

Mariological Developments after the Second Vatican Council and the Impact of Marian Devotion in the Philippines

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Aggiornamento was the spirit that moved the Fathers of Vatican II. It is a renewal in Theology which consists in the return to the sources – to Sacred Scriptures and Tradition – leading to a wealth of new insights and new injection of life into the existing treatises. This return to the sources was a sign of the modern concern with evolution and history. Today, it helps us understand how things came to be and how they have developed.

I. CHAPTER EIGHT OF THE *LUMEN GENTIUM*

Chapter eight of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church is a fundamental document on our Blessed Mother. The Council Fathers, in an effort to make clear their teachings on Mary, have undertaken steps in clarifying the relationship of Mary to her son and to the members of the Church.

Understanding this document demands some familiarity with the process of its formation and with the general trend of Mariology out of which it emerged. One has to take into consideration the circumstances behind the final product of the conciliar document on the Mother of Jesus.

The pontificate of Pius XII seemed to have a character as “an age of Mary.” This pope expressed himself on the theme of Mary. This in effect helped in the growth of popular devotion and a crescendo

of Marian atmosphere such as devotional practices, meetings, confraternities, societies and institutes being founded. Mary had been accorded a more prominent place in the minds and hearts of the faithful. The pope had engaged himself on these movements and had taken occasion to point out the dangers and the need for a solid theological approach. His support and encouragement gave way to increased manifestation of Marian piety from 1950 to 1958.

But when Pope John XXIII's pontificate came, a different atmosphere pervaded. He was sober-minded, thus the Marian devotion became tame and without much exaggeration.

It took more than five years from May 17, 1959 to November 21, 1964 for the Council statement on Mary to reach its final form. In narrating the Council and the chapter on the Blessed Virgin Mary, it is good to review and keep in mind the process and other factors that influenced its finished product.

In the ante-preparatory phase, there circulated among bishops and faculties of Catholic universities an inquiry regarding the content of the conciliar agenda in the year 1960. All were invited to send their recommendations, suggested topics and contributions that they think the Council Fathers must discuss. Some suggested to include Marian topics in the agenda.

Responding to the petition of some pre-conciliar Fathers, the theological commission prepared a text of the Marian schema headed by Fr. Charles Balic on July 1961, with the title "Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church."¹

The schema was presented to the bishops and was examined and discussed at *Antonianum* on September 1961. Among those who were in the meeting were: Archbishop Dubois, Bishop Griffiths, Monsignors Philips, Colombo, Fenton and Lattanzi and Fathers Laurentin, Gagnebet, Congar, Tromp, Garcia Garces, Bertetto, Philip of the holy Trinity and Salaveri.² Most of these theologians published important mariological treatises.

¹ Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, vol. I, Pars IV (1971), p. 92.

² Frederick Jelly "Introduction to Chapter Eight of Lumen Gentium" *Marian Studies*, 1986, p. 46.

At this point, the members of the commission who prepared the text were not certain about the status of the Marian schema whether or not it was to be an independent document or a part of the Council's teaching on the Church. Finally on January 20, 1962, they were able to send a completed text to the theological commission. They revised the draft and came up with a new title: "Mother of God and Mother of Men."³

The Council formally opened on October 11, 1962. The initial text was given *nihil obstat* by the central commission on November 1962.⁴ There was an announcement that the Marian schema would be debated after the first session. But the bishops preferred to dedicate the last week of the session on the schema on the Church. And so the Marian schema was not discussed on the first session of the Council.

During the first and second session of the Council, the Marian schema was not worked upon. Its content remained unchanged. It was however given a new title. It was "*De Beata Maria Virgine, Matre Ecclesiae*." Two prominent Fathers, Cardinal Suenens and Cardinal Martini of Milan had employed this title already in the debate on the Church schema. The debate on the Church at the end of the first session had seen the question whether: the Marian document to emerge from the Council should take a form of a separate schema or should form a part of the document on the Church. Some bishops were in favor of integrating the Marian schema on the constitution of the Church. They were "Cardinal Frings, Bishop Ferrero di Cavallerleone, Gargitter, Elchinger and Arceo. Oppose to the integration were Cardinals Arriba and Castro."⁵

1. An Independent or an Integrated Marian Schema

It became clear that there was a definite trend in favoring a fusion of the Marian schema with the schema on the Church. In

³ ACTA, vol. I, Pars IV (1971), "De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum," p. 93.

⁴ D. Flanagan, "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church," *Vatican II The Constitution on The Church*, Kevin McNamara ed., (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968) p. 320.

⁵ Frederick Jelly, a.c., p. 50.

order to clarify the situation a debate on October 24, 1963 took place. There were pros and cons on the speeches delivered by Cardinal Santos of Manila, in favor of independent schema and Cardinal Konig of Vienna, in favor of integrating the Marian schema on the Church's constitution. Cardinal Santos began his address by calling the attention to the fact that there was no real disagreement among the conciliar Fathers about Mary's role in the Church, about her involvement in its beginning and its continuous nourishment, as well as about the honor that is due to Mary, the most blessed mother of Christ the redeemer, from all of her children in the Church.⁶

He continued his speech and pointed out that nobody was lacking in devotion to Mary at Vatican II. He argued that the main discussion concerned only in the place and manner of more suitably treating the doctrine about Mary.⁷ She is the Mother of God and of the Church and the Council acknowledges her to be the "daughter of the Father, mother of the Son, Spouse of the Holy Spirit, salvation of the people of God, queen and teacher of the apostles, exemplar of perfection and help of Christians called to holiness."⁸ At this point Cardinal Santos highlighted a Trinitarian way of seeing the Mother of the Lord.

Because of her great dignity and unique role in the Church, he was of the opinion that the Council should award her a separate schema so that her singular preeminence and dignity might be highlighted. There were many other Marian prerogatives mentioned by Cardinal Santos and he pointed out that Mary could not fit into the schema on the Church.

He continued his speech in favor of retaining the Marian schema as an independent document and that there was no fitting place in the schema on the Church where the various functions of Mary might be suitably treated. Mary does not fit into the distinction between the hierarchy and laity. Such classifications do not do justice to her unique place in the Church. "Although

⁶ ACTA, vol II, Pars III (1972), p. 338.

⁷ Ibid., "De loco et modo quo aptius tractari debeat doctrina de ipsa Beata Virgine."

⁸ Ibid., p. 338.

Mary is found in the one body of the Church gathered together with all the elect, it is in order that she might be the first and preeminent member of the Church and so in a certain sense 'above the Church'.⁹ Even though a member of the Church, she is vastly different from the other members. The passive redemption of Mary, which was preservative, is different from the liberative redemption. Cardinal Santos was not of the opinion that the very close connection between the Church and Mary was a sufficient reason to insert the Marian schema in that of the Church. This is principally about the pilgrim Church upon earth, its nature and mission, its members and hierarchical constitution and its relationships with the separated brethren. It was not apparent to the cardinal how these teachings about the Church fit on the Marian schema.

He did not think that Mariology ought to be reduced to Ecclesiology, when it also had a close connection with Christology and Soteriology. The dignity of the mother of God as well as her role in the divine plan of salvation, merit a distinct document and not merely an insertion into an already full schema on the Church nor simply an appendix to it.

And so Cardinal Santos proposed that there be a separate Marian schema to be considered after the discussion on the Church. He also recommended the composition of a new introduction of the Marian schema, so that this connection is made more apparent. Finally he opted at not integrating the two schemata. The *Ecclesia* was already complicated enough and to add the Council's Marian teaching to it would require the reworking of the whole material.

In order to have a balanced point of view, after the side of Cardinal Santos had been presented, it was but appropriate to present the views of Cardinal König of Vienna, in favor of integrating the Marian schema to the schema of the Church.

Cardinal König began his address by clearly asserting that in no way was he about to contradict the statements made by Cardinal Santos, either doctrinally or devotionally.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., p. 340.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 342.

The first theological reason was the fact that the Church is the central theme of the second session of the Council as well as of Vatican II as a whole.¹¹ It was therefore fitting that Mary, because of her intimate relationship with the Church, be a part of that central theme. If a separate schema on Mary was issued by the Council, it would create an impression that Mariology had often been isolated from the rest of Theology. This isolation has led to some unfounded and false theological excesses.

Secondly, a separate Marian schema would create a reaction that Vatican II was intending to define a new Marian dogma.¹² But it had been repeatedly denied that this was the mind of the Council.

Thirdly, a direct response that it would be incongruous to treat of Mary in the context of the pilgrim Church. "The Church is more than an institution of salvation but it is also the people of God and the communion of saints, the Blessed Virgin Mary ought to be placed within the schema on the Church as the preeminent member of the people of God."¹³ Both an integral Ecclesiology and integral Mariology are interdependent. Such reintegration is beneficial to Mariology because it shows its true significance in perspective, the importance of Marian doctrine in relation to Christ and to the Church.

Fourthly, "the place and the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the economy of salvation are based upon the fact that she is related to the unique mediator Jesus Christ as the mother of God who conceived him not only bodily but also in her heart through a loving faith and obedience to the word of God."¹⁴ In this manner she typifies as an exemplar of the Church or type of the Church which is the fruit of redemption. "Mary the preeminent member of the Church as well as her archetype, is also a way of salvation by sharing with others the redeeming love that she fully received from Christ."¹⁵ Thus Cardinal Konig believed that the doctrines on the Church and on Mary would be better explained within the same conciliar schema.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 342.

¹² Ibid., p. 343.

¹³ Ibid., p. 343

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 343.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 343.

Finally, the last theological reason argued by Cardinal König was that the proper balanced understanding of the mystery of the Church as both the recipients of the fruits of redemption and a sign as well as instrument of mediating that redemption to the world. It would preclude the misinterpretation that the Council was choosing one theological school over another. The so called ecclesiotypical emphasis would not overshadow the christotypical. Since Mary would be portrayed in a single schema with the Church as the most sublime cooperator with Christ through his grace of both accomplishment and application of the fruits of redemption which indeed enhances the dignity of the mother of God.¹⁶ Other than theological reasons, Cardinal König presented three historical reasons why the Marian schema ought to be integrated into the schema of the Church.

First, Marian devotion as expressed in the litanies of the Blessed Virgin Mary was an outcome of contemplating the Church as a mother. All the titles attributed to the Blessed Virgin Mother in these litanies were originally predicated to the Church. Mary's privileges were portrayed within ecclesiological perspective. Cardinal König cited Chapter 12 of the book of Revelation, which treats of the virgin Church, but later on was symbolically attributed to Mary. In the Church's tradition, Marian privileges have become clear only in the setting of *Ecclesial* characteristics. From this one can infer that even though her privileges are truly personal, they bear an ecclesiological dimension. In this way, Mary is the type of the Church, which is better explained within a single document on Mary and the Church.

