

The understanding of Mary as the Ark of the New Covenant is nothing new. It was taught and celebrated early in Christian history. For the full story, please read my article “Mary, Ark of the New Covenant”.

I have compiled as many quotations from the Fathers of the Church as I could readily find to help establish the fact that Mary is biblically portrayed as the Ark, the Tabernacle and the fulfillment of other similar Old Testament types. These quotations are found in a book long out of print: *The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the First Six Centuries* written by Thomas Livius and published by Burns and Oakes in 1893. Quotations are taken from that book exactly as they appear including punctuation (including ellipses) and italicization, but words in bold are emphasis added. Source citations are taken from that book exactly as they appear including added comments (Livius uses “Ib.” for “Ibid.” so these are clarified). Scripture citations which appear as footnotes in the original are moved to inline citations.

Source citations from *The Blessed Virgin* are to the Latin or Greek texts, probably as published by Jacques Paul Migne, a French priest who worked in the 19th century to make the patristics texts widely available. These are available online at <http://patristica.net/graeca/> and <http://patristica.net/latina/> .

Quotations are presented in roughly chronological order. Dates and short descriptions of the authors are from Wikipedia unless otherwise noted.

There are certainly many more. If you find any additional quotations, please send me the information at sray@me.com.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* echoes the words of all the Fathers that I have quoted below. It is the Catholic Church that is the heir and successor of those first Christians. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* continually teaches the words from the earliest centuries, “Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the Ark of the covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is ‘the dwelling of God...with men.’ ” (CCC 2676)

St. Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 235)

one of the most important second-third century Christian theologians, antipope

“At that time, the Savior coming from **the Virgin, the Ark, brought forth His own Body into the world from that Ark**, which was gilded with pure gold within by the Word, and without by the Holy Ghost; so that the truth was shown forth, and the Ark was manifested. ...And the Savior came into the world bearing the incorruptible Ark, that is to say His own body.” (S. Hippolytus, *In Dan.* vi., Patr. Gr., Tom. 10, p. 648) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 77)

St. Dionysius of Alexandria (d. 264)

patriarch of Alexandria and eminent bishop of the third century

“As Christ our priest was not chosen by hand of man, so **neither was His tabernacle framed by men, but was established by the Holy Ghost; and by the power of God is that tabernacle protected, to be had in everlasting remembrance, Mary, God’s Virgin Mother.**” (S. Dionysius of Alexandria, *Respons. ad Quoest.* v. Pauli Samos) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 81)

St. Dionysius of Alexandria (d. 264)

patriarch of Alexandria and eminent bishop of the third century

“Not in a servant did He dwell, but **in His holy tabernacle not made with hands, which is Mary the Mother of God.**” (*Ib. ad Quoest.* vii. [i.e. *Respons. ad Quoest.*] In calling Mary σκηνή ἢ [tent/tabernacle] ἀχειροποιητος [not made with hands], the Saint implies that she was of an election and origin altogether singular and exceptional. The word occurs three times in the New Testament (*Mark* xiv. 58, *2 Cor.* v. 1, *Col.* ii. 11), and in each case denotes what is of singular and divine origin. See also *Heb.* ix. 11, 24.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 81)

St. Gregory Thaumaturgus (c. 213-c. 270)

bishop of Caesarea, miracle worker

“**The ark is verily the holy Virgin, gilded within and without**, who received the treasure of universal sanctification. Arise, O Lord, from the Father’s bosom, to raise up again the ruined race of our first parent.” (*Orat. in Deip. Annunciat.* Int. Opp. S. Greg. Thaumaturg) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 89)

Another translation renders this: “Let us chant the melody which has been taught us by the inspired harp of David, and say, ‘Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest; Thou, and the Ark of Thy sanctuary.’ **For the holy Virgin is in truth an Ark, wrought with gold both within and without, that has received the whole treasury of the sanctuary.**”*

