¹ Parenthetical **heos hou** here mine here.

TABLE 3

Excerpts From St. Jerome's Letter Against Helvidius

Let's look at an excerpt from St. Jerome's "Against Helvidius"³² tract to see St. Jerome trace back the Fathers ("Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and many other apostolic and eloquent men")

ST. JEROME (1.) I was requested by certain of the brethren not long ago to reply to a pamphlet written by one Helvidius. **I have deferred doing so, not because it is a difficult matter to maintain the truth and refute an ignorant boor** who has scarce known the first glimmer of learning, but because I was afraid my reply might make him appear worth defeating. There was the **further consideration that a turbulent fellow**, the only individual in the world who thinks himself **both priest and layman**, one who, as has been said, thinks that eloquence consists in loquacity and considers speaking ill of anyone to be the witness of a good conscience, would begin to blaspheme worse than ever if opportunity of discussion were afforded him. **He would stand as it were on a pedestal**, and would publish his views far and wide. There was reason **also** to fear that when truth failed him **he would assail his opponents with the weapon of abuse**. But all these motives for silence, though just, have more justly ceased to influence me, **because of the scandal caused to the brethren** who were disgusted at his ravings. The axe of the Gospel must therefore be now laid to the root of the barren tree, and both it and its fruitless foliage cast into the fire, so that Helvidius who has never learned to speak, may at length learn to hold his tongue.

. . . (2) I must call upon the Holy Spirit to express His meaning by my mouth and defend the virginity of the Blessed Mary. . . .

. . . (18) But you do worse. You have set on fire the temple of the Lord's body, you have defiled the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit from which you are determined to make a team of four brethren and a heap of sisters come forth. In a word, joining in the chorus of the Jews, you say, Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? The word all would not be used if there were not a crowd of them. **Pray tell me, who, before you appeared, was acquainted with this blasphemy?** Who thought the theory worth two-pence? You have gained your desire, and have become notorious by crime. For myself who am your opponent, **although we live in the same city**, I don't know, as the saying is, whether you are white or black. I pass over faults of diction which abound in every book you write. I say not a word about your absurd introduction. Good heavens! I do not ask for eloquence, since, having none yourself, you applied for a supply of it to your brother Craterius. . . .

. . . (19) "[Helvidius] produces Tertullian as a witness to (his view) and quotes Victorinus, bishop of Petavium. Of Tertullian, I say no more than that he did not belong to the Church. But as regards Victorinus, I assert what has already been proven from the gospel—that he (Victorinus) spoke of the brethren of the Lord not as being sons of Mary but brethren in the sense I have explained, that is to say, **brethren in point of kinship, not by nature**. By discussing such things (we) are . . . following the tiny streams of opinion. Might I not array against you the whole series of ancient writers? **Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr**, and many other apostolic and eloquent men, who against (the heretics) Ebion, Theodotus of Byzantium, and Valentinus, held these same views and wrote volumes replete with wisdom. If you had ever read what they wrote, you would be a wiser man³³"

. . . (24.) And because I think that, finding the truth too strong for you, you will turn to disparaging my life and abusing my character (it is the way of weak women to talk tittle-tattle in corners when they have been put down by their masters), I shall anticipate you. **I assure you that I shall regard your railing as a high distinction, since the same lips that assail me have disparaged Mary, and I, a servant of the Lord, am favoured with the same barking eloquence as His mother.**

³² <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3007.htm>

³³ See St. Jerome. Against Helvidius, section 19. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3007.htm>

TABLE 4

Some Patristics And Other Writings On Mary Ever Virgin In No Particular Order

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA "[T]he Word himself, coming into the Blessed Virgin herself, assumed for himself his own temple from the substance of the Virgin and came forth from her a man in all that could be externally discerned, while interiorly he was true God. Therefore he kept his Mother a virgin even after her childbearing"

— St. Cyril of Alexandria *Against Those Who Do Not Wish to Confess That the Holy Virgin is the Mother of God* 4A.D. 430].

