



Marian Doctrine and Devotion

Chapter 13



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 *latria*, *hyperdulia* and *dulia* 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.

Commentary on the book of Isaiah is by noted theologian Rev. William G. Most (1914-1999). His contributions to theology have been recognized all over the world. He published 12 books and a host of articles on topics ranging from biblical studies to Mariology and Latin grammar.

Chapter 13

Cooperation in the Objective Redemption:

a) Terminology: The objective redemption is the once-for-all acquisition by the sacrifice of Calvary of the claim to all grace and forgiveness. The subjective redemption is the giving out of that grace and forgiveness throughout all ages after Calvary. Remote cooperation in the objective redemption is being the Mother of the Redeemer, in faith and obedience furnishing Him with the flesh and blood in which He could die. Immediate cooperation is some role in the sacrifice of Calvary. A further question: just how did that cooperation operate? What was the nature of that role?

b) How did the Redemption operate?: Of course, Jesus redeemed us by His death. But we must go deeper, and ask in what way His death accomplished that.

1) Scriptural data:

Mt 20. 28: "The Son of Man... came to give His life as a ransom for many." (Mt. 10. 45 is the same).

symbol and vital center." And he added: "We trust that they will imitate in her the most perfect model of union with Jesus our Head; we trust that they will join Mary in the offering of the Divine Victim."

Pope John Paul II in an address in St. Peter's square (Sunday Feb. 12, 1984 (from English edition of L'Osservatore Romano, Feb. 20, 1984, p. 10) said: "Today I wish to dwell with you on the Blessed Virgin's presence in the celebration of the Liturgy... . Every liturgical action... is an occasion of communion... and in a particular way with Mary... Because the Liturgy is the action of Christ and of the Church... she is inseparable from one and the other... . Mary is present in the memorial—the liturgical action—because she was present at the saving event... . She is at every altar where the memorial of the passion and Resurrection is celebrated, because she was present, faithful with her whole being to the Father's plan, at the historic salvific occasion of Christ's death."

A sacrifice consists of the external sign and the interior dispositions which the sign expresses. In the Cenacle the external sign was the seeming separation of His body and blood. On the Cross, it was the physical separation. But in both cases, and on our altars the interior is the disposition of His Heart, most basically, obedience to the Father (cf. Rom 5. 19 and LG §3). His disposition on our altars is not a repeat of that which He had on Calvary, it is the continuation, for death makes permanent the attitude of soul with which one leaves the body. She shares in the external sign of the Mass in that the flesh and blood are still those He received from her. She shares in the interior dispositions of His Heart, with which she is eternally united. Therefore the Mass is not the time to stop thinking of her. Rather, the more closely one is united with her, the more closely one is united with Her Son. Therefore, let no one say we should forget her at Mass. Rather, the more closely one is joined to her there, the more closely to Jesus—and vice versa. (This is true objectively, even if one's diversity of grace does not lead him to realize it).

End

So what she had to do, unless she would break with the Father, was to will what He willed, to will the terrible death of her Son.

All this is, of course, entirely Scriptural. It merely points out that at the start, she obeyed in saying her fiat, as St. Luke tells us. At the Cross, as any soul that loves the will of the Father must do, she had to continue her fiat, to continue to obey. Isaiah 53 had said that, "by His stripes we are healed", that, "it was the will of the Lord to crush Him in pain." Even the Targum knew Isaiah spoke of the Messiah, although in the stiff-necks of many, the message was even inverted. But she was not such, she understood, and yet she did not take back her fiat, she obeyed the will of the Lord. That obedience of hers was a joining in the essential condition of the New Covenant, it was a joining in the necessary interior of His sacrifice.

Her love of Him would multiply the difficulty. It was the love of the best of Mothers for the best of Sons, a Son whom she understood as no other person could. We cannot really calculate the terrible difficulty of her obedience, going counter to such love.

Would the Father accept her obedience as part of the covenant obedience? In the old covenant, He accepted the obedience of even very ordinary, sinful people—how much more hers! Would He put her in such straits, call on her to obey when it was so incredibly hard, and then not accept her obedience as part of the covenant condition even as He had accepted the obedience of very ordinary, sinful people, as we said, in the old covenant.

He could have redeemed us with something immeasurably less painful—the mere fact of the incarnation, even without so much as a short prayer added, would have been superabundant. Yet in His love of all goodness, in His love of us, He would not stop short when there was any way to make it all richer. It was in that attitude that He called for the death of His Son, that He called for her immeasurably difficult obedience.

So, Vatican II in its teaching, merely unfolded, by pondering in hearts, what the Scripture contains: "In suffering with Him as He died on the cross, she cooperated in the work of the Savior"—in the essential requirement of the New Covenant, in the essential interior of the Great Sacrifice—"by obedience, faith, hope and burning love."

12. Her Role in Each Mass: Since Vatican II said (On Liturgy #10) that the Mass is the renewal of the new covenant, and since the Council of Trent (DS 1743) said the Mass is the same as Calvary, "only the manner or offering being changed", therefore we would expect her to have a role in the Mass parallel to that which she had on Calvary.

