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The Blessed Virgin at the Council

By RENE LAURENTIN

It is a great joy for me to make contact with American Marian theology, whose ascendant constructive effort I have had occasion to follow and to praise ever since the first issue of *Marian Studies* in 1950. It is also a source of confusion for me to speak to you — and that with such a lack of experience in the English language — at a time when I myself should have so much to listen to and learn.

You have asked me to treat the following subject: The Blessed Virgin at the Council. The theme is a delicate one, for at Vatican II the Marian question caused difficulty and has not been resolved. Thus I would have preferred to treat a more positive and less risky subject: the presence of the Blessed Virgin, for example. But I have come to see that you were right in getting me to speak on this urgent question of current interest. In your presence I approach it with all confidence, knowing your objectivity and your openness, your realistic, extensive and well-documented acquaintance with the problems, certain of obtaining from you, during the course of the discussion which will follow, some positive suggestions for the solution of this problem in the Church.

This report will consist of two parts: an account of what happened at the Council and an exposition of the problems to which those events gave rise.

1. WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COUNCIL

The first part of this paper presents a delicate problem. The activities of the Council are *sub secreto*. This rule, which has not been revoked, does not allow a participant to speak of what he knows as a member of the Council. Fortunately, the official information which the press service diffused with such broadmindedness by means of press conferences and interviews, and articles published by the bishops of the world have made all the essentials publicly known. It is on the basis of this documentation that I shall reconstruct the stages through which the Council's Marian draft passed.¹

The inquiry of the antepreparatory phase (1959-1960) already revealed two tendencies. Certain bishops hoped that the Blessed Virgin would be spoken of, and they even proposed that new definitions would be made — for example, on the Mediation, Spiritual Maternity, Coredemption. Others, a much smaller number, hoped, on the contrary, that there would be no definitions. The numerical disproportion between the two groups has certainly been reversed since then.²

In 1960 the preparatory theological commission decided to devote a chapter to the Blessed Virgin in the schema on the Church. The drawing up of this text gave rise to some discussions, which have not been made public. In March, 1962, after the vote of approval given by the theological commission in the course of its final plenary session, the chapter was set up as a separate schema. It was discussed by

the central commission in June and was printed at the end of the volume which contained the schema *De Ecclesia*. This volume was delivered to the Fathers on November 23, 1962.

The First Session.

The promoters of the schema managed to have it put on the agenda so that it would be discussed after the schema on ecumenism. Their aim, similar to that of Bishop de Smedt with respect to religious liberty at the end of the second session, was to promulgate this text at the close of the first session: on a Marian feast day, December 8.

Many Fathers saw this as inopportune.

For one thing, they were hoping to devote the final days of the first session (December 1-7, 1962) to exploratory discussion on the *De Ecclesia*, Vatican II's central project, a necessary condition for perfecting that schema between the two sessions.

On the other hand, the schema on the Blessed Virgin appeared unsatisfactory. It belonged to that same doctrinal tendency, not sufficiently in touch with the sources and with the lives of men, which had drawn criticism upon the theological schemas as a whole. The aim of hastily promulgating such a text to glorify the Blessed Virgin on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception appeared unfavorable upon clear examination. It risked extolling the maximizing tendencies in Mariology, of needlessly bringing about the promotion or dogmatization of new formulas which undue haste would render inexact.

Finally, this Mariological conclusion to the session risked striking a blow at the ecumenical spirit, not only from the point of view of the Protestant observers but of the Orthodox as well. In fact, these latter were, psychologically at least, as opposed as the Protestants to the schema's expressions, which were those of the Latin mentality, modern in their orientation, and a reworking of encyclicals.

For all these reasons, the board of presidents announced on November 26 a change of Program. In accord with the vote of the majority of the Fathers, it was to be the schema on the Church that would take up the end of the session.

Two days later, on November 28, however, the question came up again. Cardinal Ottaviani on that day, "the day before the opening of the novena for the Immaculate Conception" (the speaker emphasized this circumstance in vibrant tones) intervened to ask for the discussion and immediate proclamation of the schema on the Blessed Virgin. It would be, he said, a means of uniting us after so many discussions, in order to glorify the Blessed Virgin. It would also be a means of bringing us closer to the separated Christians of the East, who have such a great love for the Mother of God. The Cardinal ended with an earnest appeal to the bishops' love of Mary, especially on the part of the missionaries, those of the East, and those whose countries are distinguished by Marian shrines: Lourdes, Fatima, Saragossa; in fine, calling upon all those who love the Blessed Virgin to support his propositions.

