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## Franciscan National Marian Institute 1963: Mary and Church Unity

Franciscan National Marian Commission

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**Franciscan**

**National**

**Marian**

**Institute**



**1963**

**MARY AND CHURCH UNITY**

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FRANCISCAN FATHERS  
MARIAN CENTER AND LIBRARY  
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## PROLOGUE

This Marian Institute is dedicated to the task of promoting understanding. Its theme, *Our Lady and Ecumenism*, directs our attention to what will inevitably be a critical point in any ecumenical effort. A real disagreement exists between Catholics and non-Catholics on Our Lady's place in God's plan of salvation and this disagreement will not disappear by being ignored or suppressed. There is need for understanding on all sides; at the same time there is an urgent necessity for Catholics to have a profound awareness of their own beliefs especially in relation to the difficulties of our separated brethren.

In organizing a Marian Institute to meet this need the Franciscan National Marian Commission is carrying on its efforts to fulfill the purpose for which it was established. At this point some may be asking: "What is the Franciscan National Marian Commission?" Perhaps it would be best to answer this question by giving some of the history of this organized movement within the Order of the Friars Minor.

In 1946 the then Minister General, Fr. Valentine Schaaf, established a Central Marian Commission in Rome under the presidency of Fr. Charles Balic. This was done to crystallize and give direction to the tremendous sentiment for Our Blessed Mother which is and has been a Franciscan characteristic since the beginning. To carry out the purpose envisioned in creating a Central Commission, Franciscan National Marian Commissions were established throughout the world. As a further step in organizing Marian activity on the local level, Provincial Commissions were set up in the various Provinces.

The picture has changed somewhat since 1946. Then the Catholic world was anticipating the solemn definition of the dogma of the Assumption and preparing to celebrate the centenary of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The attention of the Church was then directed to its own faith and its consciousness of the dignity of the Mother of God. Now we are prompted to view the same truths of faith in relation to those outside the Church. This calls for an understanding and devotion that is deeper and more intense than was ever required before. The Franciscan National Marian Commission is convinced that it must use every means at its disposal to promote this understanding and devotion among the erudite as well as the ordinary Catholic. It is to this end that the Marian Institute on *Our Lady and Ecumenism* is dedicated.

Alfred Boeddeker, President

Marion Habig  
Alban Maguire

Sergius Wroblewski  
Louis Rohr

Norbert De Amato, Secretary



Reverend Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President/Franciscan National Marian Commission  
121 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco 2, California

Reverend and dear Father:

It was with great pleasure that I received word of the forthcoming Marian Institute, planned by the Franciscan National Marian Commission, for Saturday, April 20, 1963.

In this Age of Mary, truly, the influence of Mary—as Mother of the whole world—is manifested more than at any other time in the history of the Church. The Marian Commission in the United States is to be commended for contributing, as true lovers of Mary, towards the realization of Mary's role in the Unity of the Church of Christ upon earth: *Maria Mater Unitatis!*

International Pontifical Marian Academy  
Charles Balic, O.F.M.  
President



Dear Friends of Our Lady:

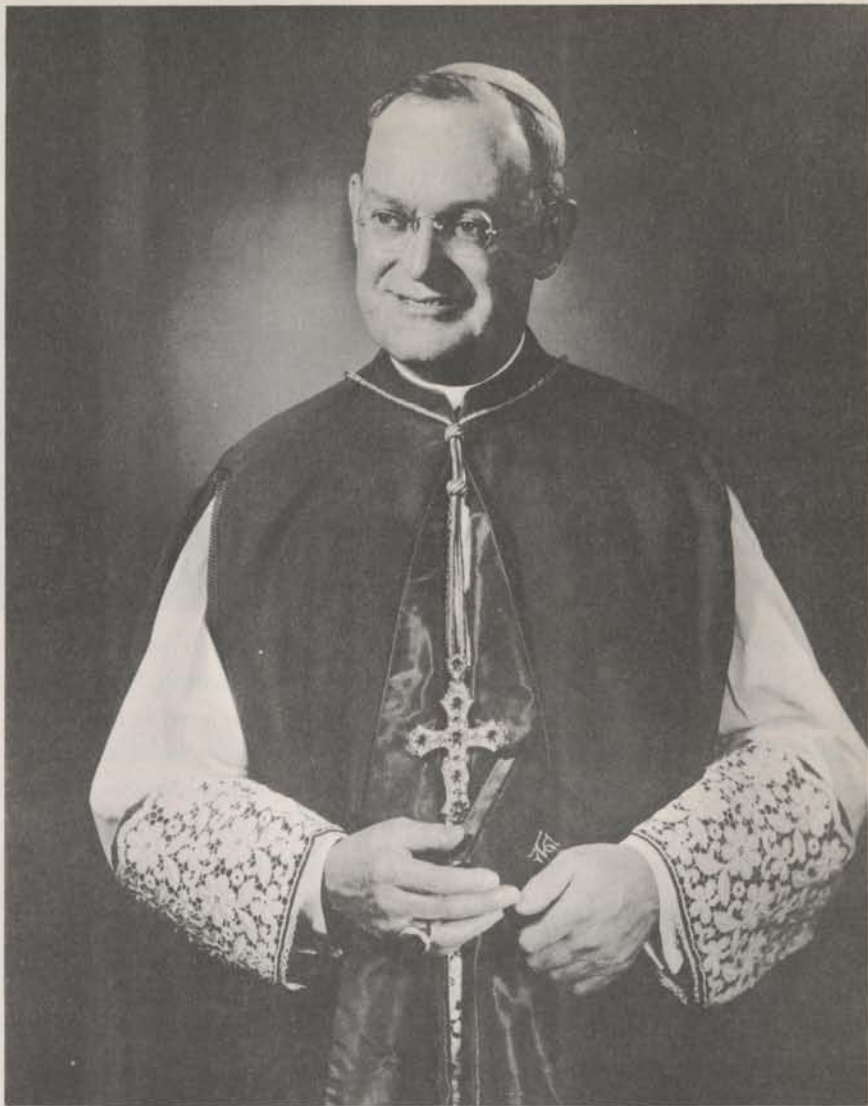
The Franciscan Marian Commission of the United States extends a warm welcome to all participants in this Marian Institute.

We meet at a time when theological interest and emphasis on the part of Christians are gradually to esteem orthodoxy and dogmas far more... The dialogue has made the position of all Christians clearer, the possibility of unity nearer.

We earnestly hope that the Protestant world's revived interest in theology will make solid Mariology more accessible and knowledgeable to all our separated Christians. Mariology will then appear not as "a malignant tumor disfiguring theology" (Barth) but "as the flower of God's revelation in Christ" (O'Meara).

In the climate of mutual kindness and understanding, we look confidently to the "Help of Christians," believing that what seems impossible to us, will through her, be accomplished: *Ut omnes unum sint!*

Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President  
Franciscan National Marian Commission



His Excellency  
MOST REVEREND THOMAS J. RILEY, D.D.



Reverend Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President/Franciscan National Marian Commission  
121 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco 2, California

Reverend and dear Father:

I should like to congratulate you on the choice of the central theme, "Mary and Christian Unity," for the Marian Institute to be held April 20 in Boston under the auspices of the Franciscan National Marian Commission.

The topic is particularly timely in view of the ecumenical movement stirring the Christian world. As an example I might point to "Marie, Mère du Seigneur, Figure de l'Eglise," by Max Thurian, member of the Franciscan community of Taize in France, which was published on October 11, 1962, the very day on which the Second Vatican Council was inaugurated. The author makes it clear that in the early days of the Reformation the Protestant attitude towards the Mother of God was much closer to the Catholic position than today, and it is my fervent prayer that the relations with our 'dissident brethren may become ever closer as a result of the concerted efforts of Christendom.

May I take this opportunity, then, to impart the Seraphic Blessing not only to the members of the Franciscan National Marian Commission, but also to all those who will attend the Marian Institute in Boston this spring.