Pope John XXIII in a radio message to the 16th Eucharistic Congress of Italy on Sept. 13, 1959, (AAS 51. 713) said he hoped all would grow in their fervor and veneration for the Blessed Virgin, "the Mother of the Mystical Body, of which the Eucharist is the

Gal. 3. 13: "Christ has bought us back from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us." (Cf. also Gal 4. 5).

1 Cor. 6. 20 (cf. 7. 23): "You were bought at a price."

Comment: The question had to arise: to whom was the price or ransom paid? It would seem at first sight that it was paid to the one who held our race in captivity, to Satan. St. Ambrose, in Epistle 72 went so far as to accept that. Most Fathers and later writers recoiled from that. Yet the idea that sin was a debt was very ancient. It is found for example in the Our Father: "Forgive us our debts"

2) Patristic texts:

St. Athanasius probably was not original in the matter, but he does tell us of four possible answers:

(1) Substitution: "He takes to Himself a body capable of death that it, by partaking of the Lord who is above all, might be worthy to die instead of all... . All being considered to have died in Him. [Cf. 2 Cor 5. 14]." (On the Incarnation 9).

(2) Blunting or absorbing the impact of a force. He died so that "the law involving the ruin of men might be undone, inasmuch as its power was fully spent in the Lord's body." (On the Incarnation 8).

(3) Physical-mystical solidarity: "Such a union was made so He might join what was by nature divine with what was by nature human, so (human) salvation and divinization might be secure." (Second Oration Against the Arians 70). The notion is that all humanity forms a unit, a solidarity. But the humanity of Christ is part of that solidarity. Further, in Him that nature is joined in one Person to the divinity. So a power spreads out from the divinity through His humanity to all humanity to heal it.

(4) Payment of a debt: "The Word of God... by offering His own temple and corporeal instrument for the life of all, satisfied the debt by His death." (On the Incarnation 9).

(5) St. Anselm (1033—1109) in *Cur Deus homo?* following up on the debt idea, said that man was created for obedience, service, devotion to God. By sin he evaded it. So God had to demand satisfaction in justice. Hence the Incarnation, the means of satisfying the debt.

Comment: Many have been displeased with the Anselmian theory. First, God does not have to do anything. Second, people could say: If someone offends me, I often just let it go. Why cannot God be so kind?

3) Further development on sin as a debt:

However, the notion of sin as a debt to be paid is found in the Old Testament (OT), in intertestamental literature (where Hebrew *hobah*) is often used to mean sin, while its basic sense is debt. It is found in the New Testament (NT). It is found widely in rabbinic literature. (cf. Appendix, Sedaqah to Wm. Most, St. Paul commentary).

Pope Paul VI, in *Indulgentiarum doctrina*, Jan 9, 1967. AAS 59. 7, wrote: "Every sin brings with it a disturbance of the universal order, which God arranged in His inexpressible wisdom and infinite love... So it is necessary for the full remission and reparation of sins... not only that friendship with God be restored by a sincere conversion of heart, and that the offense against His wisdom and goodness be expiated, but also that all the goods, both individual and social, and those that belong to the universal order, lessened or destroyed by sin, be fully reestablished, either through voluntary reparation... or through the suffering of penalties."

The same thought is brought out well in the image of a two-pan scales by Rabbi Simeon ben Eleazar, in *Tosefta*, *Kiddushin* 1. 14. He wrote c 170 AD, and says he is quoting Rabbi Meir, a disciple of the great Rabbi Akiba: "Someone has carried out one commandment. Blessings [on him]. He has tipped the scales to the side of merit for himself and for the world. Someone has committed a transgression. Woe [to him]. He has tipped the scales to the side of debt for himself and for the world."

A sinner takes from one pan of the scale what he has no right to. The scale is out of balance. The holiness of God wants everything morally right, and so wants it rebalanced. If the sinner stole property, he begins to rebalance by giving it back. If he stole a pleasure, he begins to rebalance by giving up some other pleasure he could have lawfully had. But in either case, he only begins—for the imbalance from even one mortal sin is infinite. Hence if the Father wanted full reparation—he was not obliged—the only way to accomplish it would be to send a Divine Person to become man.

So there is a price of redemption, not paid of course to Satan, nor to the Father (He was not the captor) but to the objective order, to rebalance it, as willed by the holiness of God. This price is the sacrificial death of Christ, done in obedience: cf. Romans 5. 19 and LG 3. Another aspect is that of covenant, as foretold by Jeremiah 31. 31ff. The obedient death of Christ was the covenant condition. Without obedience it would have been a tragedy, not a redemption. We note the threefold aspect: covenant, sacrifice, payment of debt or rebalance of objective order.

A sinner, as we said, takes from one pan what he has no right to take. Jesus in His painful death gave back more than all sinners have taken. And the infinity of His Person would have made even a slight thing from Him infinitely valuable. His Mother too, completely sinless, joined in that rebalance as we shall see. (The infinity of His offering does not dispense us, His members, from doing what we can. St. Paul makes clear that we are saved and made holy if and to the extent that we are not only

We must add: the redemption was, under one aspect, the making of the New Covenant, foretold by Jeremiah 31:31 ff.: "I will make a New covenant. It will not be like the covenant I made with your Fathers, for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master. But this is the Covenant. I will write my law on their heart. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

In the Covenant of Sinai, the essential condition had been the obedience of the people (Ex 19:5): "If you really hearken to my voice, and keep my covenant, you will be my special people." So the New Covenant would have again as its essential condition obedience, which Jeremiah expressed by speaking of a law written on hearts. Perhaps Jeremiah did not see it fully, but that obedience was to be the obedience of Christ.

