

(Image: [The Last Supper](#) by Carl Bloch, c. early 19th century)

*“And after the morsel, Satan entered into [Judas]. And Jesus said to him: That which thou dost, do quickly.” – John 13:27*

Among the four Gospels, there are eleven chapters which make reference to Judas. We know arguably more about Judas than any of the other Apostles, with the possible exception of Peter. Yet we typically think of Judas – and the Church readings at Mass reflect this – only one week per year. Today, we look at the perfidious Apostle through the visions granted to Ven. [Maria of Agreda](#), a 17th-century Spanish nun. She recounted these revelations, which came from the Blessed Virgin herself, in writings known to us as *The Mystical City of God*. As with previous installments of this document by *Catholic Family News*, we remind the reader that *The Mystical City of God* is available in print edition in English as well as [online](#). All text below (*in italics*) is extracted from Volume III (The Transfixion), Book Two, Chapter V.

Today’s extract focuses on Judas from the beginning of his association with Christ and the other Apostles. We see that his arrogance, ambition, and obstinacy developed over a long period of time before culminating in his betrayal of the Savior, which resulted in both of their deaths, one to glory and the other to damnation. Intriguingly, we learn that both Christ and His Blessed Mother were aware of the coming betrayal of Judas, yet they both made special efforts in patience and charity to save him from perdition. Among the many poignant revelations from the Blessed Virgin (later in the chapter) is that Saint John “had become the beloved disciple of Christ on account of his love toward me [Mary], and that Judas fell because he despised the mercy and kindness which I had shown him.” The following installment will focus on the final days of Judas’ treachery by which he turned over his Divine Master to the Jewish authorities and the forces of darkness.

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*I will...say something of that which has been made known to me concerning the wicked Apostle Judas; for it belongs to this history and less is known of him. It will at the same time be a warning to the obstinate and an admonition for those little devoted to the most blessed Mary; for it is a sad truth that there should be any mortals who entertain little love toward a creature so lovable, and one whom the infinite God Himself loves without bound or measure; whom the angels love with all their heavenly powers, the Apostles and saints from their inmost souls, whom all creatures should eagerly strive to love, and who never can be loved according to her merits. Yet this unhappy Apostle strayed from the royal road of divine love and its blessings. The understanding, which has been given me concerning this defection for the purpose of making it known in this history, is contained in the following*

paragraphs.

*Judas was attracted to the school of Christ our Teacher by His forceful doctrines, and was filled with the same good intentions which moved the others. Powerfully drawn by these motives, he asked the Savior to admit him among His disciples, and the Savior received him with the bowels of a loving Father, who rejects none that come to Him in search of truth. In the beginning Judas merited special favors and forged ahead of some of the other disciples, deserving to be numbered among the twelve Apostles; for the Savior loved his soul according to its present state of grace and his good works, just as He did the others. The Mother of grace and mercy observed the same course with him, although by her infused knowledge she immediately became aware of the perfidious treachery with which he was to end his apostolate. She did not, on this account, deny him her intercession and maternal love; but she applied herself even more zealously to justify as far as possible the cause of her Divine Son against this perfidious and unfortunate man, in order that his wickedness, as soon as it should be put into action, might not have the shadow of an excuse before men. Well knowing that such a character as his could not be overcome by rigor, but would only be driven by it to so much the greater obstinacy, the most prudent Lady took care that none of the wants or the comforts of Judas should be ignored and she began to treat him, speak and listen to him more gently and lovingly than to all the rest. This she carried so far that Judas, when the disciples once disputed among themselves concerning their standing with the Queen (as, according to the Evangelist [Luke 22:24], it happened also concerning the Redeemer), never experienced the least jealousy or doubt in this matter; for the blessed Lady in the beginning always distinguished him by tokens of special love and he, at that time, also showed himself thankful for these favors.*

*But as Judas found little support in his natural disposition, and as the disciples, not being as yet confirmed in virtue and not as yet even in grace, were guilty of some human failings, the imprudent man began to compliment himself on his perfection and to take more notice of the faults of his brethren than of his own (Luke 6:41). He permitted himself thus to be deceived, making no effort to amend or repent, he allowed the beam in his own eyes to grow while watching the splinters in the eyes of others. Complaining of their little faults and seeking, with more presumption than zeal, to correct the weaknesses of his brethren, he committed greater sins himself. Among the other Apostles he singled out Saint John, looking upon him as an intermeddler and accusing him in his heart of ingratiating himself with the Master and His blessed Mother. The fact that he received so many special favors from them was of no avail to deter him from this false assumption. Yet so far Judas had committed only venial sins and had not lost sanctifying grace. But they argued a very bad disposition, in which he willfully persevered. He had freely entertained a certain vain complacency in himself; this at once called into existence a certain amount of envy, which brought on a*

