



# The Mystery of Mary

*Paul Haffner*

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## **The Mystery of Mary** Paul Haffner

In the eighth century when Saint John of Damascus was speaking of Mary most holy he said, 'Today the salvation of the world begins.' The Blessed Virgin Mary stands at the heart of the Christian tradition. She holds a unique place in the Church's theology, doctrine and devotion, commensurate with her unique position in human history as the Mother of God. Generations of Christians continue to call Mary blessed and from time immemorial, the Church has understood Mary as an inherent part of the faith and appropriately honors her in the sacred liturgy. Catholic faith knows Mary to be the humble virgin who had the privilege of being the Mother of God. Mary's complete adherence to grace led the Second Vatican Council to remember that she 'cooperated through free faith and obedience in human salvation' that caused Wisdom's plan to be a sign of hope. In this book, Rev. Dr. Paul Haffner offers a clear and structured overview of theology and doctrine concerning Mary set in a historical perspective. He outlines the basic scheme of what constitutes Mariology set in the context of other forms of theological enquiry. Working through the contribution of Holy Scripture he proceeds to examine each of the fundamental doctrines that the Church teaches about Our Lady. From the Immaculate Conception to Mary's continuing Motherhood in the Church, the reader will find here a sure and steady guide, faithful to tradition. The author offers a realistic perspective, not reducing the concrete aspects of Mary's gifts and privileges to mere symbols on the one hand, and not confusing doctrine and devotionism on the other. 'The Mystery of Mary', with a foreword by Dom Duarte, Duke of Braganza, is published to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the definition by Pope Blessed Pius IX of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. Paul Haffner, a priest of the diocese of Portsmouth (England), obtained his first degree in physics at Oxford University. He went on to philosophical and theological studies in Rome, and received his doctorate from the Pontifical Gregorian University. At present, he is lecturer in systematic and dogmatic theology in Rome at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Lateran University, and the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum. His publications with Gracewing (UK) include 'The Mystery of Creation, The Sacramental Mystery' and 'The Mystery of Reason' (all are also published in Italian by Vatican Press). Published by Liturgy Training Publications.

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