



Marian Doctrine and Devotion

Chapter 5



Marian devotions are those prayers and acts undertaken to honor Mary and with the intent of seeking her intercession with her Son, Jesus, and his Father. Devotion to the Virgin Mary does not, however, amount to worship - which is reserved for God alone. Catholics view Mary as subordinate to Christ, but uniquely so, in that she is seen as above all other creatures. In 787 the Second Council of Nicaea affirmed a three-level hierarchy of *latría*, *hyperdulía* and *dulía* that applies to God, the Virgin Mary and then to the other saints.

The Roman Catholic Church holds many teachings associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary. Four of these specific doctrines have been raised to the level of dogma, meaning in technical terms that they must be held by the faithful as essential to participation as Roman Catholics. The four Marian dogmas have been defined by the magisterium over the course of Christian history, using both Scripture and Sacred Tradition, the two elements of the one source of Revelation, as evidence for these proclamations. These four dogmas are: Mary the Mother of God, Perpetual Virginity of Mary, The Immaculate Conception, and The Assumption of Mary into Heaven. The twentieth-century has seen a significant drive to establish a fifth and final Dogma-Mary as Co-Redemptrix.

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Chapter 5

Immaculate Conception:

History of the Doctrine: In studying Scripture there are always two phases: first, we work by human means, normal exegetical methods; second, we see what help the Church gives. If we looked in Scripture by human means, we could at most, suspect there might be an Immaculate Conception, in Genesis 3. 15, reasoning that if the woman is Eve/Mary (cf. the text of John Paul II above) and there is to be complete enmity with the serpent, then she never should have been in any way subject to him even briefly.

We could also reason from the text of Lk 1:28 "full of grace". If we can validate the translation—we can, and will do so, shortly—then we could reason: the enmity would not be full, without the Immaculate Conception.

We turn to the early Fathers. Many, not all of them, make sweeping statements about her holiness. That could imply an Immaculate Conception. Secondly, very many of them speak of her as the New Eve. They could have reasoned: the first Eve had an

St. Maximilian Kolbe raises the question: Why at Lourdes did she call herself the Immaculate Conception, instead of the Immaculate One etc. ? He explains well: the Holy Spirit is the Immaculate concept of the Father and the Son. She is His Spouse. A spouse takes the name of the other Spouse. So she took His name. (Cf. H. M. Manteau-Bonamy, *Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit* (Prow Books, Marytown Press, Libertyville, IL 1977).

We have used the word merit: merit really means participation in the claim to grace that Jesus generated. We get this claim to the extent that we are 1) not only a member of His, 2) but like Him. She was His member, as the noblest merely human member of His Mystical Body. She was also His Mother. She was more like Him than any other creature. Physically, He must have been most like her in a physical way, having only the human genes inherited from her.

Did Our Lady know of her own Immaculate Conception? We saw earlier in our survey of the prophecies that most of the Targums saw the Mother of the Redeemer present at least in the typical sense in Gen 3:15. So what the ordinary Jews could see, she must have seen too. But then, the Church, Pius XII, as we saw above, in *Fulgens corona* in 1953, gave the reasoning that if she had ever been subject to Satan for even a brief moment, then the victory mentioned in Genesis 3:15 would not have been complete. Therefore, Pius XII said that that text is the foundation of the Immaculate Conception. Again, if the Church could see this, then she, full of grace, must have seen it, and so have seen she had been immaculately conceived.

End

immaculate start in life—no sin was yet committed. So the New Eve, who was to share in undoing the harm of original sin, should have also an immaculate start. But not one of the Fathers ever reasoned that way. (Tragically, a few Fathers even tried to find sins she had committed. e.g. St. John Chrysostom said that at Cana in trying to help she wanted to make herself seem better than her Son! This was inexcusable rash judgment, no basis whatsoever: *Homily on John 21*. PG 59. 130ff).

So there was a way open for even denial of her immaculate conception.

