

1959

## 070 - Marian Doctrine of Benedict XV

Benedict XV

Follow this and additional works at: [http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian\\_reprints](http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints)



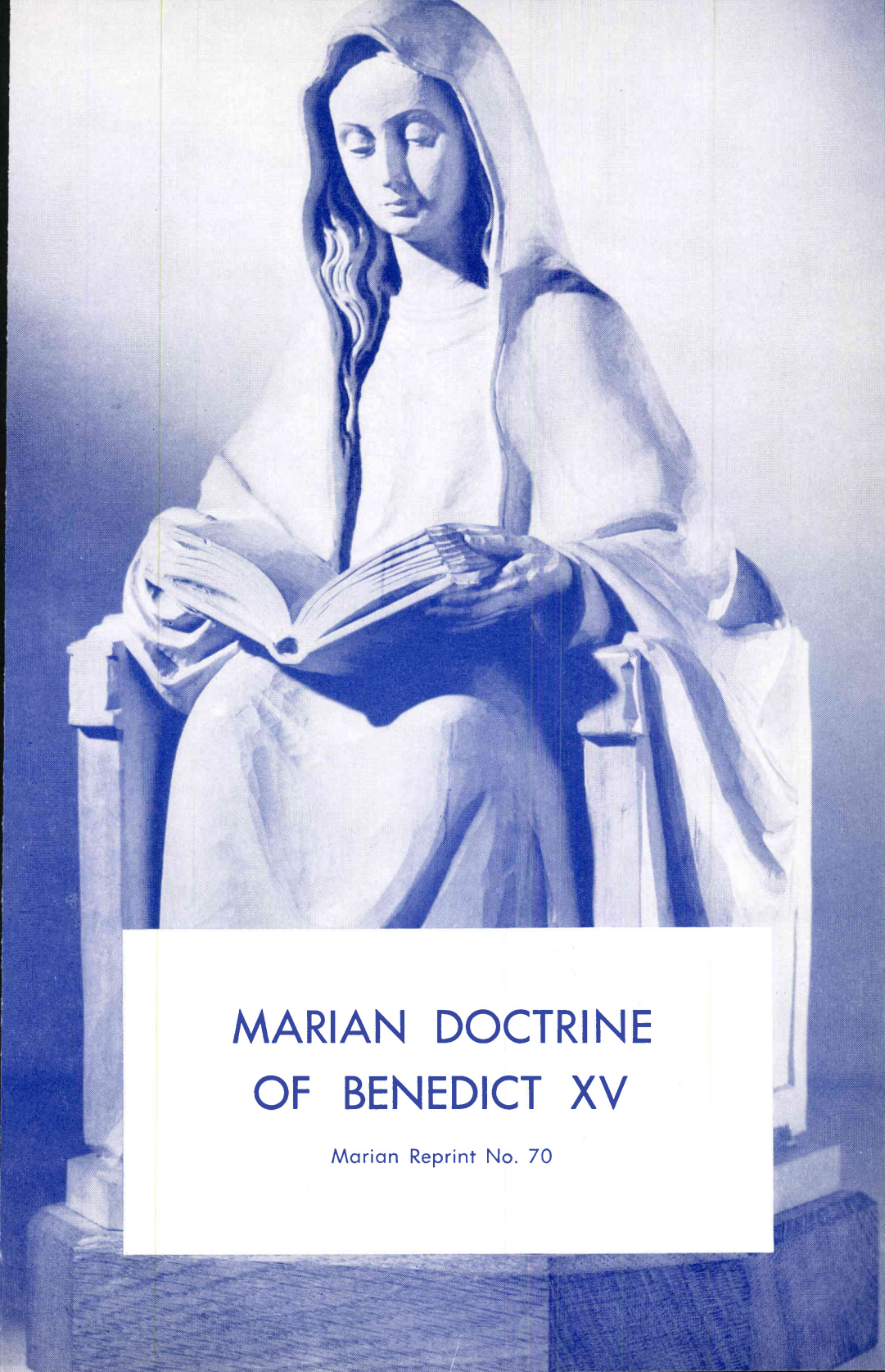
Part of the [Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

XV, Benedict, "070 - Marian Doctrine of Benedict XV" (1959). *Marian Reprints*. Paper 46.  
[http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian\\_reprints/46](http://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_reprints/46)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Reprints by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact [frice1@udayton.edu](mailto:frice1@udayton.edu), [mschlange1@udayton.edu](mailto:mschlange1@udayton.edu).



MARIAN DOCTRINE  
OF BENEDICT XV

Marian Reprint No. 70

## ABOUT THE TRANSLATION . . .

Finally on the third of September His Eminence James Cardinal della Chiesa was elected Pope. The Cardinal Deacon asked: "You have been canonically elected Pope. Do you accept?"

He was answered in the affirmative.

Again he asked: "What name have you chosen for yourself?"