What did that law of the Father, written on her heart call for? It called for what we have just said: That she positively will that her Son die, die then, die horribly. In that, she was joining in the fulfillment of the Covenant condition. He, in Gethsemani, had said: "If it be possible, let this chalice pass... but nonetheless, not what I will, but what you will." In other words, He obeyed. St. Paul stressed that too in Rom 5:19: "Just as by the disobedience of the one man [the first Adam] the many were made sinners [original sin] so by the obedience of the one man [the New Adam] the many will be constituted just."

In fact, had His death taken place without obedience, it would not have been a redemption, it would have been merely a tragedy. So it was obedience that was the covenant condition, it was that which gave the value to His death.

To look at the same reality from a different perspective, His death was a sacrifice. God had once complained through Isaiah 29:13: "This people honors me with their lips... their hearts are far from me." The ancient Jews were very adept at what is sometimes, simplistically, called "participation." They loved to make the responses, to sing, to join in processions. But it was all empty, for their hearts were far from Him: their hearts did not act in obedience. But Jesus did offer His sacrifice in obedience. So just as obedience is the covenant condition, so too, it is that without which His sacrifice would be as worthless as those of which God complained through Isaiah.

But we return to Our Lady. At the annunciation, she obeyed, she said her fiat. She knew too much for comfort even then, of what that entailed, as we explained above. But now in the blackness of Calvary, she was called on to continue to obey the will of the Father. That she did. As we said, we know this since any soul is required to conform its will to that of the Father. But then, she knew that will of the Father, knew it all too well. It was that He should die then, die horribly.

So Vatican II was merely restating a repeated teaching. But the way it expressed it is very helpful. It said her role on Calvary was one of obedience. Earlier, in 56 it had pointed out that obedience twice, in citing St. Irenaeus: "By obeying, she became a cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Then, after recalling the comparison St. Irenaeus made of all sin to a complex knot, in which the Saint said that to untie a knot, one must take the end of the rope backwards through every turn taken in tying it. And it added, from St. Irenaeus again: "Thus then, the knot of the disobedience of Eve was untied through the obedience of Mary."

At first sight this teaching seems to have no basis in Scripture. But if we look more closely, we will see something quite obvious. First, at the Annunciation, she was asked to consent, in faith, to be the Mother of the Messiah. She knew this perfectly clearly, for as soon as the Archangel said, "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever," she knew that only the Messiah could reign forever. So she knew it was the Messiah. Then there would begin to crowd into her thoughts all the ancient prophecies of the Messiah, especially Isaiah 53, of His dreadful sufferings and death. She was asked to consent to be the Mother of such a Messiah.

She did consent, as St. Luke tells us, saying: "Be it done to me according to your word." She gave her fiat, her obedience to the will of God, as the angel told her of His will.

Did she later retract this acceptance of God's will? Of course not. Any soul either falls back or goes ahead in holiness. Holiness really consists in the alignment of our wills with the will of God—for the free will is the only thing free we have.

So she faithfully stood by Him, keeping in the background when the crowds gave Him praise, but moving out into the dark blackness that hung over Calvary. There she stood.

What was her reaction? Of course, she grieved, as any Mother would, seeing her Son suffering so horribly. And she saw that suffering as our crucifixes do not generally let us see it—they contain no trace at all of the horrid scourging, leaving Him bloody all over.

But now we can begin to realize something tremendous. As we said, spiritual perfection consists in the alignment of our will with the will of the Father. Further, when we know what He positively wills, it is not enough for us to say, as it were: "Let it go". No, we are called on to positively will what He wills.

But what did He will in that dread hour? She knew from Isaiah 53:10: "It was the will of the Lord to crush Him with pain." So the Father willed that His Son should die, die then, die so horribly. So did the Son will it. So she was then called upon to will what the Father willed, what her Son willed, in other words, she was called on to will positively that He die, die then, die horribly.

members of Christ, but also like Him. That likeness of course must include this sharing in rebalancing. St. Paul says we are members of Christ: 1 Cor 12. 12-27. We must do all with Him: Rom 6. 3-8; 8. 18; Col 3. 1-4. We must be like Him: Rom 8. 9, 13 & 17. What we can call merit is really our getting on the claim generated by Christ, by being His members and being like Him.)

