

2-11-1971

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James J. McQuade

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Recommended Citation

McQuade, James J. (1971) "Mary and the Apostolate," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 22, Article 10, Pages 54-74.
Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol22/iss1/10

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MARY AND THE APOSTOLATE

In these post-Vatican II days, when the ordinary Christian realizes, as perhaps never before, that he is "assigned to the apostolate by the Lord himself,"¹ and that he is to "venerate the memory above all of the glorious and perpetual Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ," one feels urged to bring the theology of Mary and that of the apostolate together. It is reasonable to expect this urge to be felt more and more throughout the Church. We can, consequently, expect a certain development in this phase of Mariology. The subject is vast; it has already been explored to some extent; much has been done implicitly; but the subject calls for ever greater fulfillment.

It is hardly possible within the scope of an initial presentation paper such as this to advance the understanding of the theology of Mary, let alone discover new attributes and privileges, even in regard to such a restricted area as that of her relation to the apostolate. There is, however, a purpose which may justify an effort such as this. As René Laurentin points out, the definition of the Assumption occasioned the rise of two general tendencies in Marian scholarship: one is to regard the definition of the Assumption as an invitation to further research and amplification of the privileges of Mary, the other, to regard the same definition as a climax which calls rather for a development and a deepening of what we already know, to explicitize what is implicit there, and to reveal relationships with other parts of theology.² It is rather in this latter orientation that this paper seeks to proceed.

¹ Vatican II, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, No. 3.

² R. Laurentin, *The Question of Mary* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965) 44.

In addition to stating the above basic orientation, it might be well at the outset also to state the fundamental principle from which the paper proceeds in planning the development and in evaluating the force of the respective considerations that enter into the subject of Mary and the apostolate. Although many fine insights have been derived from the theory of Semmelroth that the fundamental principle of Mariology is "Mary, the Archetype of the Church,"³ still the work of Cyril Vollert in establishing this basic principle seems conclusive.⁴ The quotation from the magisterium which he gives on page 103 expresses this fundamental principle in the words of Pius XII:⁵

"The dignity of Mother of God has called down on Mary exceptional graces and extraordinary privileges, her preservation from original sin and from every personal fault, the splendor of her virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit, her intimate participation in all the mysteries of Christ's life, his sufferings, death and resurrection, the continuation of his work in the Church and his sovereignty over all creatures. All this was given to her because she was the Mother of God and therefore had a unique function to perform in the redemption of the world."

Obviously, this paper of Mary and the Apostolate will concentrate on those elements in divine revelation which deal with Mary's "continuation of His work in the Church" as stated above.

The Apostolate

It may be well to begin by saying something of the theology of the apostolate. In his address to the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, October 5, 1957, Pope Pius XII

³ Otto Semmelroth, S.J., *Mary, Archetype of the Church* (Sheed and Ward, 1963).

⁴ C. Vollert, S. J., *A Theology of Mary* (Herder and Herder, 1965).

⁵ *AAS* 48 (1957) 912.

brought Mary and the apostolate very close together in the following words:

"During these troubled years, Mary, the glorious and powerful queen of heaven, has made her help felt in far separate corners of the earth in a manner so evident and so marvelous that we have ultimate confidence in commending to her care all forms of the lay apostolate."⁶

The "apostolate" is formally defended as "the dignity or office of an apostle." An "apostle" in turn is said to be "one of the twelve disciples sent forth by Christ to preach the Gospel."⁷

Turning to a theologian, we find that in the strictest sense "the decisive criterion for apostleship is the fact of having been sent by Christ to proclaim the Gospel.

"... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and then you will be witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8).

"... and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead." (Acts 10:42).

"This criterion is indispensable, universal, and final. According to Acts, therefore, only the Twelve and Paul can be called apostles in the strict sense of the word."⁸ It is quite evident from subsequent history that this strictest sense was soon widened to include more and more.