*calumnious spirit and harshness in judging of the faults of his brethren. These sins opened the way for greater sins; for immediately the fervor of his devotion decreased, his charity toward God and men grew cold, and his interior light was lost and extinguished; he began to look upon the Apostles and upon the most holy Mother with a certain disgust and find little pleasure in their intercourse and their heavenly activity.*

*The most prudent Lady perceived the growth of this defection in Judas. Eagerly seeking his recovery and salvation before he should cast himself entirely into the death of sin, she spoke to him and exhorted him as her beloved child and with extreme sweetness and force of reasoning. Although at times this storm of tormenting thoughts, which had begun to rise in the breast of Judas, was allayed; yet it was only for a short time, and soon it arose and disturbed him anew. Giving entrance to the devil into his heart, he permitted a furious rage against the most meek Dove to take possession of him. With insidious hypocrisy he sought to deny his sins or palliate them by alleging other reasons for his conduct: as if he could ever deceive Jesus and Mary and hide from them the secrets of his heart. Thereby he lost his interior reverence for the Mother of mercy, despising her exhortations and openly reproaching her for her gentle words and reasonings. This ungrateful presumption threw him from the state of grace. The Lord was highly incensed and deservedly left him to his own evil counsels. By thus designedly rejecting the kindness and the intercession of most holy Mary, he closed against himself the gates of mercy and of his only salvation. His disgust with the sweetest Mother soon engendered in him an abhorrence of his Master; he grew dissatisfied with His doctrines and began to look upon the life of an Apostle and intercourse with the disciples as too burdensome.*

*Nevertheless, Divine Providence did not abandon him immediately, but continued to send him interior assistance, although in comparison with former helps they were of a kind more common and ordinary. They were, however, in themselves sufficient for his salvation, if he would have made use of them. To these graces were added the gentle exhortations of the kindest Mistress, urging him to restrain himself and to humble himself and ask pardon of his Divine Master. She offered him mercy in His Name and her own kind assistance in obtaining it, promising to do penance for him, if he would consent to be sorry for his sins and amend his life. All these advances did the Mother of grace make in order to prevent the fall of Judas. She was well aware, that not seeking to arise from a fall and to persevere in sin was a much greater evil than to have fallen. The conscience of this proud disciple could not but reproach him with his wickedness; but becoming hardened in his heart, he began to dread the humiliation, which would have been to his credit, and he fell into still greater sins. In his pride he rejected the salutary counsels of the Mother of Christ and chose rather to deny his guilt, protesting with a lying tongue, that he loved his Master and all the rest, and that there was no occasion for amending his conduct in this regard.*

*It was indeed an admirable example of patience and charity which Christ, our Savior, and His most blessed Mother gave us in their conduct toward Judas after his fall into sin; for as long as he remained in their company, they never showed exteriorly any change or irritation in their behavior toward him, nor did they cease to treat him with the same kindness and gentleness as all the rest. This was the reason why the wickedness of Judas, who necessarily showed signs of his evil state in his daily conversation and intercourse, remained so long concealed to the Apostles. For it is not easy, and perhaps not possible, continually to cover up or hide the tendencies of one's mind. In matters not depending upon deliberation we always act according to our character and our habits, and thus we disclose them at least to the watchful eyes of those with whom we have much intercourse. But as all of the disciples witnessed the constant affability and love of Christ our Redeemer and His most blessed Mother toward Judas, they suppressed their suspicions and ignored the exterior proofs of his wickedness. Hence all of them were much disturbed and agitated, when at the Last Supper the Lord told them that one of them was to betray Him (Matt. 26:21); and each one searched his soul, whether the accusation could refer to his own self. Saint John, on account of his greater intimacy, had some suspicion of the wicked doings of Judas and he was made more restless by his love; therefore, Jesus pointed out the traitor, but only by a sign, as is related in the Gospel (John 13:26). Before that time, the Lord had not given the least intimation of what was passing in the heart of Judas. This forbearance was yet more wonderful in the most blessed Mary, who, though the Mother of Christ and a mere creature, saw his perfidious betrayal close at hand and about to cause the death of her own Son, whom she loved so tenderly as a Mother and as a handmaid.*

