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Talk #7

*God Enters into a Familial Covenant Relationship
with Man; The Original Covenant:*



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God Enters into a Familial Relationship with Man; The Original Covenant

God Desires to Enter into Relationship with Man through a Covenant

Up to now we have been examining the natural order of creation, and inferring the reasons God created it in the form that it has. We now enter into the second part of the lecture series that focuses on the notion of covenant. We shall begin with the notion of covenant in general, and then examine the original covenant in Eden. Later we shall look at the covenant with Israel in its various moments, and conclude with the New Covenant.

Last week we looked at the institution of marriage as the crowning jewel of the natural order and its greatest beauty, because it manifests the divine love more than any other work of creation. However, God was not content with creating the natural order in which human marriage has a supreme place. He Himself wished to enter into a spousal relationship with man, of which human marriage is but the icon or sacred sign. We saw last week how St. Paul speaks of marriage as the great sacrament or sign of Christ's love for His Bride, the Church, in Ephesians 5:31.

By the way, as was brought out in the questions and answers last week, the beauty of marriage as the crowning glory in the natural order does not deny the fact that religious consecration and the corresponding vow of celibacy for the sake of the kingdom of God is a more perfect state of life. Religious life is the reality, in this life, of spousal union with God. Marriage is only a sign or sacrament of that reality of mystical marriage. Consecration to God and the vow of celibacy for the sake of the kingdom anticipates here on earth what will be the life of heaven for all: direct spousal union with God!

The Supernatural Order and Salvation History

We have seen that there are two principles that govern creation: hierarchy (headship and filiation), and complementarity. Through these principles, creatures stand in relationships with each other of headship/filiation and complementary communion that mirror the order of the divine persons and their complementary distinction.

The family contains within itself both of these relations. There is headship of the parents with respect to the children, and the complementarity of the spouses with respect to each other. The communion of the family is a unity within these relationships of distinction. In this way the family is a created image of the communion of the divine Persons of the Trinity.

In this talk we shall focus on another principle that governs creation. God is not content to make creatures that enter into relationship with each other. God gratuitously elevates the rational creature so that the creature can enter into a filial and spousal relationship with God Himself.

The hierarchical and complementary relationships of creatures to each other make up the natural order. In the supernatural order, God elevates His rational creatures to enable them to enter directly into a filial and spousal relationship with Himself, so that they can participate in the inner life of the Trinity. In order to bring this about, God's plan culminates in the sending of His Son and His Holy Spirit, who make men adopted sons in the Son, and brides in the Church.

The supernatural order consists essentially of elevating rational creatures—men and angels—to become not merely *creatures* of God, but *sons* of God and *spouses* of God. Ephesians 1:5 says: “He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”

God makes men to be His sons and daughters by giving them a participation in His divine nature, according to 2 Peter 1:4, which speaks of the God's “precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.”

By nature we are not properly God's sons, because a son must share in the nature of the father. No creature naturally shares the divine nature, for the divine nature is proper only to God. On the contrary, every creature has a created and finite nature by which it has a certain place in the hierarchy of creation and particular finite gifts that put them in complementary relationships with other creatures.

Dei Verbum 2 speaks of God's plan to enter into intimate fellowship with man:

In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Peter 1:4). Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14-15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself.

The history of mankind given to us in Revelation is the history of how God has called man into a familial fellowship with Himself. This relationship involves elements

both of sonship and matrimony. When God makes it possible for man to enter into this intimate familial relationship with Him, we say that He has made a covenant with man.

Characteristics of Covenant: Gratuitous Relationship of Adoption into God's Family

Filial and Bridal Dimension of the Covenant

It has often been observed that the notion of covenant lies at the heart of God's plan for mankind. What is meant by covenant here? Scott Hahn, in his excellent work, *Kinship by Covenant*, analyzes the notion of covenant as the extension of family relationships beyond their natural limits. One scholar defines covenant as "an extension of family relations across family lines."¹

A Jewish scholar, Tikva Frymer-Kensky, describes God's covenant with Israel, as the prophets depict it, in familial terms: "Israel's covenant with God creates a close personal relationship akin to the relationships known from family life: Israel is God's son or God's wife, and within these metaphorical understandings, the covenant and its formula have their place."²

When God extends familial relations across strict family lines, this means that God extends the familial relations of the Persons of the Trinity analogously to man, so that man is brought into a relationship of sonship and constituted as Bride of God. God's covenant with man therefore has a Trinitarian dimension. Our adopted sonship has its divine exemplar in the Person of the Son and His filial relation to the Father, and our being constituted as Bride of the Son has its exemplar in the Person of the Holy Spirit who proceeds as the love of the Father and Son.