The second historical reason was the homily of his Holiness Pope Paul VI delivered on October 11, 1963. The Holy Father emphatically presented the close relationship between the Church and the mother of God by calling Mary as "the most elite mother and daughter and sister."¹⁷

The third historical reason he pointed out was the theme of the international Mariological-Marian Congress held at Lourdes in 1958, i.e. "Mary and the Church." This was a manifestation of the fact that the intimate relationship between Mary and the Church was in accord with the spirit of the time and the devotion of the faithful.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 344.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 344 "sua madre e figlia e sorella eletissima"

Cardinal Konig also presented that the devotional life of the faithful must be nourished on the essentials. Catholics must be instructed in the right faith about Mary's role in the life and mystery of Christ and of the Church. Thus producing a single document would enrich both doctrines on the Church and Mary and improve devotional life of the Catholics.

Cardinal Konig ended his presentation with an ecumenical argument. He pointed out that such approach of integrating the Marian schema on the Church would help make Mary as the venerable *Theotokos* more recognizable to the Eastern Church. It also assists non-Catholic Christians in acknowledging the basis of Marian devotion in the testimony of Sacred Scripture and of ancient tradition.

The arguments of both parties clarified the issues and assured that the debate was not primarily on Marian doctrine and devotion but the manner of presenting her role in the mystery of Christ and of the Church that will be amenable to all the brethren of Christian faith.

The result of the voting on October 29, 1963: There were two thousand one hundred ninety-three votes cast. In favor of integrating Marian schema were one thousand one hundred fourteen votes. In favor of independent Marian schema were one thousand seventy four. There were five spoiled votes. Thus an integrated schema prevailed with a very narrow margin.¹⁸

In the following month, November 1963, to provide a new text that would become the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* a committee was formed composed of four members. It included the two Cardinals Santos and Konig, Bishop Doumith and Bishop Theas of Lourdes.¹⁹ Father Balic and Msgr. Philip were also asked to assist in the newly formed committee to share their expertise in the line of Mariology. The body was tasked to produce a text, which would receive the unanimous approval of the Fathers in the Council.

The final and definitive text on Mary after it underwent so many revisions was approved on October 29, 1964. This Marian document can be described as a well-modulated text. The integration

¹⁸ F. Jelly, a.c., p. 60.

¹⁹ F. Jelly, a.c., p. 60.

of Marian schema within the constitution on the Church represents an effort to see Mary with in and not apart from the Church. It avoids an isolationist trend perceivable during the reign of Pius XII.

2. Theological Context of its Introduction (nn. 52-54)

The chapter on Mary finally came up with the approved title: "The Blessed Virgin Mary, God-Bearer, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church."²⁰ The preposition "in" in the title plays a significant role because it portrays the Mother of God in the right perspective. She must always be contemplated in close relationship to her son Jesus Christ and to the Church.

The first paragraph of the preface in the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* teaches about the proper place of Mary within the mystery of salvation. It begins with the biblical quotation from St. Paul's letter to the Galatians: "When the appointed time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the law, to redeem the subjects of the Law and to enable us to be adopted as sons."²¹ (*Gal.*: 4:4-5) Salvation is God's gift offered in the Son whose coming in the flesh materializes through a woman.

The redemptive plan of God focuses on Christ, born of a woman. Article 52 situates Mary at the moment when the "appointed time came." It shows that Mary, under God's grace and love, is made bearer of salvation.

Her resulting place is emphasized in the mystery of salvation. This introductory statement gives us a bird's eye view of the whole theology of Mary. The Council in quoting the creed in the Roman mass "He was incarnated by the Holy Spirit from the Virgin Mary" emphasizes the virginal character of Christ's origin and divine creative power. This makes Marian doctrines so important in relation to the mystery of Christ. Jesus Christ is true man because he was born of a woman. "He is the true Son of God because no earthly Father begot him and the eternal God is his Father; divinity and humanity are united in the one person of the

²⁰ *De Beata Maria Virgine Deiperera in Mysterio Christi et Ecclesiae.*

²¹ All biblical quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible.

Logos, so that Mary is in truth the Mother of God.”²² The eternal son of the Father came into the history of humanity through Mary, to deliver us from the bondage of sin.

In article 53, Mary received the word of God in mind and in heart, thus giving the eternal logos the human dimension of his person. She is acknowledged and honored as being the mother of God and the mother of the Redeemer. Her vocation to be God’s mother is hers alone. For God calls each one in a unique way. Mary being the daughter of Adam is also redeemed by Christ. Her redemption was different from others in such that, Mary was redeemed in a sublime manner. Her unique mission thus results in a Trinitarian dimension: daughter of the Father, pre-eminent temple of the Holy Spirit and mother of the Son of God.

Mary has been hailed “preeminent and altogether member of the Church, and as the Church’s model and excellent exemplar in faith and charity.”²³ She is the first believer at the moment of the Annunciation. The Church honors her maternal role with filial affection and piety.

The last article of the preface gives the very purpose of the schema on Mary: to describe the unique vocation of Mary in the mystery of the Incarnate word and of the Church and the duties of the redeemed toward the mother of the Redeemer.

3. Mary’s Function in the Economy of Salvation (nn. 55-59)

The second part of the schema tackles the scriptural foundation and the traditional teachings of the Fathers of the Church on the function of Mary in the history of salvation. It gives the proper focusing on the role of the mother of the Redeemer. The aim of these paragraphs from article 55 to 59 is to give a bird’s eye view of Mary’s life and work as these can be discerned from the Scripture and Tradition.

²² Otto Semelroth, “The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church,” *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966) p. 287.

²³ L.G., 53.

The commission decided to use the verb "to show forth" (*ostendunt*)²⁴ in the first sentence of article 55 instead of "described" (*describunt*)²⁵ because the subject of this verb are Sacred Scripture and Tradition. "It is not simply a venerable tradition being spoken, but that the unique Tradition of the Church which must be venerated and adhered to."²⁶

Article 55 shows Mary's participation in the central events of the history of salvation, preceded by a reference to the foreshadowing of her role which was recorded in the Old Testament. The section shows the Old Testament of Christ's advent and the foretelling of Mary's part in salvation history. As the Council states: "Considered in this light, she is prophetically foreshadowed in the promise victory over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin."²⁷ It refers to the protoevangelium: "I will make you enemies of each other: you and the woman, your offspring and her offspring." (*Gen. 3:15*) In reference to the virgin who shall conceive and bear a Son, scriptural passages from the prophet Isaiah "The virgin is with child and will soon give birth to a son who she will call Emmanuel." (*Is. 7:14*) and prophet Micah, "She who is to give birth" (*Mic. 5:2*) were cited. These Old Testament quotations set forth the light of developed faith which enables us to discover the future role of the mother of the Redeemer.

The presentation of Mary in scriptural terms is an important view and development in the Church's documents. It is the result of theological development in the Church and of the new ecumenical perspective. She is viewed as among those who hear and keep the word of God. She is first and foremost among those who do the will of God. The scripture also presents Mary within the context of Israel. She is related to the people of Israel as daughter, "daughter of Zion." (*Zeph 3:14-17*)²⁸

²⁴ Acta Synodalia Sancrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II, vol. 3, pars. 6, p. 12.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

²⁶ James O' Connor, "Lumen Gentium Nos. 55 to 59," *Marian Studies*, p. 76.

²⁷ *L.G.*, 55.

²⁸ The title "Daughter of Zion" was applied first to a section of the city of Jerusalem. Then it was attributed to Mary figuratively or symbolically.

Mary is also shown in the scriptural account as the poor one. She is one of God's anawim. Mary's statement in the Magnificat recognizes God's mercies and love towards Israel, which culminated by sending his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. "This sending of the Savior is not something sudden and unexpected but the culmination of a long series of divine interventions in which salvation had been prefigured and the hopes of Israel sustained."²⁹

Article 55 of *Lumen Gentium* centers at the correct mode of understanding the Scriptures in its presentation of our Lady and her role in the Christian economy. The scriptural passages are not only to be considered but also "to be understood in the light of a further and full revelation."³⁰ It means that "one should not read in the scriptural passages something which is not really there, but something which is there but only fully understood when read in the perspective of the completed work."³¹

Article 56 is a more detailed exposition of the preceding articles. The ideas presented in this article are expanded and related more clearly to one another. This paragraph describes Mary as the New Eve, a quotation taken from the Fathers of the Church. Mary accepts God's word. The Church Fathers saw her as the woman associated with life, the contrary of that first woman Eve whose association was with death. The last paragraph of this article explicitly teaches us that Mary was chosen by God to collaborate freely under grace in the work of human salvation. The significance of Mary's obedient faith is manifested in the Gospel of Luke "Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled." (1:45) The Gospel emphasizes that the core of Mary's motherhood is her faith, her acceptance of God's word.

The act of obedience of Mary made good the sin wrought by the first woman, Eve. Thus the Church Fathers coined the parallelism between Eve and Mary. It was precisely in Eve's rejection of God's

²⁹ Donal Flanagan, "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church," *Vatican II: The Constitution on the Church*, ed. Kevin McNamara, (Illinois: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968) p. 336.

³⁰ *L.G.*, 55.

³¹ James T. O'Connor, a.c., p. 80.

word, in her refusal to obey God's word that Eve failed. On the other hand, Mary hears and obeys the word; God addresses to her that she is called the new Eve. Mary is not merely mother of God according to the flesh but the perfect hearer of God's word. The theologians see these things as one, "The fleshly presence of God's word in Mary's womb is the fullest expression of the presence of God's word to Mary's faith."³²

Article 57 and 58 depict the biblical events that interweave her life with that of her Son, Jesus Christ. Article 57 gives scriptural references of Mary in the hidden life of Jesus, while article 58 provides references on the public life of Christ. Mary is associated with Christ in faith and charity. The charity based on her exemplary faith. It is the union of the work of salvation.

It begins in the Annunciation, Christ's virginal conception (*Lk* 1:26-38). Mary's charity emerges clearly in her visitation to her cousin Elizabeth, (*Lk*. 1:39-45). The events which the paragraph recalls from the annunciation, the visitation, the birth (*Lk*. 2:1-20), presentation (*Lk*. 2:22-32), and the finding (*Lk* 2:46-52), exemplify the union of heart and the purpose of her Son which God asked of Mary.

Mary's closeness to Christ and her association with his work does not mean that her life is an easy task. Her life is a pilgrimage of faith. A blend of the receptive faith in which she shares the life, work and suffering of her Son and the meaning of that share of hers for the rest of humanity. The public ministry of Jesus sees Mary mentioned only a few instances. But her appearances are significant. In these two events, wedding at Cana (*Jn*. 2:1-11) and at the Foot of the Cross (*Jn*. 19:25-27), Mary is present. At Cana where Jesus "hour" has not yet come foreshadows his "hour" at the Calvary. The Christ of Cana has been understood as a painting forward with the sacrificial aspect at the Cross. It introduces salvation in which Mary is involved as mother of men. Her involvement in this salvific act is the expression of her faithful love and her fulfillment of her consent at the Annunciation.

Mary's participation in her Son's work is by no means clear to her. Her unwavering faith places her as the archetype of the community of those who hear the word of God and keep it.

³² Donal Flanagan, a.c., p. 339.