We come to the 12th century, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, famed for his Marian devotion, explicitly denied the Immaculate Conception. There seem to have been two reasons why Bernard opposed the Immaculate conception. First, he did not want to go beyond the data of Scripture and the Fathers. As we have seen, these were not yet clear. Secondly, he seems to have been affected by the unfortunate view of Augustine on original sin. Augustine seems to have thought that it was not merely a privation, the absence of grace that should be there, as we now know, and will explain below. He seems to have had a positive element in it, namely, concupiscence. In his *Retractations* 1. 15. 2 Augustine said: "... the guilt of this concupiscence is taken away in Baptism, but the weakness remains." We note he said there was guilt in having concupiscence before baptism. This fits with the tendency of Augustine to think souls of children derive from the souls of parents—he tended to favor this view—without being certain, however—as seeming to be needed to explain how original sin is transmitted. This fits with the words of the same Augustine in his *Enchiridion* 78. 21. After quoting St. Paul, 1 Cor 7:5 which in the poor Latin version Augustine used spoke of *venia*, pardon for sex within marriage, Augustine added: "Who now would deny it is a sin, when he admits that a pardon (*venia*) is given to those who do it, by apostolic authority?" St. Jerome spoke similarly in *Against Jovianian* 1. 2: "'It is good, he [St. Paul] in 1 Cor 7:1 says, for a man not to touch a woman. ' If it is good not to touch a woman, therefore it is evil to touch one, for nothing is contrary to good except evil. If... it is evil, but is forgiven [cf. *venia* , pardon, again] it is granted so that worse may not happen... . it was good not to touch... unless [the danger of] fornication would make the touch excusable."

Even St. Thomas Aquinas wrote (*De malo* 4. 3): "Carnal semen just as it is the instrumental cause of transmission of human nature into offspring, so it is the instrumental cause of the transmission of original sin." But a physical thing could be an instrumental cause of transmission of original sin only if original sin is thought of as not just a privation (the lack of grace that should be present in a new baby), but as having a positive element.

Not all the early Fathers made such mistakes. Tertullian, even though inclined to be a rigorist, had great praise for marriage, in his work *To His Wife*: "How, beautiful, then, the marriage of two Christians, two who are one in hope, one in desire, one in the way of life they follow, one in the religion they practice... . Nothing divides them either in flesh or in spirit. They are, in very truth, two in one flesh, and where there is but one flesh there is also but one spirit. They pray together... . Hearing and seeing this, Christ rejoices. To such as these He gives His peace. Where there are two together, there also He is present, and where He is, there evil is not." Clement of Alexandria wrote in *Paedagogus* 2. 10. 94: "Marriage in itself merits esteem and the highest approval."

The views of Augustine and Jerome were a sad mistake. In contrast, Vatican II (*Gaudium et spes* §49) taught: "The Lord has seen fit by a special gift of grace and love to heal, to perfect, and to elevate this love [within marriage]... so the actions by which the spouses are intimately and chastely united are honorable and worthy, and, carried out in a truly human manner, signify mutual self-giving and promote it." Pope Paul VI (Address to the 13th National Congress of the Italian Feminine Center, Feb. 12, 1966) said, "Christian marriage and the Christian family demand a moral commitment. They are not an easy way of Christian life, even though the most common, the one which the majority of the children of God are called on to travel. Rather, it is a long path toward sanctification." The reason is that in marriage there are countless occasions that require self-sacrifice, because the mate has such a different psychology, and for the needs of children. Cf. Wm. Most, *Our Father's Plan*, pp. 144-49.

So Bernard wrote (*Letter to the Canons of Lyons* 7. PL 182. 335): "Could sanctity have been associated with conception in the embrace of marriage, so that she was conceived and sanctified at the same time? That is not reasonable. How could there have been sanctity without the sanctifying Spirit? How could the Holy Spirit be associated in any way with sin? How could sin not have been present where concupiscence was not absent?"

Most of the great theologians of the Middle Ages followed suit. Even St. Thomas wrote (*Summa* III. 27. 2. ad 2): "... if the soul of the Blessed Virgin had never been defiled with the contagion of original sin, this would take away from the dignity of Christ, according to which He is the universal Savior of all."

But then the tide began to turn, thanks especially to the work of the Franciscan, Venerable Duns Scotus. He showed that to preserve her from original sin was a greater redemption than to allow her to fall into it and then rescue her. Scotus wrote (cited from J. B. Carol, *Mariology* I, 368): "Either God was able to do this, and did not will to do it, or He willed to preserve her, and was unable to do so. If able to and yet unwilling to perform this for her, God was miserly towards her. And if He willed to do it but was unable to accomplish it, He was weak, for no one who is able to honor his mother would fail to do so."

question of what kind of favor Paul had: a high instance of infused contemplation? a charismatic type of vision? or beatific vision?

