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Marian Activities, Scholastic Year 1965-1966

Provincial Marian Commission, Province of the Immaculate Conception

Matthew M. DeBenedictis

Norbert D'Amato

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MARIAN ACTIVITIES

Scholastic Year



1965 - 1966

Province of the
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Order of Friars Minor
New York, N.Y.

M A R I A N P R O G R A M S

presented

by Scholastic Units

of the Immaculate Conception Province

Order of Friars Minor

1965-1966

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INTRODUCTION

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN THE PATRISTIC AGE

In the interest of ecumenism, Pope Paul VI convoked two International Marian Congresses for the purpose of justifying Marian devotion and doctrine in the Catholic Church from the two sources of divine Revelation, namely, Sacred Scripture and Tradition. The first of these, already held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from March 17 to 25, 1965, at which I represented the Very Reverend Provincial, has paved the way for a fresh and penetrating search into the development of Marian studies in Sacred Scripture. The second is presently under consideration for 1967, at which a similar endeavor is anticipated from the other, equally important source of divine Revelation, namely, Tradition.

It was precisely in view of the tremendous task set before the second International Marian Congress that I undertook this year to present the authenticated writings of the Fathers of the Church, the first teachers of Christianity, on the Blessed Virgin Mary. In so doing, it was my hope that each reader would be able to dispel for himself the difficulty experienced by those who refer to such a "great silence" on Mary in the Patristic Age as to be amazed at how "Catholic Mariology has been able to build in all good faith..."

Earliest Testimonies

The first Christian writers naturally followed the pattern set for them by the Evangelists, whose sole concern was to teach Christ. The few Marian scriptural passages were meant to focus greater attention on her divine Son.

Among the Apostolic Fathers, St. Ignatius of Antioch alone made mention of Mary, and then only to reaffirm the already commonly accepted doctrine of the virginal conception of Christ against the Gnostics.

Testimonies of the Fathers

After St. Ignatius, there followed a period of silence for about thirty years, at which time the Fathers began to speak of Mary more frequently. Their testimonies are here presented both chronologically and systematically, in order to express the gradual unfolding of their beliefs in this singular person.

1. Virginity. A few of the earliest Fathers made references to a triple phase in Mary's virginal life: before the birth, in the birth, and after the Birth of Christ. By the fourth century, their testimonies on Mary's absolute and perpetual virginity became more explicit. St. Zeno of Verona (died 372), for example, taught: "She was a virgin

at the moment of conception, a virgin at birth, and a virgin after her Son." In the fifth century, the doctrine was brought to its summit by St. Augustine (died 430).

2. Mary, the New Eve. While St. Justin the Martyr was the first to enunciate the parallelism between Eve and Mary, it was St. Ireneus (died 200) who speculatively extended it by contrasting Eve, "who became by her disobedience the cause of death," to Mary, "who became by her obedience the cause of salvation." The parallelism was subsequently accepted by all the Fathers.

3. Divine Maternity. The earliest Fathers never categorically denominated Mary as "Mother of God," even though their belief was clearly manifested in expressions tantamount to an affirmation of the divine maternity. With St. Gregory of Nazianzus (died 390); however, this doctrine was accepted as the pivot of the Church's teaching about Christ and salvation: "If anyone does not believe that St. Mary is the Mother of God, he is severed from the Godhead."

4. Holiness. During the first three centuries, the Fathers did not give evidence of the existence of any rare and singular holiness in Mary. While they did show some awareness of her sanctity, they did not hesitate at the same time to place imperfections and faults in her. It was St. Ephrem (died 373) who first advanced her singular sinlessness when he wrote: "In every truth, you and your Mother are alone perfectly beautiful in every respect; for in you, Lord, there is no stain at all; and in your Mother there is no spot."

5. Death and Bodily Assumption. The scant evidence found among the fathers, especially during the first five centuries, suggests strongly a widespread ignorance relative to the ultimate destiny of Our Lady. Of special interest, however, is a homily, entitled The Assumption, only recently discovered and attributed to a Theoteknos, bishop of Levas, in Palestine. It seems to be one of the earliest Catholic affirmations of belief in the bodily assumption of Mary, dating back to the second half of the sixth century. The author submits several reasons why Mary should have been assumed into heaven, body and soul. In the eighth century, St. John Damascene (died 749) confessed that belief in Mary's bodily assumption was based on the fact that "we have received it from ancient tradition."

6. Intercessory Power. The titles "Mediatrix" and "Dispensatrix," applied to Mary, made their first appearance with St. Ephrem (died 373). Her role in the economy of salvation was summed up by St. John Damascene (died 749) in the following words: "I am the source of medicine to those who are sick."

7. Spiritual Motherhood. St. Ambrose (died 397) believed that Mary became the Mother of men under the cross. She was invoked as the spiritual Mother of men by St. Augustine (died 430): "In every truth she is spiritually the Mother of the members of our Head."

8. Archetype of the Church. Already in the third century, St. Clement of Alexandria (died 215) called the "Virgin Mother...the Church." St. Augustine (died 430) pointed out that "If She (the Church) gives birth to Christ's members, She is most like Mary." And he concluded: "Do we not see under the figure of Mary the type of the holy Church?"

Conclusion

Indeed, ever since the Mother of God prophesied "He that is mighty has done great things to me," man has felt a constant drive to penetrate the mystery of this privileged figure. The Fathers of the Church were the first to attempt this. While all these efforts have subsequently been rewarded with a greater understanding and appreciation of her, yet man is still compelled to confess with Pope Paul VI: "We will never be able to go deeply enough into the stupendous fact of what God has accomplished in Mary."

Rev. Norbert De Amato, O.F.M.
Chairman, Marian Commission

Note: This paper is but a digest of the original article, under the same title, which appeared in The Marian Era, 1966, vol. 7, pp. 23-26, 68-73.

MARIAN NIGHT
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SEMINARY
TROY, NEW YORK

December 7, 1965

- I. INTRODUCTION.....Frater Charles Soto, O.F.M.
- II. WELCOMING ADDRESS.....Reverend Alban Montella, O.F.M.
- III. HYMN: Los Coros Angelicos.....Central American Students
- IV. PAPER: Mary in the Light of Apostolic Catechesis
.....Frater Anicetus Carpenella, O.F.M.
- V. HYMN: Ave Maria.....Schola Cantorum
- VI. PAPER: Mary, Mother of the Church
.....Frater Emery Lovasik, O.F.M.
- VII. HYMN: Magnificat
Schola Cantorum
- VIII. CONCLUSION.....Reverend Norbert De Amato, O.F.M.

WELCOME ADDRESS

St. Ambrose, when writing about Our Blessed Lady, had this to say of her: "Mary is the type of the Church."

In these words of the Saint, there appears to be a justifiable foundation for all the pronouncements of Mary in reference to the Church. This traditional Christian concept of Mary's typical relationship to the Church has its source in primitive Christian doctrine: first because it was already in existence in the early days of Christianity, and secondly, because it belongs to the innermost and essential substance of the Christian reality.

At one time during the sessions of Vatican Council II, there had been some disturbing reports circulating the Catholic world that Mary's position in the Church was being considered with extreme caution lest non-Catholics take offence of our veneration of the Mother of God.

Swiftly and abruptly, the Holy Father dispelled all apprehensions about these implications when he unexpectedly but officially proclaimed Mary--MOTHER OF THE CHURCH--at the close of the third session of the Council. His words at this time were the following:

"...We have felt it opportune to consecrate in this public session a title suggested from various parts of the Christian world and which is particularly dear to us, because in a marvelous synthesis it sums up the privileged position recognized by the Council for the Virgin Mary in the Holy Church. For the glory of the Virgin Mary and for our consolation, we proclaim Mary MOTHER OF THE CHURCH, that is of the whole people of God, of the faithful as well as of the pastors. And we wish that through this title, the Mother of God should be still more honored and invoked by the entire Christian People." His Holiness ended this talk with these words: "In this manner, we entrust to the care of this Heavenly Mother the entire human family with its PROBLEMS and WORRIES, with its lawful aspirations and ardent hopes."

Rev. Alban Montella, O.F.M.

MARIA IN AMBITU CATECHESIS APOSTOLICAE

The purpose of this paper is to bring you back in time a few weeks to the then peaceful Dominican Republic. There is a convention going on-- a Marian Congress. Nothing new is being discussed, but new light is being shed on the place of Mary in the teaching of the Church in the light of Scripture.

The Gospels tell us that there were two beginnings in the teachings of the Church. The first was the body of pure facts given to the faithful who did not hear the word of God. This body is the Kerigma, that is, proclamation. Kerigma is the early teaching (missions) or the good news that Jesus Christ is God and Man as taught by the apostles. The Kerigma is not so much a body of doctrine as it is a Person -- Christ. He is the Good News, the Gift of the Father to us. The second teaching method was the doctrinal instruction given to those who already received the good news -- the Catechesis. The Acts of the Apostles explains the meaning of Catechesis in this way: "Therefore, of these men who have been in our company all the time that the Lord Jesus moved among us, from John's baptism until the day that he was taken up from us, of these, one must become witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1, 21-22)

Now you may be asking yourselves: How was Mary contained in this apostolic teaching? The Congress answered this question, saying that she was contained in two ways.

I. There are explicit references to Mary which we find in the following passages:

1. "While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brethren were standing outside, seeking to speak to him. And someone said to him, 'Behold, thy mother and thy brethren are standing outside, seeking thee.' But he answered and said to him who told him, 'Who is my mother and who are my brethren?' And stretching forth his hands toward his disciples, he said, 'Behold, my mother and my brethren: For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother.'" (Matt. 12, 46-50)

Upon first hearing these words or reading them, they may sound cruel, but we must remember who Jesus was and what was his mission. Father Eamon R. Carroll says of this reference:

The Evangelist places this incident of his mother and his brethren immediately after an open conflict between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees. Our Lord had been forced to warn his followers about "this brood of vipers." The early Church found itself menaced, not only by the Scribes and Pharisees; there was also trouble from within.

Some of the Jewish converts were insisting that the religious observances of the old Law, e. g., circumcision and forbidden foods, be imposed on pagan recruits to Christianity. In this new danger, threatening the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, the solution was again sought in the teaching of the Lord. His independence of the Jewish Sabbath was recalled. He had denounced the Pharisees for vaunting the physical ties that bound him to his family, even to his own mother.

2. Jesus' listeners, marveling at his wisdom, exclaimed, "Isn't his mother Mary?" (Mark 6, 13 and John 6, 42)

3. Once a woman in the crowd praised Mary: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the breasts that fed thee," and Jesus replied, "Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." (Luke 11, 27-28) Here again it occurred just after Our Lord had been openly accused of driving out devils by the power of Satan. In contrast to the blasphemy of the Pharisees, who twisted the good things of God into something evil, the true disciple, like Mary, must hear the word of God and keep it. In both cases Our Lord is steering his hearers toward a correct understanding of their relationship to himself. Not human ties, but faith and doing the will of God bring divine blessings.

4. "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olivet... (Acts 1, 12) all these with one mind continued steadfastly in prayer with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren" (Acts 1, 14)

The setting shows the importance of Mary. In the company of Our Lady the leaders of the Church prepared in prayer for the great work that lay ahead of them, once the Spirit would be poured out on Pentecost day.

5. "But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law."

In the writings of St. John we find the following:

6. At the marriage feast of Cana, "...the mother of Jesus said to him: 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her: 'What would you have me do, woman? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the waiters: 'Do whatever he tells you.'" (John 2, 3-5)

How is Mary involved? This revealed the glory of Jesus and that he was definitely beginning his public life. Our Lord worked this miracle at his mother's request. Mary made this request because of her deep faith and trust in God that her son would perform a miracle of kindness to stir up the faith of his first followers.

7. "At the cross of Jesus was his mother...when Jesus saw his mother and his beloved disciple he said to his mother: 'Woman, behold thy son.' And then he said to his disciple: 'Behold thy mother.'"

On Calvary, St. John may not have understood the significance of the Master's words, but by the time the Gospel was written he knew that Our Lord wished to proclaim the spiritual motherhood of Mary. Our Lord is saying that his mother must strengthen the faith of the infant Church and of all Christians of future ages.

8. "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. And being with child, she cried out in her travail and was in the anguish of delivery. And another sign was seen in heaven, and behold, a great red dragon," who "stood before the woman who was about to bring forth, that when she had brought forth he might devour her son. And she brought forth a male child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to his throne." (Apoc. 12, 1-5)

II. The second way that Mary is found in Scripture is through the Silent References--the passages where Mary could easily have been mentioned but is not. This view is held by faithful Mariologists. An example would be:

St. John in the Apocalypse says: "Among the people in my vision of the opened heaven were the leaders, and...round the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind. And the first living creature is like a lion and the second like a calf, and the third has a face, as it were, of a man, and the fourth is like an eagle flying" (Apoc. 4, 4-7) In another place St. John says: "And I heard living voices of angels and of creatures and elders about the throne." (Apoc. 5, 11) Never once in the relating of his celestial vision does he mention Mary. If the evangelist and the elders were there, the faithful Mariologist conjectures that Mary must have been among the creatures also.

Now we bring you to the next point of the Congress's schema--how should we consider these Marian elements of Apostolic Catechesis?

Again we quote Carroll, "That the Mother of Jesus was there is true throughout Our Lord's life. From the Annunciation until Our Lord sent the Holy Spirit after his Ascension, Mary is on the Gospel scene. What the Scriptures say about the Mother of Jesus is part of the good news of salvation."