The first extension of the meaning of "apostolate" seems to be that of including the function of the apostolic college or the episcopal body.⁹ The above quoted article from *Sacramentum Mundi* states this in the following terms:

⁶ N.C.W.C. ed. (1957) No. 78.

⁷ The Random House *Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*.

⁸ Antonio Jarieme, *Sacramentum Mundi*, 1 (Herder and Herder) 77.

⁹ Cf. Vatican II, *Const. on the Church*, No. 22.

"The apostolic founding of the Church continues for all time, in as much as the apostolic preaching remains active in the Church through the scriptures. This lasting confrontation of the Church with the Apostles as those empowered with the authority of Christ does not only occur over and over again with each new confrontation with the scriptures, but it is also guaranteed in an abiding way through the episcopate as the institution which derives from the apostolic office—as the ultimate logic of the Incarnation."

The extension, moreover, of "apostolate" to include within the scope of its meaning the work of priests is clearly approved by the usage of the Second Vatican Council. The third paragraph of the second section of the Decree on the Ministry and life of Priests, reads as follows:

"So it was that Christ sent the Apostles just as He himself had been sent by the Father. To these same Apostles He made their successors, the bishops, sharers in His consecration and mission. Their ministerial role has been handed down to priests in a limited degree. Thus established in the order of the priesthood, they are co-workers of the episcopal order in the proper fulfillment of the apostolic mission entrusted to the latter order by Christ."

The concept of apostolate has been broadened further by official as well as by common usage to include participation of all Christians in the mission of the Church. This is beautifully stated by the Second Vatican Council in the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. In its first chapter it says:

"All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called apostolate, and the Church carries it on in various ways through all her members. For by its very nature the Christian vocation is also a vocation to the apostolate. No part of the structure of a living body is merely passive but each has a share in the functions as well as in the life of the body. So, too, in the Body of Christ, which is the Church, the whole body 'according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives

its increase' (Eph. 4:16). . . . But the laity, too, share in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own role to play in the mission of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world."

Finally, the Church, as can be seen in the decree of Vatican II on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious life, is most emphatic that all religious conceive of themselves as apostolic. Even those "totally dedicated to contemplation" are to be apostolic:

"No matter how urgent may be the needs of the active apostolate, such communities will always have a distinguished part to play in Christ's Mystical Body, where 'all the members have the same function.'" (Rom. 12:4) (No. 7).

Although it should be taken for granted without explicit mention that "clerical and lay institutes devoted to various aspects of the apostolate" should be participating in the Church's apostolate, the Council says explicitly:

"In such communities the very nature of the religious life requires apostolic action and services, since a sacred ministry and a special work of charity have been consigned to them by the Church and must be discharged in her name." (No. 8).

It is to this "apostolate", thus universally applied, which we hope to relate the theology of Mary as it is applicable to the current scene. The subject is not really new. Much work has been done before, at least implicitly.

Mary: Then and Now

The subject of Mary and the Apostolate brings Mary into contemporary life, for the apostolate of the Church is truly contemporary: it is going on now. There is a somewhat subdued tension here that must be looked at theologically. As

one reads recent books and articles on Mary's part in salvation history, there seems to rise something of an antinomy between Mary's action in the past as having effects in the present, and Mary's "here and now" effectivity. So much of the writing discusses the meaning of the gospel narratives that one might be led to think that Mary's work was completed with her Assumption into Heaven, or possibly even with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. So much is made of what Mary *has done then*, that one is likely to neglect what Mary *is doing now*, or at least to regard Mary's present causality in the existential apostolate as merely virtual, i.e. as effective only by reason of what she did and was, ever so long ago.

One must admit, of course, that there is a virtual causality in Mary's contribution to the effectiveness of the apostolate. There is no doubt that the Christian is reaping benefits now from what Mary has been and has done "then" while Augustus Caesar, and later on, Tiberius ruled the Roman Empire. There is no doubt, moreover, but that her very "presence" before the Father is "intercessory" for all her children "now."