Article 59 emphasizes once again Mary's faith within the context of Pentecost, "All these joined in continuous prayer, together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren." (*Acts 1:14*). Mary's presence at the heart of the community awaiting the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost makes plain to us her present role at the heart of the Church, imploring for and with the members of the Church. The article closes with a consideration on the teaching of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption in an implicit manner as Mary's final conformity to Christ.

4. Mary and the Church (nn. 60-65)

The six articles on Mary and the Church make up into two parts of exactly equal length, each containing three articles. Articles 60 to 62 discuss her continuing maternal role. While articles 63 to 65 focus on Mary as type and model of the Church. Mary's two-fold role in the Church, intercession and exemplarity is treated in terms of her relation to Christ and to the members of his mystical body, the Church.

In article 60, a major doctrinal emphasis is found based on the words of St. Paul's letter to Timothy: "For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus." (*1 Tim. 2:5-6*) The words of St. Paul are direct and simple. There is only one savior, one Lord, and He is the Lord from whom all the glory comes. He is the savior from whom the salvation of all comes.

It is only within this perspective of Christ's mediation that it makes sense to talk about Mary's mediatory role in salvation. For Mary is totally relative to Christ "The absolute sovereign effectiveness of Christ's mediation is what makes it possible to conceive at all of lesser ministries within the order of salvation."³³

Thus, the maternal role of Mary in no sense stands on the level of Christ. She belongs with the Church and her association in the salvific work is to be seen at this point on the level of participation. She is essentially and before all a receiver of grace. She

³³ Flanagan, a.c., p. 343.

stands with the redeemed. She depends absolutely on the Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Articles 61 and 62 discuss adequately Mary's maternal mission to men within the context of Christ's primacy in salvation. Her maternal role in the life of Christ in which she cooperated is not an isolated thing. It forecasts her continuing participation in the mystery of the Church. This role of Mary is lasting and real.

Mary's maternal care consists of two aspects. The first one is Mary's historical, biblical and objective connection with Christ's work of redemption. The second one is the continuance beyond history of Mary's motherly spiritual care for "the brethren who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led to their happy fatherland."³⁴ Article 62 continues the positive presentation of Mary's motherhood in the economy of grace with emphasis on her relationship to the Church. It consists of the cooperation of Mary for the salvation of all, in the initial consent to the incarnation of the Redeemer, in the offering of sacrifice accomplished on the cross to her continuous maternal care in heaven.

Article 63 presents Mary as archetype of the Church as expressly recorded by St. Ambrose: "As St. Ambrose taught, the mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ."³⁵ The Church from earliest times believed the closeness of Mary and the Church.

There are two parts in this section dealing with her role of exemplarity in the Church. The first part presents her to the Church as a whole as type of the Church, in both her virginity and her motherhood. The second part shows how Mary is model for the faithful of Christ in the Church and the essential virtues of Christian holiness.

While type and exemplar, Mary is also a member of the Church. The Council Fathers consider her in the history of salvation and concludes that in her personal role and virtues, she is type of the Church

³⁴ *L.G.*, 62.

³⁵ *L.G.*, 63.

and exemplar for everyone in the Church. Since she is a member, Mary as a type enters in to the reality of the Church and shares in the life of the Church. "For in the mystery of the Church, herself rightly called mother and virgin, the Blessed Virgin stands out in eminent and singular fashion as exemplar of both virginity and motherhood."³⁶ Mary becomes mother in the order of faith and charity and it is in this mother's exemplary charity and unwavering faith that makes her the type and model of the Church. On the other hand, this two-fold mystery of Christ's virgin mother is also the type of the Church. Only the Council considers the Church first as a mother, then as a virgin. The Church's motherhood is described as fulfilling the will of the Father through his word. And through the Church's preaching and baptism, she becomes mother, to new and immortal life children conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Article 64 continues with explaining the Church's virginity. "The Church herself is a virgin who keeps whole and pure the fidelity she has to her spouse."³⁷ Mary is virgin and mother in body and spirit and the Church is mother and virgin spiritually: mother in a sense of bringing the Christian to birth through baptism and virgin in the sense of possessing the integrity or the fullness of faith. The expression "virgin Church" means "the Church being a virgin in possessing the truth given to her by Christ."³⁸ The typology of Mary-Church in article 64 is taken from the patristics and medieval theologians such as Ambrose, Augustine, Venerable Bede and Isaac of Stella (d.1178).³⁹

Article 65 moves from typology to the moral perspective and shows Mary as model of virtue for all disciples of Christ in the Church. In looking up to Mary, the Church realizes herself by her fidelity to all that Christ has entrusted her with. Mary stands before the Church as the image in which the Church can gaze upon. Her own perfection fully achieved the ideal she must preserve in order to reach her goal. By leading a Marian life, the Church encounters Christ and is more and more transformed in to his likeness.

³⁶ *L.G.*, 63.

³⁷ *L.G.*, 64.

³⁸ D. Flanagan, a.c., p. 346.

³⁹ Charles Neumann, "Mary and the Church," *Marian Studies*, 37 (1986), p. 135.

The closeness of the relationship between the Church and Mary is emphatically expressed in the statement "in the most blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle."⁴⁰ Mary who is everywhere called "blessed" in the preceding articles is in the opening line of article 65 called for the single time "most blessed" (*beatissima*). It suggests how truly she is sovereign over all the blessed in the kingdom. Mary is exemplar of the Church given by God to us so that one can see the Church in her. Mary must be viewed in the light of the word made man for she is the first creature conformed to his glorious state as Lord. The Church in imitating Mary as her creatural model becomes more and more like Christ. In Mary, one finds unique nearness to Christ, not in flesh but in faith and charity.

5. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the Church (nn. 66-67)

This section of the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* focuses on a long standing tradition of the devotion to the Mother of God since the ancient times. This devotion has taken many forms according to differing cultures and historical periods.

The Council mentions the development of Marian cult in the Church dating from the time of Ephesus. "Accordingly, following the Council of Ephesus, there was a remarkable growth in the cult of the people of God towards Mary, in veneration and love, in invocation and imitation."⁴¹ The development of the cult of Mary seems to have been rooted in the awareness of her as a compassionate mother, a mother concerned about the brothers and sisters of her Son. It is this awareness which led to prayers offered to her that she might intercede. The Christians venerate her because of her close involvement in the mysteries of Christ. In regard to prayers offered to her, the "*Sub Tuum*"⁴² is undoubtedly a very ancient prayer known. "The oldest Marian prayer dates from around 250

⁴⁰ *L.G.*, 65.

⁴¹ *L.G.*, 66.

⁴² The fragment of papyrus was acquired by the John Rylands Library, Manchester in 1917.

A.D., the time of early persecutions."⁴³ The prayer goes this way:

*"Sub Tuum praesidium configimus, Sancta Dei Genetrix; nostros deprecationes ne despecias in necessitatibus, sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta."*⁴⁴

This prayer was discovered in 1917 in Egypt on papyrus measuring seven by nearly four inches.⁴⁵ It implies that the Christians had already established devotion to the mother of God during the ancient times. The Dominicans recite this prayer after praying a chaplet of the Rosary. It is translated in English as follows:

"We fly to your patronage, O Holy Mother of God: despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin."⁴⁶

The development of devotion to Mary gradually became more widespread. But through its liturgical dimension, the Church promoted a much more orderly appreciation of this woman of faith and her role in God's determination at establishing His kingdom in the hearts and minds of the faithful.

The text expressly declares that the special cult of the Blessed Virgin is based on her exaltation by God's grace and her presence in the mysteries of Christ. That cult, therefore, always remains relative, because it is always in relation to Christ. Mary must be shown more honored than the angels and other saints, but an honor that remains essentially on the same plane as theirs, being different not merely in degree but also in kind from the adoration that belongs to the three persons in God. The Council points out that devotion varies in form according to time and place. It would be unrealistic to judge

⁴³ Oliver Treanor, *Mother of the Redeemer, Mother of the Redeemed*, (Westminster: Four Courts Press Ltd., 1988) p. 12.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴⁶ *Studentate Liturgical Committee, Preces*, (Quezon City: Dominican Students' Media center, 1995) p. 5.

the Marian devotion of other ages by what is customary nowadays, or the Marian piety of other nations by our own particular way.

In article 67, the Council insists upon the value of the cult images. It has a reference to the Second Council of Nicaea in the year 787 and the Council of Trent 1534-1565. "The sacred synod teaches this Catholic doctrine advisedly and at the same time admonishes all the sons of the Church, that the cult, especially the liturgical cult of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and that the practices and exercises of devotion towards her, recommended by the teaching authority of the Church in the course of centuries be highly esteemed, and that those decrees, which were given in early days regarding the cult images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed."⁴⁷

The text of the Second Council of Nicaea teaches that the image is not an end but a means, a sensible sign to aid in worship of God. The basic principle of iconography is that it must be a worthy sign in two ways. "First, it must be in conformity to the reality to which it should lead us, second, it must be in conformity with the needs of those to whom it attempts to speak."⁴⁸

Vatican II also reminds the faithful against two extremities: "To refrain from all false exaggeration as from too summary an attitude in considering the special dignity of the Mother of God."⁴⁹ This is also true in terms of preaching, what the Council Fathers emphasized is that the *Magisterium* as the proximate norm of truth. It speaks of the Holy Scripture, the Fathers and Doctors and Liturgy.

The last part of article 67 gives the basic rule in Marian devotion. "Let the faithful remember moreover that the true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, nor in certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to recognize the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love towards our mother and to the imitation of her virtues."⁵⁰ True devotion to Mary springs from the faith, which must be distinguished from emotion. Feelings

⁴⁷ L.G., 67.

⁴⁸ DS 302, "Definition of the Sacred Images and Tradition."

⁴⁹ L.G., 67.

⁵⁰ L.G., 67.

are not prohibited but they are given secondary place in devotion. Love for Mary must spring from the contemplation of a spiritual model whose loving influence will make a good impact on one's Christian life.

6. Mary, Figure and Hope of the Church (# 68-69)

The concluding part of the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* addresses the following issues: Mary is the image to be perfected; Mary as a sure sign of hope for us; and her role in unifying the Christian community.

Mary is the personalized foreshadowing of hope: she actualizes the communion of glory, which will prolong and expend the communion of grace. The sign of eschatological hope is Christ's Resurrection. Mary is a sign of hope, not the sign of hope. Her place of importance in eschatology stems from the fact that by the grace of her Son, she has been given already the fullness of eschatological fulfillment. She participates in the complete victory of Christ. Thus, she is the perfect image of what the Church hopes to become in Christ.

The last paragraph deals with the ecumenical concern, which the author will discuss, later in this chapter. It gives an invitation to prayer for unity. The final sentence, which closes the entire constitution, is an invitation to all, to pray for unity. Mary's intercession is situated here within the communion of saints. Its ecumenical dimension situates her within the body of Christ as a member of the redeemed humanity.