St. Gregory Thaumaturgus (c. 213-c. 270)

bishop of Caesarea, miracle worker

“The tenor of his message was as follows. I am moved by My compassion to descend to earth in order to recover the lost Adam. Sin made him to decay who was made to My image, and hath corrupted the work of My hands, and obscured the beauty which I formed. ...Go therefore to the Virgin Mary. Pass thou on to the animate city whereof the prophet spake these words: *Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God* (Ps. lxxxvi. 3). Go, then, to My rational paradise, to the Gate of the East, to the place of sojourn that is worthy of My Word, that hath appeared as a heaven upon earth ; go to the light cloud, and announce to it the shower of My coming ; **go to the sanctuary prepared for Me**, to the hall of the Incarnation, to the pure chamber of My generation according to the flesh. **Speak in the ears of My rational ark**, so as to prepare for Me the accesses of hearing.

* Roberts, A., Donaldson, J., & Coxe, A. C. (1997). *The Ante-Nicene Fathers Vol. VI : Translations of the writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325*. Fathers of the Third Century: Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius The Great, Julius Africanus, Anatolius and Minor Writers, Methodius, Arnobius. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems.

But disturb not nor vex the soul of Mary. Manifest thyself in such wise as becomes that sanctuary, and salute her first with the voice of gladness.” (*Homilies*, i, ii., iii. *On the Annunciation*, Int. Opp. S. Greg. Thaum. Learned critics attribute them to the fifth century.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 123)

Breviarium in Psalterium

“Christ in Mary as though the Bridegroom in the bridechamber, and **the body of Mary as though the tabernacle.**” (*Breviarium in Psalterium*, in loc., Int. Opp., S. Hieron) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 78)

St. Athanasius (c. 296-373)

Christian theologian, a Church Father, the chief defender of Trinitarianism against Arianism

“Be mindful of us, most holy Virgin, who after childbirth didst remain virgin; and grant to us for these small words great gifts from the riches of thy graces, O thou full of grace. Accept them as though they were true and adequate praises in thy honor; and if there is in them any virtue and any praise, we offer them as a hymn from ourselves and from all creatures to thee, full of grace, Lady, Queen, Mistress, Mother of God, and **Ark of sanctification.**” (*Orat. In Deip. Annuntiat*, nn. 13, 14. Int. Opp. S. Athanasii) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 80)

St. Athanasius (c. 296-373)

Christian theologian, a Church Father, the chief defender of Trinitarianism against Arianism

“O noble Virgin, truly you are greater than any other greatness. For who is your equal in greatness, **O dwelling place of God the Word?** To whom among all creatures shall I compare you, O Virgin? You are greater than them all **O (Ark of the) Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna**, that is, the flesh in which Divinity resides.” (*Homily of the Papyrus of Turin*) (source is not *Blessed Virgin*; source is probably *Mary and the Fathers of the Church: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Patristic Thought* by Luigi Gambero; for a defense see <http://capriciousness.blogspot.com/2009/04/discourse-on-discourse-on-holy.html>)

St. Ephrem (c. 306-373)

Syriac Christian deacon and a prolific Syriac-language hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century

“With the rib that was drawn out of Adam, the wicked one drew out the heart of Adam. There arose from the *rib* [*i.e.*, Mary], a hidden power which cut off Satan as Dagon. **For in that ark** [Mary again], a book was hidden that cried and proclaimed the Conqueror. There was then a mystery revealed, in that Dagon was brought low in his own place of refuge. The accomplishment came after the type, in that the wicked one was brought low wherein he trusted. ...Fulfilled was the mystery. Blessed is He who by the true Lamb redeemed us, and destroyed our destroyer as He did Dagon.” (S. Ephrem, *Rhythm* iii, *On the Nativity*, Morris, p.20) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 66)

St. Ephrem (c. 306-373)

Syriac Christian deacon and a prolific Syriac-language hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century
“O Virgin Mother of God, Gate of heaven, **and Ark**, in thee I have a secure salvation. Save me out of the pure mercy (δωρεάυ, gratis), O Lady.” (*Precat.* ix. Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. p. 522) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 294)

St. Ephrem (c. 306-373)