Though not explicitly mentioned, this is implied in the remarks of Pope Pius XII in *Munificentissimus Deus* where he speaks of the testimony of belief in the Assumption in liturgical books. But is the activity of Mary more than this?

It would seem that the present-day Christian sincerely hopes so. His hope will be satisfied by the theology of Mary's immediate activity. The post-Vatican Christian tends to emphasize the existential. Perhaps, therefore, the best we can do at the moment is to emphasize for the modern man the actual, existential role which the Blessed Virgin Mary plays in the apostolic process, that is, aiding it by her prayers and, through the performance of her day-to-day function of mediating grace, assisting Christ in the completion of the Redemption. The success of the apostolate would be a prime thrust in all this.

The Church in its bishops, priests and laity throughout the world is currently cooperating with Christ in the total work of

completing the redemption: preaching, giving retreats, administering and communicating Christian education, executing the performance of the works of mercy, supporting the Church in intellectual activity and scientific research,—in brief—in the whole apostolate. Do we say that Mary has a part in all this?

The answer seems to be affirmative. Common opinion seems to be that today, here and now, Mary's celestial function in the on-going history of salvation is that of obtaining through intercession, individual specific graces for individual specific apostolic situations and needs, and this in response to specific individuals requests.

Concerning such a thesis as this, we have no direct scriptural revelation. We must depend on those who have the "habit of theology," that is, upon theologians who, in reflecting on the things actually revealed in explicit terms, come to certain conclusions, some regarding possibilities, some in probabilities and some in certitudes. These theologians give us, therefore, the results of their reflections in this area in ways after the manner of the following:

"In the light of the beatific vision the soul beholds also many created objects including those happenings on earth which have a special interest for this particular soul. Thus the saint who has established a religious order during his period on earth will behold in the vision of God the successes and failures of his institute, and will thus be enabled to direct his prayers for his spiritual children in a definite form to the Almighty.

"Applying this norm to our Lady we conclude that her knowledge in the beatific vision of earthly events surpasses by far that of any other blessed soul (save the soul of Christ) because, as co-redemptrix and dispenser of all grace and the spiritual mother of all mankind, she has an interest in every human being and in all the events that take place or will take place on earth. The Redemptorist theologian, Father Herrmann, states: "The Blessed Virgin clearly be-

holds all men, especially the elect, and also their thoughts and the secrets of their hearts and all the prosperous and unfortunate events in the world.'"¹⁰

The manner in which Mary can be specifically aware of individual prayers, a multitude of which are constantly being offered throughout the Christian world, is difficult to visualize. It involves the knowledge of the spiritualized nature of the glorified body. In the body of this life the thought processes are extrinsically dependent upon the physical nerve system of the human brain. One of the consequent limitations is upon the focus of attention and awareness. It is most difficult to attend to more than one thing at a time and impossible to do so on a greatly multiplied basis. However, the spiritualization of the glorified body must at least remove this limitation of the material order. This should account for the possibility of the Blessed Virgin's indefinitely multiple intentional receptivity in regard to her intercessory function.¹¹

Mary in the Documents of Vatican II

The great part which Mary has in the apostolate of the Church at the present time may very well be seen from the many Marian sections of the several documents of the Second Vatican Council as pointed out by Msgr. Shea.¹²

The most formal teaching of the Church today is, it seems, in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.

In the eighth chapter of this Dogmatic Constitution the matter of Mary and the Apostolate is taken up quite explicitly. The very title could be translated: *Mary and the Apostolate*. Its actual wording is: *The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary*,

¹⁰ F. J. Connell, C.S.S.R., *Our Lady's Knowledge*, in J. B. Carol, O.F.M. (Ed.), *Mariology*, 2 (Bruce, 1957) 323.

¹¹ Cf. Karl Rahner, S.J., *Theological Investigations*, 1, 213ff.