II. RELATED ISSUES

1. Fundamental Principle of Marian Theology in the Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium*

Mariology being part of Theology is governed by the nature of science. Thus it belongs to a systematic body of knowledge which has its own principles and norms. Theologians are in accord when they describe basic principle. By principle it means "a primary truth with which other truths are logically connected."⁵¹ It is an important activity

⁵¹ Michael Griffin, "The Divine Motherhood, the Basic Principle of Mariology," *Marian Studies*, p. 106.

of reason where it organizes the revealed mystery in to a coherent body of doctrine. This primary principle must be the root and foundation of all the prerogatives of Mary and must enable to scientifically understand her function in the economy of salvation.

In the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* the primary principle concerning Mary is shown to be the divine maternity. All else follow from this that she is the mother of God and freely accepted to be so: she gave her assent to the Word at the Annunciation, committing herself wholeheartedly to his will in faith and obedience up to the foot of the Cross.

It is important to consider the divine motherhood as it is implied in the Sacred Scriptures. It tells us that Mary became the Mother of God the Redeemer, in the Gospel of Luke "You are to conceive and bear a Son, and you must name him Jesus... and the child will be holy and will be called Son of God." (*Lk 1: 31-35*) It does not present the motherhood in an academic manner but in a concrete, historical reality of a Jewish maiden named Mary.

Mary gave her consent fully without reserve. She dedicated her whole life and existence to her Son and his salvific mission through her continuous response to God's invitation. Thus she became the mother of the Redeemer. The meaning of her consent is confirmed by the words of Pius X in his encyclical letter *Ad Diem Illum*:

"But the virgin did not conceive the Son of God solely that, by receiving human nature from her, He should become man; but also that, through the human nature he received from her, He might become the savior of men. Consequently, in this same manner of this most pure mother, Christ assumed not only mortal flesh, but a spiritual body as well, consisting of all those who were to believe in Him."⁵²

Mary's singular adherence to God's will made of her a sharer in her Son's work of giving divine life to all men. The fullness of her personal acceptance permitted a fullness of active cooperation and made her the mother of men in the order of grace. The divine maternity is the basic principle of Mary's functions. Her being the mother of God

⁵² AAS, 36 (1904), 1152.

is the basis of her relationship to Christ and his redemptive work, to all theology and Christianity. Therefore, divine motherhood is the fundamental principle of the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*.

2. Characteristics of the Chapter Eight of the *Lumen Gentium*

"Two types of Marian theology continues to stand side by side at the Council, namely Ecclesiological Mariology and Christological Mariology."⁵³ The main difference between the two lies in the manner in which Mary's role in the work of salvation is perceived.

"The ecclesiological mariologist emphasizes Mary as our sister, eminent and exemplary member of the *Ecclesial* community."⁵⁴ This group views Mary as the type of the Church, the most perfect member of the Church. In this conception Mary stands clearly by the side of humanity, facing with it their common Redeemer.

"The christological mariologists put Mary so closely on the side of Jesus who as Christ is head of his redeemed Church."⁵⁵ Their position implies that Mary stands by the side of Christ, facing humanity with Him, rather than by the side of humanity facing Christ.

The two divergent tendencies can be found in the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*. In the first section Christological Mariology is clearly manifested in the importance given to the union between the Virgin Mary and her Son. But this is mellowed down in the following paragraphs. There is no attempt made in defining the nature of Mary's cooperation in the objective event of redemption. The relationship between Mary and Jesus is described with the help of the scriptural passages taken in the New Testament.

The ecclesiological Mariology gives more emphasis to the role of Mary side by side with the members of the Church than to the Christological one. The modification of the original title of the schema to the "Blessed Virgin Mary in the Mystery of Christ and the Church"

⁵³ E. Schillebeeckx, *Mary Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1993) p.16.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

is a sign of the shift of importance or accentuation. The trend of the document is that Mary is the most perfect member of the Church, who by her faith, charity and submission to the will of God constitutes the type of the Church.

Some theologians prefer the christological perspectives whereas others prefer the ecclesiological point of view. However, it is natural that in a schema on Mary placed within the Constitution of the Church, her relation to the members of the Church must be emphasized, thus resulting to an ecclesiological perspective. "Ecclesiological Mariology has a real chance of becoming the object of both Catholic and Protestant thinking."⁵⁶

The chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* is a middle way between two points: mariological minimalism and mariological maximalism. "On the advice of many theologians the majority of the Council Fathers want to have a mariological moratorium, a kind of cooling-off process."⁵⁷ With these given facts the document is characterized by the following: (1) It is Christocentric. In no way can Mary detract from Christ's work. (2) It is scriptural. The text is based on the Scriptures. References are made both to the Old and New Testament beginning with the Pauline text: "But when the appointed time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the law." (*Gal: 4:4*) (3) It is expressed with moderation. The mode of expression is to strike a balance. There was no citation from the Marian writers in the medieval or modern eras e.g. St. Bernard, St. Alphonsus de Ligouri or St. Louis Montfort whose writings on the Blessed Virgin might create uneasiness on the part of the non-Catholic Christians. (4) It is *Ecclesial*. It emphasizes the relationship between Mary and the Church. It presents Mary as part of the humanity, a model disciple of Christ. (5) It is Ecumenical. It looks at the same sources of revelation, Sacred Scriptures and Tradition. Everything is to be done to help other Christians see the truth about Mary: a rediscovery of her place in the redemption by all believers.

There is no mariological maximalism or minimalism in chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*. This material considers all chief aspects of

⁵⁶ Stanislaw Napiorkowski, "The Present Position in Mariology," *Concilium*, 9, no.3 (1967), p.53.

⁵⁷ E. Schillebeeckx, o.c., p. 12.

Marian doctrine and puts them together in a synthesized way. The goal is to bring unity to the whole Christendom.

3. An Inquiry on the Title of Mary as "*Mediatrix*"

The term *mediatrix* was undoubtedly the focal point of discussion of the chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*. It became the object of debate among the members of the Council. "Some members were in much favor of proclaiming Mary as *Mediatrix* of all graces, others were equally opposed to it."⁵⁸ The word *mediatrix* described Mary's intercessory role as a mother in articles 60 and 62. "But Mary's function as mother of men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ."⁵⁹

In discussing the mediation language for Mary, the Fathers began the entire section by quoting St. Paul's letter to Timothy "For there is only one God, and there is only one Mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all." (1 Tim 2:5-6). This biblical passage is almost as though an objection had to be answered before even it was made. It seems almost that on mediation and especially on "*Mediatrix*" the document is being defensive toward non-Catholic Christians and even toward some members of the Council Fathers.

The title *Mediatrix* does not extend to elaborating the truth it expresses. But it would be faithful to the Council's thought to consider her mediation in the past, during her life on earth and the present in her existence and activity in the communion of saints.

Mary is clearly seen as *Mediatrix* at the Annunciation (Lk 1:26-38). The mediatorial character of Mary's motherhood is traditionally manifested in her obedience to the will of the Father and her freely yielded fiat at the Annunciation. "According to Luke, Mary is highly favored or traditionally rendered as full of grace, the favored object of the divine choice."⁶⁰ Mary's fiat at the Gospel of Luke commits her to

⁵⁸ A. Hastings, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, vol. 1, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1968) p.68.

⁵⁹ L.G., 60.

⁶⁰ C.P. Ceroke, "Infancy Narrative" *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1981).

active participation in the birth, life, death and resurrection of her Son Jesus Christ.

At Cana she speaks to her Son on behalf of others. The Council uses "intercession" to describe her role at Cana: "She brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah."⁶¹ The significance of Cana shows the maternal care of Mary to the newly wed couple and the first manifestation of Christ's ministry. The account of the marriage feast stands at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. The mother of Jesus is present.

The miracle at the wedding at Cana presents the role of Mary in relation to Christ, to the couple and to the attendants. Mary with firm faith in Christ submits completely to His will, her role to the couple is the maternal concern where she acts as a catalyst and agent, one who knows the needs of the people. Her role to the attendants is to dispose them to obey and through obedience come to believe in Christ. The wedding at Cana is the manifestation of Christ's glory through the intercession of Mary. "It is her faith in the same divine omnipotence that is so richly rewarded at the beginnings of his public life."⁶² Christ is the source of supply, the center and Mary becomes an instrument, a catalyst and a channel through which this grace flows.

In the gospel of John, Mary is present at the beginning of Christ's public life, at the wedding at Cana and in the completion during Crucifixion at the foot of the Cross. As Jesus utters the words, "Woman, this is your son" (*Jn. 19:26*), He is entrusting to Mary, the rest of humanity as the mother of the redeemed in the person of the beloved disciple. "This motherhood of Mary pertains to the supernatural order, the order of divine grace by which we become the children of God."⁶³ This implies the communication of grace through the redemptive act of her Son. Mary shows her faithfulness up to the very end of the life of her Son. She freely acts and supports the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. "Mary's appearances in Jesus' life are not isolated events, but

⁶¹ *L.G.*, 58.

⁶² Stephen Hartdegen, "Marian Significance of Cana," *Marian Studies*, 11 (1961), p. 97.

⁶³ Armand Robichaud, "Mary Dispensatrix of All Graces," *Mariology*, vol.2, (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1957) p. 441.

a continuous rolling of her kenosis in faith, a pilgrimage of faith.”⁶⁴ Thus she is able to stand even at the foot of the Cross, she cooperates in the redemptive work of the Savior. Through this communion, Mary the mother of the Redeemer unites herself to the will of her Son.

The miracle at the wedding in Cana becomes possible through the intercession of Mary. Her presence at the foot of the Cross and her sharing in Christ’s passion help to obtain the gift of redemption. Her fiat at the Annunciation and these two narratives from the gospel of John therefore give the biblical foundation of Mary’s mediatorial role.

Moreover, some Council Fathers were alert to the fact that the enthusiasm for the title of “*Mediatrix*” was relatively recent, popularized by some papal teachings. Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical letter *Fidentem* in the year 1896 states that:

For surely, no one person can be conceived who has ever made, or at any time will make an equal contribution as Mary to the reconciliation of men with God. Surely, she it was who brought the Savior to man as he was rushing into eternal destruction. At that very time when, with wonderful assent, she received in place of all human nature the message of peace making sacrament brought to earth by the angel. She it is of whom was born of Jesus, namely His true mother, and for this reason, she is worthy and quite acceptable as the *Mediatrix* to the mediator.⁶⁵

Pius X in his encyclical letter *Ad Diem Illum* in the year 1904 states that:

As the result of this participation between Mary and Christ in the sorrows and will, she deserved most worthily to be made the restorer of the lost world and the most powerful *Mediatrix* and advocate of the whole world with her Divine son. Since she excels in all sanctity, and by her union with Christ and by her adoption by Christ for the work of man’s salvation, she merited for us *de congruo*, as they say, what Christ merited *de condigno*, and is the first minister of the graces to be bestowed.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Braulio Pena, *Mary the Woman of Faith*, San Juan: Corp. PP. Dominicos, 1981, p. 165.

⁶⁵ *DS*, 1940a.

⁶⁶ *DS*, 1978a.