In this light we must take into consideration the way the Bible is presented:

1. History of Literary Forms: This study takes advantage of literary criticism, the history of religion and sociology. Those who adhere to this approach unfortunately make a false distinction between the real Christ of history and the Christ of faith developed by the Christian community.

2. General Literary Approach: The manner of writing in the Orient must be studied and, by doing this, different ways of writing and the laws proper to these modes can be discovered. To interpret the text properly, we must discover the literary form used by the author (the easterners in the past had many more ways of expressing their thought than we are familiar with). There are catechesis (instructions), narrations, testimonies, hymns, and doxologies in these writings. Where a historical narrative is discovered, it must be interpreted as salvation history, i.e., the history of God's self-revelation in events, not history in our western sense.

3. The Body of Biblical Literature: An inspired book cannot be taken as a separate work, for the Bible is a complete unity with one message--salvation--running through it from beginning to end. Once a book is accepted as inspired, it becomes an integral part of a Whole, and loses its independent existence. Always progressive, revelation ends with the promulgation of the Canon, the list of inspired biblical books. This ending provides the correct key to interpreting each section of the Bible, the full unity of which is definitely due to God's action and is likewise reflected in the works of the inspired authors.

How do these principles apply to the texts and silent references mentioned above?

After the Ascension of Jesus, the primitive Church began to speak about him. The sermons of Peter, Stephen, and Paul have for their immediate purpose the establishment of Jesus' Messiahship; at the same time these sermons indirectly were concerned with his divinity.

Judaism identified Jesus as the son of Joseph the carpenter, and thus denied that he was the Messiah (cf. John 7, 27). Gnosticism, according to St. Irenaeus, claimed that Christ passed through Mary as water through a tube, thus doubting whether Christ truly underwent a human birth. From this the infancy narratives appeared to defend Christ's birth. Now who else could provide the information regarding Christ's birth except Mary? Thus arose the narratives of the annunciation and the nativity which first proved the divinity, then the humanity of Christ. These narratives were seen to be of such importance that they were inserted in the Apostolic Catechesis. Matthew and Luke use them, but each uses the material according to his own evangelical ends and purposes.

Writing for Jewish readers, Matthew uses these Marian elements to establish Christ as Messiah, which the primitive consciousness of the

Church had already penetrated in the preaching of Peter and under the inspired understanding of Isaias 7, 14, intending to show how Christ fulfilled this prophecy. Thus it happened that Mary was introduced in the Gospel account of the birth of Jesus (Matt. 1, 25).

Luke, on the other hand, writes for a Greek (Hellenic) audience according to the valid idea of Christ's kingship. He refers to the action of the Holy Spirit, who intervenes in Mary's conception. And the one to whom she will give birth will receive the seat of David, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a child, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of David his father, and of his kingdom there will be no end. (Luke 1, 30-33)

That intervention also demands a perennial mystical reign in the Church. In the second reign, as in the first, Mary is present. St. Luke in these texts associates Mary with the person and mission of Christ, and introduces Mary into the story of salvation.

As a result of the teachings of these two evangelists, Matthew and Luke, Mary is inserted into the Christian consciousness as a theological image, there to be contemplated.

Paul it is to be said, taught Luke the importance of Mary in the history of salvation. He professes the pre-existence of Christ, yet a Christ born bodily of a woman, and this confirms the apostolic teaching. Besides, his parallelism between Eve and Mary was developed by the early Church Fathers, as St. Augustine, St. Irenaeus, and St. Jerome.

St. Irenaeus, the first theologian of Mariology, develops the comparison:

Eve, having Adam as her husband, but herself still a virgin...was disobedient and so brought death upon herself and the whole human race. Similarly, Mary, espoused yet a Virgin, became by her obedience the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race...Though the one disobeyed God, the other was drawn to obey him, and thus the Virgin Mary became the advocate of the virgin Eve. And as the human race was sentenced to death by means of a virgin, so by means of a virgin mankind is saved. A virgin's disobedience is balanced by a Virgin's obedience.

St. Jerome states the comparison in the form of an axiom: "Death through Eve, life through Mary."

How are we to interpret Christ's two responses: "Who is my mother and who are my brethren?" and again "...blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it"? First, Christ is both the son of Mary and the Son of the Father from whom he received his special mission. This created an unusual paradox (thought). Secondly, by Law the son was obliged to give due honor to his mother; Christ accepts this and practiced this precept. Thirdly, in Judaism a teacher was superior to parents; for the latter gave life in this world, the former led to future life. If this is kept in mind, then the appearance of unexpected formulas is to be understood according to historical circumstances, brevity of sermon, and social structure of the Jewish people. Many are those who project into the text the mentality of our own times.

In these Marian elements there are certain active and vital forces present. These forces make for a continuing and constant interpretation of these texts.

Modern Bible studies have made us aware of the presence of Mary in the Scriptures more than ever before. For some time now, Protestants have been discovering Mary through Scripture, while Catholics are rediscovering her in Scripture. The American Lutheran, Professor Jaroslav Pelikan, writes: 'When the New Testament urges that Christians consider the cloud of witnesses who surround them as they run the race of faith, it certainly includes the first witness of the life and works of Jesus Christ—his Mother.' (The Riddle of Roman Catholicism, 1959, p. 142)

In the biblical texts one must recognize a period of Dormition: Is this poverty of Marian texts real or apparent? It is certainly apparent. St. Jerome and contemporary theologian Romano Guardini support this. The idea is that Scripture gives us a sufficient lead to understand Mary, as is evident from the texts quoted in the beginning of this paper.

In the biblical texts we should also recognize Evident Growth: The idea is that these texts are full of meaning, both evident and silent, and consequently give birth to newer and deeper levels of meaning.

Lastly we see an additional growth: the newer and deeper levels of meaning give rise to a real development of understanding. There is a certain logic of the heart (of love) which assists in the penetration of these texts. Thus, even by the time of St. Basil no one believed that Mary was not a perpetual virgin (the idea seems to be that this doctrine is not directly found in Scripture—Christian understanding gradually came to this position).

One factor in the development was the prayerful consideration of Holy Mary as totally dedicated, body and soul, to the service of her Son and God. In their reflections, guided by the Church, Christians understand as pertaining to Catholic faith that perfect virginity, so praised by St. Paul, was also true of the Virgin Mary.

In conclusion, if the exegete is faithful to the original text and open to its meaning, we will always see progress in the understanding of Mary.

Here I think it appropriate to quote the words of Pius XII:

The Sacred Scriptures tell us many glorious things about the Blessed Virgin. In fact, her magnificent offices and gifts, namely her virginal motherhood and unspotted holiness, are expressly asserted therein. The description of the Virgin presented there in outline appears in such living colors that it almost constitutes a portrait. But the man who considers it possible to define adequately and to explain correctly the Blessed Virgin's great dignity and sublimity from the Sacred Scripture alone, or who thinks that even the Sacred Scriptures can be explained properly without taking Catholic tradition and the sacred teaching authority sufficiently into account, is very far from the truth. (October 24, 1954)

Fra. Anicetus J. Carpenella, O.F.M.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

Of all the topics treated at the Second Vatican Council, few have created so much excitement, either within the Council or around the world, as the question of the Virgin Mary, the one which at first sight might be expected to be so innocuous as to pass unobserved.

When the schema on the Virgin Mary was presented to the Council Fathers, it presented a problem: How should this schema be treated? Would it be more beneficial to discuss it as a separate schema or to incorporate it in the schema "De Ecclesia"? The Fathers were divided on this question. Some held a "Christotypical" opinion: Mary, by being Mother of Christ, who is Head of the Mystical Body, begins to be in a certain sense above the Church, between Christ and the Church. She is at the summit of the Church as its true Mother and Queen. Others held an "Ecclesiotypical" opinion: Mary is a member of the Mystical Body of Christ as the first redeemed, the first believer. She is in the Church as its member, its type, and its exemplar.

On November 21, 1964, in his address closing the Third Session of the Council, Pope Paul offered a few suggestions for breaking the deadlock. He noted that the theme of this Council was the Church and that he hoped that the Fathers would untangle the problem concerning the Schema in the best way possible so that all will recognize "that supremely eminent position, which is proper to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church: the place highest after Christ and at the same time closest to us, that we might honor her with the title 'Mother of the Church.'" This title does not have the importance that has been given to it, as if this title were destined to procure the glory of Mary and the consolation of the Church. That would be asking too much of a simple sentence. In his address, Pope Paul uses this expression only in passing, in a conditional manner, separated from the main thought of the sentence. Why this reserve? Because the title poses some difficult problems. There are a few meanings for "Mother" and for "Church." Depending on the meaning of these two words, the title will either have a valid sense or not.

Tradition exhibits the relationship between Mary and the Church in various ways. According to Saint Augustine, "Mary is part of the Church, a holy member, an excellent member, the most eminent member, but still a member of the whole body." Saint Ambrose asserts that she is a "type of the Church." Saint Bernard saw Mary as intermediary between Christ and the Church. Titles of this kind express some aspects of Mary's relationship to the Church. Of them all, which is the most basic, central, illuminating? A few modern authors, such as O. Semmelroth and A. Muller, select the view that Mary is the prototype of the Church. But this idea is not primary, and is not wholly valid, since Mary is not the prototype of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which is essential to the Church. Mary's relationship to the Church is not by

a sense of derivation of the Hierarchy and the sacramental, magisterial and gubernative organization of the Church. Christ directly laid down the prime elements of the Ecclesiastical organization, which the Apostles developed and made concrete in the early single, local Churches after Pentecost. Mary had neither place nor function in this organization, but among the Apostles she only presided in praying and showing forth the testimony of the Nativity and the Infancy of Christ and especially his Humanity and Incarnation as the Word. She was a canal or a divine instrument of revelation. The Acts of the Apostles tells us: "All these continued in prayer with the women and Mary, the Mother of Jesus and with his brethren." However, none of the above-mentioned formulas completely satisfy the Catholic mind; they all fail to explain why Mary is the foundation or model of the Church, or why she stands between Christ and the Church. The truth that is most securely anchored in the sources of revelation and most clearly defines the relations between Mary and the Church is the simple fact stated by Pope Leo XIII and re-echoed by Pope Paul at the Council, that Mary is Mother of the Church.

At the very outset of this discussion we might question whether the title has only a devotional-psychological origin by which the soul of the Christian flees from the trials of this life to Mary as refuge and a heavenly patron, considers and calls her "Mother" by a certain natural or supernatural instinct; or whether the title might be able to be proved as expressive of revealed truth from God, transmitted to us by the Sacred Scriptures: namely, that it is expressive of the true and proper maternity by which Mary generates Christians into the life of divine grace, whence she might be able to be called their Mother, and indeed Mother of the Church.

Mary had been prepared for the divine motherhood by her Immaculate Conception and all the graces flowing from it. When the angel announced God's proposal, Mary offered to God her free acquiescence and in return received into her womb the Son of God. From Sacred Scripture we know that Mary knowingly and lovingly co-operated in the Incarnation of God's Son, who was to establish the "Kingdom of David" (that is, of God) in the world by his life and salvation-bearing death: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord will give him the throne of his father, David." She knew she was Co-operatrix of Christ in the economy of salvation, which she calls "mercy" in her Magnificat and by which God wished to recapitulate all things for His Son as in the center of all promises, prophecies, and ancient expectations, and in the font of grace and salvation: "And his mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him." "He has given help to Israel, his servant, mindful of his mercy. . . even as he spoke to our forefathers. . . to Abraham and his posterity forever." Because of the most holy disposition of her soul, she offered to God according to the decisions of her will to serve him in humble devotion and ardent love: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word." All that we can learn from the Sacred Scripture about the active function of Mary in the economy of salvation, especially her generation of the Saviour

of the World and in like manner, her conscious and permanent co-operation in the redemption and generation of the Mystical Body of Christ are applicable to the relation of motherhood to be placed between Mary and the Church, if the Church is understood as the Mystical Body: that is, the universal gathering of those who receive grace and redemption from Christ in the economy of salvation.

In consequence of her consent to be the Mother of the Messiah, she entered into a relationship with all the subjects of the Messianic King. Mary became Mother of Christ; beyond that, her motherhood extended to the entire Christian populace, to the whole Church founded by Jesus Christ.

We are certain from tradition that Mary is Mother of the Head and Body, hence the Church. But how and in what manner is she our Mother? Morally? Juridically? Or in a deeper, ontologically real sense? Moral and juridical maternity is clear; Mary embraces all the faithful with motherly love and helps them from Heaven with her prayers. But tradition asserts more than this. She is our Mother because she generates us, causing in us a real origin of supernatural life. When did she give birth to us? Three main alternatives occur: the Incarnation, associating in the Redemption, and heavenly intercession. The Incarnation is an aspect of her moral maternity, and it is only a remote origin of our supernatural life. Hence Mary's spiritual motherhood depends mostly on her co-redemptive activity. The more closely she was associated with the work of redemption, cause of our regeneration and birth of the Church, the more truly is she our Mother.

The Incarnation establishes a direct continuity between Mary and the Church, for the faithful are the Body of Christ, who is generated and formed in them. By consenting to become the Mother of Jesus, Mary had to take under her maternal charge His Mystical Body. The birth of the Redeemer from a daughter of our race inaugurated solidarity between Him and all mankind. From the moment of the Incarnation, Christ contained in mysterious fashion all the members of the Mystical Body He came to redeem. Mary gave Him the power to make our nature His Own; in her and from her virginal flesh Christ took to Himself the humanity that constitutes Him as our brother.