¹² George W. Shea, *Mary in the Documents of Vatican II*, in *MS* 17 (1966) 20-26.

Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church. It is to be noted, however, that in discussing this whole matter "the synod does not, however, have it in mind to give a complete doctrine of Mary." (No. 54) The Council, in fact, wishes to "show the role of the Mother of the Savior in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light and proposes it as something to be probed into." It will, therefore, be the object of this paper, as it will be to a greater extent for the professional theologians generally in the future, to reflect upon the teaching of the magisterium as represented in this constitution, and to "probe into" the many implications that are made.

As one reads, then, the "titles of Mary" treated by the Council, as one analyzes the various modes of expression which it uses in her regard throughout this eighth chapter, and keeps in mind their possible bearing upon the apostolate, one finds a wealth of implication as to the actual teaching of the Church as well as of indications of the opening avenues of possible development through future research and reflection.

Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer

In the very designated preface to the chapter there occurs the title "Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer." As Mother of the Redeemer she is quite obviously identified with the Redemption—the on-going Redemption—being carried on in the Church today through the apostolate. As the present swift evolution of the understanding of the apostolate takes place,¹³ it will open out new aspects of Mary's relationship to the work of the Church particularly in its ecumenical aspects. This is more than hinted at in the decree on Ecumenism (No.15):

"In this liturgical worship, the Christians of the East pay high tribute in very beautiful hymns, to Mary ever Virgin, whom the

¹³ Cf. Gabriel Facre, *Humiliation and Celebration* (Sheed and Ward, 1969).

Ecumenical Synod of Ephesus solemnly proclaimed to be God's most holy Mother so that, in accord with the Scriptures, Christ may be truly and properly acknowledged as the Son of God and Son of Man." (No. 15).

Mother of the Members of Christ

In the very next paragraph (the second of No. 53) Mary is said to be, in a quote from St. Augustine (*De S. Virginitate*, 6: PL 40, 399) "clearly the Mother of the members of Christ . . . since she cooperated out of love so that there might be born in the Church the faithful, who are members of Christ their head." As a corollary to this, the Council points to Mary's pre-eminence: "Therefore she is also hailed as pre-eminent and altogether singular member of the Church." That Mary should be excelled by anyone, on earth or in heaven, in a participation in the apostolate or in anything else is contra-indicated by this phraseology. Next to Christ, Mary comes first in the dynamics of salvation.

Type and Exemplar of the Church

Marian themes come quick and fast in this eighth chapter and every one of them has apostolic overtones and connotations. Almost immediately following Mary's motherhood of Christ's members comes the declaration of her service as "the Church's model and excellent exemplar in faith and charity." Pope Paul in his homily, given at the close of the extraordinary synod of Bishops, Oct. 25, 1969, explains this:

"Let us all at this point recall a basic consideration of theology and Marian devotion. It is an ancient one, but the Council has reminded us of it (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church No. 63). It is that of St. Ambrose who defines Mary as the 'type of the Church' (P.L. XV, 1555), and again as the 'figure of the Church' (P.L. XVI. 326). St. Augustine echoes it: 'She (Mary) showed forth in herself the figure of the Holy Church' (P.L. XL, 661). The

reason is that *the virginal generation of Jesus is mystically reproduced in the maternal and supernatural generation of the faithful by the Church*. This is a parallel that brings us even closer to Mary: all that fullness of grace that made Mary *tota pulchra*, most holy, immaculate—does it not find a certain reflection and richness of grace that has been poured upon us when sacred ordination made us like to Christ in the charism of holiness and ministerial power? . . .”

It hardly needs to be pointed out that the “maternal and supernatural generation of the faithful” is a matter of apostolate. There is, however, even more to Mary’s exemplarity than this. It should be noted that the object of the apostolate is the building up of Christ in His Mystical Body (cf. Ephesians 2:20). Mary as “Exemplar” is, so to speak, the “blueprint” according to which this construction is to proceed in the apostolate.