Sonship in the Old and New Covenants

The filial aspect of the Old Covenant is brought out in Exodus 4:22–23, in which Moses is commissioned to go to Pharaoh and tell him: "Thus says the LORD, Israel is my first-born son, and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me'; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son." God's paternity is frequently acknowledged in the liturgy of Israel, in which God is invoked as "our father": *abinu*. Nevertheless, the sonship of Israel is not a common theme in the Old Testament. Sonship remains a promise that is tied with the coming of the Messiah, who is spoken of as he who will be a son of God.

For example, in 2 Samuel 7:14, God speaks to David through the prophet Nathan about a descendent of David

who will have an eternal kingdom and who be God's Son: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son."³ Similarly, the messianic Psalm 2:7–8 speaks of the sonship of the Messiah: "I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, 'You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.'"

Many texts of the New Testaments reveal that this filial dimension of the covenant is fully realized in the Incarnation of the Son and His paschal mystery. Christ is the Son in which For example, in Gal 4:4–7, St. Paul shows how Christ's sonship and the gift of the Spirit is the cause of our adopted sonship:

In the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir.

The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit enables us to enter into a participation of Christ's relationship with His Father, so that we too can say "Abba, Father!"⁴ The New Covenant thus brings man into a participation of the inter-Trinitarian communion.

Bridal Dimension of the Old and New Covenants

The bridal dimensions of the Old Covenant is brought out in many texts. In Hosea 2:19–20, God says to Israel: "And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the Lord."

Ezekiel 16 presents Israel as an adulterous wife, espoused to God who remains faithful:

I plighted my troth to you and entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord God, and you became mine. Then I bathed you with water and washed off your blood from you, and anointed you with oil. I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with leather, I swathed you in fine linen and covered you with silk. . . . You grew exceedingly beautiful, and came to regal estate. And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendor which I had bestowed upon you, says the Lord God. But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your renown, and lavished your harlotries on any passer-by. . . . Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! . . . Yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant. . . .

1 M. S. Smith ("Your People Shall Be My People": Family and Covenant in Ruth 1:16–17," *CBQ* 69 [2007] 252, quoted in Scott Hahn, *Kinship by Covenant: A Canonical Approach to the Fulfillment of God's Saving Promises* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 28n127.

2 T. Frymer-Kensky, *Studies in Bible and Feminist Criticism* (Philadelphia: JPS, 2006) 147, quoted in Hahn, 28n127.

3 See also 1 Chron 17:11–14; Psalm 2

4 See also Romans 8:15–17: "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ."

I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

The everlasting covenant alluded to in Ezekiel 16:60-63 is inaugurated by Christ who wins the forgiveness of sins through His Passion, thus cleansing a renewed Israel to be His pure and immaculate Bride, as we read in Ephesians 5:25–27:

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

This magnificent image of the Church as a bride sanctified for conjugal union with God through the blood of Christ and the sacraments is given beautiful expression in Revelation 21:2–4:

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.”⁵

Gratuitousness of the Covenant

The supernatural order of God’s covenants is entirely gratuitous. This means that it is a divine initiative that cannot be merited in any way, or considered as *due* to the creature.

The very definition of grace (which comes from *gratis*: freely given), is that it “excludes the notion of something being due.”⁶ In order to explain this, St. Thomas distinguishes two ways in which something can be due: either on the basis of nature or on the basis of personal *merit*,⁷ in that a reward is promised to certain acts. Everything that God’s creative wisdom has ordained a species to have is *due* to it: its properties, natural potencies, inclinations, ends, etc. Natural gifts are gratuitous in the sense that they are completely unmerited, but nevertheless they are *due to the nature itself* which God has willed to institute. Supernatural gifts are *not due in either sense*, and this constitutes their special *double* gratuitousness,

5 See also Rev 21:9–14: “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”¹⁰ And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,¹¹ having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.¹² It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed;¹³ on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.¹⁴ And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

6 See *ST I-II*, q. 111, a. 1: “*Gratia, secundum quod gratis datur, excludit rationem debiti.*”

7 See *ST I-II*, a. 111, a. 1, ad 2; *Comp. theol.*, I, ch. 214.

on account of which they are given the name of “grace.”⁸

It cannot be due to the nature of the creature or due to any possible natural work of the creature that God should adopt him to be God’s son or daughter, or choose him as His bride! God’s covenant with man is absolutely gratuitous.

The Covenant Is a Divine Initiative and Election

Because God’s covenant with man is completely gratuitous, it can only be a divine initiative that springs from a free divine choice or election. God freely chooses to enter into relationship with human beings. Those with whom He chooses to enter into a covenant are said to be “elected” or “chosen.” Thus Israel is the chosen people whom God elected from all the nations to be a nation adopted by Him in sonship and betrothed to Him.