The answer came quickly: "Benedict XV." (*A.A.S.*, VI, p. 494)

It all happened quite suddenly. Pope Pius X was a seemingly healthy, though elderly, man. When, on August 15, 1914, he was afflicted with a slight attack of bronchitis, no one considered it serious. But on the 19th, His Holiness took a decided turn for the worse, and on the following day, at 1:15 in the morning, he died "in the peace of Christ," probably more from a broken heart than from any physical ailment. For only months before, the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand presaged the early onslaught of the war which had threatened Europe for so long.

The Cardinals met in Conclave on September 1, and the people waited expectantly. But no decision was reached that day. Again, on September 2, the faithful were disappointed. Finally on September 3, the Proto-deacon, Cardinal Francis della Volpe, made the eagerly awaited announcement from the balcony of the Vatican, "We have a Pope."

Thus began the brief and sorrowful reign of Pope Benedict XV. Perhaps no other Pope was so fitted by talents and training to meet so terrible a crisis as World War I — but certainly no other Pope saw all his efforts in behalf of his sons so completely disregarded and frustrated. For eight years the saintly Pontiff struggled, first to achieve the cessation of hostilities, then to gain a lasting peace. At length, worn out by his unceasing labors, he died shortly after the infamous Treaty of Versailles, on January 22, 1922.

It is no surprise, then, that the volume of writings concerning Our Blessed Mother which flowed from the pen of Benedict XV should seem small and insignificant when compared to that of his immediate predecessors and successors. But the references to Our Lady which do appear in his writings — the most important of which are contained in the pages that follow — give ample evidence of a strong devotion to Mary, especially under the title of Mediatrix of All Graces, which, given other, more peaceful times, would undoubtedly have produced eloquent documents of Marian teachings.

The following excerpts have been translated from the official documents in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Vol. VI - XIV) by Bro. Richard Zehnle, S.M., with the exception of "Il 27 Aprile" in which the translation is that of Doheny-Kelly's *Papal Documents on Mary*."

A  
MARIAN  
REPRINT

The Marian Library  
University of Dayton  
Dayton, Ohio

(published with ecclesiastical approval)



# Marian Doctrine of BENEDICT XV

Excerpts from the writings of Pope Benedict XV (1914 - 1922)

**1. UBI PRIMUM — letter to the Universal Church, September 8, 1914**  
(A.A.S., VI, 502)

(Only five days after his election, and two days after his coronation, Pope Benedict addressed a letter to all the Catholics of the world. After confessing his own personal unworthiness, but expressing his confidence in the help of God, the Holy Father went on to speak of the impending conflict in Europe. He promised his own unceasing prayer, and begged the prayers of all the faithful, especially the clergy, concluding with these words:)

We pray that our united prayers may be aided by the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God whose blessed birth, commemorated by today's feast, shone upon struggling humanity as a dawn of peace, since she would some day give birth to Him in whom the Eternal Father wished to restore all things, "bringing peace through the blood of His Cross to all things whether on earth or in heaven." (Coloss., 1, 20)

**2. PROXIMUS DIEBUS — to the Most Rev. Francis X. Schoepfer, Bishop of Tarbes & Lourdes. September 24, 1914.** (A.A.S., VI, 514 - 515)

(Pope Benedict wrote to the Archbishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, congratulating him on the successful Eucharistic Congress held at Lourdes. The latter part of the message shows clearly the role devotion to Mary held in the life of the Pontiff.)

The brief pilgrimage We were able to make to the shrine of the Immaculate Conception at Lourdes last year has afforded Us many satisfying memories. The magnificent ceremonies honoring the Mother of God have infused a deeper, more fervent love for her into Our heart. We would like nothing better than to journey again to that place which may be regarded as the headquarters on earth of Mary's compassion for her children. But since by no merit of Our own We have been chosen by Our Lord to rule His Church from the Apostolic See in Rome, We must be content to have visited Lourdes once. Indeed, We are grateful that We have had such a privilege, which was accorded to no previous Holy Father.

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

There can be no doubt that our modern world has sunk to its present level of evil and despair through departing so far from the footsteps of the Master. But if there is one sure and swift way to the Heart of Jesus it is the way of Mary. We have the greatest confidence, then, that the Virgin of Lourdes, under whose patronage you have conducted the Eucharistic Congress, will see to it that day by day devotion to, and frequent reception of, the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar will be spread throughout the world.

### **3. CUM RECENTIORIBUS — a decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office, April 8, 1916, concerning images displaying the Blessed Virgin dressed in priestly garments. (A.A.S., VIII, 196)**

Especially in the last few years images of Our Blessed Mother in priestly garments have been appearing in increasing numbers. Their Eminences, the Inquisitors General, after careful consideration, issued the following decree on Wednesday, January 15, 1913: "Images of the Blessed Virgin Mary dressed in priestly garments are forbidden."