“In the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle (cf. Eph. 5:27). (No. 65).

In commenting on these words Otto Semmelroth says very simply: “In looking up to Mary, then, the Church realizes herself by her fidelity to all that Christ has entrusted her with. Mary stands before her as the image in which the Church can gaze upon her own perfection fully achieved, the ideal she must pursue in order to reach her goal.”¹⁴ Pope Paul himself, commenting on Mary as “the Church’s model and excellent exemplar in faith and charity” says, in the previously quoted homily of October 25, 1969:

“Mary is the model of the Church (cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, No. 52). She ‘possesses in an eminent degree all the graces and all the perfections of the Church, (Olier), the graces

¹⁴ H. Vorgrimler (Ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (Herder and Herder, 1967) 1, 294.

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and perfections that we should and would possess. Mary is a teacher. She is a teacher for us who have the task of being, by our teaching and example, teachers of the People of God. What does Mary teach us? We know it well: The whole of the gospel."

In a wide-ranging treatment such as this, one can but indicate rather than develop such far-reaching concepts as is this one on the Exemplarity of Mary in its relationship to the apostolate. Otto Semmelroth, whom we have just quoted, has an excellent volume devoted entirely to the subject.¹⁵ Indeed, he seeks to vindicate this "Exemplarity" as "the basic Marian Idea." Though his theory is controverted,¹⁶ Semmelroth's work is "a study whose learning and originality qualify it for the attention of anyone interested in Christian doctrine, regardless of his ecclesiastical affiliation," as Yale University's Jaroslav Pelikan says in the preface of the book. Fundamental principle of Mariology or no, the notion of Mary as the blueprint for apostolic endeavor remains.

Mary and the Mystical Body

It seems pertinent to the subject of Mary and the Apostolate that, in presenting its general thrust of the eighth chapter, the Council includes not only her part in the Incarnation but also her part in the Mystical Body. The whole passage reads as follows:

"Therefore, as it clarifies Catholic teaching concerning the Church, in which the divine Redeemer works salvation, this sacred Synod intends to describe with diligence the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnation Word and the Mystical Body."

Again, Pope Paul illuminates this. In the aforecited homily of Oct. 25, 1969, he speaks of our mission of generating

¹⁵ Semmelroth, *Mary, Archetype of the Church* (Sheed and Ward, 1963).

¹⁶ E.g. by C. Vollert, *op. cit.*, 157.

Christ in the world—truly an apostolic matter. Generating Christ in the world today is the same as generating Christ in His mystical Body. The Pope says:

“Mary teaches us love: Mary obtains love, Mary conceived Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, the living Love which is God. She presides over the birth of the Church at Pentecost, when the same Holy Spirit takes possession of the group of the disciples, the first among them being the apostles. And she vivifies in unity and charity the historical mystical body of Christians, a redeemed mankind.”

He goes on a bit later to say:

“We have come here to implore, through Mary’s intercession, the never-ending continuance of the same miracle, which can be obtained through her as from a spring, a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For we have discovered once again ecclesial communion, which at the apostolic level we call collegiality, that is, an intercommunion of charity and apostolic effectiveness which, at this prophetic age of the world and the Church, we wish to honor and render more effective in sentiment and action, through love: that love that granted Mary the power to generate Christ, the mission of generating Christ in the world. And above all, we ask for ourselves that love which, coming down to us, is called grace, and which, rising again from us as a ‘fiat’ echoing that of Mary, is our offering and is that charity which we hope will never go out during the years of our earthly life, so that it may burn forever in the life immortal.”

*The Role of the Blessed Virgin
in the Economy of Salvation.*

The second section of the eighth chapter is entitled “The Role of the Blessed Virgin in the Economy of Salvation.” The application of this generic idea to her relationship to the apostolate is clear, since the apostolate of the Church is, beyond all

question, a main factor in this "economy." Random House *Dictionary of the English Language* gives us as the third meaning of "economy" (evidently the meaning intended here) "the management of the resources of a community, country, etc., especially with a view to its productivity." Now the "productivity" of the "community" which is the Church must necessarily be the fulfillment of its primary function: the completion of the redemption through the apostolate. By this very title, therefore, and by the use of this very word, the Council attributes to Mary a part in this apostolic "management." Through five numbers the Council amplifies Mary's part in this economy: 55, 56 (quite long) 57, 58 and 59.