Syriac Christian deacon and a prolific Syriac-language hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century
“Concentration (coetus) of the hierarchies, crown of all saints and virgins, unapproached for thy exceeding brightness and splendor, censer of gold, lamp most bright, **urn most beautiful containing the heavenly manna; table bearing the written law for men, true ark**, book of writing most divine, princess, of all most prudent and wise, light-giving Virgin, most holy consoler and directress of all, most sacred Maid. ...” (*Threni B. V. M.* Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. p. 575 sq. The *Threni* and *Precationes* are ranked amongst the *Opera Dubia* of S. Ephrem. Their style, at least in the version which we now have, is that rather of Chrysippus in the fifth, or of Hesychius and S. Sophronius at the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 297)

St. Ephrem (c. 306-373)

Syriac Christian deacon and a prolific Syriac-language hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century
“Hail, most tranquil haven, and most ardently longed for rescuer of the tempest-tossed from billows and storms. Hail, succour of those in danger. Hail, resurrection of our first father Adam. Hail, sweet liberty. Hail, parent of all. Hail, fountain of grace, and of all the solace. Hail, refuge and hospice of sinners. **Hail, mercy-seat of the afflicted. Hail, place of sanctuary in Jerusalem.** Hail, most glorious throne of our Creator. Hail, most illustrious splendor of the age. Hail, hope of all the good who suffer under affliction. Hail, sweet solace and protection of the converted. Hail, of men and women alike Queen and Patroness. Hail, best mediatrix between God and man.” (*Threni B. V. M.* Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. p. 575 sq. The *Threni* and *Precationes* are ranked amongst the *Opera Dubia* of S. Ephrem. Their style, at least in the version which we now have, is that rather of Chrysippus in the fifth, or of Hesychius and S. Sophronius at the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 298)

St. Ephrem (c. 306-373)

Syriac Christian deacon and a prolific Syriac-language hymnographer and theologian of the fourth century
“The woman ministered before the man, because he is her head. Joseph rose to minister before His Lord, who was in Mary. **The priest ministered before Thy Ark by reason of Thy holiness.** Moses carried the tables of stone which the Lord wrote, and **Joseph bare about the pure Tablet in whom the Son of the Creator was dwelling.** The tables had ceased, because the world was filled with Thy doctrine.” (*Serm.* xi., *In Natali Domini*, Opp. Syr. Tom. ii. p. 429. Morris, pp. 51, 52. S. Ephrem possibly here looks on S. Joseph as a type of the priesthood. See S. Ambrose, *In Luc* L. ii. n. 7, quoted above, p. 271.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 383)

Unknown author (4th century)

“He made not his dwelling in a slave, but in **His Holy Tabernacle not made with hands, which is Mary the Mother of God.**” (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 251)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313-386)

bishop of Jerusalem, Doctor of the Church, distinguished theologian of the fourth century

“The Ark would be the type and image of Christ: for if we look back to the way of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten, we shall see that **it is in the temple of the Virgin, as in an ark that the Word of God took up His abode.** *For in Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*, as the Scripture saith. But the testimonies in the ark were the word of God, and the wood of it was imperishable, and with pure and choicest gold was it beautified within and without.” (S. Cyril, *De Ador. in Spir. et Verit*, p. 293. S. Maximus of Turin and other Fathers apply the Ark of the Covenant to the Blessed Virgin Mary.) (*Blessed Virgin*, pp. 76-77)

St. Ambrose (c. 339-397)

bishop of Milan, Doctor of the Church, also notable for his influence on Augustine of Hippo

“The prophet David danced before the Ark. Now **what else should we say the Ark was but holy Mary?** The Ark bore within it the tables of the Testament, but Mary bore the Heir of the same Testament itself. The former contained in it the Law, the latter the Gospel. The one had the voice of God, the other His Word. The Ark, indeed, was radiant within and without with the glitter of gold, but holy Mary shone within and without with the splendor of virginity. The one was adorned with earthly gold, the other with heavenly.” (*Serm. xlii. 6, Int. Opp., S. Ambrosii*) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 77)