He drew some applause, but the board of presidents, which met the same day, kept to the agenda.

The Second Session.

Between the two sessions, the schema did not go back into committee as the prescriptions of John XXIII demanded. The unaltered text was, however, reprinted. At this time the end of the title was changed: it was no longer *De Beata Virgine Matre Dei et Matre Hominum* (On the Blessed Virgin Mother of God and Mother of Men), but *De Beata Maria Virgine Matre Ecclesiae* (On the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of the Church).

Many Fathers wanted the Marian draft reinserted into the schema on the Church. Such a wish, already expressed at the end of the first session and during the recess between sessions, took form at the beginning of the second session. As early as the first general assembly (September 30), Cardinal Agagianian, moderator of the day, let it be known that the question was being considered. It was to be decided by a special vote. But this vote remained suspended for a long time since the Council's directing forces contested the right of the moderators to present questions to the assembly.

In the evening of October 23, this difficulty was resolved, and, on the 25th, the following question was submitted to the Fathers: Do you wish to make the schema on the Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of the Church the last chapter in the schema *De Ecclesia*?

That same day, Cardinal Santos of Manila and Cardinal König of Vienna respectively pleaded against and for this proposition. Both advanced in argument the honor of the Virgin at the same time as ecumenical considerations.³

The propaganda opposed to the insertion argued that this solution was of a minimizing nature and a dishonor to the Blessed Virgin.

Here once again was the opposition between the two camps that had already confronted one another in the debate on the question of collegiality. The one group considered the Pope as a member of the episcopal college, superior to the rest of its members but still within the college. The other considered him as superior to and outside the college. To these latter the first position seemed to diminish, depreciate, and compromise the papacy. The first group said: "Peter and the *other* apostles," "the Pope and the *other* bishops." The second group said: "Peter and the apostles," "the Pope and the bishops" as if Peter were not an apostle and as if the Pope were not a bishop. Similarly the Virgin was, for the one group, an eminent and outstanding member of the Church, the summit of its union with Christ. The others tended to represent her as prior to and superior to the Church: predestined with Christ independently of the Church and prior to the latter, endowed with grace specifically different from that of the other redeemed. The one group then considered her as superior and within, the other as superior and outside the Church. For the first group, Peter's interiority to the college and that of Mary to the Church brought into full light their function and their prerogatives. It seemed to them that to separate a member from the body, even if it were to place him above it, was a kind of amputation and destruction, like cutting a branch from a vine. The others had recourse to such a sep-

aration as a means of better setting apart, exalting, and manifesting in a transcendent way the superiority of the Pope in the one instance, and that of Mary in the other. Two points of view were opposing each other: the one organic and functional, the other juridical. It is from this position that the arguments on both sides were formed, without the key issues being brought to focus.

During those days (October 23-28) numerous talks were given to the various episcopates by both sides. During the evening of October 28, two leaflets, one duplicated, the other printed, were deposited even as late as nine o'clock in the evening at the episcopal residences in Rome. They were distributed at the entrance of St. Peter's on the morning of the vote, Tuesday the 29th. Certain Fathers found them at their places.⁴ The first of these pamphlets, coming from the Spanish theologians, summed up in a few lines the theme developed during the preceding days: to vote for the insertion is to vote against the Blessed Virgin. The other signed by a few Orientals (some Syro-Malabars and Ukrainians in exile) said in brief: On behalf of the East and to favor ecumenism, vote against the insertion. As a matter of fact, the most representative Oriental groups (Melkites and Maronites, for example) showed an indifference towards the heart of the problem and admitted a preference for inclusion in the schema as a means of avoiding the excesses of a Mariology which is too strictly Latin in its form and which for that reason they find onerous.

This propaganda at the last hour brought on a wave of uneasiness. Cardinal Agagianian, moderator for October 29th, the day of the vote, made it clear that the Virgin's honor was not in question, but he only half reassured the assembly. The vote for the insertion aroused among many a feeling of guilt with respect to the Madonna. The results were divided as follows:

for the insertion	1,114
against	1,074
votes void	5

a difference of forty votes, that is, a majority of seventeen. The assembly, which ordinarily votes "yes" by more than 90%, found itself divided into two almost equal parts, as if by a two-edged sword. The duration of and in some cases the violence of the propaganda, the suspicion thrown on the orthodoxy of certain partisans for the integration, even in the newspapers,⁵ had created uneasiness. This break-up of unanimity on account of her whom the schema was pleased to call "Mother of Unity" caused a kind of consternation, which spread widely. Everybody wanted to resolve the difficulty at any cost.