Augustine Sepinski  
Minister General  
Order of Friars Minor



# Program

FRANCISCAN NATIONAL MARIAN INSTITUTE

## SOLEMN HIGH MASS

CHURCH OF ST. LEONARD OF PORT MAURICE  
(Hanover and Prince Streets - Boston 9, Mass.)  
(NORTH END)

Saturday, April 20, 1963 - 10:00 A.M.

- PRESIDING: His Excellency, the Most Reverend Thomas J. Riley, D.D.,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston
- CELEBRANT: Father Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M., President of the National  
Marian Commission, Province of Santa Barbara, Santa  
Barbara, California
- ASSISTANT PRIEST: Father Roger Imperiale, O.F.M., Guardian and Pastor  
of the Church of St. Leonard
- PREACHER: His Excellency, the Most Reverend Thomas J. Riley, D.D.,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Boston
- DEACON OF THE MASS: Father Marion Habig, O.F.M., member of the  
National Marian Commission, Province of the Sacred Heart,  
St. Louis, Missouri
- SUBDEACON OF THE MASS: Father Sergius Wroblewski, O.F.M., member  
of the National Marian Commission, Province of the Assump-  
tion, Pulaski, Wisconsin
- MASTERS OF CEREMONIES: Father Norbert De Amato, O.F.M., secretary  
of the National Marian Commission, Province of the Im-  
maculate Conception, New York City  
Father Louis Rohr, O.F.M., member of the National  
Marian Commission, Province of St. John Baptist, Cincinnati,  
Ohio
- MUSIC: Columbus Stereos (students of the Christopher Columbus  
Catholic High School)
- CHAPLAINS TO BISHOP RILEY: Father Reginald Redlon, O.F.M.  
Father Noel Antonelli, O.F.M.
- CHAPLAINS TO VERY REVEREND  
DONALD HOAG, O.F.M.: Father Arthur Murray, O.F.M.  
Father Boniface Hanley, O.F.M.
- CHAPLAINS TO VERY REVEREND  
MATTHEW DE BENEDICTIS, O.F.M.: Father John Baptist Frisoli, O.F.M.  
Father Nathaniel Rotondi, O.F.M.

CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

MARIAN PRAYER FOR UNITY

# Program

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS YOUTH CENTER

44 Prince Street - Boston 9, Mass.  
(NORTH END)

Co-Chairmen

FATHER ALBAN MAGUIRE, O.F.M.  
FATHER NORBERT DE AMATO, O.F.M.  
(Members-National Marian Commission)

12:00 P.M. - Luncheon

1:30 P.M. - Father Eamon Carroll, O. Carm., Professor of Mariology  
at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

## MARY AND THE CHURCH

Discussion...

2:30 P.M. - Father Theophane Carroll, O.F.M., St. Anthony Shrine,  
Boston, Mass.

## MARY AND THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

Discussion...

3:30 P.M. - Vocal Selections: Columbus Stereos, under the direction  
of Father Primo Piscitello, O.F.M.

4:00 P.M. - Father Roger Matzerath, S.A., Professor of Theology at  
the Atonement Seminary, Washington, D.C.

## MARY AND THE PROTESTANTS

Discussion...

Closing remarks

Father Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.

President

Franciscan National Marian Commission

Reverend Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President/Franciscan National Marian Commission  
121 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco 2, California

Reverend and dear Father:

The love of the Catholic people for Mary can be matched only by their hunger for more knowledge of their Blessed Mother. The Franciscan National Marian Commission is to be congratulated for its efforts to satisfy this hunger by the present solidly doctrinal program. Holy Name Province is happy to co-sponsor this Institute with our esteemed Sister Province, the Province of the Immaculate Conception.

Donald Hoag, O.F.M.  
Minister Provincial  
Province of the Most Holy Name



Rev. Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President/Franciscan National Marian Commission  
121 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco 2, California

Reverend and dear Father:

As co-sponsors, together with the esteemed Province of the Most Holy Name, we keenly look forward to the National Marian Institute, to be held in Boston, Mass., on April 20, 1963.

May we, in the name of our confreres of the Province of the Immaculate Conception, extend our congratulations to the members of the Franciscan National Marian Commission and assure you of a remembrance in our prayers that our Heavenly Patroness may bless your undertaking and reward your efforts in her behalf.