4) Patristic teaching on the New Eve:

The use of the New Eve theme begins with St. Justin the Martyr, around 150 AD. It is then taken up widely in the other Fathers. St. Paul had spoken of Christ as the New or Second Adam. The Fathers teach there was also a New or Second Eve. The thought is this: Just as the first Eve really contributed to bringing down the damage of original sin on our race, so the New Eve, Mary, really contributed to reversing that damage.

a) **St. Justin Martyr, (c. 100-165) Dialogue with Trypho 100:** "... we have understood that He came forth from the Father before all things... and was made man of the Virgin, so that the disobedience brought on by the serpent might be canceled out in the same manner in which it had begun. For Eve, being untouched and a virgin, conceiving the word from the serpent, brought forth disobedience and death. But Mary the Virgin, having received faith and joy, when the angel Gabriel announced to her that the spirit of the Lord would come upon her and the power of the Most High would overshadow her, so that the Holy One born of her would be the Son of God, answered: 'Be it done to me according to your word.'"

b) **St. Irenaeus (c. 120-202) Against Heresies III. 22. 4:** "Just as Eve... being disobedient, became a cause of death for herself and the whole human race, so Mary... being obedient, became a cause of salvation for herself and the whole human race... for in no other way can that which is tied be untied unless the very windings of the knot are gone through in reverse: so that the first joints are loosed through the second, and the second in turn free the first... . Thus, then, the knot of the disobedience of Eve was untied through the obedience of Mary." V, 19. 1: "Although the one had disobeyed God, the other was persuaded to obey God, so that the Virgin Mary became the advocate of the virgin Eve. And just as the human race was bound over to death through a virgin, so was it saved through a virgin; the scale was balanced—a virgin's disobedience by a virgin's obedience."

Comment: We notice the words about balancing the scales—of the objective order. We note too that Vatican II, LG 56 cited most of the first of the above texts, and put stress on obedience in 56 and 61. Also, the knot was not really untied until Calvary was completed—so the words of St. Irenaeus objectively imply more than he is likely to have seen (he was

speaking of the annunciation, it seems from context). As a Father of the Church, Divine Providence could so use him. (Ed. Note: (LG) Lumen Gentium.)

c) Tertullian (c 150-c 240). On the Flesh of Christ 17: "Therefore, since we are told that the first Adam was from the earth, God fittingly also made the next, the new Adam, into a life-giving spirit out of the earth—that is, of a flesh not yet used for generation. And yet, so I may not miss the opening provided by the name of Adam—why did the Apostle call Him Adam if Christ as man was not of earthly origin? But here reason also helps to show that God, by a rival method, restored His image and likeness which had been captured by the devil. For into Eve when she was yet a virgin had crept the word that established death; likewise, into a virgin was to be brought the Word of God that produced life: so that what had gone to ruin by the one sex might be restored to salvation by the same sex. Eve had believed the serpent, Mary believed Gabriel. What wrong the one did by her unbelief, the other destroyed by her belief."

d) St. Cyril of Jerusalem (313-386) Catecheses 12. 15: "Through the virgin Eve came death. It was necessary that life appear through a virgin, or rather, of a virgin, so that just as the serpent deceived the one, so Gabriel brought the good tidings to the other."

e) St. Jerome (c. 347-419), Epistle 22. 21 [internal quote: Is 9. 6]: "But after the Virgin conceived in her womb and brought forth for us a child for whom 'the government is upon his shoulder... God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, ' the curse was dissolved. Death through Eve; life through Mary".

f) St. Ambrose (c 333 -397) Epistle 63. 33): "Through a man and a woman flesh was cast out of paradise; through a virgin it was joined to God." On the Gospel of Luke 4. 7: "From the virgin earth [came] Adam, Christ [came] from a virgin; the former was made to the image of God, the latter [was] the image of God; the former was exalted above all irrational animals, the latter above all living things. Through a woman [came] folly, through a virgin [came] wisdom. Death [came] through the tree, life through the cross."

g) St. Augustine (354-430):Sermon on Psalm 149. 2: "For He received flesh from us and offered it. But whence did He receive it? From the womb of the Virgin Mary, so that He might offer clean flesh for the unclean." On the Christian Combat 22. 24: "Here also is a great mystery: since death had come upon us through a woman, life was born for us through a woman, so that the conquered devil was tormented by both sexes, that is, male and female, since he had rejoiced in the ruin of both. His punishment would have been too small if both had been freed and had not been freed through both." On Holy Virginity 6. 6: "... but certainly she is the Mother of His members, which we are; for she cooperated in love that the faithful might be born in the Church." Sermon 289. 2: "Since our original fall took place when a woman conceived in her heart the poison of the serpent, it is not surprising that our salvation

11. She is also our spiritual Mother: For Vatican II, in LG §61, right after the portion already quoted, added: "As a result she is our Mother in the order of grace." An ordinary Mother must do two things: (1) Share in bringing a new life into being—Our Spiritual Mother did share in that, in immense pain, by the Cross. (2) She must take care of that life so long as she is needed, willing, and able. In time children naturally outgrow the need of great help from their earthly mother. Not so Mary: we will need her help, since all graces come through her, until we finally reach the mansions of the Father. Ordinary mothers may be unwilling or unable to help. Not so Mary, who is never unwilling, always most able. (We shall see in a moment the magisterium texts on that point). Pope Benedict XV (Epistle Decessore nostrum, of 19 April, 1915), called her "suppliant omnipotence." That is: all that God can do by His own inherent power, she can obtain by her intercession.