Therefore the womb of Mary is the womb of the Church. Such is the authoritative doctrine of Saint Pius X:

In one and the same womb of his most chaste Mother, Christ took to himself human flesh and at the same time added to it a spiritual body made up of all those who were to believe in him. Therefore Mary, while carrying the Savior in her womb, may be said to have carried likewise all those whose life was contained in the Savior's life. All of us, consequently, who are united to Christ...have come forth from Mary's womb like a body attached to its Head.

As the Pope teaches here, we were all contained in the womb of Mary from the moment she conceived her Son; by the very fact that she became the Mother of Jesus, she also became our Mother. Her spiritual Maternity is rooted in the mystery of the Incarnation.

This is true motherhood. When Mary consented to the Incarnation, she represented all mankind and spoke in the name of the whole human race. In her Fiat is contained the "yes" of each and every man who has been, is, or will be conscious of his commitment to his Creator. When she conceived Christ, she spiritually conceived all the faithful. Because she is Mother of Christ the Head, she is mother of the whole body. This is not a mere moral maternity, but a supernatural reality, for Christ's members form one mystical person with the individual Christ, Son of Mary, a situation which has no counterpart in the relationship between a natural society and its founder. Accordingly the Incarnation establishes a vital union between us and Christ and consequently between Mary and the Church.

The maternity which has its inception in the Incarnation is the ontological reason why Mary's co-operation with the Redeemer on Calvary could be elevated by God to a true generation of members of the mystical body. Although she was already the mother of the faithful because she was the mother of Christ, she did not become our mother in the fullest sense except from the moment when she was present on Calvary. At that solemn hour Jesus made her the mother of John, type of all the disciples whom Christ and his Father love. At a stroke, her maternity acquired a new dimension. United to her Son in the sacrifice, she received from him her maternal mission with regard to the Christian community. This might very well be the proper understanding of the words: "Woman, behold your son." For the Beloved Disciple represented all those who, like him, lovingly adhere to the Savior. From then on, Mary is fully Mother of the whole Church. Briefly, the Blessed Virgin spiritually conceived the Body of Christ along with the Head at the conception of Jesus and, as associate of the Redeemer, gave birth to it under the cross when the Church itself was born.

Thus, on the basis of her divine motherhood, Mary is the spiritual mother of the Church; her spiritual motherhood is the prolongation of her motherhood of Christ. The two maternities are analogous, for her spiritual maternity refers not to the God-Man, but to his members, and is not according to the flesh, but is exercised on a higher, more spiritual level.

To perceive the relations between Mary and the Church in their proper perspective, we must always come back to the basic idea that she is mother of the Church. Maternal foundation of the Church, she is the very womb of the mystical body.

Therefore, the title "Mother of the Church" is a simple explanation of the teaching doctrine implicitly contained in revelation.

It can also be added that this title explains well not only the function, but also the place of Mary in the Church. She received grace from Christ and through Christ (whence she is called by Dante "the daughter of his Son"). However, she did not receive grace from the Church, so she is not an "offspring of the Church" as are all other Christians. She, after Christ, is the cause of universal salvation, the cause of life, and the cause of the Church itself: hence, it is well to call her "Mother," for she is connected to the Church, but she is above the faithful, above the Church itself in that supreme Diadem of the universe (Son of God and his Mother) from which the whole economy of salvation and "new creation" is derived.

The Church in the present era is engaged in the difficult task of defining its own nature, and of reforming its historical structure so that the true visage of the Bride of Christ will appear more evidently in the world. But this is also an era in which the Church is being challenged, solicited and pressured more drastically and on more fronts than ever before. The action of Pope Paul and the Council together point to Mary not only as the Type in which the Church can discern its true image, but also as the Mother who intervenes personally and actively, with wisdom, strength and solicitous care, to guide its faltering steps along the path traced out by the footsteps of Christ and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Fra. Emery Lovasik, O.F.M.

MARIAN NIGHT
MT. ALVERNIA SEMINARY
WAPPINGERS FALLS, NEW YORK

February 11, 1966

- I. HYMN: Glory To God (C. Rivers).....All Present
- II. INTRODUCTION.....Reverend Aidan Licari, O.F.M.
- III. HYMN: Ave Maria (C. Frank).....Choir
- IV. PAPER: The Principles of Scriptural Interpretation
Employed by the Magisterium in Mariology
.....Frater Kilian Gaughan, O.F.M.
- V. HYMN: Ave Maria (F. Schubert).....Frater Vito Lobosco, O.F.M.
- VI. PAPER: On A Principle of Biblical Hermeneutics For
Interpreting Certain Ecclesiological and
Mariological Passages In Sacred Scripture
.....Frater Barnabas Sacchetti, O.F.M.
- VII. HYMN: Litany (C. Rivers).....All Present
- VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS.....Reverend Norbert De Amato, O.F.M.

WELCOME ADDRESS

On Feb. 2 of this year, on the feast of the purification of Our Lady, His Holiness Pope Paul VI, spoke to His weekly general audience about the Mother of God.

Devotion to Mary, the Pope said, guarantees vital attachment to faith in Christ, and His Church, which would be impoverished and comprised without devoted and reasonable honor rendered to Mary. The Pope then went on to explain exactly what the nature of that devotion should be, pointing out the necessity of reviving our devotion to Our Lady by seeking the truths which give it life, in biblical origins and the age-old and genuine meditation of the Church.

With these few thoughts, the Holy Father summed up the work which faces the theologian in the field of Mariology: to find Mary her rightful place in salvation history as supported by Holy Scripture and the "consensus fidelium."

We might even go a step further and say that stimulated and challenged by the recent reference to the relationship of Mary to Christ's redeeming work and to her as the type of the Church, speculative theology today is comitted to a search for an ultimately unified insight into the 'mystery of Mary.'

A praiseworthy recent exposition, or attempt at a description of the mystery of Mary was made by the Redemptorist, Fr. Kevin O'Shea in an article entitled: Mary in the Horizon of History, in the July, 1965 issue of the Irish Theological Quarterly. Essentially this article set out to show the place of Mary in the history of our salvation beginning with the relationship of Mary to Christ as based upon the veneration of the Son by the Father, as found in the Most Blessed Trinity and foreshadowed by the Old Testament in such figures as the father Abraham and his son Isaac. The love which exists in the parent-son relationship is reflected in the Mother and Son relationship of Mary and Christ and is in turn, modelled after the spiration of the Holy Spirit through the Father and the Son in the Blessed Trinity.

It is not our intention this evening to explain or to judge the worth of this article or approach by Fr. O'Shea--but I think that this approach does emphasize the necessity of understanding the Scriptures in the proper sense--to be able to exegete correctly and then to interpret such findings through the "consensus fidelium." Only then, it seems, will a true understanding of the 'mystery' of Mary be achieved.

Thus this evening, we would like to present two papers dealing with the scriptural foundation of Mariology--two papers which were originally delivered at the recent International Marian Congress in Santo Domingo.

The first paper which will be delivered by Frater Kilian will deal with the principles of scriptural interpretation employed by the magisterium in Mariology and the second will be delivered by Frater Barnabas and will treat of a Biblical principle for interpreting certain passages in Sacred Scripture which deal with the Church and Our Lady.

Rev. Aidan Licari, O.F.M.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION
EMPLOYED BY THE MAGISTERIUM
IN MARIOLOGY

Mariology, like all other parts of theology, is founded upon revelation, that is, upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition. For many Catholic theologians, however, Tradition is in some way contained in Sacred Scripture, while for our separated brethren, all revelation is contained in Scripture alone. Given this double tendency, it would be useful to ask, on the one hand, how Marian doctrine is contained in Sacred Scripture, and, on the other hand, to ask how the official interpreter of Sacred Scripture -- the Magisterium of the Church -- interprets Holy Writ.

I. Revelation and the Magisterium

At the outset, we must clearly make a distinction between two notions which are often not clearly distinguished and which often lead to equivocation.

The single fundamental source by which the divine word is passed on to us is revelation, that is, Scripture and Tradition. By Scripture we mean the word of God given to us in the writings of the inspired authors. This is the written word of God. By Tradition we mean the oral word of God given to us by Christ through his apostles, or the oral word of God given to us by the apostles themselves under the prophetic charisma of the Spirit. This is the oral word of God, called technically objective apostolic Tradition. This Tradition with a capital "T" is qualified by the adjective "objective" to signify that it is not so much considered as a medium of transmission as it is considered the corpus of oral doctrine. This Tradition is furthermore called "apostolic" to distinguish it from sub-apostolic tradition, that is, to distinguish it from that body of doctrine which existed among the Fathers, among theologians, or within the Magisterium of the Church and even in the mind of the faithful. By so placing the single fundamental source of the divine word in revelation, we carefully avoid the disputed question of whether or not all truths of apostolic Tradition are contained in Sacred Scripture. We limit ourselves to the assertion that the word of God is passed on to us solely by revelation, which revelation is certainly contained in Scripture and in the objective apostolic Tradition.

Nevertheless, we have clearly asserted that the Magisterium of the Church is not a font of the divine word; it is merely the interpreter of that word. The Magisterium does not give us a new word of God, a new revelation. It merely interprets this revelation, whether it is in its written or oral form. We insist upon this in order to avoid confusion, confusion for which Catholic theologians are not entirely without blame. The doctrine passed on throughout the ages by

the Magisterium of the Church does not constitute objective apostolic Tradition. It does, nevertheless, constitute a kind of tradition: an interpretative ecclesiastical tradition, which is not to be confused with objective apostolic Tradition. As is Holy Scripture, objective apostolic Tradition is the very word of God, while ecclesiastical tradition is only the interpreter of apostolic Tradition and of Sacred Scripture. Consequently, ecclesiastical tradition is in no way a third font or source. It is not, and cannot be, placed on a par with Scripture and apostolic Tradition.

II. Laws upon which the Interpretation of Scripture Depends

Since the Magisterium of the Church is the interpreter of revelation, it can be asked: How does the Church proceed, or upon what laws does the Magisterium depend, when it wishes to interpret Scripture and to determine its authentic sense? Through her theologians, the Church depends upon three methodological laws, which we will now enumerate and briefly explain.

First, the Church depends upon the general principles of biblical exegesis, in which she employs "the contemporary investigation of erudite men, whether in matters archaeological or historical or philosophical." Then, through her exegetes, the Church attempts to determine the various literary types, in order to know better "who the hagiographer was, and what he wished to signify in his writing." And thus the Church can better determine, first of all, what is the literal sense of the divine word.

Secondly, the Church depends upon the principle of analogy of faith. Because Scripture enjoys inerrancy in all its parts, it follows that there can be no contradiction among the various parts of Sacred Scripture and that the various parts of Scripture mutually illumine each other in an infallible fashion. This is the analogy of faith. The Church can compare certain less clear texts with other clearer and more explicit texts, and thereby obtain a clearer and deeper sense of the more obscure texts. Moreover, after the Church interprets with certainty particular texts, in the way we have indicated above and will further indicate, she can then compare other less clear texts with these explicit and clearer texts, and so again obtain a clearer and deeper sense of these obscure texts.

Thirdly, the Church depends upon oral tradition, that is, upon objective apostolic Tradition. Sacred Scripture is almost a summary of objective apostolic Tradition, which summary later prolonged itself in objective apostolic Tradition. We shall later question how we can come to a knowledge of objective apostolic Tradition, but for the present it is well to keep in mind that objective apostolic Tradition, which preceded and prolonged Scripture, is extremely beneficial in correctly interpreting Scripture and in finding its authentic sense.

The Magisterium of the Church, therefore, depends upon these three principles: upon the exegetical principles, upon the principle of the analogy of faith, and upon the data of objective apostolic Tradition. Depending upon these three principles, upon the help of theologians, and upon the aid of the Holy Spirit, whose assistance was promised to the Church, the Magisterium can authentically interpret Scripture, either by expounding its explicit sense or by making explicit that which is only implicitly contained in Scripture.

III. The Manner in which Sacred Scripture is Made Explicit

How does the Church proceed when she legitimately wants to make explicit a doctrine that is merely implicit in Scripture? We are not here speaking of virtually revealed doctrine, but solely of doctrine formally revealed. Formally revealed doctrine, as you know, may be either explicitly or implicitly revealed. How do we legitimately make explicit what is only implicit?

Since formally but implicitly revealed doctrine is truly and immediately attested to by God in an obscure manner, it can be made explicit either immediately or mediately. The transition from the implicit to the explicit can be made without the intervention of some other truth and is called an immediate transition. Thus, for example, a definition contained in a definition, an essential physical part contained in a whole, a particular proposition contained in a universal collective proposition, or a correlative contained in another correlative can be made immediately explicit without the aid of any other truth. Thus, in the explicit proposition "The Word was made flesh," there is contained implicitly, but immediately, the revealed truth that Jesus is God and man, that Jesus has both body and soul.

An implicit truth, however, that requires the mediation of another truth to make it explicit is said to be implicitly but mediately revealed. Such an implicitly, mediately revealed truth is also made explicit by what is called a subjective illative discourse, that is, it is made explicit either as a necessary and certain conclusion or, at least, as a conclusion that is probable only, due to reasons of convenience, by means of a demonstrative or persuasive discourse.

This raises a further question of great import: How can we licitly affirm that a conclusion that is either demonstrative or persuasive is truly formally revealed or immediately attested to by God? As a justification for this affirmation, it does not suffice to answer that we depend upon the infallible judgement of the Magisterium. That is precisely the question: Upon what does the Magisterium depend when it judges, especially in an infallible fashion, that a particular conclusion, whether demonstrative or persuasive, is formally revealed or immediately attested to by God?