In handling the delicate issue of this title "*Mediatrix*" a middle course was chosen by the theological commission by reformulating it in the form of a simple statement. Mary is invoked by the Church's constitution with the title "*Mediatrix*" in addition to others such as "Advocate, Helper and Benefactress."⁶⁷ The presence of the other titles expressive of Mary's intercessory role serves to bring to light how much deeply rooted in tradition the notion of Mary's role is more than just the expression of it in the title "*Mediatrix*."

Christ is of course, the one mediator between God and men. It was He; the God-man who reconciled man with God through his redemptive death upon the Cross. And Christ continues his mediation by communicating the grace He won at Calvary for the salvation of souls and one's sanctification. Christ's mediation is ontological. It is unique and can not be replaced. "Christ's mediation is wrought in three phases: in the incarnation, in the redemption by which the God-man performed the sacrificial act that reunited man with God, and in the eternal life where by the risen Christ communicates to men from heaven, one by one, the graces He merited for them by his passion and death."⁶⁸ But it is also true as it can be seen in the scriptures, that God has chosen others e.g. angels, prophets, apostles and priests to serve as mediators between Him and mankind. Such mediation is always subordinate to Jesus Christ. It is evident after careful reflection that God has granted to all the members of the mystical body of Christ some intermediary role to exercise according to the state of life and specific mission entrusted to them by God.

The idea of Mary's mediation dates back to the early centuries. The Immaculate Virgin participates in the mediation of Christ in a unique and singular manner. Her mediation is something dynamic. Mary accomplished a true work of mediation by the very fact that she became the mother of God and by her personal action manifested in her obedience and act of faith to the will of God. Her mediation "is understood as being secondary to and dependent on Christ's primary and self-sufficient mediatorial role."⁶⁹ Mary participated profoundly

⁶⁷ L.G., 62.

⁶⁸ C. Vollert, *A Theology of Mary*, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965) p. 40.

⁶⁹ J.B. Carol, *Mariology*, (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1957) p. 226.

as did no one else with the salvific work of her Son, the savior of the world. This participation is the underlying principle of her mediatorial function.

To participate means "to possess part of something, and therefore when something receives in a particular mode that which pertains universally to another, it is said to participate in that."⁷⁰ Mary through her obedience and act of faith participates in the divine plan of salvation and receives a unique role by being the mother of God.

This participation of Mary brings her to an important role in the redemptive office of Christ and has super eminent grace. And grace is but a participation in the life of God. Since Mary is unique in her response to the will of God from the Annunciation to Crucifixion, and because of her participation in the life of her Son Jesus Christ, she can be called *Mediatrix* of grace in an analogous manner. "For Catholics the mediatorial function of Mary can be expressed in the principle of participation: Mary can share in the one unique mediation of Christ in an analogous sense, that is with a shared dependent mediation that is oriented to that sole Mediator."⁷¹

The Council Fathers formulated the mediatorial role of Mary in such a way that it did not exclude the uniqueness of the mediation of Christ. This section of *Lumen Gentium* on *Mediatrix* paragraph 62 is a great contribution to the field of Mariology for the renewal of the Church. It gives an opportunity for dialogue with non-Catholic Christians. This doctrine on Mary is rooted in the Scriptures and it emphasizes the relationship of Mary to the Church. Thus it paves way for the separated brethren in the Christendom to relate within the teachings of the Church on Mary and even with her mediatorial function.

4. Mary and the Ecumenical Movement

The Second Vatican Council pointed out the importance of explaining our faith in a manner that is intelligible to our separated

⁷⁰ Thomas Aquinas quoted in A. Aureada, *The Language of the Grace of God: A Re-evaluation of the Analogical Character of Sanctifying Grace According to St. Thomas Aquinas*, (Romae: Pontificia Universitatem S. Thomae, 1994) p. 159.

⁷¹ S. De Fiores, "Mary in Post Conciliar Theology," *Vatican II Assessment and Perspectives*, vol. 1, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) p. 493.

brethren. In an implicit manner, the conciliar Fathers identify the foundation of the Christian faith: "Before the whole world let all Christians confess their faith in God, one and three, in the Incarnate Son of God, our Redeemer and Lord."⁷² The mysteries that form the foundation of our faith therefore are the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Redemption; all the other truths of the Catholic doctrine are hierarchically ordered in accord with their relation to them.

1) Hierarchy of Truths: Its Nature

The hierarchy of truths is the hierarchy of importance given to the truths of faith. Of central importance are the mysteries that concern the final goal, namely, the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation and Redemption. The other truths of faith are on the level of means toward salvation, such as the seven sacraments, the hierarchical structure of the Church, the apostolic succession, etc. Such secondary or peripheral truths in the order are not to be considered as unimportant or any less true and revealed. All truths revealed by divine faith are to be believed with the same faith and all those elements, which make up the Church, must be kept with equal fidelity, although not all of them are of equal importance. The criterion for ranking is not the theological note attached to the truth but its closeness to the mystery of Christ, which includes the mystery of the redeeming triune God.

It is good to note that the hierarchy of truths can be seen figuratively as central and peripheral in accord with the image of concentricity. Primary truths are the central mysteries while secondary truths are the peripheral elements of the Catholic faith. What is important is that one understands the doctrinal context of the peripheral truths in relation to the central mysteries of Jesus Christ and the redeeming triune God revealed in Him. These peripheral truths of our faith have a dual function in Christian lives of contemplation and action. They throw greater light upon the meaning of the central mysteries of the faith and help show the practical application to one's daily existence as believers in the world. Peripheral truths are truths about the means toward salvation, such as the sacraments, devotion

⁷² Vatican II, Flanerry Austin (ed), "Unitatis Redintegratio," # 12, New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1995.

to Mary and all the saints. They help deepen one's understanding in the mystery of salvation.

2) Marian Doctrines: Bridge or Wall

The Divine maternity of Mary was defined at the Council of Ephesus in the year 431 A.D. The Council proclaimed Mary as Theotokos or Mother of God. It is the dogma about Mary closest to the mystery of Christ. It affirms the intimate connection between her divine maternity and the mystery of Incarnation. To call her God's own mother is associated with calling Him the word Incarnate, the humanity of God's own Son.

Mary's virginity or the Marian doctrine of the virginal conception of Christ Jesus relates to the central mystery of faith. Its christocentric character stems from the fact that Mary conceived Christ without marital intercourse. It is a fitting witness to the divine transcendence of her child who has no human father, since God alone is his Father.

As the Immaculately conceived, Mary is the most perfect redeemed. In her is the clearest revelation of her Son's saving grace. Her consent to be His mother at the Annunciation was completely free and cooperative, not only in her own redemption but that of all humanity. Through her the triune God reveals to us the undivided personality, the one who concretely shows that through the redemptive Incarnation of Christ, grace has an absolute preeminence over the sinful world. As regards to Mary's glorious assumption, for believers it takes on the added meaning that Mary as one of the redeemed is already glorified.

In establishing the relationship of the Marian doctrines to the central mystery of faith and focusing on the intimate relationship to the hierarchy of truths, it answers the traditional Protestant and Anglican objection that we have placed Mary into competition with Christ as Redeemer. The hierarchy of truths approach to the mystery of Mary makes more seriously the primacy of biblical revelation in understanding any truths of our faith. One of the main criteria for an authentic and spiritual value of any Marian doctrine is the transparency to the central mystery of faith – the triune redeeming God revealed in Jesus Christ.

Accordingly, the doctrines of Mary's divine maternity and perpetual virginity are given a christocentric focus in the truths of

revelation, while the Immaculate Conception and Assumption take more of an ecclesiotypic meaning in the economy of salvation. This is to emphasize the place of Marian doctrines within the context of the hierarchy of truths. There is no conflict between seeing Mary as the archetype of the Church and seeing her in close relation to Christ. She is the archetype of the Church only because of her connection with Christ as his mother which forms the basis for the share that the Church as Christ's bride has in his work. One must view Mary in her two-fold relationship: to the redeeming God and to redeemed humanity.

3) *Synopsis: Metamorphosis of Mariology*

In the years preceding Vatican II, Mariology appeared to be vigorous and full of life. It has gone as far as Pius XII's proclamation of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin on November 1, 1950. It has been the mode of Mariology that concentrated on the privileges and titles of Mary. It has placed a great emphasis on Mary's close relationship to Christ. But during the dawn of Vatican II, under the pontificate of John XXIII another atmosphere has pervaded in the Church. Mariology could no longer proceed as before, because new directions in theology were taking place. Pre-Vatican II Mariology then was forced into recess for years, especially following the Council's spirit. But it did not mean that it has died. Rather it was undergoing a metamorphosis, an evolution. The old way of looking at Mary was giving in to a new Mariology more suited to the sources and to the needs of our age. Certainly Mariology should be renewed, but only through a creative blend of fidelity to the past and sensitivity to the present.

In this metamorphosis of Mariology, Mary will be viewed theologically as part of the whole history of salvation and recipient of God's saving grace. The mother of God will be the paradigm of Christ's disciples as one who perfectly heard the Word of God and put it into practice. She will be the perfect disciple, the representative of Christians. As the perfectly redeemed, she will throw light on the nature of sin and grace. As a disciple in the community, she will teach what it means to be a true follower of Christ. As one who has reached the fulfillment that God offers the redeemed, she shows forth the destiny to which every Christian is called. Her distinguishing mark is – Mary, the fully redeemed, the perfect Christian.

Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium* is considered as the *magna carta* of the Mariology of our era. The novelty of this document is its inclusion in the Constitution on the Church. Mary is no longer treated separately, but integrated in the doctrine of the Church. The entire text represents a skillful and prudent compromise between two tendencies in modern Catholic Theology. One emphasizes Mary's unique connection with Christ the Redeemer; the other tendency is her close connection with the Church and all the redeemed.

The Council places Mary within the context of salvific history. Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium* consists of five parts with seventeen numbered articles from #52 to #69. The first part refers to Mary's place in the heart of redemption. It describes the unique vocation of Mary in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and of the Church and the duties of the redeemed toward the mother of the Redeemer.

The second part deals with our Lady's role in the history of salvation. It shows the scriptural foundation and traditional teachings of the Fathers of the Church on Mary's unique function in redemption.

The presentation of Mary in biblical terms is an important view and development in the Church and a new ecumenical perspective. She is viewed as among those who hear, believe and keep the Word of God. The presentation thus paves a way towards a common understanding with non-Catholic Christians as well.

After discussing her role in the history of salvation, the third part discusses Mary's relation to the Church. This section on Mary and the Church is made of two parts of exactly equal length. The first part focuses on her continuing maternal role that flows from God's disposition. The second part stresses on Mary as type and model of the Church. Mary's two-fold role in the Church, intercession and exemplarity is treated in terms of her relation to Christ and to the members of the Church.

The fourth part deals with a long-standing tradition of devotion to the mother of God from ancient times. The Council reminds the faithful against two extremes: exaggerated devotion or too narrow attitude towards the dignity of the mother of the Redeemer. True devotion to Mary springs from true faith, which must be distinguished from emotion. It must spring from the contemplation of a spiritual model whose loving influence will make a good impact on one's Christian life.