Matthew M. De Benedictis, O.F.M.  
Minister Provincial  
Province of the Immaculate Conception



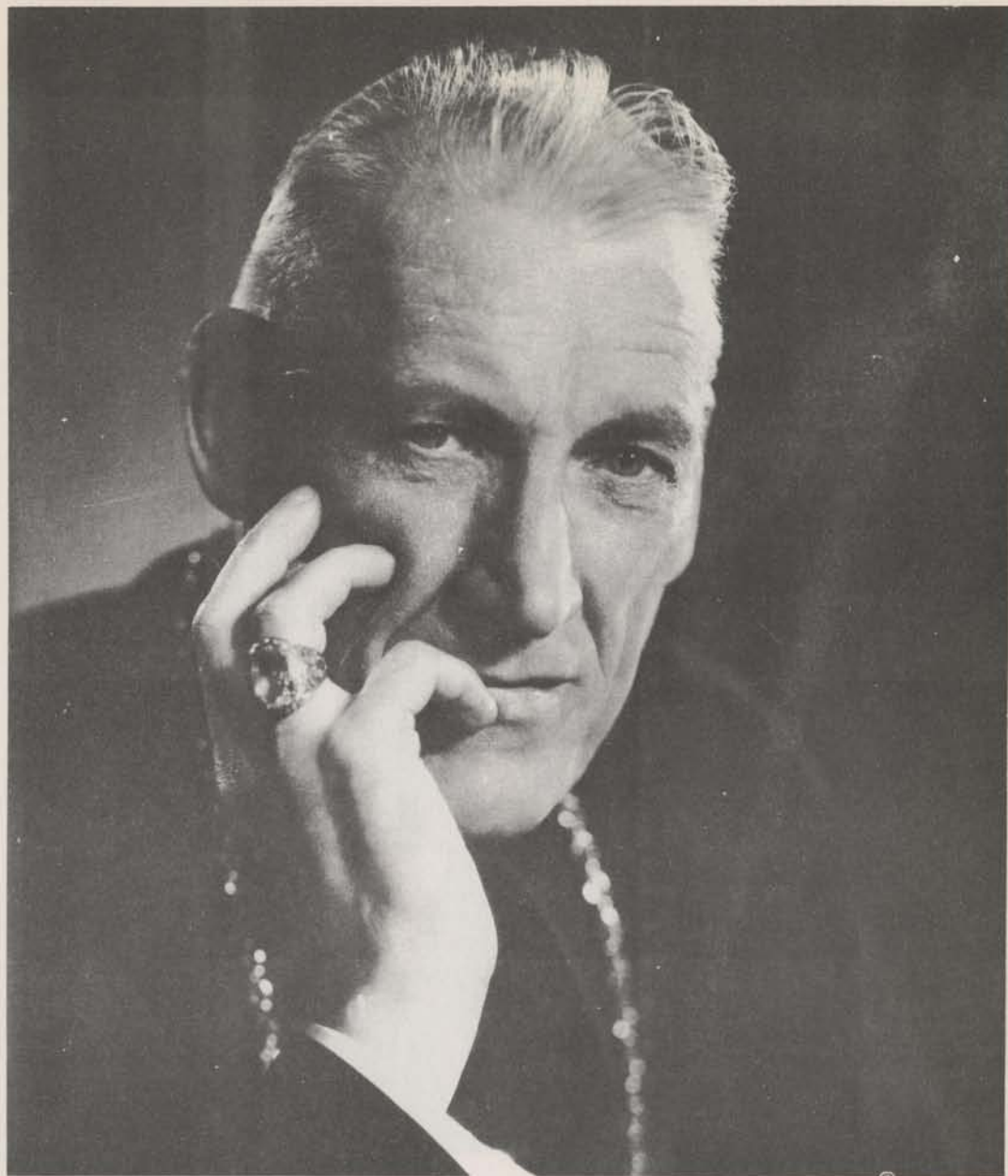




O Divine Spirit, sent by the Father in the name of Jesus, Who dost infallibly assist and guide the Church, pour forth the fullness of Thy gifts upon the Ecumenical Council.... Renew in our time Thy wondrous work, as in a new Pentecost, and grant that Holy Church, gathered together in unanimous, more intense prayer, *around Mary*, the Mother of Jesus, and guided by Peter, may spread the kingdom of the Divine Saviour, which is the kingdom of truth, of justice, of love, and of peace. Amen.