St. Ambrose (c. 340-397) (duplicate of the quote above, different translation, citations slightly differ)

bishop of Milan, Doctor of the Church, also notable for his influence on Augustine of Hippo

“For this cause did the prophet David dance before the Ark. **And what shall we say is the Ark, but holy Mary? For as the Ark bore within it the tables of the Testament, so Mary bore the Heir of the same Testament:** it preserved within it the Law, she the Gospel; it had the voice, she the Word, of God. The Ark, moreover, was radiant within and without with the shining of gold, whilst **holy Mary gleamed within and without with the splendor of virginity; it was adorned with earthly gold, she with heavenly.**” (*Serm. xlii., Int. Opp. S. Ambros.* The author is uncertain, but there is nothing to show that he is not S. Ambrose. Ed. Maurin, vol. iv. p. 551. Venet. 1750.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 201)

St. Jerome (c. 347-420)

priest, Doctor of the Church, best known for his translation of most of the Bible into Latin

“Behold one in truth, the handmaid of the Lord. Holy she is, in whom is no guile, all simplicity. ... **The spouse of Christ is the ark of the covenant, within and without overlaid with gold, a keeper of the law of the Lord.** As in the ark there was nothing but the tables of the Testament, so too in thee no one from outside should be thought of. Over this propitiatory, as though upon the Cherubim, the Lord is pleased to sit. ... The

Apostle thus defines a virgin, that *she should be holy in body and in spirit (1 Cor. vii. 34).*” (Epist. xxii., *Ad Eustoch.* nn. 18, 19, 21, 24, 38. Cf. *Ep. cvii. ad Laetam*, n. 7, and *Ep. xlvi.*, *Ad Pammachium*, n. 21.) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 216)

St. Theodotus of Ancyra (died c. 446)

theologian, bishop of Ancyra, and a leading advocate of orthodoxy in the discussion of the nature and Person of Christ at the Council of Ephesus in 431--Encyclopaedia Britannica

“But what part had the divine Virgin Mother, worthy of all praise, in these things that were taking place? She wondered indeed and with reason at the things that were being said, and kept them, together with those said before, in her heart. To her now Simeon of set purpose speaks: O fair and innocent dove! **O sacred tabernacle of our hope, wherein all sanctity and magnificence dwell**, He to whom thou hast given birth—thou knowest it not—is set for the ruin and resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed (Luke ii. 34, 35).” (Hom. iv. in *Deip. et Simeon.* n. 13, Patr. Gr. Tom. 74, p. 1410) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 161)

St. Theodotus of Ancyra (died c. 446)

theologian, bishop of Ancyra, and a leading advocate of orthodoxy in the discussion of the nature and Person of Christ at the Council of Ephesus in 431—Encyclopaedia Britannica

“O Dove, all-white and innocent! O holy temple of our hopes, wherein dwells all sanctity and magnificence.” (Hom. iv. In *S. Deip. et Simeon. Ib.* [i.e. Patr. Gr. Tom. 77], p. 1395) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 223)

St. Proclus (d. 446)

friend and disciple of St. John Chrysostom, later archbishop of Constantinople

“Let the woman haste hither, for the woman shows not the tree of death, but brings forth the tree of life: the virgins...the mothers also, for the Virgin Mother has amended the tree of disobedience by the tree of life. The female sex is no longer in execration, for it has obtained whereby it shall surpass even the angels in glory. Eve has been healed...and Mary is venerated (adored), because she has become mother and handmaid, cloud and chamber, **and ark of the Lord.** ...For this cause let us say to her: *Blessed art thou amongst women*, who alone hast healed the grief of Eve; who alone hast borne the world’s price.” (Orat. iv. and v. In *Natal. Dom.* P.G. Tom. 65, p.710) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 58)

Hesychius of Jerusalem (d. c. 450)

priest-monk, played a prominent role in the 5th-century controversy on the nature of Christ and was acclaimed as having annotated the whole of sacred Scripture—Encyclopaedia Britannica