POPE SAINT LEO THE GREAT "His (Christ's) origin is different, but his (human) nature is the same. Human usage and custom were lacking, but by divine power a **Virgin conceived, a Virgin bore, and Virgin she remained**"

— Pope St. Leo I (also called Leo the Great)
Died in 461 A.D. (*Sermons* 22:2A.D. 450)].

POPE SAINT LEO THE GREAT "She (Mary) brought Him forth without the loss of virginity, even as she conceived him without its loss...(Jesus Christ was) born from the Virgin's womb **because it was a miraculous birth.**"

— Pope Leo the Great (Died in 461 A.D.)

The Lateran Council in 649 A.D. (a non-ecumenical Council but held under Pope St. Martin I and is thus considered authoritative) also asserts The Blessed Virgin Mary's in-partu inviolability.

LATERAN COUNCIL If anyone does not, according to the holy Fathers, confess truly and properly that holy Mary, ever virgin and immaculate, is Mother of God, since this latter age she conceived in true reality without human seed from the Holy Spirit, God the Word himself, who before the ages was born of God the Father, and **gave birth to him without corruption, her virginity remaining equally inviolate after the birth, let him be condemned.**³⁴

— The Lateran Council in 649 A.D.

The Second Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (Nicaea) in the 700's A.D., just matter-of-factly assumed you already knew and had deeply imbedded the fact that Mary is "EVER-VIRGIN".

SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF NICAEA Along with these synods, we also confess the two natures of the one who became incarnate for our sake from the God-bearer **without blemish, Mary the ever-virgin**, recognizing that he is perfect God and perfect man, as the synod at Chalcedon also proclaimed, when it drove from the divine precinct the foul-mouthed *Eutyches* and *Dioscorus*.

— Second Council of Nicaea **787 A.D.** (Tanner Translation)

HAYMO OF HALBERSTADT "Just as she conceived without (carnal) pleasure, so she gave birth without pain."³⁵

— Haymo of Halberstadt (+853) *Expositio in Apocalypsim* 3

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS We must therefore simply assert that the Mother of God, as she was a virgin in conceiving Him and a virgin in giving Him birth, did she remain a virgin ever afterwards.

— St. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologica*. Third Part. Article 3, Question 28.

FOURTH LATERAN COUNCIL . . . Finally the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, who became incarnate by the action of the whole Trinity in common and was conceived from the **ever virgin Mary** through the cooperation of the holy Spirit, having become true man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh, one person in two natures, showed more clearly the way of life. . . .

— Fourth Lateran Council 1215 AD Tanner Translation
(Constitutions, Confession of Faith)

THE CONFITEOR AT MASS I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters . . . therefore I ask **blessed Mary ever-Virgin**, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

— From The Latin Rite of the Catholic **Mass** (English Translation)

³⁴ D-H 503TCP 703] quoted in: **Mariology. A Guide For Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, And Consecrated Persons.** See specifically p. 311. See Chapter on "Our Lady's Perpetual Virginity" by Monsignor Arthur Burton Calkins (see pp. 277-315).

³⁵ *Expositio in Apocalypsim* 3, 12; PL 117:1081D-1082A quoted in John Saward, *The Way of the Lamb: The Spirit of Childhood and the End of the Age* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999) 153, n. 9. Quote from Monsignor Calkins <http://www.motherofallpeoples.com/2012/10/the-virginity-in-partu-revisited/>