Prayer of Pope John XXIII  
(composed on the occasion of the Second  
Vatican Ecumenical Council)





Reverend Alfred Boeddeker, O.F.M.  
President/Franciscan National Marian Commission  
121 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco 2, California

Reverend and dear Father:

I pray that the Blessed Mother will intercede in the Kingdom of Heaven for all those who participate in the Marian Day celebration under the auspices of the Franciscan Fathers, Saturday, April 20, 1963.

Richard Cardinal Cushing  
Archbishop of Boston

## SERMON DELIVERED DURING MASS

by

His Excellency

MOST REVEREND THOMAS J. RILEY, D.D.

The Marian Institute in which we take part today represents something more than a passing manifestation of devotion, something deeper than a scholarly investigation into the foundations of Marian theology. The period of history in which we live has been designated the Age of Mary... This is Mary's Age because God has intended it to be so...

If God has chosen to make known in extraordinary and unmistakable ways His desire that devotion to Mary should be characteristic of our age, we are bound, it would seem, to look beyond the superficial attractiveness of certain aspects of Marian devotion to its essential relation with the ultimate purposes of human life, as God's grace has ordained them. And we cannot, in the age in which we live, approach any of the great problems which engage us, or invite our cooperation, without asking ourselves what part Mary is divinely destined to play in them, and how we may benefit from her maternal intercession as we work for their solution...

Thus we are led to the conclusion that our very apostolic life, as ministers of the Church and instruments of God's grace, is a participation in the mediation which Mary is divinely empowered to exercise in union with her Divine Son. The Church would not exist today if Mary had not cooperated in preparing the human life of Christ...

Are we in danger of forgetting these simple truths today as we take part in the efforts which are being made for the reunion of Christendom and the reconciliation of our separated brethren?... Can we insist that she was but a woman among women without calling into question the central doctrine of the Redemption around which the very structure of Christianity has been erected?...

Indeed, only when Mary becomes a topic of discussion (for the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant) will the Ecumenical Movement be drawn into the deep currents of divine grace that form the heart and soul of the Mystical Body of Christ.

For those who have a sense of their apostolic mission as Christians, Mary must be a profound reality... Priests and leaders of Catholic Action must strive to make Mary's part in our Redemption thoroughly understood and deeply appreciated. Grown men and women must not be left with the impression that devotion to Mary belongs to childish sentimentality and is unsuitable for those who have attained adult maturity. Once Mary's office has been universally proclaimed and accepted, one of the greatest obstacles in the way of a truly apostolic life will have been removed. It will be your immediate purpose today to promote the theological discussion that will bring into enlarging perspective the place of Mary in the apostolic life of the Church. As you do so, you will find new meaning in the truth for yourselves as well as for others, that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who was Christ the Son of God, is likewise the mother of all men and Co-redemp-trix with her Son of all for whom He suffered and died on the Cross.



## MARY and the CHURCH

Catholics and Protestants are sharply divided on the role of Mary in the Church. Protestant experts agree that Catholic doctrine and devotion to the Virgin Mary clearly reflect the way the Roman Catholic Church regards itself. For Catholics Mary is the model and mother of the Church.

The Mary-Church relationship has its roots in the New Testament. St. Paul compares the bond between Christ and the faithful to the unity between head and other members in a human body. Our Lord is the head of his spiritual or 'mystical body' which is the Church; those who belong to the Church are 'members' of this 'body'.

The twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse speaks of the "woman clothed with the sun." A great dragon wages war against this mysterious woman, but she succeeds in bringing forth and caring for her Son. "The rest of her offspring" are those "who keep the commandments of God, and hold fast the testimony of Jesus" (Apoc. 12, 17). St. John is describing the Church under the figure of Mary; what he says is true both of Mary in reference to Christ and of the Church in reference to all Christians.