The only possible solution, it seems, is that the Magisterium bases its judgement upon objective apostolic Tradition, the authentic word which is prepared and prolonged in the New Testament. But this response raises still another question: How does the Church know that such a doctrine truly pertains to apostolic Tradition and that it is consequently formally revealed? For this knowledge the Church depends upon sub-apostolic knowledge, that is, upon patristic tradition, upon the tradition of theologians, upon the sensus fidelium, as well as upon ecclesiastical tradition, which in this case is not considered the Magisterium, but one of the proofs of tradition. If a particular doctrine was admitted for a long time by sub-apostolic tradition as a doctrine revealed and to be believed, this is a sign from which it can be deduced that this doctrine is truly revealed and to be believed, since Christ, who promised constant and indefectible assistance to his Church, could not allow the entire Church to remain in error for many centuries.

When, however, it may now be asked, is a particular sub-apostolic tradition sufficient to allow the conclusion that it is an infallible sign and an unobjectionable proof of apostolic Tradition? And who can make this judgement? To the Church alone, we answer, did Christ give the power to guard and rightly interpret the deposit of revelation; and, therefore, only after the most diligent human investigation and only with the infallible aid of the Holy Spirit, the Church herself can pronounce and judge that a particular sub-apostolic tradition is sufficient enough to allow the Church to draw the infallible conclusion that it is a certain sign of apostolic Tradition. After the Magisterium of the Church infallibly judges with due form that such a doctrine that was previously only demonstrative or persuasive as far as we were concerned is certainly revealed and more probably contained in Sacred Scripture -- after all this -- it is then absolutely certain that the doctrine in question is formally attested to by God, pertains to the deposit of revelation, and consequently constitutes an object of divine faith.

IV. Concerning Scripturistic Doctrine and Doctrine Connected with Scripture

Besides formally revealed truths, there are other truths not formally revealed that are also objects of the Magisterium due to their connection with revelation. Such truths connected with revelation must, however, be clearly distinguished from revelation itself. We can distinguish two cases.

In the first case, a doctrine can be deduced from revelation by means of an objective reasoning process, or it can, at least, be deduced to be in necessary connection with revelation. Such a doctrine can be presented by the Magisterium as necessarily connected with revelation. That doctrine does not as such become the object of revelation and of divine faith, but it is nevertheless infallibly true.

In the second case, some doctrine may appear as deduced from revelation without being evidently so, or it may be connected with revelation without the connection being apparently necessary, so that only an argument of convenience is had. Doctrine known in this way cannot be more than probable; and if it is ever introduced into a system, it can only be considered an hypothesis.

V. Application to Mariology.

We are now in a position where we can apply these principles to Mariology. Two notions are involved, namely, the scriptural interpretation of the mariological texts and the deduction of truths from these mariological texts.

Certainly the first point to be considered is the interpretation of Scripture. The fundamental principle has a certain relevancy here: Mariologists must admit, and they openly do admit, that all the mariological texts of Scripture must be treated according to the same principles and with the same methodological rigor as accorded all other texts of Scripture. Let us consider this from a twofold aspect.

First, we must admit, as opposed to truth, certain mariological doctrines that are in no way contained in Scripture, not even implicitly. Nevertheless, if any one of the above-mentioned methods is strictly applied and verified, we can then say without fear of error that such doctrines are truly contained in the deposit of revelation and -- more probably -- also in Sacred Scripture. This assertion is no more astonishing than those declarations of the Church in virtue of which we must admit (as certainly contained in the deposit of revelation and probably in Scripture itself) the doctrines of extreme unction, penance, matrimony, and of the infallibility of the pope.

Secondly, it is necessary to keep in mind that the first principle of Mariology, as of all theology, is revelation -- that is, Sacred Scripture and objective apostolic Tradition. Thus, the mariological principles of her singularity, eminence, and similarity (similitudo) with Christ are principles that give systematic order to all the diverse elements that have been obtained from rigorous mariological investigation. These principles, moreover, also serve in obtaining conclusions that are perhaps probable (forsan probabiles). They must, therefore, be further confirmed in other ways. We must remember, however, that these mariological principles do not constitute strict principles from which we can rigorously deduce truths pertaining to Mary that are certain.

The second point that must be considered is the deduction of truths from the mariological texts of Scripture. In Mariology, as in the other parts of theology, it is legitimate to deduce truths -- which are called theological conclusions -- from Scripture. If these truths are rigorously deduced from revelation or are necessarily connected

with revelation, they are certain doctrines. If, however, they seem to be deduced from revelation without being evident, or if they are in connection with revelation without the connection appearing necessary, as is had in an argument of convenience, then they are no more than probable doctrines.

The methodological principles in marian theology are exactly the same as in all other parts of theology. But even if the theologian rigorously applies these methodological principles, he will nevertheless find the widest (amplissimam) and richest doctrine concerning the Blessed Mother. By following this precise method, moreover, he will construct a solid marian theology, which will be admitted as common doctrine, not only by mariologists, but also by all theologians. Ultimately, such a procedure will redound to the greater glory of God and to the greater honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Original article by Robert Morency, S.J.
Translated by Rev. Fra. Kilian Gaughan, O.F.M.

ON A PRINCIPLE OF BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS
FOR INTERPRETING CERTAIN
ECCLESIOLOGICAL AND MARIOLOGICAL PASSAGES
IN SACRED SCRIPTURE

The interpretation of certain Marian passages of the New Testament has always been a problem. A partial solution to this problem can be found by reviving a principle which was common during the Middle Ages, whereby certain passages (esp. Apoc. 12) can be more easily interpreted. This principle is simply an adaptation of the "Genus and Species" Principle established by Tychonius at the end of the fourth century in his Liber Regularum.

Tychonius, an African, wrote during the second half of the fourth century, and died around 390. St. Augustine says of him that he was "a man with a sharp intellect and rich eloquence, but a Donatist," although he wrote against the Donatists.

The Liber Regularum, written about 380, is the first compendium of biblical hermeneutics in Latin. This small work establishes seven rules whereby obscure passages of Sacred Scripture may be clarified, although the author does not claim to be able to clarify all obscure passages by these rules. The seven rules concern: 1) the Lord and his Body; 2) the Lord's twofold body; 3) the promises and the law; 4) genera and species; 5) times; 6) recapitulation; 7) the devil and his body. These rules were used often by St. Augustine, St. Isidore, and St. Bede.

Our treatment will describe the origin and nature of the Ecclesiological-Mariological Hermeneutical Principle and its basis and value.

I. Origin and Nature

We are concerned here with the fourth principle of Tychonius, namely, the one concerning genera and species. This principle shows us how the sacred authors sometimes used the whole when they actually referred to a part of the whole, and vice-versa. By genus we understand the whole, e.g., a nation; and by species we understand a part of the whole, e.g., a particular city of a given nation. According to Tychonius, Sacred Scripture sometimes hides the species under the genus, and sometimes hides the genus under the species. Thus, in the interpretation of certain passages we might have to understand a whole as only a part, or a part as a whole.

According to medieval authors, this principle is to be used with those passages that show a relationship between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church, viz., the Canticle of Canticles, Ps. 44, and Apoc. 12. In these cases, the genus, or whole, is the Church; the species, or member of the whole, is Mary. In these passages, what must be said

in general (i.e., about the Church) first appears to be said in particular (i.e., about Mary). The genus here is hidden in the species. Therefore, by observing the proper proportions, a transition can be made from the genus to the species and vice-versa.

This principle, therefore, has two forms: 1) a transition from the species to the genus, or from Mary to the Church; 2) a transition from the genus to the species, or from the Church to Mary.

In its first form, the principle is used rarely and with great caution, keeping in mind the author's intention. This form is used by St. Bede when he says that the mystery of Mary's maternity is continued in the mystery of the Church. Also, Ambrose Autpertus used this form when he said that the "sword of sorrows" prophesied by Simeon also refers to the sorrows of the Church brought about by persecutions and by the sins of the faithful.

In its second form, the principle is applied more frequently, and by a larger number of authors.

II. The Foundation of the Principle

Besides the general logical foundation for our principle, we must mention the four particular foundations: 1) the great similitude between Mary and the Church; 2) the intimate connection between the mystery of Mary and the mystery of the Church; 3) the intimate relation of both Mary and the Church to the whole Christ, Head and members; 4) Mary as part of the whole, i.e., part of the Church.

1. The Great Similitude between Mary and the Church. Both are Christ's spouse; both are Mother and Virgin. The Blessed Mother is the type or prototype of the Church, and is therefore a certain prefiguration of the Church because of her divine maternity and consequent fullness of grace. God united together in Mary, in a full and perfect manner, all the perfections which he dispensed separately to the whole Church. "The whole existed in the part," says Paschasius Radbertus, "so that what was yet to be accomplished in the whole was already accomplished in the part."

2. The Intimate Connection of the Mystery of Mary with the Mystery of the Church. The mystery of the Church is none other than the continuation and perpetuation of the mystery of Mary. Ambrose Autpertus, in explaining chapter twelve of the Apocalypse (a great sign appeared in heaven), does not hesitate to say: "Certainly this sign is still seen in the heavens, that is, in the Church of the saints, which gives birth daily to new people, from which the Body of the Mediator is formed." This idea is nothing else than a certain particular application of Mary to the idea of the perpetuation of the mystery of Christ in the Church. This is energetically expressed by St. Leo the Great when he says that "until today and until the end of time, the

Lord is conceived in Nazareth, born in Bethlehem, etc." Peter Lombard says that this is so because "the Church is almost Mary. Mary is made the Church." For this reason, in interpreting scriptural passages, we may understand certain passages as referring to both Mary and the Church.

3. The Intimate Relation of Mary or the Church with the Whole Christ, Head and Members. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church make up the mother of the whole Christ. Therefore, what Sacred Scripture says about one can somehow be attributed to the other. "For as the Head and members are one Son and many sons," says Isaac de Stella, "so Mary and the Church are one mother and many (mothers). Both are Christ's mother, but neither begot him without the other. This is in the divinely inspired Scriptures..."

4. The Blessed Virgin is Part of the Whole, i.e., of the Church. Sometimes what is said of one member of a collectivity can be validly attributed to the collectivity itself. Thus, for example, it can be said that in the year 1950 the Church defined the dogma of the Assumption; or it can be said that Pope Pius XII defined the Assumption. The reason for this is beautifully stated by St. Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on a verse of the Apocalypse: "'And she gave birth to a son.' 'And she gave birth,' that is, Mother Church; 'a son,' that is, Christ, through the Virgin Mother who was a member and a part of the Church." Thus, what pertains to a part or a member is attributed to the whole of the Church. For when the Blessed Virgin begot her son, the Church also begot him through the Virgin, that is, in the many people she begot. For the Church begot Christ in a twofold manner: spiritually, as she begets the faithful through the strength of her doctrine and example of living; bodily, as she begot Christ through the Virgin who is a part of the Church. And this is so because of the power miraculously given to the Virgin.

III. The Value of this Principle

This principle is important for hermeneutics and for history. Its historical importance rests on the fact that medieval exegetes made extensive use of it. Besides, this principle is important in exegesis, although there are certain limitations to the range of its application. A transition is logical from the part to the whole and vice-versa. For, according to Tychonius, the Holy Spirit, the author of Sacred Scripture, speaks to us in the Scriptures in mysteries. "He hides the whole in the part, or the whole body in one member." Therefore, there is a legitimate transition either from the whole to the part, or from the part to the whole.

Although the principle has great value, it has its limitations, for not everything that is said about the Church in Sacred Scripture can be applied to Mary. For example, as Rupert Tiutiensis points out, "There are many sad things about the penitent Church...which are below

the dignity of the Blessed Virgin." Nor can everything that is said about Mary in Sacred Scripture be applied to the Church (e.g., Mother of God, Co-redemptress, etc.), because Mary is imminent in the Church, yet transcends the Church. She is imminent in the Church in so far as she is a member. She transcends the Church in so far as she is a special member, coming right after the Head, and because she is clearly distinct from the other members. (Thus, she is sometimes called the Neck of the Mystical Body.) As Ambrose Autpertus says, "She is the most excellent member of the Church." The Blessed Virgin precedes the Church "in dignity as well as time." In no manner, therefore, can the Church (as the individuals who are parts or members of the Church) be placed in the same line as Mary.

Therefore, we must conclude with Father Barre that all the merit for the principle of transition from Mary to the Church and vice-versa in the interpretation of certain scriptural passages must be given to the Middle Ages.

Original article by Gabriel Roschini
Translated by Fra. Barnabas Sacchetti, O.F.M.

MARIAN NIGHT
ST. FRANCIS SERAPHIC SEMINARY
WEST ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

March 25, 1966

- I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.....Reverend Isaac J. Calicchio O.F.M.
- II. HYMN: O Loving Mother.....Schola Cantorum
- III. PAPER: Islam and the Virgin Mother.....Milo David Romano
- IV. HYMN: Queen of Heaven.....Schola Cantorum
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- VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS.....Reverend Matthias Pastore, O.F.M.

ISLAM AND THE VIRGIN MOTHER

Mary, who is known as Maryam in Arabic, occupies a rather important position in Islam. The Koran, or Holy Bible of the Moslems, contains numerous references to her. The commentators, theologians, historians and even the mystics of Islam had as their starting point passages in the Koran or Hadiths. They confronted the problem of Mary and sought to resolve it as part of the sacred texts and teachings of tradition. The following paper will describe certain events in the life of Mary from the viewpoint of the Koran and the Moslem tradition.