So we cannot argue that if Moses and Paul had it, she would have had it. We simply do not know, and the thought of St. Therese of Lisieux is impressive indeed. And the conduct of Christ to her in the Gospels is usually not warm, it usually appears such as to cause her to hold on in the dark, in faith—more on this later. We might add the comments of St. Teresa of Avila (*Interior Castle* 6. 9): "There are many saintly people who have never known what it is to have a favor of this kind [visions etc.] and there are others who receive such things, even though they are not saintly. It is true that these favors can be a very great help towards reaching a high degree of perfection in the virtues, but anyone who has attained the virtues at the cost of his own work has earned much more merit." We recall again Mt 7:22-23.

Even though she was full of grace at the start of her life, yet she could still grow, for, as it were, her capacity for grace could increase. In general, a soul will grow in proportion to these things: 1) The greater the dignity of the person, the greater the merit (We will explain merit presently). In her case, the dignity of Mother of God is the highest possible for a creature. (2) The greater the work, the greater the merit: her cooperation in the redemption, as we shall see, was at the peak. (3) The greater the love, the greater the merit. Love of God means the attachment of our will to His. Her will adhered supremely, with no obstacle at all, so that even ordinary household duties, which she saw as the will of the Father for her, were supremely valuable. Jesus Himself saw fit to spend about 30 out of 33 years in an ordinary household life. Further, when a soul must hold on in the dark, as it were, when it seems impossible, then the adherence of the will to that of God is very high. We think of the case of Abraham, ordered to sacrifice his son Isaac, even though he had to believe he would be the father of a great nation through Isaac. Our Lady often had to hold on in the dark: why flee to Egypt, when she knew what He was? When she had to handle Him and care for Him as an infant, her senses would report: nothing special here, but her faith continued to know and to hold. During the 30 years of hidden life, she might well wonder: Is He ever going to start His work? At Cana, He seemed to reject her, but she held on and told the waiters: Do whatever He tells you. (More instances of holding on in the dark in Wm. Most, *Our Father's Plan*, 129-31).

Her love then not only grew, but must have grown at a rate we might compare to geometrical increases such as $2 \times 2 = 4$; $4 \times 4 = 16$ etc.

is greater. She of course, was at the peak in both categories. She heard the word of God through the archangel, and kept it, and so conceived and kept the Word of God incarnate.

Therefore the dignity of being Mother of God is a quasi infinite dignity, as we just saw from the words of Pius XI. Yet the holiness coming from hearing the word of God and keeping it is something greater still. The dignity of the Mother of God is one of closeness of relation to the Infinite (the sense of Hebrew *qadosh*): those who come under the Covenant all have some degree of that closeness or relation to God. But that does not of itself make one capable of the face to face vision of God in the next life. That comes from hearing the word of God and keeping it. In other words, hearing the word and keeping it is the same as faith, as St. Paul uses the word faith. It includes three things: believing what God says, confidence in His word, and obeying His word, what St. Paul (Rom 1:5) calls "the obedience of faith", that is the obedience that faith is. She fulfilled that obedience first of all by saying: "Be it done to me according to your word." She continued and kept this obedience of faith even to the cross, where that obedience of faith was, as we shall bring out later, part of the covenant condition itself, and a sharing in that interior disposition which gave His death all its value (without it the plaint of Isaiah 29:13 would apply), and so a most intimate sharing in the work of redemption.

Really, this obedience of faith in any soul is the indispensable means of taking in sanctifying grace, which consists in transforming the soul so as to make it capable of the face to face vision of God in the next life.

Did she also have charismatic graces, such as the gift of working miracles, speaking in tongues etc? The texts of Pius IX and Pius XII really refer to sanctifying graces, not to charismatic graces. Therefore we cannot know with certainty if she had such graces. They do not of themselves sanctify a person. St Therese of Lisieux liked to think she did not have them. In a poem she wrote:

"I know that at Nazareth, Virgin full of graces. You lived in great poverty, not wishing anything more. No raptures, no miracles, no ecstasies embellished your life, O Queen of the Elect. The number of little ones is very great upon the earth. They can, without trembling, lift up their eyes to you. It pleases you to walk along the common way Incomparable Mother, to guide them to the heavens."