The fifth and the last part of the document addresses the following issues: Mary is the image to be perfected, she is a sure sign of hope for the believing community and she has a role in unifying the Christian community. This section deals with the ecumenical concern that situates Mary within the body of Christ as a member of the redeemed humanity. The mother of God should be studied in a holistic manner. She must be taken into account within the whole context of the history of salvation, i.e. in her relation to the Father, to Christ the Word Incarnate and to the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier and giver of life. She must be studied further as an eminent member of the Church and her relationship to the redeemed. The future of Mariology will lie in its being biblical, liturgical, ecumenical and anthropological. Marian doctrine and devotion will have its roots in Scriptures, will be expressed in liturgy, enriched and updated by the ecumenical sensitivity, and will give a full account of Mary as a woman relevant in our time, a model for the men and women of today.

III. LITURGICAL DIMENSIONS

Paul VI's pontificate from 1963 to 1978 marked the development of the 20th century in the fields of humanities, science and technology. Side by side with it was the opening of the Church's door from the old to the new order, the promulgation of Vatican II. It was Paul VI who continued and presided the most important discussions in the Council, which Pope John XXIII began.

Paul VI was guided with firmness but also with genuine deep Marian devotion. His devotion was reflected on his Marian teachings. The predominant themes on his Marian teachings were the union of Mary with the mystery of Christ and the Church and the placement of Marian devotion in its right perspective. He encouraged the inclusion of the Marian schema into the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. "He then proposed three fundamental principles: to integrate Mary into the Church, to manifest her superiority as regards of the Church, and to realize on these bases the unanimity of the Council."⁷³ Paul VI appeared to have been

⁷³ Rene Laurentin, "The Second Vatican Council and Marian Devotion," *Mary in the Faith and Life in the New Age of the Church*, (Zambia: Franciscan Mission Press, 1983) p. 117.

preoccupied with a solid traditional doctrine, a doctrine inspiring both great love and veneration for the mother of God.

This preoccupation led Paul VI to write an apostolic exhortation, *Marialis Cultus*, perceiving the liturgical renewal in the Church. He wanted to illustrate how that renewal enhanced the place of Mary in the prayer life of Catholics, both in public and private.

***Marialis Cultus*⁷⁴ of Pope Paul VI**

This apostolic exhortation is composed of four parts. Part one discusses about the devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the Liturgy. It deals with the Blessed Virgin Mary as a paradigm in the liturgical dimension of the Christian life. "That the Blessed Virgin is an exemplar in this field derives from the fact that she is recognized as a most exemplar of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ."⁷⁵ Part two deals with the renewal of devotion to Mary. It explains the Trinitarian, Christological and Ecclesial aspects of devotion to Mary. The third part discusses the two most popular devotions to Mary, namely the *Angelus* and the Rosary. The apostolic exhortation ends by discussing the theological and pastoral devotion to Mary.

Marialis Cultus has influenced the theological and pastoral dimension of Marian devotion in the Church. It has spawned a series of articles on devotion to Mary, its nature and history. It has also stimulated theologians to pursue further the ideals of the Council in terms of ecumenical dimension.

It was the intention of *Marialis Cultus* to develop a theological basis of Marian feasts within the liturgical life of the Church and offer guidelines as well:

"We therefore wish to dwell upon a number of questions concerning the relationship between the sacred liturgy and devotion to the blessed Virgin Mary, to offer considerations and directives suitable for favoring the development of that devotion and finally to put forward a number of

⁷⁴ Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, LXVI, (Romae: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1974)

⁷⁵ R. Laurentin, o.c., p. 25.

reflections intended to encourage the restoration, in a dynamic and an informed manner, of the recitation of the Rosary.”⁷⁶

For the subject of veneration of the mother of God to be valid, it must always be in relation to Christ. “In the Virgin Mary everything is relative to Christ and dependent on Him.”⁷⁷ The substance of the mystery of Incarnation is that God’s Son is born of us, the Word became man through a woman. Whatever relationship she has with her Son, is the fruit of God’s graciousness. No human being is linked to this mystery as Mary is through her faith and consent. This bond is the indispensable root of the special veneration we have for the mother of God.

1. Public Devotion

There is a two-way action that happens in the liturgy: the glorification of God and sanctification of man. Mary’s place in the liturgy is to be the model of the Church in her response and openness to the will of the Father from the Annunciation to the foot of the Cross. Her life as a manifestation of God’s greatness is something the faithful can imitate upon.

The Church has honored Mary since the early centuries. Catholic veneration of the Mother of God has two aspects: public (official) and private (unofficial). Public devotion refers to the official liturgical prayers in the Mass and Liturgy of the Hours on various solemnities, feasts and memorials of Mary. Emphasizing the term official means that “its text and ritual elements have been approved by competent authority, ultimately the Holy See, for use on specific occasion.”⁷⁸ On the other hand, private devotion refers to unofficial individual pious practices such as praying of the Rosary, the *Angelus* and other novenas to the mother of God.

⁷⁶ M.C., p. 117.

⁷⁷ M.C., 25, p. 135. “In Virgine Maria omnia ad Christum referuntur et ex eo pendent.”

⁷⁸ Michael Glazier, *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, (Bangalore: Claretian Publications, 1997) p. 518.

Paul VI's *Marialis Cultus* is written in order to have a proper perspective and order of Marian devotion in the renewed liturgy. Marian devotion is part of Christian worship. And it is found in the Roman Missal and in the Liturgy of the Hours.

1) *Roman Missal*

The mother of God is commemorated daily at the celebration of the Eucharist. She continues to pray with the community of God's people in the mass celebrated daily in the priories, convents and churches. The Collect prayers in the solemnities in her honor remind us of her continuing role in the work of redemption.

January 1 is the solemnity of the Mother of God. In the opening prayer it is written:

God our Father, may we always profit by the prayers of the Virgin Mother Mary, for you bring us life and salvation through Jesus Christ her Son who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit one God for ever and ever.⁷⁹

Or:

Father, source of light in every age, the Virgin conceived and bore your Son who is called wonderful God, Prince of Peace. May her prayer, the gift of Mother's love, be your people's joy through all ages. May her response, born of a humble heart, draw your Spirit to rest on your people. Grant this through Christ our Lord.⁸⁰

These two opening prayers certainly make clear that God the Father is the source and giver of every good gift. Through the prayerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the faithful receive blessing from almighty God. This is where the Blessed Mother exercises her office as intercessor to all those who ask for God's blessings. Her intercessory role is entirely derived from the superabundant compassion of the Father.

⁷⁹ International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *The Sacramentary*, (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1985) p. 55.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

March 25 is the solemnity of the Lord's Annunciation. The collect begins with "that Christ, the Word made flesh, will make us more like him."⁸¹ It gives us a christocentric form of prayer. It is written as:

"God our Father, your word became man and was born of the Virgin Mary. May we become more like Jesus Christ, whom we acknowledge as our Redeemer, God and man. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever."⁸²

Or:

Almighty Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have revealed the beauty of your power by exalting the lowly virgin of Nazareth and making her the mother of the Savior. May the prayers of this woman bring Jesus to the waiting world and fill the void of incompleteness with the presence of her child, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.⁸³

This solemnity commemorates the "beginning of the redemption and of the indissoluble and wedded union of the divine nature with human nature in the one Person of the Word."⁸⁴

August 15 is the solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. It is another aspect of Mary's holiness. The early Christians celebrated this day as a memorial of Mary patterned on the "birthday into heaven" of the martyrs. This memorial evolved into the feast of the "falling asleep" of the Virgin. This Marian celebration of Assumption gives hope of what awaits the faithful members of the Church. The opening prayer has two alternatives:

Almighty God, you gave a humble Virgin Mother of your Son, and crowned her with the glory of heaven. May the prayers of the Virgin Mary bring us to salvation of Christ and raise us up to eternal life.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 622.

⁸² Ibid., p. 622.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 622.

⁸⁴ *M.C.*, 6, p. 120.

⁸⁵ International Commission on English in the Liturgy, o.c., p. 684.

Or:

Let us pray to the Father, in whose presence she now dwells. – May the prayer of this woman clothed with the sun bring Jesus to the waiting world and fill the void of incompleteness with the presence of her Child, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.⁸⁶

The second form of prayer gives a perspective of Mary praying with the Church to the Father. It gives an ecclesiotypical dimension of Marian devotion. Mary is with the pilgrim members of the Church. This leads the faithful to be more aware that God is the rootstock of all the blessings or benefits the faithful receives. Mary is there to help the people to be disposed in receiving God's precious gifts of grace. The efficacy of intercession is based on the free and holy will of God who chooses to bestow his blessings to the faithful.

December 8 is the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. The collect begins with "that through the prayers of the sinless Virgin, that God will free us from our sins."⁸⁷ It shows through one's invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that God will free us from the bondage of sin. She who is immaculately conceived and prepared by God to be the mother of the Savior understands and cares for the brethren of her Son. The opening prayer goes this way:

Father you prepared the Virgin Mary to be the worthy Mother of your Son. You let her share beforehand in the salvation Christ would bring by his death and kept her sinless from the first moment of conception. Help us by her prayers to live your presence without sin.⁸⁸

Or:

Father the image of the Virgin is found in the Church. Mary had faith that your Spirit prepared and a love that never knew sin, for you kept her sinless from the first moment

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 684.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 752.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 752.

of her conception. Trace in our actions the lives of her love, in our hearts and the readiness of faith.⁸⁹

The prayer is linked with the mystery of the Immaculate Conception to the mystery of Christ that would save men from sin. It also shows the petition to the Father that Mary's intercession be efficacious for us, members of Christ's mystical body. She, who believed in the word by listening attentively, becomes a model in prayer for all the members of the Church. Thus we have Mary to help us through her prayers to accept the word of God with faith in our lives.

On May 31 the Church celebrates the feast of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. The collect gives a pattern of asking God for the grace needed and teaches us to be docile to the working of the Spirit. Thus the collect is written in this manner:

Eternal father, you inspired the Virgin Mary, mother of your Son, to visit Elizabeth and assist her in her need. Keep us open to the working of your Spirit, and with Mary may we praise you forever.⁹⁰

Or:

And in the prayer after communion: May we always recognize with joy the presence of Christ in the Eucharist we celebrate, as John the Baptist hailed the presence of our Savior in the womb of Mary.⁹¹

Mary's character in assisting Elizabeth, her kinswoman in her need is a manifestation of Mary's sensitivity to the needs of others. Thus the Church in these prayers invokes her for the needs of the people. The christocentricity of the liturgical piety is not lacking. The prayer is always addressed to the Father, who is the primary source of all graces through the efficacious intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 752.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 640.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 640.

2) *Liturgy of the Hours*

The Divine Office or the Liturgy of the Hours is the official prayer of the Church. It features Mary in the hymns, prayers and readings. At times, the mother of God is invoked in the general intercessions at Lauds and Vespers. No day passes without the recitation of Magnificat, the canticle of Mary.