### **4. IL 27 APRILE 1915 — a letter to Peter Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State of His Holiness, concerning the necessity of prayers to Our Lord through the intercession of His most holy Mother Mary to grant peace to the world — May 5, 1917. (A.A.S., IX, 265)**

(On April 27, 1915, Pope Benedict had extended certain indulgences, granted locally by Pope Pius X, to any family that would consecrate its home to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The enthusiastic response to his letter encouraged him greatly in his efforts for world peace. In his letter of May 5, 1917, he recalled this enthusiasm and urged all men to continue their prayers to the Sacred Heart especially during the month of June which was fast approaching. He went on to speak of Mary's role in securing the peace:)

And since all graces which God deigns to bestow in pity upon men are dispensed through Mary, We urge that in this terrible hour, the trusting petitions of her most afflicted children be directed to her.

Hence, We direct Your Eminence to make known to all the bishops of the world that it is Our fervent desire that mankind turn to the Sacred Heart of Jesus — the Throne of Grace — and that recourse to this Throne be made through Mary.

Accordingly, We ordain that, beginning with the first day of June this year, there be placed in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin the invocation: *Queen of Peace, pray for us. . . .*

From every corner of the earth — from the majestic churches and the humble chapels; from the mansions of the rich as well as from the huts

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

of the poor; from wherever dwells a faithful soul; from the bloodstained battlefields and war-swept seas — may the pious and ardent invocation arise to Mary, the Mother of mercy, who is all-powerful in grace! To Mary may be brought each anguished cry of mothers and wives, each tear of innocent children, each longing of generous hearts! May her loving and merciful solicitude be moved to obtain for this convulsed world the peace so greatly desired! And may the ages yet to come remember the efficacy of Mary's intercession and the greatness of her blessings to her suppliants!

### **5. INTER SODALICA — March 22, 1918 — granting plenary indulgences to the Sodality of Our Lady of a Happy Death on certain feast days, and to all the faithful for the recitation of certain prayers.**

(A.A.S., X, 181 - 182)

(Before listing the feasts and the prayers to which plenary indulgences were to be attached the Holy Father discussed at length the importance of the work being done by the sodality and the appropriateness of addressing Mary as Patroness of a Happy Death.)

There are many groups in the Church today which dedicate themselves to the two-fold object of spreading devotion to Mary and promoting the spiritual welfare of Christians. Among these groups, or sodalities as they are called, is the Sodality of Our Lady of a Happy Death, founded in recent years by the Priests of Mary of Tinchebray. The excellence of its purpose, and its rapid growth and fruitful work in all parts of the world certainly have earned it a place of honor among such sodalities.

Upon being admitted to membership, the candidates, according to the rules of the group, dedicate themselves to intensifying devotion to the Sorrowful Virgin both in their own lives and in the lives of others. They offer to God the prayers and sufferings of the Sorrowful Mother at the foot of the Cross, trusting that they will gain for themselves and for others the grace of persevering in or of returning to the Christian way of life, and especially the grace of dying in the embrace of Christ, the necessary condition for rejoicing with Him forever in heaven.

The choice of the Sorrowful Virgin as the Patroness of a Happy Death is not only a wise and salutary move, but it is also in accord with the teaching of the Church and constant practice of the faithful. It is a common opinion among the Doctors of the Church that, in the face of her seeming absence from the public life of Our Lord, Mary's presence at His suffering and death on the Cross had some special Divine purpose. There can be no doubt that Mary's sufferings were so intense as almost to cause her death. Moreover she can truly be said to have given up her maternal rights over her Son for the salvation of man, and, as much as it was in her power, to have immolated her Son to placate the justice

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

of God. In the light of these facts, it may rightly be said that she redeemed the human race together with her Son.

An evident conclusion from this truth is that all the graces which we receive from the treasury of the Redemption are distributed as it were by the hands of the same Sorrowful Virgin. It would seem to be then most natural that we should seek the grace of a holy and happy death — which is indeed the efficacious and perpetual seal of the Redemption for each man — from Mary herself.

Again, the Sorrowful Virgin, Mother of all men in Christ her Son, watches with loving care over the spiritual life of the faithful still on earth. Certainly she is especially near to her sons at that instant in which their eternal destiny is decided.

For all these reasons, the liturgy of the Church is replete with earnest supplications to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the hour of death. Moreover, it is a firm opinion among Catholics, attested to by daily experience, that a true servant of Mary will never perish. Little wonder then, especially in these troubled times, that 500,000 of the faithful, of both sexes and of every walk of life, have been enrolled in the Sodality of Our Lady of a Happy Death. Rather, We deeply regret that so many (so-called good) Catholics — not to mention those who have fallen away or who no longer practice their religion — are so engrossed in business affairs or in the transitory pleasures of this life, that the thought of death has little or no effect on their lives. Indeed they seem to spend a great deal of energy trying to avoid it. . . .

### **6. CUM ANNUS — to the Most Rev. Francis X. Schoepfer, Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, January 20, 1919. (A.A.S., XI, 37 - 38)**

(When the sixtieth anniversary of the apparitions of our Blessed Mother at Lourdes occurred on February 11, 1918, Europe was still beset by the ravages of World War I. Early in the following year, Pope Benedict wrote the following letter to the Bishop of Lourdes concerning the belated celebration he had planned.)