COUNCIL OF BASEL It firmly believes, professes and preaches that one person of the Trinity, true God, Son of God begotten by the Father, consubstantial and coeternal with the Father, in the fullness of time which the inscrutable depth of divine counsel determined, for the salvation of the human race, took a real and complete human nature from the immaculate womb of the virgin Mary, and joined it to himself in a personal union of such great unity that whatever is of God there, is not separated from man, and whatever is human is not divided from the Godhead, and he is one and the same undivided, each nature perduring in its properties, God and man, Son of God and son of man, equal to the Father according to his divinity, less than the Father according to his humanity, immortal and eternal through the nature of the Godhead, passible and temporal from the condition of assumed humanity. It firmly believes, professes and preaches that the Son of God was truly born of the virgin in his assumed humanity, truly suffered, truly died and was buried, truly rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father and will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. It anathematizes, execrates and condemns every heresy that is tainted with the contrary. **First it condemns Ebion, Cerinthus, Marcion, Paul of Samosata, Photinus and all similar blasphemers** who, failing to see the personal union of the humanity with the Word, denied that our lord Jesus Christ was true God and professed him to be simply a man who by a greater participation in divine grace, which he had received through the merit of his holier life, should be called a divine man.

— The General Council of Basel also called Basel-Ferrara-Florence, 1431-45

Notice the delicate and Holy, yet revealing language St. Faustina uses to describe Mary's in partu inviolability!

SAINT SISTER FAUSTINA MARY KOWALSKA "To give worthy praise to the Lord's mercy, we unite ourselves with Your Immaculate Mother, for then our hymn will be more pleasing to You, because She is chosen from among men and angels. Through Her, as through a pure crystal, Your mercy was passed on to us. Through Her, man became pleasing to God; Through Her, streams of grace flowed down upon us."

— St. Faustina (1905-1938) from Diary; "Divine Mercy In My Soul" section 1746

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM (315-386 A.D.):
 "Since through Eve, a virgin, came death,
 it behooved (became necessary or proper),
 that through a Virgin, or rather from a Virgin, **should life appear**; that,
 as the Serpent had deceived the one,
 so to the other Gabriel might bring good tidings."
 — St. Cyril of Jerusalem. -Cat. xii. 15.

ST. GREGORY THE NAZIANZEN "If anyone does not agree that Holy Mary is the Mother of God, he is at odds with the Godhead. **If anyone asserts that Christ passed through the Virgin as though a channel**, and was not shaped in her **both** divinely and humanly, **divinely because without man** and humanly because in accord with the law of gestation, he is likewise godless."
 — St. Gregory of Nazianzen "Letter to Cledonius the Priest" 382 A D

Incidentally, St. Gregory of Nazianzen was one of St. Jerome's teachers!

ST. JEROME I think I delivered myself fully as regards this point in my argument against Helvidius, and in the book which I addressed to Eustochium. At all events Tertullian while still a young man, gave himself full play with this subject. **And my teacher, Gregory of Nazianzus**, discussed virginity and marriage in some Greek verses.

— St. Jerome. Against Jovinianus. Section 13

St. Augustine (writing approximately in 400 A.D.) wonders: Why all the incredulity?

ST AUGUSTINE But perhaps it is the unprecedented birth of a body from a virgin that staggers you? But, so far from this being a difficulty, it ought rather to assist you to receive our religion, that a **miraculous person was born miraculously**.
 —St. Augustine City of God Book V, Chapter 29 On the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Which The Platonists In Their Impiety Refuse To Acknowledge

Do we see the birth of Jesus FROM a VIRGIN as an "unprecedented birth"? I certainly hope so.

Listen to St. Irenaeus back in the late 100's A.D. almost certainly referring to Mary's in partu inviolability!

ST IRENAEUS Immanuel, born] of the Virgin, exhibited the union of the Word of God with His own workmanship, declaring] that the Word should become flesh, and the Son of God the Son of man (**the pure One opening purely that pure womb** which regenerates men unto God, and which He Himself made pure); and having become this which we also are, (He nevertheless) is the Mighty God, and possesses a generation which cannot be declared.

— St. Irenaeus. Against Heresies Book IV, Chapter 33 (180 A.D.)

No blood to clean up. St. Peter Chrysologus tells us the “blood was still”.