*O ignorance and folly of men! How differently do we behave, if we are slightly affronted, though we deserve it so much! How unwillingly do we bear with the weaknesses of others, though expecting all men to bear with ours! How grudgingly we pardon an offense, though daily and hourly asking the Lord to pardon us our own! (Matt. 6:12). How prompt and cruel are we in making known the faults of our brethren, yet how resentful and angry at any word of criticism against us! None do we measure with the same measure with which we desire to be measured, and we do not wish to be judged by the same standard as we judge others (Matt. 7:1-2). All this is perversity and darkness, a breath from the mouth of the hellish dragon, who wishes to stem the flow of the most precious virtue of charity and disconcert the order of human and divine reasonableness; for God is charity, and he who exercises it perfectly is in God and God is in him [cf. 1 John 4:16]. Lucifer is wrath and vengeance and all those that yield to these vices follow the devil, who is leading them on to all the vices opposed to the good of the neighbor. Though the beauty of this virtue of charity has always filled my heart with the desire of possessing it fully, nevertheless I see, as in a clear mirror, that I have arrived not even at a beginning of this most noble virtue as exhibited in these wonders of divine charity toward the most ungrateful disciple Judas.*

*In order that I may not incur the blame of concealing what belongs to this chapter, I will mention another cause of the ruin of Judas. When the number of the Apostles and disciples increased, the Lord resolved to appoint one of them to take charge of the alms received, thus to supply the common needs and pay the imperial tribute. Jesus made known His wishes to all indiscriminately without addressing Himself to any one in particular. While all of them feared such an office and sought to evade it, Judas immediately strove to obtain it. In order to secure his appointment, he humbled himself so far as to ask Saint John to speak to the most holy Queen and induce her to arrange this matter for him with her Son. Saint John yielded to the request of Judas and spoke to the most prudent Mother; but she, knowing that this request of Judas was not proper or just, but proceeded from ambition and avarice, did not wish to propose it to the Divine Master. The same kind of influence Judas sought to bring into play through Saint Peter and other Apostles, without success; for the Lord in His goodness wished to stay his ruin, and justify his cause before men, if He should grant the request. At this resistance the heart of Judas, already corrupted by avarice, instead of quietly yielding, was consumed with unhappy desires for the office, and the devil stirred up thoughts of vilest ambition, such as would have been most improper and wicked in anyone, and hence were much more culpable in Judas, who had been a disciple in the school of highest perfection and who had lived in the light of the Sun of justice and its beautiful Moon, Mary! Neither in the day of abundant graces, when the Sun Jesus lighted his paths, nor in the night of temptations, when the Moon Mary disclosed to him the wiles of the poisonous serpent, could he have failed to become aware of the wickedness of such suggestions. But, as he flew from the light and cast himself willfully into darkness, he presumed to ask most holy Mary in a direct manner for her influence in obtaining his object. He had lost all fear and hid his avarice in the cloak of virtue. Approaching her, he said that he had made his request through Saint Peter and Saint John, with the sole desire of diligently serving her and his Divine Master, since not all would attend to the duties of this office with proper solicitude and that, therefore, he now asked her to obtain the position of purser for him from the Master.*

*The great Lady answered him with extreme gentleness: "Consider well, my dearest, what thou askest, and examine whether thy intentions are upright. Ponder well, whether it is good for thee to seek that which all thy brethren fear and refuse to accept, unless they shall be compelled thereto by the command of their Lord and Master. He loves thee more than thou lovest thyself and without doubt knows what will benefit thee; resign thyself to His most holy will, change thy purpose, and seek to grow rich in humility and poverty. Rise from thy fall, for I will extend thee a helpful hand and my Son will show thee His loving mercy." Who would not have yielded to these sweetest words and such urgent advice, spoken by such an amiable and heavenly creature as was most holy Mary? But this fierce and adamant heart was not softened or moved. On the contrary, the soul of Judas was*

*offended and enraged against the heavenly Lady for thus offering him a means of escaping from his dreadful danger. Boundless ambition and avarice roused his fury against her who seemed to hinder him in his projects and he considered her well-meant advice as an insult. But the most meek and loving Dove pretended not to notice his obstinacy and said nothing more to him at that time.*