Passages pertinent to "Mary and the Apostolate" abound in these numbers:

"In subordination to Him and along with Him by the grace of Almighty God, she served the mystery of redemption" "...not merely in a passive way, but as cooperating in the work of human salvation through free faith and obedience." (No. 56).

"But since it pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery of the salvation of the human race until He poured forth the Spirit promised by Christ, we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost 'continuing with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and with his brethren' (Acts 1:14). We see Mary prayerfully imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation.

"Finally, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, the Immaculate Virgin was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory upon the completion of her earthly sojourn. She was exalted by the Lord as Queen of all, in order that she might be the more thoroughly conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords (cf. Apoc. 19:16) and the conqueror of sin and death."

The Maternity of Mary in the Order of Grace

In taking up the subject of "The Blessed Virgin and the

Church," the Council speaks in language which bears most directly on Mary and the Apostolate. (Section 3 No. 60). It is to be noted that the apostolate is really a supernatural activity designed to produce supernatural effects. This supernaturality involves grace. It is this grace for which Mary intercedes and which, as the Council says, is given by the Almighty to those promoting the various projects of the ecclesial apostolate at Mary's intercession.

"This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross. This maternity will last without interruption until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. For, taken up to heaven, she did not lay aside this saving role, but by her manifold acts of intercession continues to win for us gifts of eternal salvation." (No. 62).

"By her maternal charity, Mary cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led to their happy fatherland. Therefore, the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix." (No. 62).

These several titles all have apostolic overtones. They all indicate Mary as coming to the aid of the Church now, and there is no need of the Church greater than that power to carry on, and overcome the obstacles to its apostolate of bringing all men back to God, the Father, as the fruit of Christ's redemption, and that, again, is apostolate.

The Marian Apostolate: Religious and Lay

Our concern to this point has been with the relationship between Mary and the apostolate of the Church as such. From the existential viewpoint, to continue this theme, this same relation of Mary to the apostolate is shown forth in the number and quality of the various religious and lay institutes and as-

sociations devoted to actual apostolic work here and now in the Church.¹⁷

Mary's activity in the world today is being carried on by men and women devoted to her work for the kingdom of Christ. And this is an active cooperation. These organizations of the apostolate are not carrying on as people inspired by the example of a great person and a grand ideal of the past. They are not like the Daughters of the American Revolution, for instance, who are imbued with a sense of the greatness of our founding patriots and are devoted to carrying on their philosophy into current events. Mary is alive. Today. Mary is very much involved in the work of such groups as the Legion of Mary and Christian Life Communities (the newly adopted name for Sodalities of Our Lady.) The words of Pius XII in the Apostolic Constitution of September 27, 1948, illustrate the "psychology of apostolate" pervading such lay organizations:

"22. Sodalities of Our Lady likewise qualify with full right to be called 'Catholic Action undertaken through the Blessed Virgin Mary's constant care and inspiration.' (Pope Pius quotes himself as Cardinal speaking to the Sodalists in Menzigen, Switzerland, Oct. 22, 1938.) There structure and distinctive characteristics are no obstacle to their being so designated. In fact, just as they have in the past, so now 'they are, and in the future will be, safeguarding and contributing to an eminent Catholic formation of souls...'" (Sub-quote from Pius XI, Talk to Sodalists, March 30, 1930).