A similar comment is in order on the question of whether or not she ever had, even briefly, the beatific vision in this life. Such a thing is possible: Jesus had it constantly. St. Augustine (*De videndo Deo*, and in *De Genesi ad litteram* 12) and St. Thomas (I-II 175. 3. c.) think Moses had it at times, and also St. Paul. But the reasons given are not solid. Moses in Ex 33:18-23 had asked to see God. But God showed only "His back", even though Ex 33:8-11 said Moses saw God face to face. Their opinion on St. Paul is based on 2 Cor 12:1-4 where Paul tells of being taken up to the third heaven, and hearing words no one may speak. But Thomas and Augustine do not raise the

Again, we note that behind most of the objections was the rather positive notion of original sin. Had they seen, what we now know (see below) that it consists solely in a lack (privation) of the grace that should be there, then there is no problem of God providing it in anticipation of the merits of Christ.

There were false arguments too drawn from etymology. One of these said that Latin *redimere* means to buy back. But the back implies someone was in a bad state. But no one should ever try to prove anything from the root meanings of any word. For only if the one who first coined the word did a good job, will the meaning even coincide with the meaning of the roots. And even if it does, then later on the only thing we can be sure of is that the meaning probably develops, and we cannot be sure in which direction it will develop. Still further, the Latin merely attempts to reproduce Hebrew *gaal*, the real source of the concept of redemption. But there is no prefix meaning back on the Hebrew word.

Then the Popes began to make statements of varying clarity. (On these cf. *Marian Studies* V, 1954, esp. pp. 73—145.) Sixtus IV in 1477 (DS 1400) praised the liturgical celebration of the Immaculate Conception. The same Pope added further support in 1483 (DS 1425-26), condemning those who said it was sinful to preach and believe the Immaculate Conception. The Council of Trent explicitly declared in its decree on original sin (DS 1516): "... it is not its intention to include in this decree... the blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Rather, the Constitutions of Sixtus [IV] of happy memory are to be observed."

After Trent, the attacks on the Immaculate Conception were greatly moderated. One of the most zealous defenders of the doctrine during this period was the Dominican Ambrose Catarino. Then Pope St. Pius V, in 1567 (DS 1973) condemned the error of Baius who said Our Lady was subject to original sin. And in 1568 the same Pope put the feast of the Immaculate Conception on the calendar of the Roman breviary. Alexander VII in 1661 explained the doctrine much as Pius IX did later: DB 1100. Pope Clement XI in 1708 made Dec 8 a holyday of obligation. Further, the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore in the U. S. in 1846 declared Mary Immaculate to be Patroness of the United States, and Pius IX on Feb. 7, 1847 confirmed this dedication.

The result was that about a century and a half before the definition of 1854, everyone believed the Immaculate Conception.

Finally, in *Ineffabilis Deus*, in 1854, Pius IX defined this doctrine and added that she was conceived immaculate by anticipation of the merits of Christ. This is not strange, for to the eye of God, all time is present. (Incidentally, this leads to the thought: Could we pray for the salvation of someone

already dead, hoping God might have taken into account our prayers in advance? The view that we could is quite plausible, not certain).

Pius XII, in *Fulgens corona*, 1953 wrote: "... the foundation of this doctrine [Immaculate conception] is seen in the very Sacred Scripture in which God... after the wretched fall of Adam, addressed the... serpent in these words... 'I will put enmity... ' But if at any time, the Blessed Virgin Mary, defiled in her conception with the hereditary stain of sin, had been devoid of divine grace, then at least, even though for a very brief moment of time, there would not have been that eternal enmity between her and the serpent... but instead there would have been a certain subjection."

b) Nature of original sin: Vatican II said, in *Unitatis redintegratio* §6: ". . . if any things whether in morals or in ecclesiastical discipline or in the manner of expressing a doctrine—to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith—have been kept less accurately [than they might] at an opportune time they should be rightly and duly restored." Paul VI followed up with *Mysterium fidei* (Sept 3, 1965) said that if the older language may be less good, it is not wrong: "The rule of speaking which the Church in the course of long ages, not without the protection of the Holy Spirit, has introduced, and has strengthened by the authority of Councils... must be kept sacred, and no one at his own whim or under pretext or new knowledge may presume to change it."

Such is the case with the language used in speaking of original sin.

To see the matter clearly, we recall three levels of gifts God gave to our first parents:

1) Basic humanity—which would include a body and soul, each having many drives and needs, none of which is evil, but each of which operates blindly and as it were mechanically, without regard to the needs of the other drives or of the whole person. Hence if God had given nothing but this first level, there would have been need of mortification, to gradually tame these drives and keep them subject.