Pope Pius XII in a message to the Marian Congress of Ottawa, Canada, on July 19, 1947, said: "When the little maid of Nazareth uttered her fiat to the message of the angel... she became not only the Mother of God in the physical order of nature, but also in the supernatural order of grace she became the Mother of all, who... would be made one under the Headship her divine Son. The Mother of the Head would be the Mother of the members. The Mother of the Vine would be the Mother of the branches." (English text from AAS 39. 271. Cf. also Marian Studies III, 1952, pp. 14-217.)

12. Scriptural Basis for the teaching on Immediate Cooperation: The claim is often made that the Catholic doctrine on Our Lady is largely unscriptural. The culmination of this charge is of course the teaching on her immediate cooperation in the objective redemption.

Yet, it is easy to show that even this most advanced doctrine is Scriptural: First, we want to notice that in the very earliest Fathers of the Church, such as St. Justin Martyr (c. 145-150), we find the New Eve doctrine, i.e. , that just as the first Eve really contributed to the damage of original sin, so Mary, the New Eve, really contributed to removing it. They had in mind her obedient acceptance, in faith, to be the Mother of the Messiah.

But today as we saw above, the Church has gone beyond that early teaching. Let us recall the Constitution on the Church of Vatican II, §61: "... in suffering with Him as He died on the cross, she cooperated in the work of the Savior, in an altogether singular way, by obedience, faith, hope and burning love, to restore supernatural life to souls." Basically this same doctrine is found in every Pope from Leo XIII up to and including John Paul II. By the time of Vatican II, nearly all the die-hard Catholic theologians who disliked this teaching had admitted they had to concede.

Still further, Msgr. G. Philips of Louvain, one of the chief drafters of LG, shows in his commentary that he himself did not fully understand all that he wrote. In his commentary on §§ 61 and 62 of LG (L'Eglise et son mystere aux Deuxieme concil du Vatican. Histoire, text et commentaire de la Constitution Lumen Gentium, Desclée, Paris, 1968, reprinted in Ephemerides Mariologicae XXIV, 1974, pp. 87-97. We cite from this reprint) he thinks that only (p. 92) "a mental distinction... between the acquisition and the distribution of grace is possible." That is, between objective and subjective redemption. But on p. 90 of his commentary, he says that her cooperation was "concretized in her unconditional obedience." While on p. 92 he said her present role (subjective redemption) is one of intercession. Intercession and obedience are not at all the same thing. In obedience, she does the will of the Father, in intercession she asks the Father to do her will, to grant graces to her children.

9. The alternatives of redemption: If we imagine the Father looking over the scene after the sin of our first parents, of course He willed to restore our race. But there were several alternatives open to Him: (1) He could forgive with no reparation at all. This would not satisfy His generosity to us, nor would it at all rebalance the objective order, as His Holiness wanted. (2) He could have appointed any mere human and ordered that one to perform any religious act. That would be of finite value, but He could have accepted, even could have bound Himself by promise to accept it as the whole of redemption. (3) He could have sent His Son to be born in a palace, fitted with every possible luxury. The Son would not need to die at all. The mere fact of becoming Incarnate was a come-down for a Divine Person, and so would be infinitely satisfactory and meritorious. He could have added a short prayer, perhaps, "Father, forgive them" and then could have ascended in a blaze of glory without ever dying. This would have been an infinite redemption [cf. the physical-mystical theory of the Easter Fathers described above]. (4) He went beyond the palace to the stable, beyond a deathless prayer to the Cross. Without any rhetoric we can say: this is beyond infinity. In the lowly terrain of mathematics, infinity plus a finite quantity does not increase. But this is the realm of divine generosity, which wills to make everything as rich as possible. (5) Further, recalling He could have used a mere human for the whole of redemption: why not use the Virgin Mary as the associate of the Divine Redeemer?—Our magisterium texts and analysis have shown He did precisely that. We recall again St. Thomas I. 19. 5. c.

10. Parallel to the Mass: The Mass, says Vatican II (On Liturgy §10) is the renewal of the New Covenant. But in that renewal we, the members of Christ, are called on to join our obedience to His, to form the one great offering of the obedience of the whole Christ, Head and members. Therefore, if the renewal is faithful to the original, there must have been in the original a parallel, i. e., the infinite value of the obedience of Christ, to which was joined the obedience of His Mother.

came when a woman conceived in her womb the flesh of the Almighty. Both sexes had fallen; both had to be restored. Through a woman we were sent to ruin; through a woman salvation was restored to us."

Comment: A more extensive collection of Patristic New Eve texts in English is found in: T. Livius, *The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the First Six Centuries* (London, 1893). Other Fathers quoted in Livius are: St. Theophilus of Antioch, Origen, St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Amphilocius, St. Ephrem, St. Epiphanius, St. Maximus, St. John Chrysostom, St. Peter Chrysologus, St. Proclus, St. Eleutherius Tornacensis, and the Epistle to Diognetus. Still more texts in Latin are to be found in Gabriel M. Roschini, *Mariologia* (2nd ed. Rome, 1947. II, 300-01, 304-09.