In the Common of the Blessed Mother, her intercession is being beseeched. In the Morning Prayer we ask God, "*May your mother intercede for us Lord*".⁹² While in the Evening Prayer we pray, "*Mary, full of grace intercede for us*".⁹³ Here we can see that Mary is being addressed directly. The fact that it is being prayed at all, is a sign of Mary's mediatorial function or intercessory role being accepted in the official prayer of the Church.

The revised breviary typifies Vatican II's goal to reform the liturgy in a way that will make it more meaningful to those who worship God every day. As Pope Paul VI states: "The post-conciliar renewal has, as was previously desired by the liturgical movement, properly considered the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of Christ, and in harmony with tradition, has recognized the singular place that belongs to her in Christian worship as the holy Mother of God and the worthy associate of the Redeemer."⁹⁴

2. Private Devotions

When a devotee of Mary wants to deeply reflect on the mystery of her role in the history of salvation, the individual should read the Holy Scriptures and find out what it says about the Mother of the Lord. For the Scripture is one of the sources of revelation.

In terms of private devotions, the *Angelus* and the Holy Rosary are the two exercises of piety, which are both biblically based. The substantial part of these devotions is primarily taken from the Gospel. "To pray the rosary and *Angelus* reverently is to

⁹² International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *The Liturgy of the Hours*, vol. III, (New York: Catholic Book Publishing, 1975) p. 1652.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 1368.

⁹⁴ *M.C.*, 15, p. 127.

repeat the text of St. Luke or St. John, a practice that expresses admiration and love for the word of God.”⁹⁵

Pope Paul VI in this apostolic exhortation, leaves to the local communities to revise popular practices and it is the prerogative of the various religious congregations to reform their acts of piety in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary within the spirit of Vatican II. He also considers in this exhortation the two practices: namely, the *Angelus* and the Holy Rosary, which are widespread in the West.

1) *Angelus*

The prayer traditionally recited three times, one about six in the morning, the other during noontime and finally six in the evening. The *Angelus* is primarily biblically based. It “reminds us of the Paschal Mystery, in which recalling the Incarnation of the Son of God, we pray that we may be led through His Passion and Cross to the glory of his Resurrection.”⁹⁶

It has a medieval origin. “The recitation of three Hail Marys in the evening marked the tolling of the curfew bell in some areas: this custom probably dates from the eleventh century.”⁹⁷ The praying of *Angelus* evolved from one custom to another, from the mere recitation of the Hail Mary to standardized form in the middle of the sixteenth century. But its value remains the same: meditation on mystery of Incarnation.

In spite of the modernization of our time, the value of this prayer remains unchanged. While meditating on the angelic salutation and in the mystery of the eternal Word becoming man, the faithful invokes Mary’s intercession. This makes up the traditional praying of the *Angelus*.

⁹⁵ Oliver Treanor, *Mother of the Redeemer, Mother of the Redeemed*, (Westminster: Four Courts Press Ltd., 1988) p. 53.

⁹⁶ *M.C.*, 41, p. 152.

⁹⁷ Michael O’ Carrol, *Theotokos: Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, (Quezon City: Claretians Publications, 1985) p. 379.

2) *Rosary*

Paul VI recommends the continuous recitation of the Rosary and encourages its propagation. There are recent developments in studies that have been done in relation to the pastoral dimension of the rosary in modern times. The rhythm of this prayer appeals to modern society. It helps or disposes one to contemplation where body and spirit are harmonized through the regularity of breathing and quiet repetition of the words from Scriptures.

The Rosary of twenty decades links Mary to Jesus Christ's salvific mission: from the Annunciation and the joyous events of the hidden life of Jesus, through the sorrowful mysteries of Passion and Death, to His glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and the descent of the Holy Spirit to the apostles at the upper room, and concluding with the reunion with her Son at the Assumption and Coronation.

The scriptural riches of the Rosary are of lasting value. Its basic prayers are the "Our Father," the "Hail Mary," and the "Doxology." The words of the first half of the Hail Mary are taken from the Gospel of St. Luke. The second half: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death," is in the main stream of prayers that go back to the early centuries of Christian devotion.⁹⁸

This prayer is called the Gospel prayer because the very essence of the Rosary lies on the meditation of the Paschal Mystery of Christ and life of Mary based on the Gospel. As a Gospel prayer it is focused on the salvific events of the life of Christ. Thus it is a prayer with a christological dimension.

There are congresses, conventions and meetings organized by associations, societies and individuals that dealt with the Rosary. "Among these people special mention should be made of the sons of St. Dominic, by tradition the guardians and promoters of this very salutary practice."⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Donald Attwater, ed. *A Dictionary of Mariology*, New York: Kennedy and Sons, 1956, p. 279.

⁹⁹ *M.C.*, 43, p. 154.

Pope Paul VI emphasizes the value of traditional prayers such as the *Angelus* and the Rosary. The emphasis is on the contemplative character of these two prayers. Even though the Rosary is not a liturgical prayer, it helps us to be disposed to the official prayers of the Church. Both the Mass and the Rosary contemplate on the same mysteries and both are memorials. The Mass is sacramentally efficacious, while the Rosary is not. But contemplation of these mysteries leads the individual to be properly disposed for the Eucharistic celebration. As Paul VI states: "In fact meditation on mysteries of the Rosary, by familiarizing the hearts and minds of the faithful with the mysteries of Christ, can be an excellent preparation for the celebration of those same mysteries in the liturgical action and can also become a continuing echo thereof."¹⁰⁰

3. Renewal of Devotion

Religious practices, in order to be meaningful and intelligible are to be correlated to the teachings of the Church. Vatican II is centered on going back to the sources of faith and the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is always in relation to the Scriptures. "The mother of God is authentically revered when Marian liturgical cult is conducted in the ways recommended and prescribed by the teaching authority of the Church, and in keeping with Sacred Scripture, the Fathers, the Doctors and the liturgical tradition of the past."¹⁰¹

1) *Trinitarian*. Prayers to Mary must be addressed in such a way that she is always in relation to the Three Persons in One God: as an obedient daughter to the Father, mother to the Word Incarnate and docile temple of the Holy Spirit. "A devotion is rightly called Christian because it takes its origin and effectiveness from Christ, finds its complete expression in Christ and leads through Christ in the Spirit to the Father."¹⁰²

2) *Biblical*. The devotion and honor given to Mary must be based on Scriptures. The Bible is the light and source of wisdom. Mary as the seat of Wisdom is honored through the Church's meditation and preaching of the message and the messenger Jesus Christ.

¹⁰⁰ *M.C.*, 48, p. 157.

¹⁰¹ O. Treanor, o.c., p. 33.

¹⁰² R. Laurentin, o.c., p. 7.

3) *Liturgical*. Veneration and other para-liturgical Marian devotion must be done in harmony with the renewed liturgical celebrations. "It is necessary however that such devotions with consideration for the liturgical seasons should be arranged as to be in harmony with sacred liturgy."¹⁰³ Devotional practices such as novenas, rosary should not be merged with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Rather it should be done before or in any suitable time as a way to dispose the faithful. For example the Rosary is good preparation before the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for it helps the individual to be apt as he meditates on the Paschal mystery.

4) *Ecumenical*. Non-Catholic Christians have always criticized the way Catholics venerate Mary. It has been a point of contention for several centuries. But Pope Paul VI would consider the devotion to the Blessed Mother as in fact "in accord with the deep desires and aims of the ecumenical movement, that it acquires ecumenical aspect."¹⁰⁴ Mary as the mother of Christ is also the mother of all who are united to Christ in faith and baptism. True devotion therefore should draw a unity in the Church with Christ in a common spirit of gratitude.

4. Mary as Model of the Church in Liturgy

The Acts of the Apostles gives us the image of Mary as a model of faith and prayer: "All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus as well as his brothers." (*Acts 1:14*) "This element of praying together in the upper room is characteristic of the emerging Church in the Acts of the Apostles."¹⁰⁵ Mary's presence in the Upper Room has given witness to a prayer life of the early Christian communities. She gives us the content of her prayer through her personal pondering over the events and words in the life of her Son. Mary has been consistently a woman of faith and prayer from the Annunciation (*Lk 1:26-38*) to the Upper Room (*Acts 1:12-14*), awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁰³ *M.C.*, 31, p. 142.

¹⁰⁴ *M.C.*, 32, p. 143.

¹⁰⁵ Bertand Buby, *Mary of Galilee*, vol. 1, (New York: Alba House, 1994) p. 101.

The Pope states in the apostolic exhortation that Mary is the model of the Church in divine worship: She is always considered as the attentive virgin who, by listening to the word of God and responding to it, becomes the mother of Christ. Like Mary, the Church listens attentively to God's word, which then becomes the source of her dynamic action in the lives of the faithful. She is the Virgin in Prayer whose motherhood is an exemplar of the Virgin-Church, which through her preaching and baptism becomes herself a mother. Finally, she is the virgin presenting offering to the Father; at the Presentation and on Calvary, Mary models to the whole Church, an offering to Christ.

1) Origin of Marian Devotion in the Philippines

The widespread devotion to the Blessed Mother goes back to the origins of Christianity in the Philippines. As early as 1571, there are ancient images of Mary, like *Nuestra Senora de Guia*, now venerated in the Ermita Church and whose origin is somewhat lost in the folkloric details of legend. Our Lady of the Holy Rosary is another image venerated through the centuries in Manila whose origin dates back to July 22, 1587, the arrival of the Dominican missionaries in the Philippines.

Among the titles of Mary, "The Immaculate Conception and *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary*" are particularly prominent.

The invocation of the Filipino Catholics to the Immaculate Conception goes back to the year 1578, when Pope Gregory XIII in a bull issued on February 6 decreed that the Manila Cathedral should be erected under the invocation of *Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.¹⁰⁶ Clement VIII decreed on August 13, 1595 that cathedrals of *Nueva Segovia* and *Caceres* also be erected under the same title of the Immaculate Conception. Moreover, one of the three ships that received the Philippines on the first voyage of Magellan in 1521 was named Concepcion.

The veneration of Mary under the title of *Our Lady of the Rosary* goes back to 1587; a confraternity was established in 1588. There are two shrines of "*Our Lady of the Holy Rosary*" under

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

the administration of the Dominicans in the Philippines, one of which is in Quezon City and the other in Manaoag, Pangasinan.

Nuestra Señora de La Naval de Manila occupies a place of honor among the national shrines dedicated to Mary in the Philippines. The image of *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of La Naval* is a priceless religious heirloom of our nation donated to the Dominican Fathers by Governor Luiz Perez Dasmarinas in 1593. Since then it had been part of the Philippine church history.

The annals of history attest to the veracity of Mary's miraculous intervention, famous of which are the five naval battles in 1646 against the invading Dutch fleet.¹⁰⁷ The naval captain sought aid the of *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary* to help them fight against the invaders with a vow that all the defenders will walk barefoot in procession towards her shrine in the old Santo Domingo Church in Intramuros if their prayers were answered. Mustering only two old ill-equipped galleons to defend the islands, the Spanish and Filipino defenders successively defeated the bigger and powerful Dutch ships in five consecutive battles in the waters of Manila. Hence, the Blessed Mother was referred to as the "*Señora Grande de Filipinas*" on account of the many favors attributed to her.