2) A coordinating gift, which made it easy to keep all these drives each in its own proper place and range. This gift is sometimes called the gift of integrity.

3) The life of sanctifying grace, which gave the soul the radical ability to see God face to face in the next life (cf. 1 Cor 13:12) making it a temple of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 3:16 and 6:19) and so sharing in divinity: (cf. 1 Pet 1:4). This is called original justice. It is not, as Luther thought, a part of human nature (hence he held for total corruption), or due to human nature. It was strictly supernatural, i. e., raising the soul entirely above the level of the merely human. The presence of the Holy Spirit (or all Three Persons) is not a spatial presence, for spirits do not use space. It means the producing of an effect, here, the giving of the radical ability to see God face to face.

By original sin, our first parents lost, or rather, cast away, all but level 1. Hence they did not have the higher gifts to pass on to their offspring. For a child to come into the

But there are two great categories of grace: sanctifying graces, and charismatic graces. Sanctifying graces are aimed at making the recipient holy; charismatic graces are not aimed at that, though incidentally they may help it. But they are aimed at some benefit for the community. Sanctifying graces include two kinds: habitual grace (also called sanctifying grace) and actual grace (given to me at this moment to lead me and enable me to do a particular good thing here and now). Sanctifying grace consists in the transformation of the soul so as to make it capable of the face to face vision of God in the next life. (At times we speak of created and uncreated grace. Uncreated grace is this presence of the Three Persons, but since that Presence is not spatial—spirits do not take up space—it consists in causing the transformation of the soul. Hence they come to the same thing).

In regard to sanctifying graces: God offers them abundantly, without any limit except that imposed by the receptivity of the recipient. For in the covenant He accepted an infinite price of redemption, and so had bound Himself to offer sanctifying graces without limit, as it were, infinitely. But charismatic graces are very different. There the principle is: The Holy Spirit gives what he wants, where He wants, without regard to the receptivity of the recipient. In fact, one may have a charismatic grace, even that of working miracles, and still not be in the state of sanctifying grace, as we learn from Mt 7:22-23: "Many will say to me on that day: Have we not prophesied in your name? have we not cast out demons by your power? Have we not done many miracles in your name? Then I will tell them: Depart from me, you evildoers. I never knew you."

Which kind of graces, sanctifying or charismatic, do Pius IX and Pius XII speak of as given to her more than to all others? Clearly their words apply primarily at least to sanctifying graces. For Pius IX said her holiness even at the time of the Immaculate Conception was so great that, "none greater under God can be thought of, and no one but God can comprehend it." This was given her in view of her role as Mother of God, of which Pius XI said (*Lux veritatis* AAS 23. 513, citing St. Thomas I. 25. 6. ad 4): "The Blessed Virgin from the fact that she is the Mother of God has a sort of infinite dignity from the infinite good that God is."

But we need to make a further distinction. In Lk 11:27-28 (cf. Mt. 12:46-50 and Mk 3:35) a woman in the crowd exclaimed: "Blessed is the womb that bore you..." He replied: "Rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." Vatican II explains in LG §58: "She received His words, in which her Son, extolling the Kingdom more than the bonds of flesh and blood, proclaimed blessed those who hear and keep the word of God, as she herself was faithfully doing." In other words, Jesus was teaching dramatically that if we compare two things, the dignity of being Mother of God, and the holiness of hearing and keeping the word of God—the second

has always understood them, it is clearly indicated by this singular and solemn salutation, never otherwise heard, that the Mother of God was the seat of all divine graces... ." Vatican II, in LG 56 uses that translation. Pope John Paul II has used it many times, and spoke at length on it in Redemptoris Mater §§ 7-11.

If we turn to philology: the Greek word in the Gospel is kecharitomene. It is a perfect passive participle of the verb charitoo. A perfect passive participle is very strong. In addition, charitoo belongs to a group of verbs ending in omicron omega. They have in common that they mean to put a person or thing into the state indicated by the root. Thus leukos means white, so leukoo means to make white. Then charitoo should mean to put into charis. That word charis can mean either favor or grace. But if we translate by favor, we must keep firmly in mind that favor must not mean merely that God, as it were, sits there and smiles at someone, without giving anything. That would be Pelagian: salvation possible without grace. So for certain, God does give something, and that something is grace. So charitoo means to put into grace. But then too, kecharitomene is used in place of the name Mary. This is like our English usage in which we say, for example, someone is Mr. Tennis. That means he is the ultimate in tennis. so then kecharitomene should mean "Miss Grace", the ultimate in grace.—Hence we could reason that fullness of grace implies an Immaculate Conception.