5) Ordinary Magisterium on Mary's Immediate Cooperation in the Objective Redemption

Preliminary Note:

1: We need to distinguish carefully between two things:

- (a) The fact that she cooperated immediately on Calvary,
- (b) The manner in which that cooperation worked.

2: Any doctrine proposed repeatedly by the Ordinary Magisterium is rated as infallible. In fact, Pius XII added in (*Humani generis*, Dec. 28, 1950. DS 3885): "Nor should one think that the things proposed in Encyclical Letters do not of themselves call for assent on the plea that in them the Popes do not exercise the supreme power of their Magisterium. For these things are taught by the Ordinary Magisterium, to which this also applies: 'He who hears you hears me.' ... But if the Popes in their acta deliberately pass judgment on a matter controverted up to then, it is clear to all that according to the mind and will of the same Pontiffs, the question can no longer be considered open to free discussion among theologians." But: If a doctrine comes under the promise of Christ "He who hears you hears me" that doctrine cannot be in error. The reason is that in the case described by Pius XII, the Pope who can speak for the whole Church, shows clearly the intention to make a teaching definitive: so it comes under the promise of Christ which cannot fail.

1. Leo XIII, Encyclical, *Iucunda Semper*, Sept 8, 1884. ASS 27. 178 "For when she presented herself to God as a handmaid for the role of Mother, or when she totally dedicated herself with her Son in the temple, from each of these facts she was already then a sharer in the laborious expiation for the human race. Hence we cannot doubt that she greatly grieved in soul in the most harsh anguishes and torments of her Son. Further, that divine sacrifice had to be completed with her present and looking on, for which

she had generously nourished the victim from herself. Finally this is more tearfully observed in the same mysteries: There stood by the Cross of Jesus, Mary His Mother... of her own accord she offered her Son to the divine justice, dying with Him in her heart, transfixed with the sword of sorrow."

2. Leo XIII, Encyclical, *Adiutricem populi*, Sept. 5, 1895. ASS 28. 130-31: "For thereafter, by the divine plan, she so began to watch over the Church, so to be present to us and to favor us as Mother, that she who had been the minister of accomplishing the mystery of human redemption, would be likewise the minister of the dispensation of that grace, practically limitless power being given to her."

3. St. Pius X, Encyclical, *Ad diem illum*, Feb. 2, 1904, ASS 36. 453-55: "Hence that never disassociated manner of life and labors of the Son and the Mother... . But when the final hour of her Son came, His Mother stood by the cross of Jesus, not just occupied in seeing the dread spectacle, but actually rejoicing that her Only-Begotten was being offered for the salvation of the human race... . from this common sharing of sufferings and will, she merited to become most worthily the reparatrix of the lost world, and so the dispensatrix of all the gifts which were gained for us by the death and blood of Jesus... . She... since she was ahead of all in holiness and union with Christ, and was taken up by Christ into the work of human salvation, she merits congruously, as they say, what Christ merited condignly, and is the chief minister of the dispensation of graces."

4. Benedict XV, Epistle, *Inter Sodalicia*, May 22, 1918. AAS 10. 182 : "With her suffering and dying Son she suffered and almost died, so did she surrender her mother's rights over her Son for the salvation of human beings, and to appease the justice of God, so far as pertained to her, she immolated her Son, so that it can be rightly said, that together with Christ she has redeemed the human race".

5. Pius XI, Apostolic Letter, *Explorata res est*. Feb. 2, 1923. AAS 15. 104: "... the sorrowful Virgin shared in the work of redemption with Jesus Christ... . Comment: The word "sorrowful" shows this was a cooperation on Calvary, not just in the annunciation.

6. Pius XI, Encyclical, *Miserentissimus Redemptor*, May 8, 1928. AAS 20. 178:"May the kindly Virgin Mother of God be present and smile on these our prayers and undertakings, who, since she brought forth Jesus the Redeemer, fed Him, offered Him as a victim at the cross, by her hidden union with Christ, and an altogether singular grace from Him, was likewise the Reparatrix, and is devoutly called that."

7. Pius XI, Radio message to Lourdes, April 28, 1935. *L'Osservatore Romano*, April 29, 1935: "O Mother of piety and mercy, who as Co-redemptrix stood by your most sweet Son suffering with Him when He consummated the redemption of the human race on the altar of the cross... preserve in us, we beg, day by day, the precious fruits of the Redemption and of your compassion."

which was so great, as we learn from Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*, that "none greater under God can be thought of, and no one but God can comprehend it".

7. Theological reasoning on the data tells us this: Her Son generated a claim to all forgiveness and grace in three ways: First, by obeying and so fulfilling the covenant condition. She as the Council and Popes make clear shared in that covenant condition by her obedience, of which LG spoke three times. So she shared in the "price" of redemption (cf. 1 Cor 6. 20 and 7. 23). Second her obedience joined in His obedience, which was the interior disposition that gave all the value to His sacrifice. Third her obedient suffering, together with His, was the payment of the debt, the rebalancing of the objective order.