THE KORAN

Since the basis of this study is the Koran, it would be useful to explain briefly what this book means to the Moslems. For members of the Moslem faith, the Koran is the exact word of God; as a result, their whole faith depends on this book. They are only self-confident when they believe themselves to be in firm accord with the teachings of this book.

Compared with the Christian message about Our Lady, the message of Islam resembles more the one we find in the Apocrypha than in the canonical Gospels.

Now that we have a clear-cut view of what the Koran means, let us go to the life and events of the Blessed Virgin.

PARENTS OF OUR LADY

The Koran mentions the father of Mary and calls him Imran. His family is linked to Adam by successive generations passing through Noah and Abraham. The Koran does not, however, give the name of Our Lady's mother; it is satisfied to call her "spouse of Imran." But Moslems are aware of her true name and use it. They regard St. Anne as the sister of St. Elizabeth, who was the mother of St. John the Baptist.

CONCEPTION AND BIRTH OF MARY

The mother of Mary has a prominent role in the Koran. Such passages refer to the childless old age of Imran's wife and about her hope for a male heir who would be the result of her prayer and longing.

According to a legend about Anne, she was grieved at not having children after long years of marriage. One day, by chance, she was beneath a tree in whose branch a bird was feeding its young. Anne's grief became greater at this sight, but also her prayer became more fervent. And so God granted her prayer.

WITHOUT STAIN

St. Anne continues to speak of God in the Koran. "And I place her, as well as her descendants, under your protection, safe from Satan." This text is not very explicit, but tradition speaks of an extraordinary privilege granted to Mary and her Son: the privilege that both of them--and only these two individuals--should be preserved from all contact with Satan. This tradition is regarded as one of the most venerable of all Islam. There is a saying attributed to Mohammed, "Every child is stung by Satan, except Mary and her Son."

CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE OF MARY

The Koran, like the Gospels, contains only a few allusions to this period in the life of Mary. One reference says "Her Lord received her very well and caused her to grow up in a flourishing way. He entrusted her to the care of Zachary and it was Zachary who looked after Mary in the temple.

Later the Koran mentions a drawing of lots among those who wished to take care of Mary and were disputing among themselves over this matter. They had to throw their writing material into the waters of the Jordan River; only the writing material of Zachary stayed on the surface and even went upstream against the current. The whole account is full of fantastic details. These surround the childhood of Mary, according to the concepts of most Moslems.

She was allegedly carried to the temple after her birth, or she was taken there at the age of three, when her mother died. From birth she was able to speak and had the use of reason. The Koran gives no classification as to Mary's duties in the temple. The commentators love to consider her as given over to a life of prayer, but also performing household tasks.

MARY AND JOSEPH

The Koran is entirely silent about the role of Joseph in the life of the Blessed Virgin. But Moslem tradition knows of his name, his presence at Mary's side, and his connection with her.

All the Moslem authors declare that Joseph was the first person to notice the situation of Mary after the Annunciation. This fact put him in a difficult position and he had to speak clearly to the Virgin about this.

This is how the story goes: Joseph was horrified, scandalized, and grieved over Mary's condition. So Joseph said to Mary, "Can the wheat grow without seed?" "Yes," she replied. "Can the trees grow without rain?" "Yes," she replied again. "Can a child be conceived without a father?" "Yes," replied Mary. "Do you not know that God caused the wheat to grow when he first created it without seed? To-

day's seed only comes from the wheat that God caused to grow without any seed. And do you not know that God caused the first trees to grow without rain? Do you know," continued Mary, "that God created Adam and Eve without a father and a mother?" "Yes," replied Joseph, and saying that he had the intuition that Mary's state was due to Divine decision and that he had no right to question her further.

ANNUNCIATION

As Mary went to draw water, one day, from the well, angels appeared to her. They said, "Oh Mary! God has chosen you and purified you and he has chosen you above the women of the universe." The Moslems have a particular fondness for this magnificent proclamation of Mary's vocation, holiness, and dignity. They regard her as a great pattern of chastity--"the Virgin."

The Annunciation scene is presented at three different times: the unexpected appearance of the angel in human form and his message; the dignified response of Our Lady; finally, the soothing statement of the messenger, which was followed by the miraculous conception.

The Koran gives no historical circumstances of the Annunciation and the Nativity. There is no statement as to how the conception of Christ took place, nor about the age of the Virgin. Koranic scholars say that the Angel's appearance is supposed to have influenced the maternal feelings of the Virgin, which feelings, through God's will, produced the body of Christ. For the Moslems, Gabriel contributed to Christ's formation.

Concerning the Visitation, Mary is said to have entrusted the secret of her situation to Elizabeth. Elizabeth, in turn, revealed to Mary that she too was expecting a child.

The Koranic scholars admit the following version concerning the Nativity. The Virgin is said to have been warned by God of the persecution which would be directed against her by her people. They say that she was forced to flee to Egypt on a donkey led by Joseph. A more popular belief is that Jesus' birth took place like all others.

MARY AND THE MARVELOUS EVENTS OF CHRIST'S CHILDHOOD

Jesus speaking in the cradle is the most important event after the Nativity. For, according to the Moslems, to prove the innocence of Mary it was absolutely necessary that Jesus should miraculously attest this fact. Although we do not know what Jesus said, the Koran is constant in the defense of Mary's purity and innocence. It goes so far as to say that one of the main reasons for the condemnation of the Jews is because of the abominable accusation which they brought against Mary.

The coming of the Magi and the martyrdom of the Holy Innocents are not mentioned in the Koran, and even the Flight into Egypt is scarcely mentioned. However, tradition does attest to these facts.

MARY AND HER SON'S PUBLIC LIFE

Moslem writing tells of the episode in which Jesus is seen in the midst of the doctors. Mary is said to have entrusted her son to a teacher. When the teacher tried to teach Jesus the alphabet, Jesus showed that he knew more than the teacher himself.

The miracle at Cana is said to have taken place at the request of Mary. One very interesting thing that Moslems believe is that Christ was not crucified or put to death. "That was only an illusion" says the Koran. God spared suffering and humiliation to his messenger; He delivered himself up from the hands of the Jews and raised him up to himself. After the Ascension, adds the non-Koranic tradition, Jesus appeared to his mother, Mary Magdalen, and the Apostles to assemble them again to fulfill His mission to them. Mary only survived her Son's Ascension by six or eight years and is said to have died about the age of fifty.

MARY MOTHER OF GOD

Islam recognizes as well as Mary's virginal motherhood, her resplendent holiness throughout life and her complete submission to God's will. However, the title "Mother of God" seems to the Moslems to be a dreadful blasphemy, since they do not accept Christ as being God.

MODERN TIMES

Moslemism is the only great post-Christian religion of the world. Because it had its origin in the seventh century, it was possible to unite within it some elements of Christianity and of Judaism, along with particular customs of Arabia.

Bishop Sheen is of the firm belief that Moslems will eventually be converted to Christianity. This will happen, according to him, not through the direct teaching of Christianity, but to a summoning of the Moslems to a veneration of the Mother of God. However, in truth, the missionary effort of the Church toward this group has been, at least on the surface, a failure. Moslems are almost inconvertible. The reason is that for a Moslem to become a Christian is much like a Christian becoming a Jew. The Moslems believe that they have the final and definite revelation of God to the world.

The only serious rival to Mary would be Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed. But after the death of Fatima, Mohammed wrote: "Thou shalt be the most blessed woman in Paradise, after Mary."

Now that we have learned of Mary's place in Islam, it is interesting to know why the Blessed Mother, in the 20th Century, should have revealed herself in the insignificant little village of Fatima. Bishop Sheen believes that the Blessed Virgin chose to be known as "Our Lady of Fatima" as a pledge and a sign of hope to the Moslem people, and so as an assurance that they, who show her so much respect, will one day accept her Divine Son, too.

There is an historical fact that supports this view. The Moslems occupied Portugal for many centuries. At the time when they were fully driven out, the last Moslem chief had a beautiful daughter by the name of Fatima. A Catholic boy fell in love with her, and for him she not only stayed behind when the Moslems left, but even embraced the faith. The young husband was so much in love with her that he changed the name of the town where he lived to Fatima. Thus the very place where Our Lady appeared in 1917 bears an historical connection to Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed.

The final relationship of Fatima to the Moslems is the enthusiastic reception which the Moslems in Africa and India and elsewhere gave to the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Moslems attended the Church service in honor of Our Lady; they allowed religious procession and even prayer before their Mosque; and in Mozambique, the Moslems who were unconverted began to be Christian as soon as Our Lady of Fatima's statue was erected.

Missionaries in the future, more and more, see that their apostolate among the Moslems will be successful in the measure that they preach Our Lady of Fatima. It is better to start with that which people already accept.

It now remains to use another approach, that of taking the forty-first chapter of the Koran and showing them that it was taken out of the Gospel of Luke, that Mary could not be, even in their own eyes, the most blessed of all the women of Heaven if she had not borne One who was the Savior of the world.

Milo David Romano

THE SCRIPTURAL ROSARY

What is the scriptural rosary? It is a modern development of the original form of praying the rosary wherein a suitable short text from Holy Scripture picturing an incident in the life of either Jesus or Mary is recited before each Hail Mary. These texts, although only a few lines long, draw an even deeper meaning from the fifteen mysteries. Thus they are a wonderful aid to meditation, an essential part of the rosary.

Here is a short example as taken from a recent publication of the "Scriptural Rosary." For our purposes, I choose the second joyful mystery, the Visitation. The Our Father is recited as usual. Then before the recitation of the first Hail Mary, one says: "Now Mary went into the hill country and she entered the house of Zachary and saluted Elizabeth." (Luke 1: 39,40) Then the Hail Mary is recited as usual, with the thought centered on the short passage. Before the second Hail Mary: "When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe in her womb leapt. And she was filled with the holy Spirit." (Luke 1:41) and then the second Hail Mary with the thought centered on this phase of the visitation. The combination of the ten short verses before each Hail Mary forms the whole mystery. This also affords the possibility of meditating on certain aspects, never before considered. So it is a definite aid to meditation.

It takes a little longer to pray this way. And no additional graces or indulgences are attached to saying this form of the rosary. Why then should the average layman go about the practice of saying the scriptural rosary? Ordinarily John Doe never says the rosary anyway and if he does why should he say it in a way that will take more time. These are questions that I'm sure every one of you must have. There is one simple reason for this: that is, you were never taught to say the rosary correctly. And again there is a reason for this, too. It may come as a shock to you, but your parents were never taught to say the rosary correctly either. Nor were your parents' parents. To see why I can make such a statement, it will be necessary to take a brief look at the development of the rosary, keeping in mind that the scriptural rosary is a return to that original form.

In the middle ages, there was a tremendous revival on the part of the laity, to partake with all possible inner devotion, in the life of the Church. This brought about their imitation of the 150 psalms of Sacred Scripture, since the psalms comprised the most important parts of the Canonical hours. Unfortunately the masses of the people were illiterate, and all the psalms were written in Latin. It was practically impossible for any one person to memorize all 150 psalms, and besides the only people excepting the clergy who had any contact whatsoever with the Latin language were the poor peasants who toiled in the spacious fields of the numerous monasteries and abbeys.

About this time, over and above the 150 psalms of the Bible, another series of prayers composed of 150 individual parts also developed.

These were named "psalters." And the rosary originated in order to find for the laity a prayer corresponding to the Latin psalter of the Church.

Something resembling the rosary came about when, in 800 A.D., an Irish monk suggested to the people that they substitute 150 Our Fathers for the 150 psalms. This "substitution" became known as the "psalter of the 150 Our Fathers." Many of the people accepted this willingly and even those who did not have the time to spend in great amount of prayer managed to say at least one-third of their psalter of 50 Our Fathers. This is the beginning of dividing the psalter into three sets of 50. From this, we can see the rosary developed into 3 sets of 50 Aves, each set dwelling on one particular series of mysteries.

Soon, a transition took place. People began substituting 150 Hail Marys for the Our Fathers, and a newer psalter developed. Called the "psalter of Our Lady," it was brought about by the rapid spread of the Hail Mary as a supplement to the Our Father. Soon the psalter was found in all of Europe. A certain Scottish manuscript from Auchwilik, about the year 1310, gives proof to the origin of the psalter of the Aves. A certain youth, as the legend goes, had the habit of reciting daily 50 Hail Marys in honor of Our Lady. Then Mary appeared to him one day and told him to pray the fifty Hail Marys three times a day in the morning, noon and night. He was to count the prayers on his fingers ten by ten, and after ten to sing a hymn to her. As she appeared to him poorly clad, she pointed out that this was because his prayers were short. The youth promptly hearkened to her advice, and recited 150 Hail Marys every day from then on. On the seventh day thereafter, she appeared to him again, and it is written: "After seven days Our Lady again appeared in majesty, garbed as a bride on bridal day, and thanked him for the prayers."

In the latter part of the 14th century, a Carthusian Monk by the name of Henry Eghar or Malicar (d. 1408), introduced the practice of separating the psalter of Our Lady into 15 decades by inserting an Our Father before each decade.

Up until this time, the rosary had mysteries, but the mysteries were always considered separate psalters. But since the psalter of 150 Our Fathers combined with the psalter of Our Lady, so too did the two psalters of the life of Jesus and Mary combine. And also at this time in the development of the rosary, each Hail Mary and Our Father had its own short mystery. These "Mysteries" are quite unlike the mysteries as we know them today, but none the less it is the idea of the scriptural rosary for each Ave to have a separate meditative thought.

Then in the beginning of the fifteenth century, Dominic of Prussia, another Carthusian (d. 1450), introduced the practice of meditating on certain definite mysteries on the life of Our Lord and Our Lady during the recitation of the fifty Hail Marys in honor of the Blessed Mother.