You were undoubtedly disappointed that the sixtieth anniversary of the appearance of the Immaculate Virgin at Lourdes was forced to pass unaccompanied by the year-long celebration befitting its dignity. Such are the bitter fruits of war. Now, however, it is only right that you observe with special solemnities the coming feast commemorating her apparitions. These past sixty years the Grotto of Lourdes has abounded with miracles of nature and of grace. Bodies wracked with terrible, incurable diseases have become whole again. Souls cut off from their religion by the darkness of sin have succumbed to the light of faith. And countless pilgrims wend their way home from Lourdes, perhaps still lacking the bodily health they had sought, but possessed of a new and serene acceptance of the loving will of God.

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

For all these blessings we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to the Blessed Virgin, through whose intercession they have been obtained. But above all we must not forget that most precious gift — that weapons have at last been put aside and hope of a just and lasting peace has shone upon the world. Surely this is of her doing, she who has given the world its Prince of Peace, she who is the most loving mother of all men. Yet we must not forget our pressing duty to beg the mercy of God that we shall at last have that peace for which all good men have hoped, a peace founded in honor and justice, a peace which will strengthen the bonds of Christian charity among all nations. We are especially pleased that the prayers We have ordered to be recited throughout the world for this intention are being offered in all the famous Marian Shrines, among which Lourdes is outstanding. Such is our confidence in the power of Mary.

It should be obvious, then, that We wholeheartedly approve the celebrations you have prepared for the near future. In addition, We wish to add to the spiritual benefits of the faithful, taking part in these ceremonies, from the spiritual treasury of the Church which has been confided to our care. Under the usual conditions of confession and Holy Communion we grant a plenary indulgence to all who visit the shrine at Lourdes, not only on February 11, the feast itself, but on each of the days this year commemorating the appearances of the Immaculate Virgin at the grotto. The same indulgences may be gained under the same conditions, moreover, by all participants of the solemn pilgrimages to the Lourdes Basilica which, as you mentioned, will be undertaken this year.

In this manner We will kneel in spirit with you at the feet of the Mother of God, thanking her for her innumerable benefits and offering prayers for all Christian people, in that place which is indeed the headquarters of her loving kindness on earth.

### **7. ILLUSTRIORES INTER — a letter conferring the rank of minor basilica upon the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Rothomague (Latin — Rothomagensis) — March 18, 1919 (A.A.S., XI, 226)**

(His Holiness recounted the history of the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and outlined the extend of its fame throughout France. He mentioned the many votive offerings on its walls as evidence of the worthiness of this Church to be honored as a minor basilica)

The walls, and even the choir benches of this magnificent Church are covered as far as the eye can see with testimonials of favors received and with precious gifts. What a splendid testimony that the Virgin Mother of God, Mediatrix of all graces, regards this sanctuary as a special throne of her majesty, from which she dispenses an abundance of favors and benefits.



**8. COHAERET PLANE — to the Archbishop of Bogota and the other archbishops of Colombia concerning the projected Marian Congress, March 21, 1919. (A.A.S., XI, 265)**

The Marian Congress which you have planned for the near future certainly meets with Our approval and commendation. God Himself so loved the Blessed Virgin that He chose her for His Mother. How worthy is she, then, of any honor we can hope to offer her?

When we consider the influence which Mary, from her exalted position, has with her Son, and when We consider how much she loves, how eagerly she helps her true servants, we cannot help desiring with all Our heart that each and every faithful Christian dedicate himself completely to his Mother, loving her, honoring her, and imitating her virtues. For these reasons We have so warmly approved your plans. We have the utmost confidence in their success.

But we urge you, venerable brethen, to take special care that the interior dispositions of those in attendance correspond to the magnificence and splendor of the convention itself. Otherwise there will be grave danger that what is begun with such enthusiasm will dissipate quickly as "a vapor which appears but a little while" (James, IV, 15). Remind the participants that mere exterior appearance is not essential, that their work must not aim at the brief duration of a day or two. It will be their responsibility to find means, means that will stand the test of time, of spreading devotion to Mary, of re-invigorating the faith among Catholics, and of promoting Christian doctrine. Could such a convention ever be content merely to achieve the spectacle of a multitude of Christians gathered together to praise and honor the Virgin? Praiseworthy as this may be, does it satisfy the goal proposed by such a group? Surely it will be the ideal of all that the "flowers" of a sincere devotion to Mary "may bloom as the lily" and, through the vigor of a truly Christian life, "breathe sweet fragrance and bring forth the fruits of grace." (Eccles., XXXIX, 19)

**9. AUX PELERINS FRANCAIS — an address to the French pilgrims present for the approbation of the miracles for the canonization of Joan of Arc, April 6, 1919. (Actes de Benoit XV, Vol. II [1914-1922], Paris, Bonne Presse.)**

Let us offer thanks above all to God and to the august Virgin Mary. For the two miracles attributed to blessed Joan of Arc, the authenticity of which has been proclaimed today, are clearly the work of God alone. And as we recognize in every miracle the mediation of Mary, through whose hands God has willed to grant all of His graces to men, so we are made unmistakably aware of a very special manifestation of that mediation in one of the miracles referred to above.