Overflowing grace: Pius IX, in the document, Ineffabilis Deus, defining the Immaculate Conception in 1854 wrote: "He [God] attended her with such great love, more than all other creatures, that in her alone He took singular pleasure. Wherefore He so wonderfully filled her, more than all angelic spirits and all the Saints, with an abundance of all heavenly gifts taken from the treasury of the divinity, that she, always free from absolutely every stain of sin, and completely beautiful and perfect, presented such a fullness of innocence and holiness that none greater under God can be thought of, and no one but God can comprehend it."

Pius XII, in Mystici Corporis (AAS 35. 247) has in a way gone even further. He said "her most holy soul was filled with the divine Spirit of Jesus Christ more than all other creatures of God taken together."

Paul VI, in Marialis cultus (AAS 66:135) says the Father "adorned her with gifts of the Spirit granted to no one else."

We need to explore further. Pius IX said she had a greater abundance of grace than all other creatures. Pius XII said an abundance greater than that of all other creatures taken together.

world without these is not what God had planned, it is a privation, a lack of what should be there. That lack is original sin.

Often in the past original sin has been spoken of as if it were something positive. It is even likely that St. Augustine thought concupiscence was part of original sin, which would make it partly positive. In Retractations 1. 15. 2: "This sin, of which the Apostle spoke thus is called sin for the reason that it comes from sin, and is the penalty of sin, at times it is called concupiscence of the flesh, the guilt of this concupiscence is taken away in Baptism, but the weakness remains." He speaks of concupiscence before baptism as "guilt" [reatus]. So it seems there is guilt to it before Baptism takes the guilt away, leaving the weakness. This fits with his tendency to hold Traducianism [notion that souls of children are derived from souls of parents] since otherwise he would find it hard to explain how original sin is transmitted, if God would create each soul separately.

The Council of Trent taught (DS 1515): "This Holy Synod declares that the Catholic Church has never meant that this concupiscence, which at times the Apostle calls 'sin' [Rom 6. 12ss] is a sin in that it is truly and properly called a sin in those reborn—but [it teaches that it is called sin] because it comes from sin and inclines to sin."

We can see then: she had not inherited sanctifying grace from Adam, and so would have begun life without it. But God supplied it in anticipation of the merits of Christ. The Fathers so often call her the New Eve. The first Eve started life without original sin—it had not been invented then—and so it is at least highly suitable that the New Eve, who, as we shall see, was to share in removing that damage, should have the same kind of start in life, i.e. , with grace.

We said that the older language on original sin was less suitable than it might be. Especially in sermons preachers spoke of the stain of sin—but a spirit cannot have a stain. Even Trent (DS 1513) spoke of original sin as transmitted by heredity. Paul VI, in his Credo of the People of God (1968) spoke similarly: "We believe that <1>in Adam all have sinned, which means that the original offense... caused human nature, common to all, <2> to fall to a state in which it bears the consequences of that offense. This is no longer the state in which human nature was at the beginning in our first parents... . And so it is human nature, so fallen, deprived of the gift of grace with which it had first been adorned, <3>injured in its own natural powers... that is communicated to all men: it is in this sense that every man is born in sin. We therefore hold with the Council of Trent that original sin is transmitted with human nature, by propagation, not by imitation, and that it is in all men, proper to each."

Comment: We have added numbers for convenience in reference. At <1> we see the echo of the version of Romans 5:12 used by the Latin Fathers, "in quo omnes peccaverunt"—"in whom all have sinned". But the Greek Fathers understood it differently, "inasmuch as all have sinned." Now Trent in its teaching on original sin (DS 1514) taught that we must understand Romans 5:12 the way the whole Church, scattered throughout the world, has always understood it. Now the whole Church has understood that Romans 5:12 teaches original sin.—But that last clause was not understood the same way by the whole Church, as we have just seen. Actually the Greek Fathers are right, and the Latin is a strangely distorted rendering, which led even some theologians to say God had miraculously enclosed all our wills in Adam so all could sin together! Oddly St. Thomas in *De malo* 4. 3 said: "Carnal semen, just as it is the instrumental cause of the transmission of human nature, so it is the instrumental cause of the transmission of original sin." The language is very unfortunate, probably influenced by the Latin *in quo omnes peccaverunt*. And sadly too the New Catechism in §404 says, "the whole human race is in Adam" and refers us to Thomas 4. 1, just before the 4. 3 text just cited.