To this practice the term "Rosarium" or rosary, meaning bouquet rather than psalter was applied. It was the true beginning of the modern day rosary, of which meditation is an essential part. This is true, even though Dominic's rosary consisted of 50 consecutive Hail Marys without Our Fathers. His contribution consisted in 50 relative clauses which he introduced after the words, "Jesus Christ" in the 50 Hail Marys of his rosary; and these 50 clauses have a remarkable conformity with the fifteen mysteries of today.

The forty-eighth clause for example, is as follows: "Who at last assumed you, His blessed Mother, to Himself, placed you at His right, and gloriously crowned you. Amen." The Ave ended this way, hence the complete Hail Mary with the petition "Holy Mary, Mother of God" was not yet being used. Like Dominic of Prussia's rosary, the scriptural rosary makes an addition to each Hail Mary, for the purpose of making it easier to meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary.

It was through the Confraternity of the Rosary that the Dominican De La Roche and confreres combined the previous developments and established them into fifteen decades separated by Our Fathers, and recited while meditating on the fifteen principle mysteries of the life of Our Lord and Our Lady; five joyful, five sorrowful, and five glorious mysteries.

Even after the confraternities focused attention on the fifteen main mysteries, the practice of considering a special mystery at each Ave was by no means given up. In fact, it has been continued at least in isolated instances down to our own day, and the scriptural rosary seeks to revive the custom. A book published in 1521 by the Dominican Father Alberto Da Castello calls the fifteen principle mysteries "mysteries of the Pater" which are announced before each Our Father with a brief theme for meditation of them. Then each ten of the 150 Hail Mary mysteries are grouped as subtopics, under the principle mysteries of each decade and announced with each Hail Mary. The Scriptural Rosary does the same thing.

Proof that this method of saying the rosary continued down to the 19th century is contained in the Reminiscents of an Indian Missionary, by Father Chrysostom Verwyst O.F.M. Father Verwyst emigrated as a boy, with his parents and brothers from Holland to the United States; and in the middle of the nineteenth century the family settled as pioneers near Hollandtown Wisconsin. Speaking of the long winter evenings in their loghouse home, Father Verwyst recalls: "shortly before bedtime we would say the rosary together, Father adding to each Hail Mary some particular fact or incident mentioned in Holy Writ. This was a common and, I may add, a very interesting way of saying the rosary, requiring a good memory and making one naturally attentive. We boys, of course, had to answer the prayers; but as praying is not so congenial to a boys nature as listening to stories and songs, we would often fall asleep for a moment, only to be awakened by a word from mother or father, after which we would answer all right for a few Aves and doze off again.

No wonder after working hard all day in the woods, coming home tired, eating a hearty supper, and getting warm at the fire! Still, the early practice of saying the rosary in the evening during a considerable part of the year, gradually instilled in us a great love of the holy devotion."

And now, why say the scriptural rosary? Well if you were to sum up the elements which make up the rosary I think you would come up with a list such as this. First, the rosary includes both vocal and mental prayer. Also the rosary is a prayer of petition in which we ask for that which the mysteries promise. Thirdly, the rosary is a prayer which is to be said, not merely now and then, but frequently; hence it should be a part of our daily routine. And lastly, from the rosary prayer, we should draw the strength to live according to the gospels. But can you see how the scriptural rosary fulfills all these? Most important the scriptural rosary aids meditation; in that long spaces of time do not have to be covered by one all-encompassing mystery. Actually, the scriptural rosary sets down the form that is supposed to be followed in the rosary prayer. All you have to do is follow it.

At Fatima, Our Lady left no doubt that the rosary must combine both mental and vocal prayer. At one of the apparitions she spoke of the meditation on the mysteries as an actual part of the rosary, parallel to the vocal prayer. She explained the nature of the meditation by asking us to "keep her company" for fifteen minutes. Therefore anything that aids meditation is also an aid to the rosary.

But what about today's modern world. How does the scriptural rosary fit in with our living? And above all, can the scriptural rosary be justified?

Well, first of all, I feel it can be justified very easily. We have seen that the origin of the rosary shows that it is a devotion, composed of varied elements welded into a unity. In consequence there are many spiritual approaches to it. Just as every entrance opens into a house as a whole, so any element in the rosary can lead us to the right understanding and a proper recital of the entire prayer. The greater complications which characterize our age open many avenues of approach to the rosary. The scriptural rosary is only one of them.

Also the religious life of the present age is marked, above all, by a return to the sacred Scriptures, more particularly to the Gospels. To the faithful who are influenced by this movement, the rosary offers a series of events from the life of Jesus and His Mother, which they can ponder prayerfully and even use as a model for their own life. Did not the apostles say that reading of the scripture is useful to teach and to edify?

One more approach, a final one, must be considered: the rosary counteracts the current haste and unrest. Modern life makes too many demands on physical energies that a measure of open-air life and outdoor activity becomes imperative for health and vigor.

Such need is usually recognized. It even assumes a legal and formal status, in the contract of employees granted a vacation with pay. But a spiritual atmosphere, isolated from the world's hurry and an aid to the soul's health and vigor is much more important; such an atmosphere is provided by the rosary.

The prayers with meditation affects the soul as radioactive isotopes affect the body. As one submits to the health-giving influence of these invisible rays, he is not very active exteriorly. One merely submits to their influence. So too with the rosary, as in submitting to the rays, one must only sacrifice the required time.

Thus looking at the rosary in the light of the aggiornamento, in the light of the spiritual wonders of the rosary itself, you can realize more easily what a tremendous tool has been given to us. It is up to us to use that tool to its most proper end. This is the role portrayed by the scriptural rosary.

Ronald Charnock

MARIAN NIGHT
SERRA HIGH SCHOOL
McKEESPORT, PA.

April 27, 1966

- I. INTRODUCTION:.....Reverend Luke Ciampi, O.F.M.
- II. HYMN: Ave Maria (Rosewig).....SERRAnaders' Chorus
- III. PAPER: The Rosary and the Teen-ager.....George Becker
- IV. HYMN: Stabat Mater (Ancient Melody).....SERRAnaders' Chorus
- V. PAPER: Is the Rosary Outdated?.....Bernard Picchi
- VI. HYMN: Ave Maria (Original Melody, by Mr. Joseph Farina)
.....SERRAnaders' Chorus
- VII. Commandante March (Gus Guentzel).....Serra High School Band
- VIII. Highlights from "Exodus".....Serra High School Band
- IX. CONCLUDING REMARKS
.....Very Reverend Matthew M. De Benedictis, O.F.M.
- X. HYMN: Holy God (Traditional, arr. by Mr. Edwin Shiner)
.....Serra High School Band

WELCOME ADDRESS

What Parents' Night is, you already know. After the ceremonies of the Marian observance the parents are to go upstairs to the home rooms, where the teachers will distribute the third quarter report cards, and then the parents may visit with the other teachers to discuss their son's progress or lack of progress. This feature of the evening is especially important to those parents whose sons are showing failures on their report cards, because as we enter the last quarter and race down the home stretch the time runs out fast for those who have chosen to bury their talents under a heap of sloth and inertia.

What Marian Night is and means for us has been explained before, but bears repeating --- because we can never be too active where the Mother of God is concerned. Simply, then, a Marian Night is an occasion and an opportunity to get together and render homage to that virgin Mother whose honor God chose to make pre-eminent among the children of men. In each province of the Franciscan Order a Marian Commission has been set up to promote study and appreciation of Mary's privileges, prerogatives and role in the Divine Economy. Similarly, in each country the Franciscan provinces maintain a National Commission to co-ordinate their efforts along these lines, just as the Order itself operates an International Commission for this purpose. The reason for such a jealous safeguarding of Mary's honor is traceable to Saint Francis himself; who cradled the Franciscan Order in his humble chapel of Our Lady of the Angels, outside of Assisi. Successive centuries have seen Franciscans the world over --- learned and unlearned alike --- vie with one another and with God himself, as it were, to foster love and devotion for Mary Immaculate.

Recent innovations, revisions and restorations in the Divine Liturgy have in some quarters led to a downgrading of Marian study and devotion. Especially has the Rosary been relegated by some to the limbo of oblivion. The purpose of the Ecumenical Council in focusing greater attention on the participation in the Eucharistic Banquet and Sacrifice is to keep matters in their proper perspective. Mary is not greater than Jesus, and therefore the Rosary is not more important than the Mass. But--and this is sound Franciscan Christo-centric doctrine--in the order of creation Mary is highest after Christ. Devotion to the Mother of God is secondary, but secondary with a special emphasis:

In the two papers we shall hear this evening, two young men of Serra will discuss the basic theme: "Is the Rosary outdated today?" together with its implications as regards the spiritual development of modern teenagers.

Before turning the program over to the chairman, may I add, in introducing him, that Mr. James D. Bendel, head of the English department, deserves a special nod of gratitude for directing our two speakers in their preparation of this evening's papers.

Rev. Luke Ciampi, O.F.M.

THE ROSARY AND THE TEENAGER

In every field of accomplishment there is a hero whom every young boy admires. The hustling, bustling youngster in your community may be an ardent and enthusiastic admirer or imitator of that immortal of the baseball world, Mickey Mantle; on the gridiron it's Jimmy Brown, the fast ball-carrier, who serves as an ideal for the husky square-shouldered teenager in the corner drugstore. The sports "showoff," tramping the streets and interested in the latest fashion with its hair oils and social polish, takes his cue from his motion picture idol. Each individual boy lives his life in terms of batting averages or league standings, in rib-splitting jokes or daredevil feats, in a word, in every outlet that satisfies his hunger for asserting his personality. But what is Mary's position in the standings? It should be first place. And the best way to make it that way is to pray the Rosary, which is the material link between ourselves and the Blessed Virgin.

High school boys have their own original way of making fools of themselves. It is strange, but true. The young gent who tells the policeman off is hailed as a fine leader. Huddling together in places makes youngsters feel their needed security. The boy who refrains from his part is dubbed a coward. Whenever a decent conversation is in the air, some bright boy has to insert a filthy immoral twist. The joy ride organizer sees everything in relation to himself, his kicks, his company, and his big time. These are the things that breed false pride and popularity in youth. Unknowingly, every careless teenage boy with disregard for authority weaves a web of moral danger, himself the victim of spiritual ruin. If the teenager would keep Mary, his guide, in his mind at all times, then there would be no wiseguys in our midst, because when he prays the Rosary to Mary, She will give him the necessary strength to overcome his weakness and to be firm and strong in conviction to walk the straight and narrow path of righteousness.

More than ever today, our young boys are in need of a good model, an unerring guide, and a trusting protectress. They need someone to imitate, someone to show them the right path in life, and, most of all, someone in whom they can place all their confidence. This someone is Mary, the Mother of God. She symbolizes respect, purity, truthfulness, and humility. Not every Catholic student can brag about high marks, ability in the sports arena, comic talent, or good personality. But each and every Catholic teenager can and should proudly boast of his most chaste and most pure model, Mary, the Mother of God and youth. By making Mary his all-star player, his steady girl friend, each youngster can become a Catholic hunter for souls. Faith in his Mother, fidelity in the duties of his religion, and the spirit of sacrifice in his daily routine will give him the moral strength required to meet the dangers of the world. Whenever he is troubled, his immac-

ulate and powerful protectress is there waiting for him. No boy can be denied this needed help, because Mary is and always will be the Advocate of all who turn to Her. The best way to seek the help of the Mediatrix of all graces, Mary, is through her Holy Rosary.

Through widespread Catholic action and love for Mary, every boy can preach a living Gospel to all. He can set the world afire by a shining example. Whenever and wherever he uses his marian torch of Christian goodness, there will be his Mother's radiant face, smiling approval upon her successful child. What better way is there to show love for Mary than by praying her Holy Rosary? Pope Pius XII strongly recommended the Rosary, not only for families but also for individual persons. In this "mixed-up" world, we need something and someone to enlighten us as to which is the right path to take in our struggle through life. The Rosary and Mary fulfill this need. All of us can pray the Rosary with the intention of rejuvenating the Rosary among our youth.

George Becker

IS THE ROSARY OUTDATED?

In asking oneself "Has the rosary lost its importance in today's world?," the question might well be phrased, "Has Mary lost her importance in today's world?"

On November 18, 1964, the world's foremost expounder of Catholic theology stated:

As we know, Mary has a most singular position. She too is a member of the Church; she is redeemed by Christ; she is our sister; but by virtue of her being chosen to be the Mother of the Redeemer of mankind and because of her perfect and eminent representation of the human race, she has the right to be called, morally and typically, the Mother of all men, especially ours, of us, the believers and the redeemed, the Mother of the Church, the Mother of the faithful.

That theologian was none other than Pope Paul VI, and this is neither an isolated nor rare sentiment in the contemporary papacy. Again and again veneration of the highest form is extended to Mary by our modern popes, for it is she who is the Mother of Christ, it is she who is called "Co-Redemptrix," it is she who is called Mediatrix of all graces.

But particularly in our last two pontiffs-- our two most ecumenical popes-- can we find such vigorous encouragement of the Marian veneration. Pope John named the Blessed Virgin as the Protectress of the Second Vatican Council. Pope Paul has continually adverted to the title "Mother of the Church" when speaking of Mary.

As you can see, then, veneration of the Blessed Virgin is not, as the false prophets state in tones of doom, "dying of consumption," but rather is being fed and nourished by that ever-increasing torch of love for our "First Mother."