*After his interview with most holy Mary, the avarice of Judas would not allow him to rest; casting off all modesty and natural shame (and the least spark of faith), Judas now resolved to apply to his Divine Master and Savior. Clothing himself like a consummate hypocrite in the garb of a sheep, he went to his Master and said: "Master, I wish to fulfill Thy wishes and serve Thee as Thy purser and as the dispenser of the alms which we receive; I will look to the interests of the poor, fulfilling Thy doctrine that we should do unto others as we wish them to do unto us, and I will see to it that alms are distributed according to Thy wishes, more profitably and orderly than hitherto." Such reasoning the specious hypocrite boldly used, committing many enormous sins in one and the same act. For, first of all he lied, concealing his real intention. Then, being ambitious of an honor which he did not merit, he neither wished to appear in his true light nor did he wish to be in truth what he merely pretended to be. He also blamed his brethren, discrediting them and praising himself: the ordinary course of those who are ambitious. What is especially to be noticed in this conduct of Judas is that he showed his loss of infused faith; for he attempted to deceive Christ, his Divine Master, by wearing the cloak of hypocrisy. For, if he had firmly believed that Christ was true God and man who penetrated into the secrets of the heart, he could not have hoped to be able to deceive Him; nor would he have attempted such double dealing, not only because he would have known Christ as the omniscient God, but because he would not have hoped to impose upon the infused and beatific science of Christ as man. Hence Judas had lost belief in all these prerogatives, and to his other sins, added the sin of heresy.*

*What the Apostle [Paul] says in his first letter to Timothy was literally fulfilled in this treacherous disciple: "For they that will become rich, fall into temptation and into the snares of the devil and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils; which some coveting have erred from the faith and have entangled themselves in many sorrows" (1 Tim 6:9). All this happened to the perfidious and avaricious disciple, and his avarice was so much the more blamable, since he had the striking and admirable example of Christ and of His Mother and that of the whole apostolic company before his eyes; and they all accepted only very moderate alms. But the wicked disciple imagined that on account of the great miracles of His Master and the multitudes which followed and gathered around Him, the alms and offerings would increase and he could have at his disposal large amounts. Seeing that his expectations were not realized, he was much disappointed, as he plainly showed on*

*the occasion of the anointing of the Lord by Mary Magdalen (Mark 14:4); his desire of gathering in alms induced him to estimate the value of the ointment at three hundred pence and to complain that this money was withheld from the poor, among whom it could have been distributed. He was moved to say this because he regretted very much not to lay hands on it himself; little cared he for the poor. He was highly incensed against the Mother of mercy because she distributed such generous alms among the poor; against the Lord because He would not accept large donations, and against the Apostles and disciples because they did not ask for them. All this vexed him sorely because his purse was thereby kept empty. Some months before the death of the Savior, he began frequently to avoid the other Apostles, absenting himself from their company and from the Redeemer; for the intercourse with them was getting irksome to him, and he joined them only in order to collect what donations he could. During these times of absence, the demon inspired him with the thought of breaking entirely with the Master and of delivering Him over to the Jews.*

*But let us return to the answer given to Judas by the Master, whom he asked to make him purser. We shall see how hidden and terrible are the judgments of the Most High. The Redeemer wished to ward off from him the danger which lay behind this request and which threatened the avaricious Apostle with final perdition. In order that Judas might not excuse himself under plea of ignorance, the Lord answered him: "Dost thou know, Judas, what thou seekest and what thou askest? Be not so cruel toward thy own self as to solicit and seek to obtain the poison and the arms which may cause thy death." Judas replied: "Master, I desire to serve Thee by employing my strength in the service of Thy faithful followers and in this way I can do it better than in any other; for I offer to fulfill all the duties of this office without fail." This daring presumption of Judas in seeking and coveting danger, justified the cause of God in allowing him to enter and perish in the danger thus sought and coveted. He resisted the light, and hardened himself against it, water and fire was shown him, life and death: he stretched forth his hand and chose perdition (Sirach 15:17-18). The justice of the Most High was made clear and His mercy was exalted, since He had so often presented Himself at the portals of this hardened heart, whence He had been spurned in order to make way for the devil. Later on, I will mention further particulars of the wickedness of Judas as a warning to mortals; for I do not wish to prolong this chapter too much and they will fit better into other parts of this history. What mortal, subject to sin, will not be seized with great fear when he thus sees one of his fellow-beings, who belonged to the school of Christ and of His blessed Mother, who was reared in the light of His doctrines and miracles, who performed the same wonders as the rest, in so short a time pass from the condition of an Apostle into that of a demon? Transform himself from an innocent sheep into a ravening and bloodthirsty wolf? From venial sins, Judas proceeded to most grievous and horrible crimes. He yielded himself to the devil, who already suspected that Christ was God and who*

*began to exercise the wrath he had against the Lord upon this unfortunate disciple strayed from the little flock. If, then, the fury of Lucifer is just as great and much greater after having learnt to his cost that Christ is the true God and Redeemer, what hope has the soul of escaping this inhuman and cruel enemy who so vehemently and furiously seeks our eternal damnation?*