This sort of thinking on the Marian apostolate is logically extended to all other lay organization in a somewhat broader sense. Pope Pius XII in his address to the Second World

¹⁷ This has been treated thoroughly before. It was my privilege to give a paper at the Tenth International Mariological-Marian Congress at Lourdes in 1958. The ninth theme of the Congress, namely, Mary and the Apostolate of the Church, was confided to the American delegation. Altogether, some twenty papers were given and discussed over a period of four days.

Congress of the Lay Apostolate, October 5, 1957, made this very clear:

"During these troubled years, Mary, the glorious and powerful Queen of Heaven, has made her help felt in far separate corners of the earth in a manner so evident and so marvelous that we have ultimate confidence in commending to her care all forms of the lay apostolate."

Turning to religious orders and congregations of men and women, we find the influence of Mary in the current apostolate most clearly apparent. Ten of the sixty world-wide religious communities of men, listed in the *National Catholic Almanac* have Mary in their titles. Out of the 494 listed groups of religious women in the United States, 107 claim Mary as their title patron. And all of them, title or no, are deeply involved with Mary in their devotional and apostolic life. Each could fill a volume with evidence of Mary's participation in their life and work, as did, for instance, A. Drive in his book *Marie et la Compagnie de Jésus*.¹⁸

Possible Future Developments

A word or two might well be said at the end here about some of the possible future developments in the theology of Mary and the apostolate as they were seen by the author in the composition of this paper. One of the areas that seems open to further evolution is that of Mary and the "apostolic priesthood." Possibly the research of theologians might well be fruitful here. The common opinion today seems to exclude Mary from any participation in the hierarchical apostolate. It is stated clearly by René Laurentin:

"Mary is a woman and because of this is excluded from some of the hierarchial characteristics and functions which are reserved

¹⁸ Published by Casterman, Belgium, 1904.

for those of the male sex. The mission of officially representing Christ, acting in his name, delivering with authority the word of

salvation to men, together with the precepts and sacraments which guide and nourish the Church was never hers."¹⁹

Pope Paul also seems to imply this. In his address on "Exploring the Mystery of the Church" at the close of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, November 21, 1964, he attributes to Mary only the non-hierarchical functions, saying:

"For the Church is not constituted just by her hierarchical order, her sacred liturgy, her sacraments, her institutional structure. Her inner vitality and peculiar nature, the main source of her effectiveness in sanctifying men is to be found in her mystical union with Christ. We cannot conceive this union apart from her who is the Mother of the Incarnate Word, and whom Christ so intimately associated with Himself in bringing about our salvation...."

On the other hand there seems to be a movement among theologians today to question the exclusion of women which appears to be the basis for excluding Mary from any but the more general Christian form of participation in the priesthood of Christ. *Time* Magazine for September 28, 1970, for instance, in reporting the Brussels meeting of some 225 theologians who had met to discuss the future of the Church, quotes a resolution on women in the Church. It reads:

"We must denounce discrimination against women in the Church, a discrimination which often exists also in the rest of society. The Church should examine seriously the possible role of women in the ministries."

Out of this tension between practice and common doctrine on the one hand, and the speculative tendencies of theologians on the other, there may come a weakening of the current ban on women, and if so, Mary will be included in those who are to be included.

¹⁹ R. Laurentin, *The Question of Mary* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965).

It is worth noting, too, in this connection, that on September 27, Teresa of Avila was raised to the dignity of a Doctor of the Church in the "saint-status" of the liturgy. On October 2, 1970, just a week later, Catherine of Siena received the same honor. Now, being a Doctor of the Church is being a teacher of the word of God to the whole Church. This, at least, is one episcopal function. It is certainly a major apostolic line. Can one not reasonably speculate on something of a Marian development here?

Parallel with this, there seems to be also a possible development of the participation of Mary in the sacramental life of the Church. It would flow possibly from a study of all that is involved in the union of Christ and Mary, the degree of its intensity, the operative consequences of its reality. In the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (No. 7) Vatican II says:

"By His power He (Christ) is present in the sacraments, so that when a man baptizes, it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the Holy Scripture prays and sings."