Yet, a strange paradox exists. The rosary, being the principal instrument of Marian veneration, should be expected to increase in importance as Mary has come to be understood on a wider scale. But somewhere along the ecclesiastical line something has gone wrong, almost as if the rosary were put into a state of suspended animation, wherein, as everything around it grew, the rosary simply existed; or, as our concepts of Mary matured and grew, the rosary remained infantile and immature. Perhaps these observations seem a bit harsh, and yet, if the rosary were not strong enough to stand up under the most critical of scrutiny, of what value would it be?

To understand why a condition of cynicism towards the rosary exists, we must analyze some universal misconceptions, both classic and contemporary:

Some skeptics claim the rosary is the prayer for those individuals too stupid to follow the Mass or the action of the priest. However, full meditation and concentration upon the principle theme as presented in each decade requires great intellectual concentration. Pope Pius XII said he never felt his day complete until he finished the rosary. Pope John XXIII said fifteen decades daily. President John Kennedy was said to have carried a rosary with him at all times. So, as you can see, the rosary is not a prayer of simpletons who are unable to read their missals or prayerbooks. There is immeasurable depth and inexhaustible richness in this devotion. In its vocal part, it is a prayer founded on scriptural and ancient Church texts. In its mysteries, it offers for our meditation the visible evidence of God's love for us through the Incarnation, Redemption, and Glorification of His Son. In its entirety it is the gift of a loving Mother to her children indicating her role in the mystery of salvation. Every rosary brings before our eyes the example of Jesus and Mary with the inevitable invitation to follow in their footsteps.

Another popular fallacy of the day seems to attack the effectiveness of the rosary. Sometimes, as we all know, we are unable to see the effects of our work. Even in the material world is this true. Parents realize that for about twenty years they will not be able to see the benefits of the training they have bestowed upon their children. The situation is much the same with the rosary.

An acquaintance of mine once told me that about ten or fifteen years ago a friend of his had been killed in a very sad and tragic motorcycling accident. In the course of paying his respects to the family of his deceased friend, he had occasion to return to the funeral home several times. Every time my friend returned, there, piously stationed in front of the casket, was a lad of not more than fifteen. With rhythmic quality he prayed the rosary over, and over, and over again. So impressed was my friend by this boy's faith, that he was eventually led to investigate the Catholic Church, and is today an exemplary and active Catholic. Yet, that boy, so instrumental in my friend's conversion, has never been told what good effect his fine example brought into being.

By far the most modern of the rosarian fallacies comes from the misinterpreted ideas of some possibly over-zealous theologians. There are a number of theologians who claim the rosary to be a deterrent to inter-denominational unification. In addition, many lay people have exaggerated the theories of the modern teachers. Some even claim that the rosary is anti-liturgical, anti-ecumenical, and anti-Catholic. But official Church policy is far from discouraging the use of the rosary; rather, it even encourages widespread use of Mary's favorite devotion. Since the Church's official theologian, Pope Paul VI, seems never to tire of exhortations to pray to the Blessed Virgin, we should therefore embrace the rosary lovingly and joyfully, and make it our own daily prayer to the Mother of God.

What kind of a future does the rosary enjoy? Well, I can see only a very bright future for these powerful beads. This, the Second Age of Enlightenment--the Age of Ecumenism--will, no doubt, clear the rosary of all existing fallacies that have engulfed and covered it with a shroud of superstition for so many years. And perhaps, at long last, the rosary will once again be taken off the shelf of suspended animation and be allowed a long overdue maturation.

Bernard Picchi

MARIAN NIGHT
ST. ANTHONY PRIARY
CATSKILL, NEW YORK

May 29, 1966

- I. INTRODUCTION.....Reverend John B. Frischi, O.F.M.
- II. TABLEAUX: Franciscans and Mary.....Novices
- III. PAPER: Liturgy and Mary.....Frater Adam Retzlaff, O.F.M.
- IV. Marian Scriptural Readings and Psalmody.....Novices
- V. PAPER: The Modern Church and Mary
.....Frater Finian Tortorelli, O.F.M.
- VI. MUSICAL TRIBUTE: Saxophone and Trumpet Ensemble
.....Frater Placid Stronach, O.F.M.
Frater Adam Retzlaff, O.F.M.

WELCOME ADDRESS

This evening the Novices are presenting their annual Marian tribute. On their behalf I wish to welcome you all: Father Guardian, the Fathers of the Marian Commission, Fathers of the Community and Brother. Also we have an ecumenical coloring this evening. We are happy to have the Sisters with us.

Last week Pope Paul urged all to renew their devotion to the Mother of God. In Rome the new parish of Mary, Mother of the Church was officially opened. Our Holy Father had told the council of this projected Church as a tangible monument to the II Vatican council. Mary is certainly in the forefront of our lives.

There has been much discussion, probably more than the ordinary, because of the council, on the question of Mary in general. Pope John himself sounded a warning to the Council and to the Catholic world that excesses and distortions were to be avoided in Marian Theology and devotion. We all know there is need for this strict cautioning. But some, here as in do many other areas, take the negative approach. Almost with a grudge they release a tirade of criticism and minimize Mary's role. They seize upon every authoritative pronouncement to misrepresent and misinterpret to serve their prejudice.

There are others who of course go to the other extreme. They follow the school of "De Maria Numquam Nimis" (concerning Mary there cannot be too much praise.) This adage parallels that concerning Charity which is said to have no limits. But for both there can be wrong applications. In our day we have seen the rise of the Slaves of Mary, Father Feeney's group, and more recently in reaction to the council, a dangerous assembly known as "Militant Servants of Our Lady of Fatima." Both are guilty of fanatical devotion and disobedience to the Church. In answer to them, we might reverse the time honored truth that whatever honors the Mother, honors the Son, to read whatever hurts the Son hurts also the Mother. Certainly Mary would be the first to disown such partisans.

The constitution on the Church resolves this problem in a most satisfactory way. It is brought into sharper focus and a new and deeper light shows clearer lines, lines we might say of new charm and truth in Mary's portrait and her role in the Church. Some were disappointed that Mary was treated as part of this document and that only in the last chapter. Yet, if we read through the text, I feel we would give no greater tribute to Mary - the entire chapter is full of beautiful thoughts expressed in a glowing moving language. Indeed the whole constitution on the Church is a poetry of Theology and Mary's chapter is its crowning point. It must be read in its entirety to be appreciated.

The two main papers this evening will deal with aspects of Mary's role in the modern Church. As they draw from the council document and statements of the Pontiffs, I am sure that they will reflect both light and warmth. After all, this is the test of our Franciscan Theology and spirituality, so well stated in the chapter, The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and the Church: "Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, not in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our Mother and to an imitation of her virtues." To this end we offer our program this evening.

Rev. John Baptist Frisoli, O.F.M.

LITURGY AND MARY

History and literature tell us about certain women who were the cause of much confusion or controversy. To name a few: Pandora, Eve, and Helen of Troy. Perhaps some hapless philosopher with this in mind remarked that a Woman's place is in the home.

And among Christians, Mary has been a reason for controversy. A most important point in this controversy is concerned with Mary's relationship to the Church. Here there are two schools of thought which are expressed in schema VIII of the Dogmatic Constitution on the church:

The first view is expounded as follows: "Hence she is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer. Redeemed in an especially sublime manner by reason of the merits of her Son, and united to him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the supreme office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God. As a result she is also the favorite daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit."

In the next paragraph the document goes on to give the other point of view: "At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all human beings in their need for salvation. Indeed she is (here the Council quotes St. Augustine) '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.' Therefore she is also hailed as a pre-eminent and altogether singular member of the Church, and as the Church's model and excellent exemplar in faith and charity. Taught by the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Church honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother."

The controversy is not one of disagreement but of emphasis. The two views involve much: one of the subjects they are concerned with is the role of Mary in the liturgy; and using these two views I intend to explore the question of how Mary is present in the liturgy.

The first of the two approaches is called the Christo-typical approach since, as Fr. Theodoric Zubek, O.F.M., says, it "associates" Mary with Christ in the work of the objective redemption." (Incidentally, Fr. Zubek is at present the Delegate Provincial of the Comisariat of the Most Holy Savior and Provincial of our own Frater Regis) So, to begin with, Mary is present in the liturgy as our Coredemptrix.

Now, to define a term, "Liturgy," writes Fr. Martin F. Horak, O.S.B., "is Christ sacramentally continuing his work of mediatorship between God and man, among men, here and now." In the liturgy we relive sacramentally Christ's historical life; we partake of the saving action of Christ. In liturgically celebrating each of the mysteries in Christ's life we receive the graces proper to these mysteries: when the feast of Christ's birth is celebrated, we receive the graces for

our own rebirth. In the Postcommunion of the Christmas Vigil Mass we pray: "Grant, we beseech you, O Lord, that the celebration of the birth of your only-begotten Son may give us fresh life." (St. Andrew Daily Missal)

The close association of Mary with Jesus in salvation history is evident in some of their titles: Son of God - Mother of God; Redeemer - Coredeмпtrix; Second Adam - Second Eve; Mediator - Mediatrix; King - Queen.

To quote Fr. Martin Horak again: "Mary's work as the associate of Jesus consists in assisting him, according to her calling and abilities, in his work of redemption, and in imitating him in what he is and does. Mary is the perfect created image and imitator of Jesus in his mysteries."

To a degree this is obvious in the similarity existing between some of the feasts of Jesus and Mary. Mary's cooperation with Jesus in these mysteries and her imitation of him is expressed by this similarity.

On February 2, the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple is celebrated and on November 21 the Presentation of Mary in the temple. As Christ has his Good Friday, Mary has the feast of the Seven Dolours. There is the feast of the Nativity of the Lord and that of the Nativity of Our Lady. Christ's Resurrection and Ascension are mirrored by Mary's Assumption. There are Masses both of the Most Holy Name of Jesus and of the Most Holy Name of Mary. The feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is paralleled by the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The feast of Christ the King is imitated in the feast of the Queenship of Mary.

In all the feasts of the liturgy graces stream from Christ but are distributed by Mary. In the feast of the Annunciation we pray that through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, we may obtain the graces of the Incarnation.

While we encounter the living sacramental Christ in the liturgy we also encounter Mary, his Mother and associate. Throughout the liturgy, Mary, as our mother, accompanied Jesus through the sacramental mysteries of our redemption and is on hand to distribute the particular graces of each mystery.

In summary of this approach, the liturgy portrays Mary in her prerogatives of Mother of God, Mediatrix, associate of Christ, and Coredeмпtrix.

The second of the two approaches is called ecclesio-typical. Writes Fr. Theodoric Zubek, "the ecclesio-typical approach views Mary as the most perfect member of the Church and a type of sanctity for

the Church."

From the Song of Songs the Church takes the lesson for the feast of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary. While the Church has long referred to the bridegroom in the Song of Songs as a type of Christ and to the bride as a type of the Church united to Christ, on this feast the figure of the bride is applied to Mary alone: "I can hear my true love calling to me Rise up, rise up quickly, dear heart, so gentle, so beautiful, rise up and come with me. Winter is over now; the rain has passed by. At home, the flowers have begun to blossom; pruning-time has come; we can hear the turtledove cooing already, there at home. There is green fruit on the fig-trees; the vines in flower are all fragrance. Rouse yourself and come, so beautiful, so well beloved, still hiding yourself as a dove hides in cleft rock or crannied wall. Show me but your face, let me but hear your voice, that voice sweet as your face is fair." Commenting on this, Eucharis Berbuir proposes: "If it is the conviction of the Church that the reference here is to herself and to Mary, then the Church openly acknowledges the union of the Church with Mary, and the union of Mary with the Church."

The following passage from the Apocalypse for the feast of the Apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes at once refers to the Church and to Mary who is the pinnacle of the Church: "And now, in heaven, a great portent appeared: a woman who wore the sun for her mantle, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars about her head ... Then I heard a voice crying aloud in heaven: The time has come; now we are saved and made strong, our God reigns, and power belongs to Christ, his Anointed." Otto Karrer's explanation of the woman is this: "The sun serves as a mantle; it is an image of rich spiritual beauty. The moon is the symbol of God's grace received ... The twelve stars point in the original sense to the twelve tribes of Israel, then to all the elect. All these signs describe the espoused daughter of Sion, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem, namely our Mother who like the Messias, is of a heavenly nature, although she is on earth for a short time, making a pilgrimage."

The woman is certainly a symbol of the Church, the Bride of the Lamb, and on the last day will become wedded to Christ in the fullest sense; the union of Mary with Christ in heaven is a prefiguration of that final wedding and union of Christ with his entire Church on the last day; for, says Very Rev. Fr. Charles Balic, O.F.M. President of the Pontifical International Marian Commission, "Advancing by faith toward the perfect realization of the kingdom of God, the Church looks to Mary who has preceded it in the divine Spouse, Jesus Christ." Again; Mary is the apex of the Church, its most perfect human member.

The following event from the life of Christ points out the union of Mary with the Church: "When he spoke thus, a woman in the multitude said to him aloud: Blessed is the womb that bore you, the breast which you have sucked." And he answered: Shall we not say, Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it?" On the significance of this passage Eucharis Berbuir writes: "The Lord takes up these words of

praise and extends them to all who, fulfilling the will of the Father, live in union with him. Christ's praise of the woman is but a part of the whole, in which Mary has her place. This total figure, which, by the common fulfillment of the Father's will, in union with the Lord, and just because of this union, is blessed, is the Church."