In Deuteronomy 4:37, Israel is said to be chosen out of love: “And because he loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them, and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power.” A fuller statement of the nature of the covenant and its source in a gratuitous divine choice, rooted solely in the divine love, is given in Deuteronomy 7:6–11:

For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but it is because the Lord loves you, and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, and requites to their face those who hate him, by destroying them; he will not be slack with him who hates him, he will requite him to his face. You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command you this day.⁹

Just as Israel is elected in the Old Covenant, so the Church is the object of God’s election in the New Covenant. A beautiful expression of this notion of election in the New Covenant is given by St. Paul in Ephesians 1:3–6:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before

8 Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God according to St. Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2010), 225–226.

9 Another text on the divine election is Deuteronomy 10:14–16: “Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it; yet the LORD set his heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.”

the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In John 15:16, Jesus tells the Apostles, whom He calls friends rather than servants, that “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.”

Conditions of the Covenant are Freedom and Fidelity; Covenant Implies a Blessing and a Curse

The purpose of God’s covenant with man is to promise and bestow a superabundant inconceivable blessing: the blessing of adoption and entering into a spousal relation with God. However, this blessing is given to man with the condition of his free fidelity to the covenant.

Every covenant between God and man involves an obligation of fidelity on man’s part. God desires to enter into a relationship that involves a reciprocity of mutual fidelity. The relationship which is freely chosen on God’s part is also to be freely chosen on man’s part. This is necessary for the covenant to be a maximum communication of God’s goodness. If the covenant involved no condition, then there would not be any true participation of man in choosing the relationship given in the covenant. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 311 summarizes:

Angels and men, as intelligent and free creatures, have to journey toward their ultimate destinies by their free choice and preferential love. They can therefore go astray. Indeed, they have sinned. Thus has *moral evil*, incommensurably more harmful than physical evil, entered the world. God is in no way, directly or indirectly, the cause of moral evil. He permits it, however, because he respects the freedom of his creatures and, mysteriously, knows how to derive good from it.

God, of course, is absolutely faithful to the covenant, for He is fidelity itself. Hence we have seen that God says in Deuteronomy 7:9: “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.” Similarly, in the New Covenant, St. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:13: “if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.”

So that man can freely ratify the covenant, it comes with a condition to which man must freely choose to remain faithful. This condition is fidelity to God’s Law. If man is faithful, the covenant is a source of superabundant blessing, but if man is unfaithful to the Law, the curses of the covenant come into effect. In Deuteronomy 11:26–28, God says: “Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day, and the

curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God.” A more extended description of the blessing and curse is given in Deuteronomy 28.

Covenant Implies a Mission of Transmission of the Covenantal Blessing

In giving the covenant, God also gives a mission to transmit the covenant to others. Every grace given implies a mission to cooperate with God in transmitting that grace to others. This corresponds to a general principle that we see throughout creation. God wills to maximally communicate His goodness. A very significant part of that goodness is the kingly dignity of communicating or passing on that good to others. In other words, God wills those who have received His blessings to serve as mediators for others, so that they can also receive it. We have seen that this corresponds to the mission of headship.

We see this aspect of headship and mediation in Exodus 19:5:5: “Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Israel in general, and the Messiah in particular (see Isaiah 49:6¹⁰) is called to be a light to the Gentiles and a blessing for all peoples, as God promised to Abraham in Genesis 12:3.¹¹ The blessing promised to Abraham’s descendants, the chosen people, is to pass to all peoples.

In the Church, this missionary aspect is seen in the missionary mandate in Matthew 28:19–20. Before ascending to heaven, Jesus gives the disciples the daunting task: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” The covenant is given to those freely chosen to be its first recipients, precisely so that it may be maximally communicated.

For this reason the Church is missionary by her very nature. John Paul II, in an encyclical on the missions, *Redemptoris Missio* 1, wrote:

The mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the Church, is still very far from completion. As the second millennium after Christ’s coming draws to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service. It is the Spirit who impels us to proclaim the great works of God: “For if I preach the Gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (1 Cor 9: 16)

10 Isaiah 49: 6: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

11 Gen 12: 3: “I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

In the name of the whole Church, I sense an urgent duty to repeat this cry of St. Paul. From the beginning of my Pontificate I have chosen to travel to the ends of the earth in order to show this missionary concern. My direct contact with peoples who do not know Christ has convinced me even more of the *urgency of missionary activity*, a subject to which I am devoting the present encyclical.

The Second Vatican Council sought to renew the Church's life and activity in the light of the needs of the contemporary world. The Council emphasized the Church's "missionary nature," basing it in a dynamic way on the Trinitarian mission itself. The missionary thrust therefore belongs to the very nature of the Christian life, and is also the inspiration behind ecumenism: "that they may all be one...so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (Jn 17:21).