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

We feel that Our Lord has had a special purpose in arranging the circumstances of this miracle: that it is never right to overlook the role of Mary, even though we seem to obtain a certain miracle through the intercession or mediation of a blessed or a saint. Such is the inference which we believe must be drawn from the fact that Thérèse Belin obtained her complete and instantaneous cure at the grotto of Lourdes. On the one hand, Our Lord shows us that He is able to work miracles through the intercession of one of His servants even in that place which has been established as the domain of His most Blessed Mother. But He also reminds us that even in such cases we must not fail to discern the intervention of her upon whom the Fathers of the Church have bestowed the title of *Mediatrix of all mediators*. Thus the eminent "orator" has with good reason placed the first offering of thanks at the foot of the throne of God and at the feet of the Virgin.

### **10. COMMUNES LITTERAS — a letter to Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, and Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, and to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States — April 10, 1919. (A.A.S., XI, 171 - 174)**

(The occasion of this letter of His Holiness was the Golden Jubilee of the priesthood of Cardinal Gibbons. The Pope took advantage of the occasion to note with favor the frequent meetings of the prelates of the United States and their concern with social affairs and with education in particular. He praised the American Catholic school system highly, and especially the Catholic University of America in Washington. Then he turned his attention to the proposed basilica of the Immaculate Conception:)

We have recently heard of the impetus given to Marian devotion among the faithful of the United States by your proposal to erect a basilica in honor of the Immaculate Conception near the Catholic University of America in Washington. You can scarcely imagine with what joy we received this news. Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius X, not content with simply approving your plans, was most generous in his praise of them. In like manner, We consider it a matter of the greatest interest and importance that a basilica worthy of the Heavenly Patron of all America be erected as soon as possible in the capital city of your great republic. Moreover the University itself will experience a new spiritual vitality under the guidance and protection of the Immaculate Mother of God.

We are confident that in the years to come the Catholic University of America will be a center of Catholic learning, attracting scholars from every part of your nation. And We are equally certain that this noble basilica, blessed by the all-powerful intercession of the Immaculate Virgin, will come to be regarded as the official center of Catholic worship,

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

and that the faithful, not just the scholars attending the University, but all the faithful of the United States, will flock to it in ever-increasing numbers.

May that day come quickly, venerable brethren, which will witness the completion of your labors. But do not let the work lag at the beginning. We urge you to call upon all who claim the name of Catholics to give even more generously than usual that the actual construction may soon be underway. Religious groups also should be summoned to do their share, especially those groups professing in their very constitution a special dedication to the Mother of God.

A special appeal for whole-hearted cooperation should be made to all Catholic women. It would seem inappropriate, indeed, if women were content to play a secondary role in an appeal which has for object the promotion of the honor of the Immaculate Virgin, for such honor re-ounds in a special way upon members of their sex.

But words are of little merit without example. Therefore, with the hope of encouraging the generosity of others, We have decided to adorn the main altar of the basilica with a gift of Our own. Thus We will provide for the construction in the Vatican studios of a mosaic of the Most Blessed Virgin conceived without sin. This will be sent to Washington in due time to be mounted over the main altar as a testimony of Our devotion to Mary and of the high regard in which We hold the Catholic University of America.

Mankind finds itself today engaged in a terrible conflict which demands the help of the Virgin on one hand, and the united efforts of all men on the other. We totter uncertainly along the narrow border between salvation and ruin, there to remain unless the basic principles of human society are established once again in the spirit of justice and charity. Upon you more than all others falls the responsibility of action in this crisis. The staggering task of rebuilding the society of men in peace and order, after so violent and widespread an upheaval, devolves in large measure upon your nation, which has remained faithful to the ideals of true liberty and Christian civilization.

We pray that Our Blessed Mother may confirm our fatherly concern by bestowing the graces of heaven upon you. As a proof of Our love for you in the Lord, venerable brethren, We impart to you, and to the clergy and laity committed to your care, especially to those who contribute either now or in the future to the construction of the basilica at Washington, Our apostolic benediction.

**11. DUBIUM CIRCA INDULGENTIAS — July 21, 1919. — a decree of the Sacred Penitentiary dealing with a question concerning indulgences attached to the litanies of the Blessed Virgin. (Lemieux, ed., Marie, Vol. II, 21)**

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

The following question was put to the Sacred tribunal:

The custom has been introduced in certain places to chant the litany of Loretto in the following manner: 1) The *Kyrie eleison* is said only once (*Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Christe audi nos, Christe exaudi nos*); 2) The invocations are grouped into threes followed by only one *ora pro nobis*; 3) Finally only one *Agnus Dei* is said (*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Domine; exaudi nos, Domine; miserere nobis.*)

In the light of canon 934, section 2, of the Code, it is asked if in this manner the faithful can gain the indulgences attached to the litany:

The Sacred Penitentiary, after careful consideration, has decided to answer: No.