It was surely possible for the Father to accept her obedience as part of the covenant condition, and as the interior disposition of His sacrifice, and as suffering to pay the debt or rebalance the objective order: He called for it at immense cost to her, as we have seen. He made her intrinsically apt. He appointed her to cooperate. Could we then suppose He would not accept that which He Himself had arranged? Not at all. So, factually, He did accept her obedience in all three aspects, which generated a claim to all forgiveness and grace. This is far beyond what the German Mariologists supposed, with their theory of mere active receptivity, which sounds so much like the position of Luther saying our role is mere appropriation.

This does not mean she was on the same level as Jesus. Her very ability to do anything came from Him. Further, even His offering was on the secondary level of the covenant, in the sense explained in our study of Sinai. That is, the Father did not cease being angry because Jesus came and died: rather, it was because the Father always loved us that He came. On the most basic level no one can generate a claim to move the Father. He did not have to be moved. He cannot be moved, or changed. Yet, within the covenant framework, which He established, He does repay (cf. Romans 2. 6).

8. Answer to an objection: Vatican II, in LG §54 said it did not intend to settle debates among theologians, chiefly, between the German Mariologists and those who hold she actively contributed to generating a title to all forgiveness and grace. Yet, In LG §55 the Council made clear that even if the human writers of Gen 3. 15 and Is 7. 14 may not have seen the full import of their words, the Church now does see them, in the light of the Holy Spirit. Jeremiah the prophet in 31. 31 ff. wrote more than he probably knew. St. Irenaeus wrote more than he understood, with his knot comparison. Why could not the Council, an instrument of Divine Providence, also write more than it realized? We have seen, by careful analysis, that its words do objectively mean more than it realized.

17. John Paul II, Allocution at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guayaquil, given on Jan 31, 1985, reported in L'Osservatore Romano Supplement of Feb. 2, 1985 and in English L'Osservatore Romano, March 11, 1985, p. 7: "Crucified spiritually with her crucified Son (cf. Gal 2:20), she contemplated with heroic love the death of her God, she 'lovingly consented to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth' (Lumen gentium #58)... as she was in a special way close to the Cross of her Son, she also had to have a privileged experience of his Resurrection. In fact, Mary's role as coredemptrix did not cease with the glorification of her Son."

Comment: Same sense as the previous text. We note the Pope even uses the word Coredemptrix.

6) Conclusions from Texts:

a) The Patristic texts do not go beyond remote cooperation, explicitly. But St. Irenaeus implies more in his knot comparison. A Father of the Church may be used by Providence to say more than he realizes, even as the writers of Scripture sometimes are. And we shall see that it is very likely that happened to Vatican II as well.

b) The Popes and Vatican II give us clearly the following data:

(1) She was appointed officially to cooperate, for her role was "in accordance with the divine plan." Further the position of the New Eve is official, with the New Adam.

(2) She was made intrinsically apt to cooperate by the Immaculate Conception.

(3) Her role was entirely singular, i. e., unlike that of St. John, who was present.

(4) Her cooperation was done by way of obedience, faith, hope and burning love.

(5) We notice specially that obedience was

(a) the covenant condition, and

(b) was that which gave the value to His sacrifice, which otherwise would have been only a tragedy.

(c) It also was a means of joining in payment of the debt, i.e., of rebalancing the objective order.

(6) **Her obedience consisted in precisely "the obedience of faith"**, in willing what the Father willed—which is the essential of all and any sanctity. So the Popes and Council say she "consented" and "immolated Him". John Paul II says this is part of the deepest kenosis, self-emptying in all history. This was more than just agreeing to let it go: For she had to positively will this, going counter to her love for Him,

8. Pius XII, Encyclical On the Mystical Body, June 29, 1943. AAS 35.

247: "She it was who, as the New Eve, free from every stain of original or personal sin, always most closely joined with her Son, offered Him to the Eternal Father on Golgotha together with the holocaust of her motherly rights and love for all the sons of Adam, defiled by his miserable fall."

9. Pius XII, Radio message to Fatima, May 13, 1946, AAS 38. 266: "Jesus is King of the Eternal Ages by nature and by right of conquest; through Him, with Him, and subordinate to Him, Mary is Queen by grace, by divine relationship, by right of conquest, and by singular choice [of the Father]".

Comment: The same title "by right of conquest", is given for both Jesus and Mary. A triple subordination is carefully expressed even though it would be obvious in itself, therefore there should be no other reservation thought to be understood. Hence, with subordination, the title applies in the same way to each.

10. Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution, Munificentissimus Deus, Nov. 1, 1950. AAS 42. 768: " We must especially remember this, that starting in the

second century, the Virgin Mary is presented by the holy Fathers as the New Eve, who, although subject to the New Adam, was most closely joined with Him in that struggle against the infernal enemy, which, as was foretold in the Protoevangelium [Gen 3:15], was to come to the most full victory over sin and death, which are always joined together in the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles. Hence, just as the glorious resurrection of Christ was an essential part and final sign of this victory, so that struggle which was common to the Blessed Virgin with her Son, had to be closed by the glorification of her virginal body."

Comment: In spite of the fears of some scholars, such as Altaner, that the Assumption was not in the sources of revelation, the Pope found the Assumption there in the New Eve theme, and more precisely, in her cooperation on Calvary, which was most close, to such an extent that the Pope even could speak of a struggle that was "common to the Blessed Virgin and her Son".