ST. PETER CHRYSOLOGUS Where are they who think that the Virgin's conception and giving birth to her child are to be likened to other women? For, this latter case is one of the earth, and the Virgin's is one from heaven. The one is a case of divine power; the other of human weakness. The one case occurs in a body subject to passion; the other in the tranquility of the divine Spirit and peace of the human body. **The blood was still, and the flesh astonished; her members were put at rest, and her entire womb was quiescent during the visit of the Heavenly One,** until the Author of flesh could take on His garment of flesh, and until He, who was not merely to restore the earth to man but also to give him heaven, could become a heavenly man. **The Virgin conceives, the Virgin brings forth her child, and she remains a virgin."**

— St. Peter Chrysologus (380 – 450 A.D.) Sermons

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS But just as He who was conceived kept her who conceived still a virgin, **in like manner also, He who was born preserved her virginity intact, only passing through her and keeping her closed** ... For it was not impossible for Him to have come by this gate, **without injuring her seal** in any way."

— St. John the Damascene (approx. 676-754 A.D.) *De Fide Orthodoxa*

ST. EPIPHANIUS "We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God . . . who for us men and for our salvation came down and took flesh, that is, was **born perfectly** of the holy **ever-virgin** Mary by the Holy Spirit"

— St. Epiphanius of Salamis *The Man Well-Anchored* 120A.D. 374].

DIDYMUS THE BLIND "It helps us to understand the terms 'first-born' and 'only-begotten' when the Evangelist tells that Mary remained a virgin 'until she brought forth her first-born son' (Matt. 1:25); for neither did Mary, who is to be honored and praised above all others, marry anyone else, nor did she ever become the Mother of anyone else, **but even after childbirth she remained always and forever an immaculate virgin"**

— Didymus the Blind *The Trinity* 3:4A.D. 386].

ST. AUGUSTINE "It was not the visible sun, but its invisible Creator who consecrated this day for us, when the **Virgin Mother, fertile of womb and integral in her virginity, brought him forth**, made visible for us, by whom, when he was invisible, she too was created. **A Virgin conceiving, a Virgin bearing, a Virgin pregnant, a Virgin bringing forth, a Virgin perpetual.** Why do you wonder at this, O man?"

— St. Augustine *Sermons* 186:1A.D. 411].

St. Ignatius of Antioch (35 A.D. or 50 A.D. to 98 A.D. to 117 A.D.), **who was a disciple of the beloved disciple St. John** although brief and not as specific, has this to say in two of his letters on his way to martyrdom from the lions in the coliseum for pagan sport . . .

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH I give glory to Jesus Christ, the God who has given you wisdom. For I have perceived that you are firmly settled in unwavering **faith**, being nailed, as it were, to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, fully convinced as touching our Lord that he is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, and Son of God by the Divine will and power, **truly born of a virgin**, . . .

— St. Ignatius of Antioch Letter To The Smyrneans

ORIGEN "There is **no child of Mary except Jesus**, according to the opinion of those who think correctly about her."

— Origen. Commentary on the Letter to the Galatians³⁶

ST. ATHANASIUS Let those, therefore, who deny that the Son is by nature from the Father and proper to His essence, deny also that He took true human flesh from the **Ever-Virgin Mary**. In neither case would it have been profitable to us men: if the Word were not by nature true Son of God, or if the flesh which He assumed were not true flesh.

— From St. Athanasius. Discourses Against The Arians (358-362 A.D.)³⁷

ST. BASIL THE GREAT Concerning the holy and much-lauded **ever-virgin one**, Mary, the Mother of God, we have said something in the preceding chapters, . . .

— An Exact Exposition of Orthodox Faith St. Basil Book IV CHAPTER XIV.

³⁶ Origen, Commentary on the Letter to the Galatians, *Patrologia Graeca* 14, p. 1928 quoted in L. Gambero, *Mary and the Fathers of the Church*, p.73.