This decision was submitted by the Cardinal Grand Penitentiary to His Holiness Pope Benedict XV in an audience of July 18, 1919. His Holiness confirmed the decision and ordered it to be made known that *this custom cannot be approved, and that, from that time on, the bishops ought to act with prudence and discretion to see that it is discontinued in the places in which it has been introduced.*

### **12. Homily of Pope Benedict XV at the canonization of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin and St. Margaret Mary Alacoque — May 13, 1920. (A.A.S., XII, 224)**

(After noting how modern society has forgotten Christ, Pope Benedict remarked the fittingness of the canonization of these two great lovers of the Passion of Our Lord, Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother and Margaret Mary of the Sacred Heart.)

But the sufferings of Jesus cannot be separated from the sorrows of Mary. Just as the first Adam had a woman for accomplice in his rebellion against God, so the new Adam wished to have a woman share in His work of re-opening the gates of heaven for men. From the cross, He addressed His own Sorrowful Mother as the "woman," and proclaimed her the new Eve, the Mother of all men, for whom He was dying that they might live.

### **13. PACEM DEI — an Encyclical letter concerning the Christian concept of peace — May 23, 1920. (A.A.S., XII, 209 - 218)**

(The Holy Father expressed joy that the horrors of war were at last at an end, but warned of the dangers of attempting to achieve peace without Christian principles. He called upon all to realize that peace could come only from charity, and from a charity which not only put aside hatred and pardoned offenses, but also practiced the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The Pope concluded his plea with this prayer:)



## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

We place our trust in the intercession of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, whom We have recently ordered the Universal Church to invoke as *Queen of Peace*, and in the three blessed whom We have recently raised to the honors of the altar. And in this confidence we humbly beg the Holy Spirit that He "mercifully bestow the grace of unity and peace to His Church," and that He renew the face of the earth by rekindling in souls the spirit of love for the common good of mankind.

### **14. PRINCIPI APOSTOLORUM — an Encyclical letter declaring Saint Ephrem the Syrian to be a Doctor of the Church — October 5, 1920. (A.A.S., XII, 467)**

(After briefly outlining the life of St. Ephrem, Pope Benedict singled out his inspired poetry for special praise and lengthy exposition. When treating of his poems in honor of the Blessed Virgin, His Holiness wrote:)

It is impossible for Us to recapture with words alone the true ardor of his devotion to the Virgin Mother of God. "You, O Lord, and Your Mother," he sings in one of his poems, "are alone perfectly beautiful in every respect; for in You, my Lord, there is no stain, nor in Your Mother does any sin reside." This "Harp of the Holy Spirit" never sings more sweetly than when he sings the praises of Mary whether it be her most perfect virginity, her divine maternity, or her merciful solicitude for her children.

### **15. FAUSTO APPETENTE DIE — an Encyclical letter commemorating the 700th anniversary of the death of Saint Dominic — June 29, 1921. (A.A.S., XIII, 329 - 335)**

(The Holy Father, in praising Saint Dominic and his Order, noted three chief qualities of their preaching: sound doctrine, loyalty to the Holy See, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin. In concluding his commentary on the first two, he mentioned several great Dominican saints, the last of whom was Pope St. Pius V. He then proceeded quite naturally to the third characteristic:)

Christian and civil society will always be grateful to Saint Pius V. Through his continued exhortations he managed to unite the forces of the Catholic princes against the Turks, and, with Mary as protector, smashed the power of the Ottoman empire at Lepanto. In memory of this event, he added "Help of Christians" to the titles of the Mother of God.

This is a splendid example of the third of the qualities We noted in the preaching of the Dominicans — a most devoted love for the Mother of God. The story has come down to us that this same Pontiff, through a special revelation, learned that victory was gained at Lepanto at the very moment that the many Marian groups throughout the world were beg-

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

ging Mary's help by praying the Rosary, a devotion introduced to the world by the Founder of the Order of Preachers and later propagated far and wide by his followers.

Indeed it was with an unbounding confidence in the Blessed Virgin, whom he loved as his true mother, that Dominic set out to plead the cause of the Faith. The Albigensian heretics, against whom he fought, were attacking the very foundations of the Catholic faith, and heaping insults on the divine maternity and perpetual virginity of Mary. Dominic defended the sacredness of these truths to the best of his ability, but placed his trust in the help of the Virgin herself, constantly repeating the words he had so fittingly applied to her: "Make me worthy to praise you, O sacred Virgin; give me strength against your enemies."

That Mary was grateful to her devoted servant we can have no doubt. She entrusted to his hands the tremendous task of teaching the Church, the Spouse of her Son, the most holy Rosary. By its very composition — the blending of vocal prayer, in the recitation of the Our Fathers and Hail Marys, and mental prayer, in the contemplation of the principal truths of our Faith — the Rosary is an abundant source of faith and devotion for all the faithful. Convinced by his own experience of its un-failing efficacy, Dominic enjoined his disciples to inculcate devotion to the Rosary in all to whom they would preach.