“**The ark is without doubt the Virgin Mother of God.** For if Thou art the gem, **with reason is she the ark**; and because Thou art the sun, the Virgin will necessarily be called heaven: since Thou art the unfading flower, the Virgin must assuredly be the plant of incorruption and paradise of immortality. Which things Isaias, seeing from afar, exclaimed later on: *Behold a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel (Is. vii. 14).* Behold a Virgin. Who is she? The most noble of women, the elect from among virgins, the splendid ornament of our nature, the glory of our mould, who freed Eve from her shame and Adam from the curse,

who cut off the bold insolence of the dragon, she whom the smoke of concupiscence touched not, nor the worm of pleasure harmed.” (Hesychius, *Orat. de Virginis laudib.* Biblioth. PP. Græco-Lat. Tom. ii. p. 423) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 89)

Hesychius of Jerusalem (d. c. 450)

priest-monk, played a prominent role in the 5th-century controversy on the nature of Christ and was acclaimed as having annotated the whole of sacred Scripture—Encyclopaedia Britannica

“*Arise, Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the Ark of Thy sanctification* (Ps. cxxxix. 8), **which is very evidently the Virgin Mother of God.** For if thou art the pearl, with good reason is **she the Ark.**” (Serm. V. *De S. Maria Deip.* Patr. Gr. Tom. 93, pp. 460-4) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 227)

Chrysippus (399-479)

Born in Cappadocia, Chrysippus was a monk in the monastery of St. Euthymius in Jerusalem. He was ordained a priest about 455, and left many writings. Among the few which have survived is the Oratio in Sanctam Mariam Deiparam, a sermon on Our Lady, important because of its contents and its relevance to the origins of Marian Liturgy. Mary is also briefly referred to in a homily on St. John the Baptist. https://hymnsandchants.com/Texts/Mariology/MarianEncyclo/MarianEncyclo_C/Chrysippus/ChrisippusPrint.pdf

“**An ark truly royal, an ark most precious is the ever-Virgin Mother of God, an ark which received the treasure of entire sanctification.** Not that ark wherein were all kinds of animals, as in the ark of Noe, which escaped the shipwreck of the whole drowning world. Not that ark in which were the tables of stone, as in the ark that journeyed in company with Israel throughout the desert; but an ark whose architect and inhabitant, pilot and merchant, companion of the way, and leader, was the Creator of all creatures, all which He bears in Himself, but by all is not contained.” (Chrysippus, *Orat. de laudib. Deip.*) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 74)

St. Zeno (prob. d. 371-2)

possibly bishop of Verona, <https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/2012/02/24/the-homilies-of-zeno-of-verona/>

“God, the Son of God, at the time appointed, concealing for the while His majesty, comes forth from His ethereal throne, and **prepares for Himself a tabernacle in the temple of the predestined Virgin; wherein He hides Himself**, about to become man; and there whilst preserving what He was, He meditates to be what He was not. Mingled thus with human flesh He forms Himself an infant. The womb of Mary swells forth with pride, not by conjugal gift, but by faith; by the Word, not by seed. She knows not the tediousness of the ten months (Virg. *Æn.* iv. 61).” (Lib. ii., *Tractatus* viii. et ix., Pat. Lat. Tom. 11, pp. 413-417) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 126)

An Ethiopic Hymn (5th century)

“Though shalt be named the Beloved One, O thou blessed among women. **Thou art that second Chamber which is called the Holy of Holies, where were the tables of the Covenant of the ten commandments, writ by the finger of God...Thou art the pure chest of gold in which was laid up the manna**, that bread which came down from Heaven and the Giver of life to all the world...Great things and marvelous shall they speak concerning thee, O thou City of God; **for thou hast been the dwelling-place of the Word of the Father...The Ark was she of one Person of the Holy Trinity.** She

was that Jerusalem, the city of the Prophets, and the abode of joy to all the Saints..." (The simile of the Ark in the tabernacle is a very frequent one in early hymnology. It occurs in the Coptic hymn quoted by Passaglia, *De Imm. Virg. Concept.* i. pp. 202, 240. In another Coptic passage she is compared to the Ark of Noe. *Ib.* p. 252.) (*Blessed Virgin*, pp. 462, 464, 465)