2) *Mary in the Prayer Life of the Filipino Catholics*

During the nine day *Aguinaldo* Masses, the renewed liturgy offers immense riches with respect to the mother of the Redeemer. It celebrates the traditional mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The advent liturgy is thoroughly arranged that it provides readings in the lectionary concerning the prophecies of the Messiah and the blessed Mother. Marian devotion during Advent is directed ultimately to Christ. Mary as mother of God figures prominently in the the *Belen*, and in other dramatic presentations like the traditional "*Panunuluyan*" (begging for shelter).

The most important religious occasion of the year for the Filipinos, with the possible exception of the town fiesta, is Christmas. Christmas offers a special opportunity for the people

¹⁰⁷ Regino Cortes, *The Story of La Naval*, (Quezon City: Santo Domingo Convent, 1998) p. 46.

to show their veneration for Mary. The re-enactment of the nativity of our Lord, with the part that Mary had in it, is done in some churches with a deep sense of simple faith and identification with both the infant Jesus and Mother of God. In this season of joy, the Church celebrates the feast of the Holy Family and the solemnity of the mother of God within the octave of Christmas.

In the Lenten season, especially during the Holy Week, Mary plays an important role in the popular devotion of the faithful. Good Friday has a deep human appeal for Filipinos, especially in the Way of the Cross and the commemoration of the sufferings of our Lady of Sorrows.

Easter Sunday brings the deeply human and dramatic encounter of the Mother with her risen Son in the *Salubong*, which is artistically enacted in many places all over the Philippine Islands. The prayer *Regina Coeli*¹⁰⁸ is prayed throughout Easter season, instead of the traditional *Angelus*.

One particular aspect of the veneration of Mary intimately connected with forms of popular religiosity in our country is the holding of fiestas in her honor, procession and pilgrimages to the shrines.

In May, the classic *Flores the Mayo* is celebrated in many localities with splendor and simplicity of faith. Then follows the historical procession of La Naval in October, a devotion due mainly to the zeal of the sons and daughters of St. Dominic. The practice has been widespread since the 16th century.

It would not be correct to qualify all these manifestations of the Marian piety of our faithful as mere actions or symbols without meaning, or to consider that they do not stem from a sincere and simple faith. All these devotions represent a normal outlet for human and religious remembrance, thoughts and affections. However, some practices need proper guidance and reform due to lack of doctrinal instruction and a tendency to deviate from the norms set by the Church.

Fiestas are more intense and vigorous movements of the spirit in the collective life of the people and constitute for them

¹⁰⁸ Studentate Liturgical Committee, *Preces*, (Quezon City: The Dominican Students' Media Center, 1995) p. 3.

a privileged encounter with God and the Blessed Mother. These celebrations in honor of Mary often culminate in pilgrimages to one of her shrines, where God's presence among us appears with particular transparency. It is there where people feel they have a proper forum for their religious experiences and where pilgrims find a particular stimulus to commit themselves to real "salvation history."

In this context, we find deep meaning in the holding of processions. These processions when participated in with a spirit of faith and prayer, become the sign of the pilgrim Church moving toward Christ's paschal mystery. In this sense, participants become – and are – eschatologically oriented. Full of spiritual meaning and content pilgrimages to Mary's shrines, play a significant part in conserving a tradition of faith.

3) *Anthropological and Social Dimensions of Marian Devotion*

It is worthy to consider the social implications of the two most popular celebrations we have described above where Christ and his mother are presented together: the feast of Christmas and the celebration of Holy Week, particularly in *Salubong*. As locally celebrated, one observes that during the Christmas season, it is the family, which is the center of interest. In the Easter celebration, the folk practice centers in the reunion of Christ and his mother, which all who participate, feel the joy of the vicarious meeting. Both of the feasts, therefore, feature a family reunion, and for this reason provide extremely rich experiences for the Filipinos.

In the Philippines, where women enjoy a status and freedom which her Asian counterparts still aspire, one must look deeper into the role of women in society. The Filipina is a figure of strength not only in the family but also in society. Her relationship with man is highly ambivalent. This relationship needs to be examined before any renewal of society can be effected.

Imitation of Mary does not mean keeping women within cultural limitations, which bound the women in Mary's time. The Virgin Mary is proposed to the faithful as an example to be imitated not precisely in the concrete tasks she undertook at Nazareth. She is held up as an exemplar to the faithful, as a woman of faith,

who in a particular event of her life fully and responsibly accepted the will of God, because she heard the word of God and acted on it. Her charity and spirit of service are the driving force of her actions. This quality of Mary's life will serve as an inspiration for others especially for women, mothers, or wives in the home or anywhere else in our society. Their femininity therefore will have a deeper meaning and significance.

Mary's *Magnificat* reflects a social character. Balasuriya states that: "Mary's song shows how she reconciles social radicality with personal service, a revolutionary message with interpersonal love."¹⁰⁹

The *Magnificat* is found in the Gospel of Luke, "He has shown the power of his arm, he has routed the proud heart. He has pulled down princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things, the rich sent empty away." (*Lk. 1: 51-53*) One can see in this passage a combination of practical action, personal concern and prayer. "It speaks of a cultural, political and economic reform, wherein the proud-hearted and haughty are got rid of in favor of the poor, simple and lowly people; the political power passes from the mighty to the masses of the people and by which the hungry and the starving get the good things instead of their being monopolized by the rich who are sent empty away."¹¹⁰

Thus, the challenge to every devotee of Mary is to develop a just and humane society. It means a combat against all forms of injustice, discrimination, racism and other forms of dehumanization. The song of Mary calls for humility and respect, equality and dignity for all, above all a *metanoia*. This is indeed a timeless message, especially for the Philippine society. This places one's devotion to Mary on the side of the weak and the poor and serves as an inspiration for a personal and social transformation throughout the whole world.

We rarely associate devotion to Mary with the social dimension of Christian living. This is when devotion to her tends towards pious individualism. Rather, Mary should be seen as a

¹⁰⁹ Tissa Balasuriya, *Mary and Human Liberation*, (Colombo: Center for Society and Religion, 1994) p. 52.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

biblical character that does the will of the heavenly Father. Her song, the Magnificat is an echo of the utterances of the poor and the lowly. The poor of Israel were blight in the land; they were the manifestations of a sick society. The poor in other words were the visible signs of a deep-rooted sin of injustice in a nation.

Poverty is encountered in the Philippines. There are more than seventy percent of Filipinos living below the poverty line. The oppression that exists in Philippine society is contrary to the salvation that Jesus and his mother proclaimed by their lives. Filipino Catholic Christians who profess to be followers and devotees of Mary must live according to their belief. Faith and action must go hand in hand. Devotion to Mary should lead to a conscientized individual and a deeper concern for the present plight of the vast majority of poor Filipinos. These poor and oppressed brethren are sons and daughters of God. They too are devotees of Mary, who call out to her as their mother. And surely her maternal care goes out to them. Devotion to Mary shows itself in works. These works are words translated into actions; works of justice free the poor from oppression. As the Church points to us her mission: "To be present in the heart of the world proclaiming the Good News to the poor, freedom to the oppressed, and joy to the afflicted."¹¹¹

5. Synopsis

Pope Paul VI's *Marialis Cultus* and John Paul II's *Redemptoris Mater* are the Church's documents that have continued the spirit of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council.

The apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus* of Pope Paul VI continued the teaching of the council's document on the liturgy. Liturgy is the official prayer of the Church and as such, it is the norm of all prayers. It should not, however, neglect private devotions, especially those which have stood the test of time such as the Rosary and the *Angelus*. Neither liturgy nor private devotions are ends in themselves; they are means enabling us to reach God. Liturgy is one of the means in developing God's life in us.

¹¹¹ Synod of Bishops 1971, "Justice in the World," *Second Vatican Council*, (New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1995) p. 696.

After examining in detail the place of Mary in the revised Roman liturgy and its meaning, Paul VI speaks of the Trinitarian, Christological and Ecclesial aspects of this devotion. He then continues to reflect the other guidelines for the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. These are biblical, liturgical, ecumenical and anthropological. These reflections constitute a profound contribution to the development or evolution of liturgical Marian piety.

Marialis Cultus has influenced the theological and pastoral dimensions of Marian devotion in the Church. Pope Paul VI proposes Mary as model of the Church in divine worship. He speaks of her as the attentive virgin who, by listening to the word of God and responding to it, became the mother of the Redeemer. Like Mary, the Church listens attentively to God's word. It becomes the source of her dynamic action in the lives of the faithful.

She is the virgin in prayer whose motherhood is an exemplar of the virgin-Church. Through the Church's preaching and sacraments, she becomes a typical mother. Mary is also the virgin presenting offerings to the Father. At the Presentation and on Calvary, Mary models for the whole Church an offering of Christ to the Father.

In *Marialis Cultus*, the pope emphasizes the value of traditional prayers known as the Holy Rosary and the *Angelus*. The emphasis is upon the meditative and biblical characteristics of these two prayers. The recommended recitation of the Rosary does not consist merely in the mechanical way of uttering familiar prayers. Interwoven with these prayers is the contemplation of the mysteries of the life of Jesus in which his mother shared.

In this apostolic exhortation, the pope insists that the Rosary is a non-liturgical prayer. The liturgy and the Rosary both contemplate the same mysteries. The liturgy represents these very mysteries of our redemption, while the Rosary through contemplation of these mysteries, leads the individual to a better Christian living. The reflection found in *Marialis Cultus* refine and develop further our understanding of the link between liturgical and non-liturgical practices of Marian devotion.

Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter *Redemptoris Mater* certainly follows the line of thought of Chapter Eight of *Lumen*

Gentium. He focuses on the role of Mary within the context of the life of Christ and then, on Mary's role in the Church. The main sources of *Redemptoris Mater* are the sacred scriptures and the central documents of Vatican II. Through these sources one can identify the salient features of this encyclical. It is biblical. The Holy Father quotes the scriptures often and shares his reflections in relation to the mother of the Redeemer. It is also conciliar, where he cites the pertinent documents of Vatican II especially chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium* as the starting point of his reflection.

The Holy Father discusses Mary's maternal mediation in the third chapter of the encyclical. Mary's mediation is based on participation in Christ's mediation. In relation to Christ's ontological mediation, the Blessed Mother's mediation is dynamic and participative. Mary's maternal mediation is accomplished through intercession. The encyclical develops these thoughts with constant reference to the Sacred Scriptures and Vatican II.

It is evident in the Scriptures that Mary cooperated with her Son in his messianic mission from the Annunciation to the foot of the Cross. John Paul II reflected on Mary beginning with the Incarnation, then at Cana and up to Calvary. The pope's basic teaching on Mary's mediation is that her mediation is unique because it is maternal mediation, related to Christ who is always born into this world. Her mediation thus represents the female dimension in the history of salvation, this female dimension is forever centered in Mary's role. □