Dominic realized, on the one hand, that Mary's power of intercession with her Son is so great that she is in reality the mediatrix and dispensatrix of all the graces He bestows on men. On the other hand, he knew that so un-failing is her love for even the most miserable of her children, that it is impossible for her to refuse those who ask her help. Such has always been the mind of the Church concerning Mary, whom she so frequently addresses as Mother of Grace and Mother of Mercy. And this is especially the case where the devotion of the most holy Rosary is concerned. Thus the Roman Pontiffs have never lost any chance of praising the Rosary and of enriching its use with numerous indulgences. . . .

In conclusion, We urge all loyal sons and daughters of Saint Dominic to regard the spread of devotion to the most holy Rosary to all men as their special duty. In the past We have taken many opportunities to promote this devotion, as have Our predecessors, especially Leo XIII of happy memory. We wish to repeat this plea, and even with greater emphasis in these troubled times. If this centennial year should accomplish this one goal — increased devotion to the Rosary — We should count it as a great success.

### CONCLUSION

Again and again, while reading through the letters and other documents of Pope Benedict XV, we are impressed with the manifold expression of his dedication to Our Blessed Mother. He recalls with joy his

## MARIAN DOCTRINE OF POPE BENEDICT XV

pilgrimage to Lourdes, and longs to be there again. Not only does his solicitude extend to the Grotto of Lourdes, but he hastens to the aid of the Holy House of Loretto when it has been destroyed by fire. The proposed construction of a basilica in honor of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., so gladdens his heart that he conceives a beautiful gift of his own for the main altar as a token of his devotion and as an example to others.

When he congratulates the Order of Preachers on the seventh centennial of the death of their Founder, he devotes an inspiring passage to the praise of Mary's Rosary. When he canonizes Saint Gabriel, when he declares Saint Ephrem a Doctor of the Church, he makes special note of their devotion to the Mother of God. When he raises to the rank of basilica a Church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, he makes special mention of the efficacy and universality of her mediation.

Pope Benedict is ever ready to encourage Marian groups to spread her devotion throughout the world, whether the group be the renowned Order of Preachers or the recently-formed Sodality of Our Lady of a Happy Death. Yet he carefully guards against what would be unorthodox in this devotion, whether by excess or defect. Though Mary may be called Co-redemptrix, this role must be rightly understood; it must not result in her representation in priestly garments. The Church will not countenance arbitrary changes in the recitation of her Litany to suit the whims and fancies of private devotion.

Even in his most important work, attempting to restore peace to a world scarred by war and embittered with hate, we find his devotion to Mary coming to the fore. His first letter to the faithful pleading the cause of peace is written on the feast of her Nativity, a "dawn of peace" to the world. In the midst of the conflagration he orders all Christians to beg Mary, Queen of Peace, to end the terrible conflict. And he concludes his masterpiece on the Christian concept of peace by placing his confidence in the Immaculate Virgin.

It is true that Pope Benedict XV has not left us glowing encyclicals on the prerogatives of Our Blessed Mother, as have his immediate predecessors and successors. But the pressing needs of his war-torn reign left little time for anything but the driving ambition of his pontificate — the establishment of a just and lasting peace based on Christian charity and justice.

Yet, even such references as we have cited afford ample evidence of the belief and teaching of this successor of St. Peter regarding Mary's privileges as Co-Redemptrix of mankind and Mediatrix of all graces. We might wish that time had permitted him a fuller development of these Marian doctrines in his writings. But he could have left no finer proof of his own devotion to Mary than the portrait of himself presented by even a casual perusal of his letters — a man of God living his dedication to Our Blessed Mother in every action of his life.

(MARIAN REPRINTS back issue listing — continued from back cover)

47. FILIAL PIETY: MARIAN AND FAMILY—*Gerald J. Schnepf, S.M.*
48. MARY AND THE HISTORY OF WOMEN—*E. A. Leonard*
49. OUR LADY, MODEL OF FAITH—*Jean Galot, S.J.*
50. OUR LADY, SYMBOL OF HOPE—*Jean Galot, S.J.*
51. MARY, MODEL OF CHARITY—*Henri Holstein, S.J.*
52. SPIRIT OF THE LEGION OF MARY—*Frank Duff*
53. THE TIMELESS WOMAN—*Gertrud von LeFort*
54. MARY, QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE—*James M. Egan, O.P.*
55. THE LOURDES PILGRIMAGE—*Pius XII*
56. OUR LADY OF LOURDES—*Bishop Pierre-Marie Theas*
57. ESTHER AND OUR LADY—*Ronald A. Knox*
58. MARY AND THE THEOLOGIANS—*Thomas E. Clarke, S.J.*
59. EDITH STEIN AND THE MOTHER OF GOD—*Sister Mary Julian Baird, R.S.M.*
60. BEHOLD THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD—*Richard Graef, C.S.SP.*
61. LOURDES DOCUMENTS OF BISHOP LAURENCE—*Bishop of Tarbes, 1845-1870.*
62. THE POPE OF THE VIRGIN MARY—*Thomas Merton, O.C.S.O.*
63. DEVOTION TO MARY IN THE CHURCH—*Louis Bouyer, Orat.*
64. BEAURAING DOCUMENTS OF BISHOP CHARUE—*Bishop of Namur*
65. MOTHER OF HIS MANY BRETHREN—*Jean-Herve Nicolas, O.P.*
66. ST. BERNADETTE AND OUR LADY—*Mary Reed Newland*
67. LOURDES, WITNESS TO THE MATERNAL SOLICITUDE OF MARY—*James Egan, O.P.*
68. MUNIFICENTISSIMUS DEUS—*Pius XII*
69. IS OUR VENERATION TO OUR LADY "MARIOLATRY"?—*Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R.*