Early authors wrote of Mary as prototype of the Church, showing likenesses between Mary, virgin and mother, and the Church, also virgin and mother. The baptismal font is the virginal womb where mother Church brings forth her children to the new life of Christ. Mary and the Church have the same spiritual children — the brethren of Christ, members of his mystical body.

The question, "what is the true place of Mary in God's plan of salvation, in his Church?" is of immense ecumenical importance. No question is of more painful immediacy in Christendom. According to advance reports, soon after it reconvenes in September, 1963, the Second Vatican Council will consider Mary's place in the Church — Mary, Mother of God and Mother of men.

Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm.  
Whitefriars' Hall  
Washington, D.C.

## MARY in the ORTHODOX CHURCHES of the EAST

The position of the Blessed Virgin in the daily liturgical life is brought out by citations from the Liturgy and the Divine Office, showing the ordinary nourishment of the faithful, and emphasizing that these texts in the main date back to the days when East and West were one.

A very brief account of Mary among the Eastern Church Fathers will tend to show why there is a great tradition of veneration of the Mother of God among the modern Orthodox, who, faithful to their Fathers, are nourished to this day on the Fathers' teachings.

The fact that Orthodox theologians of today are uneasy in the face of Western definitions of Marian doctrine, is explained by the facts of the nine hundred year separation, psychological and historical factors, and the fact that the papacy has gone along this road without the collaboration of the Orthodox Church.

Finally, the position of the Blessed Virgin in the Roman Catholic communion and that of Orthodoxy is shown to be essentially the same.

Theophane Carroll, O.F.M.  
St. Anthony Shrine  
Boston, Mass.

## MARY and the PROTESTANTS

Protestants in recent years have shown a new interest in Our Lady. Cardinal Bea, head of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, notes: "Today quite a few Protestant theologians admit that...Marian doctrine is intimately bound up with many doctrines of the Christian religion which interest Protestants also."

Three reasons for the new interest may be discerned. The ecumenical movement has contributed a large part by stimulating study and discussion of Christian doctrine. A new and deeper interest in the Catholic Church, brought about partially through the Vatican Council, has also added to a Protestant interest in Mariology. Dialogues between Catholics and Protestants have naturally led to a renewed examination of Marian doctrines.

Present day objections of Protestants to Catholic Mariology may be found in the initial reactions of Protestants to the Vatican Council and in published reports of dialogues held between Catholics and Protestants.

One primary objection of Protestants is that Catholic devotion to Mary proceeds from some kind of idolatry in which that honor is given to a creature which is due to God alone. Moreover, it is claimed that Catholics set up a twofold mediation, that of Christ and of Mary, and that this takes away from the unique mediation of Christ.

Another difficulty is that, by defining the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin in 1950, the Catholic is seen as clearly and explicitly claiming the authority to promulgate a doctrine which is without direct biblical foundation. This has aroused the fear that future dogmatic developments may be increasingly independent of Scripture.

A final widespread objection is that Catholic manifestations of Marian piety are too independent of Christ. As one author puts it: "It is with bewilderment that a Protestant reads of recent popes dedicating all mankind to Mary, appealing to her for mercy, grace, and help in time of misfortune, speaking of her as receiving the same lot as Christ in order to atone for the sins of men, and even affirming that she offered up the Son in her own way so that there is a sense in which it is proper to speak of her as having redeemed the human race together with Christ."

What is the basis for the difficulties which Protestants have with Catholic Mariology? Cardinal Bea places it in the rejection of the cult and invocation of the saints. Fr. Marie Joseph Nicholas, O.P., says that the difficulties of Protestants have their roots in an understanding of the Church. Fr. Jean Danielou, S.J., declares that the problem can be traced back to a differing understanding of the Incarnation.

Whatever Protestant difficulties and their causes may be, the current ecumenical atmosphere suggests the need for new efforts on the part of Catholics to present Marian doctrines and to practice Marian devotions with prudence and precision.

Roger Matzerath, S.A.  
Atonement Seminary  
Washington, D.C.



PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Lord, Make me an instrument of Your peace!  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
And it is in dying that we are born  
to eternal life,