St. Venantius Fortunatus (c. 530-c. 609)

poet and hymnodist, later bishop of Poitiers

"How blest that Mother in whose shrine, The great Artificer Divine, Whose hand contains the earth and sky, **Vouchsafed, as in His ark, to lie!** Blest, in the message Gabriel brought; Blest, by the work the Spirit wrought; From whom the great Desire of earth, Took human Flesh and human birth. All honor, laud, and glory be, O Jesu, Virgin-born to Thee! All glory, as is ever meet, To Father and to Paraclete. Amen." (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 458)

Orthodox Hymn: The Akathist Hymn (6th century)

Priest: When the Absolver of all mankind desired to blot out ancient debts, of His Own will He came to dwell among those who had fallen from His Grace; and having torn up the handwriting of their sins, He heareth this from all: Alleluia!

Priest: While singing to Thine Offspring, we all praise Thee as a living temple, O Theotokos; for the Lord Who holdeth all things in His hand dwelt in Thy womb, and He sanctified and glorified Thee, and taught all to cry to Thee:

Rejoice, **tabernacle of God the Word:**

Rejoice, saint greater than the saints!

Rejoice, **ark gilded by the Spirit:**

Rejoice, inexhaustible treasury of life!

Rejoice, precious diadem of pious kings:

Rejoice, venerable boast of reverent priests!

Rejoice, unshakable fortress of the Church:

Rejoice, inviolable wall of the kingdom!

Rejoice, Thou through whom victories are obtained:

Rejoice, Thou through whom foes fall prostrate!

Rejoice, healing of my flesh:

Rejoice, salvation of my soul!

Rejoice, O Bride Unwedded!

Priest: O all-praised Mother Who didst bear the Word, holiest of all the saints, accept now our offering, and deliver us from all misfortune, and rescue from the torment to come those that cry to Thee: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

(THE AKATHIST HYMN is one of the most well-loved services of devotion in the Orthodox Church. Although there is some debate concerning the particulars of its authorship, many scholars agree with the pious tradition which states that the Akathist was composed in the imperial city of Constantinople, "the city of the Virgin," by St. Romanos the Melodist, who reposed in the year 556. To view the whole hymn, visit http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/m_akathist_e.htm .)

St. Methodius (815-885)

with his brother St. Cyril, theologians and missionaries known as the "Apostles to the Slavs"

“Hence it was that **the Ark of God removed from the stable at Bethlehem**...and rested upon the mountains of Sion; and receiving into her pure bosom as upon a lofty throne—such as transcends the nature of man—the Monarch of all, she presented Him there to God the Father—the Son joint-partner of His throne, and inseparable from Him—together with that pure and undefiled flesh which He had from her assumed. ...She goes up therefore to the temple, she who was more exalted than the temple, clothed with a double glory—the glory, I mean, of undefiled virginity, and that of ineffable child-bearing, the benediction of the Law, and the sanctification of grace...

“Tremendous, verily, is the mystery connected with thee, O Mother Virgin, thou spiritual throne, glorified and made worthy of God. ...*And the lintels of the doors*, says the prophet, *were raised at the voice of them that cried* (*Is. vi. 4*). By which is signified the veil of **the temple overshadowing before the ark of the Covenant which typified thee**. ...For if to the ark, which was the image and type of thy sanctity, such honor was paid by God, that to no one but to the priestly order was the access to it open, or ingress allowed to behold it—the veil separating it off, and keeping the vestibule as that of a queen—how great, and what sort of veneration is due to thee from us, who are of all the least, to thee who art indeed a Queen ; **to thee who art in truth the living Ark of God**, the Law-giver; to thee who hast verily become the heaven that contains Him who can be contained of none? ...” (S. Methodius, *Orat. de Simeone et Anna* ii. Patr. Graec. Tom. 18, p. 332) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 153)