## MARIAN REPRINTS

(ALL BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE FROM THE MARIAN LIBRARY — UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON)

1. MARY'S PLACE IN OUR LIFE—*T. J. Jorgensen, S.J.*
2. THE MEANING OF MARY—*Lois Schumacher*  
LITANY FOR OUR TIMES—*Robert L. Reynolds*
3. MARY AND THE APOSTOLATE—*Emil Neubert, S.M.*
4. THE IMITATION OF MARY—*Placid Huault, S.M.*
5. MARY, ASSUMED INTO HEAVEN—*Lawrence Everett, C.S.S.R.*
6. FATIMA—IN BATTLE ARRAY—*Joseph Agius, O.P.*
7. MEN, MARY, AND MANLINESS—*Ed Willock*
8. MARY, CONCEIVED WITHOUT SIN—*Francis Connell, C.S.S.R.*
9. RUSSIA AND THE IMMACULATE HEART—*Pius XII*
10. MARY, OUR INSPIRATION TO ACTION—*Robert Knopp, S.M.*
11. SIGN IN THE HEAVENS—*James O'Mahony, O.F.M.Cap.*
12. SOUL OF MARIAN DEVOTION—*Edmund Baumeister, S.M.*
13. THE ASSUMPTION AND THE MODERN WORLD—*Bishop Fulton J. Sheen*
14. MOTHER AND HELPMATE OF CHRIST—*James Egan, O.P.*
15. MARY, PATRONESS OF CATHOLIC ACTION—*John J. Griffin*
16. THE MYSTERY OF MARY—*Emil Neubert, S.M.*
17. THE BLESSED VIRGIN IN THE LITURGY—*Clifford Howell, S.J.*
18. OUR LADY OF RUSSIA—*Catherine de Hueck Doherty*
19. THE WITNESS OF OUR LADY—*Archbishop Alban Goodier, S.J.*
20. FULGENS CORONA—*Pius XII*
21. THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND THE U.S.—*Ralph Ohlmann, O.F.M.*
22. THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND THE APOSTOLATE—*Philip Hoelle, S.M.*
23. INEFFABILIS DEUS—*Pius IX*
24. MARY'S APOSTOLIC ROLE IN HISTORY—*John Totten, S.M.*
25. AD DIEM ILLUM—*Pius X*
26. KNOW YOUR MOTHER BETTER: A MARIAN BIBLIOGRAPHY—*Stanley Mathews, S.M.*
27. THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND MARY'S DEATH—*J. B. Carol, O. F. M.*
28. IMMACULATE MOTHER OF GOD—*James Francis Cardinal McIntyre*
29. THE WISDOM OF OUR LADY—*Gerald Vann, O.P.*
30. AD CAELI REGINAM—*Pius XII*
31. OUR LADY AT HOME—*Richard T.A. Murphy, O.P.*
32. THE BROWN SCAPULAR OF CARMEL—*Henry M. Esteve, O. Carm.*
33. MARY'S ROLE IN THE MYSTICAL BODY—*Thomas A. Stanley, S.M.*
34. MARY AND THE FULLNESS OF TIME—*Jean Danielou, S.J.*
35. PROTESTANTISM AND THE MOTHER OF GOD—*Kenneth F. Dougherty, S.A.*
36. THE LEGION OF MARY—*Edward B. Kotter*
37. DEVELOPING A SOUND MARIAN SPIRITUALITY—*William G. Most*
38. LAETITIAE SANCTAE—*Leo XIII*
39. THE MOTHERHOOD OF MARY—*Emil Neubert, S.M.*
40. THE HAIL MARY—*James G. Shaw*
41. OUR LADY'S SERENITY—*Ronald A. Knox*
42. OUR LADY AND THE HOLY SPIRIT—*Bishop Leon J. Suenens*
43. CHRIST'S DEVOTION TO MARY—*Joseph J. Panzer, S.M.*
44. MARY, OUR SPIRITUAL MOTHER—*William G. Most*
45. MARY IN THE EASTERN CHURCH—*Stephen C. Gulovich*
46. MARY'S MEDIATION AND THE POPES—*Eamon R. Carroll, O. Carm.*

(Continued on the inside rear cover)