In the item marked <2> Paul VI improves the language of <1> without making it as good as it might be, especially in view of his words in <3> about human nature injured in its powers—just as it is often said that our mind is darkened and our will weakened.

But now John Paul II greatly improved the language in two general Audiences. On Oct 1, 1986 (emphasis added): "In context it is evident that original sin in Adam's descendants has not the character of personal guilt. It is the privation of sanctifying grace in a nature which, through the fall of the first parents, has been diverted from its supernatural end. It is a 'sin of nature' only analogically comparable to 'personal sin'". In other words: It is only the lack, or privation, of that which God wanted us to have, which we should have inherited from our first parents. It is a sin 'only analogically' he said, that is, in a sense partly same, partly different. If we compare an adult who has just committed a mortal sin, and the new baby, the state is the same in that both lack grace; it is different in that the adult has grave personal gift, the baby has none at all. Hence a baby dying without baptism deserves no suffering at all. St. Thomas, *De malo* 5. 3 ad 4: " the children are separated from God permanently in regard to the loss of glory, which they do not know of, not however as to sharing in natural goods, which they do know. That which they have through nature, they have without suffering." Tragically, St. Augustine said such babies all go to hell, in *Enchiridion* 93. Even he admitted in *Epistle* 166. 6. 16, "But when we come to the penalty of infants, believe me, I am put in a very tight spot, and do not know what to reply." Pius IX ruled out this sad error. In *Quanto conficiamur moerore* (DS 2866) he taught: "God... in His supreme goodness and clemency, by no means allows anyone to be punished with eternal punishments who does not have the guilt of voluntary fault."

John Paul II in Audience of Oct 8, 1986 said (emphasis added): "It is human nature, so fallen, stripped of the grace that clothed it, injured in its own natural powers... that is transmitted to all men, and it is in this sense that every man is born in sin... . However, according to the Church's teaching, it is a case of a relative and not an absolute deterioration, not intrinsic to human faculties.... not of a loss of their essential capacities even in relation to the knowledge and love of God." That is, original sin took us down to level one, but not lower. Mind is darkened and will weakened in a relative sense, relative to what it could and would have been. And it is transmitted by heredity in that grace is not transmitted by heredity.

We need here to reflect on a point of theological method. God has promised to protect the teaching of the Church; He also promised free will. At times these go in opposite directions. As a result we must read texts tightly. What is set down on paper is protected, not what we may suspect was in the mind of the drafters. Here, we fear the idea of Augustine and the poor Latin version in *quo omnes peccaverunt* may have been in the mind of those who wrote some texts. But only what they set down on paper is protected. So we invoke the principle of UR §6 saying that the old texts are not wrong, but may need improvement.

c) Preventive redemption: She needed redemption, not that she was ever in original sin. Nor did she have an "obligation" to contract it, as some have foolishly said: there can be no obligation to any sin. We can merely say she would have been in original sin in the sense just explained, i.e. , she would have been born without grace, were it not for the preventive redemption. The word "preventive" means anticipatory: the grace she received at her conception was given in anticipation (Latin *praevenire*) of the merits of Christ, which merits earned that grace.

"Debt" of contracting original sin: It is unfortunate that some theologians have discussed whether and in what way Our Lady had an obligation to contract original sin. They used the word debt, which masks the reality. Of course, no one whatsoever could have an obligation to contract sin. The very idea is nonsense . All we could and should say is that without the special grace of the Immaculate Conception, she would have been in original sin, but even then we must keep firmly in mind that original sin is just a privation, in not a contagion or stain in the proper sense of the word.

d) The nature of her grace at the Immaculate Conception: In Lk 1:28 the archangel hails her as, "full of grace". Most versions today do not use that rendering, but greatly weaken it. Yet it is the correct translation as we can see from the *Magisterium* and from philology.

First, Pius XII, in *Fulgens corona gloriae* (Sept 8, 1953. AAS 45. 579) taught: "And furthermore, since this Most Holy Virgin is greeted as full of grace and blessed among women, from these words, as Catholic tradition