One might be forgiven for speculating a bit about the consequences of Mary's union with Jesus, her office as Mediatrix of all graces, her particular mode of active participation in the Redemption as possibly pointing to a special function of Mary in the sacramental system.

Again, the intimacy and practical carrying out of the union between the mission of Mary in the economy of salvation and the actual exercise of the apostolate may well provide another whole area of development. Cardinal Suenens, speaking of Mary and the Apostolic Renewal, points out that it is quite evident that the Holy Spirit is bringing about two great movements at least in the Church today. One is the movement of Mary which, in many facets, is flowering out not only in great theological advances in Mariology, but also in making this devotionally "the age of Mary." The second movement is one

in which "Clergy and laity are becoming more vividly aware of their apostolic duty toward their brethren, and its urgency."²⁰

He then asks the question: "Has the Holy Spirit, which is bringing about these movements, forged any link between them?" In answering this question Cardinal Suenens responds affirmatively but only in the most general terms. His question is, however, one that calls for more research than has yet been done and for more development than has yet taken place. Perhaps, therefore, this will be another area to which we can look for further development in the theology of Mary.

Two general processes seem to be taken place, moreover, in the over-all field of theological speculation and research. One is occurring primarily in the study of Sacred Scripture but also derivatively in dogmatic theology, and it is called "de-mythologization." This word covers the total effort to get at the objective reality of the truth that lies behind scriptural and dogmatic imagery and modes of expression. A second tendency is derived somewhat from philosophy. It is called "de-cosmologization." This is an effort, of immense difficulty indeed, by which theology seeks to divest itself of the limitations that come from spatial thinking in its contemplation of infinity and from those which come from temporal conceptualizations in efforts to deal with the eternal.

Eliseo Ruffini has a splendid essay explaining these in his prenotes to his edition in Italian of *I novissimi nella teologia contemporanea*, by Hans Urs von Balthasar. He entitles his essay *Eschatological Perspectives in the Thought of Hans Urs v. Balthasar*.²¹

Mariology has scarcely begun to explore the possibilities of this de-mythologization. Words of the Vatican Council, for instance, 'Auxiliatrix, Adjutor, Advocate' etc. are all highly metaphorical, each involving an image background of no little

²⁰ Cardinal Suenens, *Mary, the Mother of God* (Hawthorn Books, 1959). 127.

²¹ Edit. Queriniana, Brescia, 1967.

significance. Mary is called 'Queen of the apostles'—again a metaphor. Even the title, 'Motherhood of men' has metaphorical implications. Mary as 'daughter of the Father' and especially as 'spouse of the Holy Spirit' is a matter of analogy. The exploration of the underlying reality of all this imagery may well yield further Mariological insights into the subject of Mary and the Apostolate.

The same holds for the process of decosmolization, both in regard to time and space. The reality of Mary, assumed into heaven and now living in eternity, producing simultaneously effects in time, presents an opening for yet unexplored relationships between Mary and existential apostolic projects.

Decosmolization in regard to space also opens up new possibilities. Mary's place in the apostolate may turn out in reality to be more than a mere metaphor for her participation. The whole question of 'presence' is raised. When is a matter 'present' to me? Only by geographical proximity? What of intentional presence? Bergson has done a lot to make us aware of these cosmological dimensions. When we begin to contemplate divine revelation about Mary, whether it be in relation to the apostolate or some other matter, in all these same dimensions, we may expect rather thrilling discoveries.

Conclusion

It is certainly evident, therefore, that Mary has an integral part in the apostolate of the Church. The literature that has been covered in this paper, the theological speculations that have been presented, the documents of the *magisterium* which have been quoted, all, in their profusion, reveal Mary, Queen of Apostles, truly as central to the whole work of the Church in completing the redemptive process, in bringing all men to the Father as the fruit of Christ's redemption.

REV. JAMES J. McQUADE, S.J.
Colombiere College
Clarkston, Michigan