11. Pius XII, Encyclical, Fulgens corona, Sept. 8, 1953. AAS 45. 583: "... she was joined with her Only-begotten Son in the struggle against the most wicked infernal serpent."

12. Pius XII, Encyclical, Ad Caeli Reginam, Oct. 11, 1954. AAS 46. 634-35: "In accomplishing this work of the redemption, the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was certainly closely joined with Christ... was associated with Jesus Christ, the very principle of salvation, by divine plan, and indeed in a way similar to that in which Eve was associated with Adam, the principle of death, so that we can say that the work of our salvation was accomplished

according to a certain recapitulation... and if she was joined with her Son, even on Golgotha, [and] she offered Him, together with the holocaust of her Mother's rights and love, like a New Eve, for all the sons of Adam, defiled by his wretched fall, as a result, beyond doubt, it is right to conclude that just as Christ, the New Adam should be called King not only because He is the Son of God, but also because He is our Redeemer, so by a certain analogy, the most Blessed Virgin is Queen, not only because she is the Mother of God, but also because as the New Eve she was associated with the New Adam"

Comment: Mary acted in a way parallel to that of Eve, who did not receive a sin from Adam [as the German Mariology would imply] but in an effective and active way generated sin. Therefore Mary's work was not active receptivity, as the Germans assert, but an effective and active cooperation in generating the title for the Redemption.

13. John XXIII, Radio message to the Eucharistic Congress of Italy at Catania, Sept. 13, 1959. AAS 51. 714: "We trust that they will imitate in her the most perfect model of union with Jesus, our Head; we trust that they will join Mary in the offering of the divine Victim... ."

14. John XXIII, Homily for the Canonization of St. Peter Julian Eymard. Dec. 9, 1962. AAS 65. 10: "Intimately associated in the Redemption in the eternal plans of the Most High, Our Lady, as Severianus of Gabala sung, is the mother of salvation, the fountain of light made visible".

15. Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, §58: "So also the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully bore with her union with her Son even to the cross, where, in accord with the divine plan, she stood, vehemently grieved with her Only-Begotten, and joined herself to His Sacrifice with a motherly heart, lovingly consenting to the immolation of the victim born of her."

§61: "In conceiving Christ, in giving birth to Him, in feeding Him, in presenting Him to the Father in the Temple, in suffering with her Son as He died on the cross she cooperated in the work of the Savior in an altogether singular way, by obedience, faith, hope and burning love, to restore supernatural life to souls."

Comment: Her cooperation was by way of obedience, which was the covenant condition, the very thing that gave the sacrifice its value, for without obedience, it would have been only a tragedy, not a redemption. Hence in §3 of the same constitution: "By His obedience, He brought about redemption. ." Cf. also Romans 5. 19. She cooperated officially "in accord with the divine plan" as the New Eve. She was made interiorly apt for this by the Immaculate Conception. Such a cooperation is clearly active, in generating the title for redemption.

16. John Paul II. Encyclical, Redemptoris Mater, March 25, 1987. AAS 79. 382. 83. Vatican Press Translation. "How great, how heroic then is the obedience of faith shown by Mary in the face of God's 'unsearchable judgments'! How completely she 'abandons herself to God without reserve,' offering the full assent of the intellect and the will 'to Him whose ways are inscrutable...'. Through this faith, Mary is perfectly united with Christ in his self-emptying... . At the foot of the Cross Mary shares through faith in the shocking mystery of this self-emptying. This is perhaps the deepest 'kenosis' of faith in human history. Through faith the Mother shares in the death of her Son, in His redeeming death... . as a sharing in the sacrifice of Christ—the new Adam—it becomes in a certain sense the counterpoise to the disobedience and disbelief embodied in the sin of our first parents. Thus teach the Fathers of the Church and especially St. Irenaeus, quoted by the Constitution Lumen gentium: 'The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosed by her faith. '"

Comment: In his Apostolic Exhortation, Redemptoris Custos, the same Pope said that in Redemptoris Mater, he intended to deepen the teaching of Vatican II on Mary's faith. Now since faith involves total adherence of a person to God, requiring intellectual assent, confidence in promises, and the "obedience of faith" [Rom 1. 5], and since all spiritual perfection lies in the alignment of one's will with the will of God, it is clear that on Calvary her conformity to the will of the Father required that she positively willed the terrible death of her Son. To do that was indeed the deepest kenosis of faith in all history, for she had to will His death in spite of her love, which was so great that Pius IX, in Ineffabilis Deus, in 1854, taught that at the very start of her life, her holiness (= love of God) was so great that "none greater under God can be thought of, and only God can comprehend it."—The very value of His death depended on His obedience to the will of the Father (cfr. Lumen gentium §3 and Rom 5. 19) for that obedience was the condition of the New Covenant, the essential interior disposition of the great sacrifice. But then, her cooperation consisted in the obedience of faith, and so was a share in the covenant condition, in His obedience; hence her obedience became "the counterpoise to the disobedience and disbelief embodied in the sin of our first parents." -She did this as the one appointed by the Father to cooperate, as the New Eve, who was there, as Lumen gentium §§ 58 & 61 said, "by plan of divine Providence."