

<i>Project Title</i>	"Litany of Loretto"
<i>Image Title</i>	"Sedes-Sapientia - Seat of Wisdom"
<i>Medium</i>	Iris giclee print on Arches Cold Press
<i>Size example</i>	" Sedes-Sapientia - Seat of Wisdom " 30" x 30" unframed
<i>Artist</i>	Lisa A. Johnston
<i>Style</i>	Montage Photography
<i>Synopsis</i>	This image is part of a series currently in progress and is a visual study on the names given to Mary the mother of Jesus in the "Litany of Loretto", a solemn litany of titles sung or prayed in honour of the Virgin Mary. The imagery is concerned with examining these <i>titles</i> through contemporary photographic technique which is supplied heavily with the vigorous usage of religious and poetic literary symbolism and iconography.

*Particular Image Statement*



This particular image *Sedes Sapientiae* or *Seat of Wisdom* is a visual interpretation of this title and theme. The Virgin Mary is the seat of wisdom to which God will pour out His love for all men and to fulfill His covenant with humanity by sending us the Messiah. As reference points for understanding the imagery the following quotations are invited:

Our Lady is the Seat of Wisdom because she was the creature who knew and loved God most, contemplating Him in the universe. The Gospel tells us: She observed all things and kept them in Her Heart. Our Lady is the Seat of Wisdom because She is the Universal Mediatrix that God established between Himself and men in order to be known and loved.

"Here, then, is the admirable secret to possess Divine Wisdom: Mary is the secret magnet. Wherever she is, she draws Eternal Wisdom so powerfully that He cannot resist. ...Once we possess Mary we shall easily and in a short time possess Divine Wisdom through her intercession. Of all the means to possess Jesus Christ, Mary is the surest, the easiest, the shortest way and the holiest." – St. Louis de Montfort

"The king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold". [I Kings 10:18] This is the "Throne of Solomon", and it refers to Mary's status as a vessel of the Immaculate Conception. She is carrying the Holy Child who is the Wisdom of the Father. "In the bosom of the mother rests the Wisdom of the Father" – St. Hildegard.

**LUKE 2:30-31.** *Because my eyes have seen thy **salvation**, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples.*

**Wisdom 7:1** *I myself am a mortal man, like all others, and of the race of him, that was first made of the earth, and in the womb of my mother I was fashioned to be flesh*

**Wisdom 7:12** *And I rejoiced in all these: for this wisdom went before me, and I knew not that she was the mother of them all.*

**Proverbs 3:18.** *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her: and he that shall retain her is blessed.*

I ne'er forget the ministry of healing,  
 The cup of wine, the sleep in spotless cell;  
 The hand of benediction, the appealing  
 Of cross, and saint, and shrine, and vesper bell - MARY LOWE DICKINSON

**Chambered Nautilus:** an 18<sup>th</sup> c poem by. Frenchman, Beranger:

**Chambered Nautilus:** an 18<sup>th</sup> c poem by. Frenchman, Beranger:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

**Isaias 61:11.** *For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth her seed to shoot forth: so shall the Lord God make justice to spring forth, and praise before all the nations.*

*Visual Symbols:*

Contained within this image are many symbolisms including:

- **Red Rose Petals** – Red represents the ardent love with which the heart of Mary was always inflamed towards God. The red signifies the mortification of her flesh and her compassion for the world. Red also symbolizes the blood of the cross which she was to stand under. The rose is the queen of wreath-flowers and ornamental expression of beauty.
- **Green Leaf** – symbol of life, hope and the Holy Trinity.
- **Child** – Representative of Infant Christ symbolic of eternal hope, redemption and is the "Word made flesh" and the incarnation of "Holy Wisdom". He is born into the world as man, but is a child, vulnerable and seated on the lap of His mother and protector.
- **Chambered Nautilus**- Symbolic of the womb of both Mary and her mother, Ana, the shell is a container of life. It is a symbol of internal harmony and the perfection of nature. The nautilus shell evokes a sense of mystery and awe. Its spiral structure displays perfect mathematical proportion. The nautilus shell is lined with mother-of-pearl and is a relatively unchanged form for 450 million years. The cephalopod grows into increasingly larger chambers throughout its life cycle symbolizing protection, expansion, and renewal.
- **Hand of Benediction:** Symbolizes the Father, as Blessor. Traditionally "Sedes Sapientia" "Seat of Wisdom" has been portrayed as the Virgin Mary wearing a veil or crown and holding an "un-childlike" Infant Christ who is seated on her lap. Christ holds His hand in benediction or with a book (of Holy Wisdom). The hand of benediction is also the hand used in the sacramental life for example in ordination and Eucharistic consecration also hands are united in marriage. Raising the hand is an act of the human will and it is united in the divinity of a prayerful blessing.

## Litany of Loretto

"Sedes-Sapientia - *Seat of Wisdom*"

---