At the foot of the Cross Jesus speaks to Mary: "This is your son," and to John: "This is your mother." Here Mary is the image of Mother Church, and John the image of the Christian community which is born of the Mother Church. Father Eamon R. Carroll, a Carmelite, and a Doctor of Sacred Theology, understands Jesus' words to Mary in this way: "What are we to understand by the words, 'Woman, behold your Son'? Our Lord is proclaiming the spiritual motherhood of both Mary and of the Church whose symbol Mary is. This interpretation is backed by Christian understanding of centuries past and is strongly supported by the recent popes."

According to this view, Mary's mediation of grace is dependent on the fact that Christ united her to the Church. Explaining this in his article, "The Vatican Council and Our Lady," Father Constantine Koser, O.F.M., our present Vicar General, asserts: "In ecclesio-typical Mariology...the only kind of mediation exercised by Mary consists in the fact that she alone occupies the position of one who receives the graces merited by Christ in the name of all mankind and before all others." So, in this view Mary is merely a distributor of graces which Christ merited alone; whereas the Christo-typical view maintains that she merited graces for mankind with and under Christ by special privilege and also distributes them.

As the entire Church, through which the Holy Spirit gives us the Sacramental Presence of Christ, is present at consecration, so also is Mary. As Eucharist Berbuir puts it: "The Sacramental Presence of the Lord is given to us by the Holy Spirit, not without the mediatory cooperation of the Church; and the Church is not without Mary, as Mary is not without the Church." The Church whose mother is Mary mediates all the graces of liturgical celebrations.

In summary of this second approach, Mary is present in the liturgy as part of the Church, as its apogee, image, and exemplar.

Concerning the two views, Fr. Charles Balic remarks: "The first view (the Christo-typical view) puts emphasis on the fact that Mary is the only creature in this world who can say to Jesus: 'You are my Son and Creator'; it therefore exalts Mary's privileges as much as possible since it is unable, as Pius XII said, ever to add a dignity which surpasses or even equals that of divine maternity. The second view, concerned over ecumenical matters, sees in the ecclesio-typical opinion the possibility of checking the modern development of Marian piety and doctrine and a possible acceptance of the figure of Mary even by Protestants."

I would like to round off and conclude this paper by citing Fr. Balic, who claims that both approaches are not irreconcilable and can

lead to a fuller and more developed Mariology: "Despite the difference between the two tendencies, and, we might add, a certain opposition, it would surely be an exaggeration to speak of a 'Mariological' Crisis or of a serious 'Mariological problem' in the life of the Church of today. In fact, all Catholic theologians are in accord in admitting that Christians have always venerated in the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God above all and that therefore the Virgin is to be considered completely relative to God and to Christ: all admit that the Mother of God has no privilege for which she is not indebted to her divine Son, to whom every honor and praise bestowed on her redounds."

Then Fr. Balic goes on to add: "Consequently, it seems both possible and fitting that...these two different outlooks, reflecting two separate mentalities and illustrating the Marian mystery in a different way, can be combined into a superior and happy Mariological synthesis."

Fra. Adam Retzlaff, O.F.M.

THE ROSARY IN THE MODERN CHURCH

"Where do you come from, my Lady?"

"I come from Heaven."

"And what are you coming here for?"

"I come to ask you to meet here six times in succession, at this same hour, on the thirteenth of each month. In October I will tell you who I am and what I expect of you."

After a few moments' pause, Lucy asked again:

"You come from Heaven...And I, shall I go to heaven?"

"Yes, you will come."

"And Jacinta?"

"She, too."

"And Francis?"

The Lady, encompassed by dazzling light, turned, looked more directly at the little boy, and with an expression of kindness and compassion sighed:

"He, too. But first, he must say his beads often."

The children understood what she meant by the beads. They were certainly nothing new. The Lady had often made visits with them. Leo XIII knew her love for them when he wrote that: "...among the several rites and manners of paying honor to the Blessed Virgin Mary, some are to be preferred, inasmuch as we know them to be most powerful and most pleasing to our Mother; and for this reason we specially mention by name and recommend the Rosary." Now this short excerpt, taken from the Pontiff's "Octobre Mense," is characteristic of his Rosary Encyclicals. They flowed rapidly from Leo's prolific pen---encyclicals in which he urged his children to return to the spirit of prayer and the Christian life, which, in the Pope's words, "...are best attained through the devotion of the Rosary of Mary." In these works of solid asceticism and filial love, Leo decried the morals and ethics of the "Age of Enlightenment" and he continually urged his faithful to pray the Rosary daily. When told that 150 altars at the Lourdes shrine were dedicated in honor of the mysteries of the Rosary, he foresaw a favorable augury in it and, in his own words, "...may the Queen of Heaven deign to ratify it."

Whatever Leo meant by these words we may never know, but if the Holy Virgin Mary awaited an invitation, this was it. With Leo's death an enlightened Europe buried his words with him; a Europe whose militarism, to quote a famous personage, "had run stark mad." It was only a matter of history now. The war exploded across the continent. Few places escaped its wrath. One of these was the hamlet of Aljustrel in the town of Fatima, in Portugal. In a ledge-filled pasture called the Cova da Iria, on a little azinheira bush, the Queen of Heaven, as we have seen, appeared to three shepherd children. The little trio

noticed that the Lady held out to them a Rosary and with a heavy heart she said: "If people will do what I shall tell you, many souls will be saved and there will be peace." The Lady continued: "I want you ...to continue to say...the rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary to obtain peace in the world...For she alone will be able to help." The words still apply: Mary-peace-Rosary. Having seen the great opposition which she encountered on previous visits, the Lady of Light promised to perform a miracle in October. On the thirteenth of that month she told the children to "...continue without fail to say the beads every day..." and when Lucy asked her to reveal herself she replied: "I am the Lady of the Rosary." With these words she disappeared and the Fatima apparitions ended. Yet she kept her promise. On that memorable day, in the presence of some 70,000 people, she performed the miracle of the sun---a solar phenomenon which still puzzles skeptics and believers to this day. A mere thirteen years later the Bishop of Leiria, the diocese of which Fatima is a part, approved the apparitions. After careful study he declared "...worthy of credence the visions of the shepherds at the Cova da Iria..." and in our day Pius XII stated that "the time to doubt Fatima is past." There have been many publications which have tried to expound the Fatima message. It is simply this: prayer and penance. Doesn't this bring to mind Leo's exhortation? It will be remembered that he urged a return to the spirit of prayer and the Christian life which "are best attained through the devotion of the Rosary of Mary." From what we have seen thus far, I think we can say that the Rosary is a prayer which is under the aegis not only of the Supreme Pontiffs but also of the Blessed Virgin herself.

Within a year Pope Benedict XV invoked her as Queen of Peace that the great holocaust of 1914 might soon end. In his Encyclical "Ianua appetente die" he writes: "This sweet prayer (Rosary)...is most suitable to nourish souls and encourage them to practice virtue." Pius XI records that: "Among the various supplications with which we successfully appeal to the Virgin Mother of God, the Holy Rosary without a doubt occupies a special and distinct place."

It is a matter of common knowledge that the solemn definition of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary has ushered in a new Marian Era. That it is a fact is acknowledged by Popes and scholars alike. the late Pontiff, John XXIII, affirmed this when he addressed these words: "Unquestionably signs seem to point to the fact that ours is a Marian Age; and it likewise becomes clearer day by day that the way for men to return to God is assured by Mary, that Mary is the basis of our confidence, the guarantee of our security, the foundation of our hope."

The Church today finds herself in a complex position. She is reacting to the needs of this age by an internal reform. An Ecumenical

Council has been convoked. The Church makes clear its purpose in an opening message of this Council to the world: "We shall take pains so to present to the men of this age God's truth in its integrity and purity that they may understand it and gladly assent to it." These are the words of a Council which was predominantly pastoral in character.

The reigning Pontiff, Pope Paul VI, has declared that: "By the promulgation of the Constitution on the Church, which has as its crown and summit a whole chapter devoted to Our Lady, we can rightly affirm that the present session ends as an incomparable hymn of praise of Mary."

This crown and summit is the celebrated *Schēmā VIII*, a majestic treatise hailed by many as a "Summa" of Mariology. In this schema we read that: "The Church has endorsed many forms of piety toward the Mother of God, provided that they were within the limits of sound and orthodox doctrine." This Holy Synod "... charges that practices and exercises of devotion toward her be treasured as recommended by the teaching authority of the Church in the course of centuries..." With these words the Second Vatican Council defends and urges the devotion of the Rosary.

Of course it should be realized that all devotions should harmonize with the liturgical seasons "...since in fact the liturgy by its nature far surpasses any of them." This relationship (for our purposes we shall call it devotional-liturgical) is summarily expressed by Pius XII in his "Mediator Dei": "When dealing with genuine and solid piety we stated that there could be no real opposition between the Sacred Liturgy and the other religious practices, provided that they be kept within the legitimate bounds and performed for a legitimate purpose. In fact, there are certain exercises of piety which the Church recommends very much to the clergy and religious. It is our wish that the faithful as well, should take part in these exercises. The chief of these are: meditations on spiritual things...visits to the Blessed Sacrament and these special prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary among which the Rosary, as we know, has the pride of place."

This, then, is the Church's magisterium speaking to us, her faithful children. Surely, we must acquiesce both in mind and will to her teachings even though, as in this instance, it may not be an ex cathedra pronouncement. We would quote the Council Fathers on this point: "This submission of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even though not speaking ex cathedra. That is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgements made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will. His mind and will in the matter may be known chiefly either from the character of the documents, from his frequent repetition of the same doctrine, or from his manner of speaking."

And is not this frequent repetition of the same doctrine especially true of the Rosary? We could continue with our list of papal citations concerning this simple and profound prayer which "teaches us to make Christ the principle and end not only of Marian devotion, but of our entire spiritual life..." Pope Paul has very frequently expressed such thoughts about "Mary's Psalter." In his brief encyclical "Mense Maio" he exhorts his fellow bishops, and in so doing he expresses a theme of this paper, that they: "...do not fail to lay careful stress on the saying of the Rosary, the prayer so dear to Our Lady and so highly recommended by the supreme pontiffs." This same Pope, when he crowned Mary "Mater Ecclesiae," recommended the rosary as "the most acceptable form of supplication of her aid." The list is not exhausted, though to continue it might make it exhausting. These words of Pius XII admirably summarize what we have here presented. "Let the Holy Rosary be held again in very high honor among you, for it is a synthesis of the whole Gospel: meditation on the mysteries of the Lord, an evening sacrifice, a garland of roses, a hymn of praise, a family prayer, a compendium of Christian life, a sure pledge of heavenly favors, a defense while we await our expected salvation."

Perhaps, even as I read these words, you recall the distractions that beset you the other day while praying the Rosary. These mysteries are difficult to concentrate on---but then maybe that's why they're called mysteries. Anyway, distractions, as a rule, lead to discouragement; but we should take heart in this admission of the Little Flower. In her autobiography she writes: "But when I'm by myself...it's a terrible thing to admit, but saying the rosary takes it out of me more than any hair-shirt would; I do it so badly! Try as I will to put force on myself, I can't meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary; I just can't fix my mind on them. For a long time I was in despair about this, this want of devotion. I couldn't understand it, because I've such a love for the Blessed Virgin that there ought to be no difficulty about saying prayers in her honor; her own favorite prayers, too! Now I don't distress myself so much; it seems to me that the Queen of Heaven, being my Mother, must be aware of my good intentions, and that's enough for her." Of course, this is not a license to give in to a distraction. We see that she tried to force herself to concentrate; she fought the distractions. St. Teresa tells us in another part of her autobiography: "God has given me one grace---I'm not afraid of a fight..." We shouldn't be either!

On September 28, 1960, Pope John XXIII concluded a letter to Clemente Cardinal Micara and, in the same vein as his "Grata recordio," the Pontiff, not without some restrained emotion, wrote: "An Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory be to the Father on our lips; the vision of the mysteries of the life of Our Lord and of his Mother before our eyes; the sigh of a fervent heart. Oh, what a delight this blessed Rosary is! Oh, what assurance it brings of being heard here on earth and in the eternal heavens! In reciting the Rosary, the thing that matters is devoutly meditating on each of the mysteries as we move our

lips. Therefore, we are sure that Our children and all of their brethren throughout the world will turn it into a school for learning true perfection, as, with a deep spirit of recollection, they contemplate the teachings that shine forth from the life of Christ and of Mary Most Holy."

I hope then that some thought has impressed you. The point, I believe, is clear. The Holy Rosary is a traditional Marian devotion, propagated by the Church's magisterium. It is perfectly in keeping with the spirit of Vatican II, especially in its High Medieval form--the Scriptural Rosary. In any case, it is the legacy of a sorrowful Mother who speaks timely words to her children:

"What do you want of me, my Lady?"

"I want you...to continue to say...the rosary every day."

And should we not answer with little Jacinta:

"O my Lady, I will say all the rosaries you want!"?

Fra. Finian Tortorelli, O.F.M.

MARIAN NIGHT
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

November 15, 1965

- I. HYMNS: Praise to the Lord of Heaven
Salve Mater.....Glee Club
- II. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.....Rev. Donald D'Ippolito, O.F.M.
- III. PROLOGUE: The Quest.....Michael Caporale
- IV. HYMN: O Purest of Creatures.....Glee Club
- V. PAPER: The Historical Development
of Devotion of the Rosary.....Anthony Puleo
- VI. PAPER: Marian Encyclicals and Other
Papal Documents on the Rosary.....Dennis DiGiovanni
- VII. EPILOGUE: Queen of Peace.....Joseph Pilato
- VIII: HYMN. Magnificat.....Glee Club