Original Covenant between God and Adam and Eve in Eden

Right at the beginning of human history, God created man in the blessing of a covenantal relationship. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 54 speaks of the original covenant with man in Eden:

"God, who creates and conserves all things by his Word, provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities. And furthermore, wishing to open up the way to heavenly salvation, he manifested himself to our first parents from the very beginning." He invited them to intimate communion with himself and clothed them with resplendent grace and justice.¹²

We see the intimate communion with God that Adam and Eve enjoyed above all in the figure of walking with God in the cool of the day in Genesis 3:8. Adam and Eve thus enjoyed a state of original harmony with God, with their own faculties that were free from concupiscence and infirmity, and with creation outside of them.¹³

The theological tradition summarizes the gifts enjoyed by Adam and Eve by distinguishing three levels of gift: human nature, preternatural gifts that are proper to the angelic world, and supernatural gifts proper to God alone. The preternatural gifts are immortality, freedom from suffering, freedom from concupiscence known as integrity, and some infused knowledge of God. The supernatural gifts include sanctifying grace, the theological virtues, the infused moral virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the Indwelling of God.

12 See also CCC 375: "The Church, interpreting the symbolism of biblical language in an authentic way, in the light of the New Testament and Tradition, teaches that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were constituted in an original 'state of holiness and justice.' This grace of original holiness was 'to share in ... divine life.'"

13 See CCC 374: "The first man was not only created good, but was also established in friendship with his Creator and in harmony with himself and with the creation around him, in a state that would be surpassed only by the glory of the new creation in Christ."

Conditions of the Original Covenant

The privileged relationship with God came with a condition to test Adam's fidelity. Adam was told in Genesis 2:16–17: "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 396 gives a good description of the nature of this condition for fidelity:

God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. A spiritual creature, man can live this friendship only in free submission to God. The prohibition against eating "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" spells this out: "for in the day that you eat of it, you shall die." The "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" symbolically evokes the insurmountable limits that man, being a creature, must freely recognize and respect with trust. Man is dependent on his Creator and subject to the laws of creation and to the moral norms that govern the use of freedom.¹⁴

Headship in the Original Covenant and Original Sin

We can see the kind of headship and missionary responsibility enjoyed by Adam and Eve from the sad consequences of their infidelity. After their sin, they were unable to transmit to their descendants the inestimable gifts that they had received over and above the limits of human nature.

Of the three levels of gifts, only that of human nature remained with them to be transmitted to their posterity. The result is that Adam and Eve have passed on to us human nature stripped of the original preternatural and supernatural gifts that gratuitously adorned their nature in the Garden. The greatest loss was the state of friendship with God in which they had been created, which is given by sanctifying grace and supernatural charity.¹⁵

Secondly, Adam and Eve lost—for themselves and for us—the preternatural gifts with which they had been created: immortality, immunity from suffering, infused knowledge, and integrity (immunity from disordered passion).

Ultimately all moral responsibility carries with it the possibility of wreaking havoc through abuse of that responsibility, not only to oneself but also to others. This fearful capacity is of the very essence of created responsibility, which involves the obligation/vocation to preserve a trust that has been received for the sake of others, for the sake of the common good.

Nevertheless, moral responsibility is itself a great good, despite its immense potential for abuse. It is an inestimable good in that it makes possible a unique and free sharing in God's own kingship or providence exercised

14 See John Paul II, *Dominum et vivificantem* 36, on which this text of the CCC draws.

15 See CCC 375, 1997; LG 2; 2 Pt 1:4.

over those very creatures that God has willed for their own sake. Through moral responsibility the creature is elevated to share in the distribution of God's gifts to His beloved creatures.

In the case of Adam and Eve, their privilege of being the first human couple entailed an immense privilege of kingly mediation. They had been given human nature adorned with supernatural and preternatural gifts as a sacred endowment or trust to pass on to all the future members of the human race. This privilege necessarily contained an awe-inspiring responsibility to be faithful to their trust of being God's agents in the passing on, not only of His natural, but also of His supernatural gifts. This kingly trust was violated by their seeking to make themselves morally autonomous, capable of deciding good and evil for themselves without responsibility towards God and His law, making themselves as gods. The claim of moral autonomy includes the lack of recognition of oneself as the recipient of an utterly gratuitous endowment.

Nevertheless, Adam and Eve retained their natural gifts of human nature, which they were able to pass on to all humanity. Thus Adam retained a natural headship over the human race, while forfeiting his supernatural headship, to be taken up in the fullness of time by Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, St. Paul writes: "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." Even more explicit is Romans 5:12-19:

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned¹⁶... Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The failure of the headship of Adam and Eve¹⁷ is superabundantly countered by the offer of a New Covenant in Christ!

¹⁶ This last part of this sentence can also receive another translation: "in whom all have sinned," a reading given in the Vulgate.

¹⁷ See the teaching of the Council of Trent on original sin in Session V, 1546, Denz. 788-89, DS 1511-12.