³⁷ (Migne Text) From "The Faith of the Early Fathers Volume 1 of 3. William A. Jurgens p. 330

ST. BASIL THE GREAT The friends of Christ do not tolerate hearing that the Mother of God (Θεοτόκος) **ever ceased to be a Virgin** (παρθένος)."

—Bishop St. Basil the Great of Caesarea (Doctor & Holy Hierarch). On The Holy Generation of Christ

There are MANY MORE statements and examples that I just didn't have room for here all asserting the same thing on this issue—The the Blessed Virgin Mary is "Ever Virgin".

Eastern Orthodox Liturgy also currently states the same teachings. Here are two examples:³⁸

Troparion of the Dormition, Tone 1 In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

Kontakion of the Dormition, Tone 2 Verily, the Theotokos, who is ever watchful in intercessions, who is never rejected, neither tomb nor death could control. But being the Mother of Life, He Who dwelt in her **ever-Virgin womb** did translate her to life.

TABLE 5

Even These Guys (Below) Affirmed Mother Mary's Perpetual Virginity!

Martin Luther: (1483-1546)

Luther "It is an article of faith that Mary is Mother of the Lord **and still a virgin** . . . Christ, we believe, **came forth from a womb left perfectly intact.**"

— Martin Luther (Works of Luther, Volume 11, 319-320, Volume 6, 510.)

Luther Christ, our Savior, was the real and natural fruit of Mary's virginal womb . . . This was without the cooperation of a man, **and she remained a virgin after that.**

— *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan (vols. 1-30) & Helmut T. Lehmann (vols. 31-55), St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House (vols. 1-30); Philadelphia: Fortress Press (vols. 31-55), 1955, v.22:23 / *Sermons on John*, chaps. 1-4 (1539)

Luther Christ . . . was the only Son of Mary, and **the Virgin Mary bore no children besides Him** . . . I am inclined to agree with those who declare that 'brothers' really mean 'cousins' here, for Holy Writ and the Jews always call cousins brothers.

— *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan (vols. 1-30), *ibid.*, v.22:214-15 / *Sermons on John*, chaps. 1-4 (1539)

Luther 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** . . .

— *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan (vols. 1-30), *ibid.*, v.45:199 / *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew* (1523)

Luther Scripture does not say or indicate that she later lost her virginity . . . 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 . . . This babble . . . is without justification . . . he has neither noticed nor paid any attention to either Scripture or the common idiom.

— *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan (vols. 1-30), *ibid.*, v.45:206,212-3 / *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew* (1523)

Editor Jaroslav Pelikan (Lutheran) adds:

Pelikan Luther . . . **does not even consider the possibility that Mary might have had other children than Jesus.** This is consistent with his lifelong acceptance of the idea of the **perpetual virginity of Mary.**

— Pelikan, *ibid.*, v.22:214-5

John Calvin: (1509-1564)

Calvin Under the word 'brethren' the Hebrews include all cousins and other relations, whatever may be the degree of affinity.

— John Calvin. From Calvin's Commentaries, tr. William Pringle, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949. vol. I, p. 283 / *Commentary on John*, (7:3)

³⁸ Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. <http://www.antiochian.org/node/20155>

Calvin "There have been certain folk who have wished to suggest from this passage that **the Virgin Mary had other children than the Son of God**, and that Joseph had then dwelt with her later; but **what folly this is!** For the gospel writer did not wish to record what happened afterwards; he simply wished to make clear Joseph's obedience and to show also that Joseph had been well and truly assured that it was God who had sent His angel to Mary. he had therefore never dwelt with her nor had he shared her company....

— John Calvin (Sermon on Matthew 1:22-25)

Calvin "... And besides this Our Lord **Jesus Christ is called first-born. This is not because there was a second or a third**, but because the gospel writer is paying regard to the precedence. Scripture speaks thus of naming the first-born whether or no there was any question of the second."

— John Calvin (Sermon on Matthew 1:22-25)

Calvin **Helvidius displayed excessive ignorance in concluding that Mary must have had many sons, because Christ's 'brothers' are sometimes mentioned.**

— John Calvin. Harmony of Matthew, Mark & Luke, sec. 39 (Geneva, 1562), vol. 2 / From Calvin's Commentaries, tr. William Pringle, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949, p.215; on Matthew 13:55

Calvin On Matt 1:25:] The inference he (**Helvidius**) drew from it was, that Mary remained a virgin no longer than till her first birth, and that afterwards she had other children by her husband . . . **No just and well-grounded inference can be drawn from these words . . . as to what took place after the birth of Christ. He is called 'first-born'; but it is for the sole purpose of informing us that he was born of a virgin . . .** What took place afterwards the historian does not inform us . . . No man will obstinately keep up the argument, except from an extreme fondness for disputation.

John Calvin. From Calvin's Commentaries, tr. William Pringle, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949. vol. I, p. 107

Calvin "We have already said in another place that according to **the custom of the Hebrews all relatives were called 'brethren.'** **Still Helvidius [a 4th century heretic] has shown himself to be IGNORANT of this by stating that Mary had many children just because in several places they are spoken of as 'brethren' of Christ."**

— John Calvin, Commentary on Matthew 13:55³⁹

Calvin "Concerning what has happened since this birth the writer of the Gospel **SAYS NOTHING**...certainly it is a matter about which NO ONE will cause dispute unless he is somewhat curious; on the contrary **there never was a man who would contradict this in obstinacy unless he were a PIG-HEADED and FATUOUS i.e. foolish and stupid] person."**

— John Calvin, Commentary on Matthew 1:25⁴⁰

Huldreich Zwingli: (1484-1531)

Zwingli "I firmly believe that Mary, according to the words of the gospel as a pure according to the words of the gospel **as a pure Virgin brought forth for us the Son of God and in childbirth and after childbirth forever remained a pure, intact Virgin"**

- Zwingli (Volume 1, 424).

As Dave Armstrong states: 'Fidei expositio,' (was) the last pamphlet from his (Zwingli's) pen There is a special insistence upon the perpetual virginity of Mary.

Zwingli **To deny that Mary remained 'inviolata' before, during and after the birth of her Son, was to doubt the omnipotence of God . . .** and it was right and profitable to repeat the angelic greeting - not prayer - 'Hail Mary' . . . God esteemed Mary above all creatures, including the saints and angels - it was her purity, innocence and invincible faith that mankind must follow. Prayer, however, must be . . . to God alone . . .

— Zwingli Fidei expositio. G. R. Potter, Zwingli, London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976, pp.88-9, 395 / The Perpetual Virginity of Mary . . . , Sep. 17, 1522

Zwingli also had printed in 1524 a sermon on **'Mary, ever virgin, mother of God.'**

Zwingli I have never thought, still less taught, or declared publicly, anything concerning the subject of the ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our salvation, which could be considered dishonourable, impious, unworthy or evil . . . **I believe with all my heart according to the word of holy gospel that this pure virgin bore for us the Son of God and that she remained, in the birth and after it, a pure and unsullied virgin, for eternity.**

— Thurian, *ibid.*, p.76 / same sermon (Zwingli's Mary ever virgin, mother of God)

John Wesley: (Founder of Methodism) (1703-1791)

Wesley The Blessed Virgin Mary, who, as well after as when she brought him forth, continued a pure and unspotted virgin.

— John Wesley. "Letter to a Roman Catholic," quoted in A. C. Coulter, *John Wesley*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, 495

³⁹ <http://www.philvaz.com/apologetics/num27.htm> (all caps from Phil Parvaznik, Catholic Apologist)

⁴⁰ <http://www.philvaz.com/apologetics/num27.htm> (all caps from Phil Parvaznik, Catholic Apologist)