At the beginning of November, a solution was in the offing. A private sub-committee consisting of four bishops was charged with drawing up a text capable of effecting unanimity. The four members were: the two Cardinals Santos and König, plus Bishop Doumith, a Maronite to represent the East, and Bishop Théas of Lourdes, who enjoyed the confidence of the assembly. They had at their disposal the official draft based on the encyclicals and concerned with promoting the development of the Coredemption, two counter-proposals, officially submitted in October, each with more than one hundred signatures, as required by Article 33, section 7 of the rules of

procedure. Both of these proposals, the so-called English one by Dom Butler, and the other, the Chilean draft, were characterized by the same biblical, pastoral, ecumenical outlook.⁶ There were, finally, some unofficial drafts, one of which was made up for the needs of the Secretariat for Unity.

The new text was to be submitted to the episcopal conferences through the good offices of the “conference of twenty-two,” the unofficial but efficient coordinating organization that each week brought together the representatives of the principal national and international conferences. There was now question of an exceptional procedure. The conference had to make sure of the Fathers’ agreement that the schema would be voted on without being publicly discussed in order to avoid another flaring up of passions. But, as soon as the committee of four was expanded, passions did arise. It was impossible to come to any agreement even on the main points of the new version. The session ended in this deadlock.

The Discourse of Paul VI.

On December 4th, Paul VI’s closing discourse gave some suggestions for breaking the deadlock. Translations have, in general, not been faithful to rendering the nuances of this paragraph, which consists of one long sentence, difficult to put into our modern languages.⁷

Speramus denique eandem Synodum
quaestionem de schemate circa Beatam
Mariam Virginem, optimam, quae pos-
sit, habituram esse enodationem:
ita scilicet ut uno consensu et summa
pietate agnoscat locus longe praest-
antissimus qui Matris Dei est proprius
in Sancta Ecclesia, de qua praecipuus
est sermo in hoc Concilio: locum, di-
cimus, post Christum, altissimum nobis-
que maxime propinquum, ita ut nomine
“Matris Ecclesiae” eam possimus or-
nare; idque in ejus honorem cedat in
nostrumque solatium.

: We hope, finally, that the council will
: untangle the problem of the schema on
: the Blessed Virgin Mary in the best
: way possible,
: so that with one mind and with the
: greatest devotion all will recognize that
: supremely eminent position which is
: proper to the Mother of God in the
: Church, the principal theme of the pres-
: ent Council: the place, we say, which
: is the highest after Christ and the one
: closest to us, so that we might be able
: to honor her with the name “Mother
: of the Church:” and that all this will
: tend to her honor and our salvation.

This text contains three principal suggestions:

1. To restore unanimity, to find once again a fervent accord with regard to the Blessed Virgin (*ut uno consensu et summa pietate agnoscatur . . .*); to unravel all that has so unfortunately and so passionately become entangled around that subject. The Pope uses the expressive *enodationem* in preference to the more common word *solutionem*. He proposes two essential means to that end.

2. To integrate the Blessed Virgin into the schema on the Church (*agnoscat locus Matris Dei . . . in Sancta Ecclesia de qua praecipuus est sermo in nostro Con-*

cilio). On October 11, at a time when the idea had already been put forward that insertion into the Church was detrimental to the Virgin, the Pope had clearly insinuated the opportuneness of such an integration: “Our Council . . . is on the point of declaring the name of the Madonna **IN THE GREAT VISION OF THE CHURCH**,” he said in the presence of the Conciliar Fathers assembled at St. Mary Major. And further on: “O Mary, may the Church of Christ, which is also your Church (*sua e tua Chiesa*), **IN DEFINING ITSELF** recognize you . . .” The closing discourse confirmed these directions and, above all, so also did the vote of October 29th, which had decided upon the insertion by such a feeble majority.

3. To make clear that this integration is not and ought not to be interpreted as a lowering of the Blessed Virgin to the level of the other members. The Pope insists on that, for the propaganda during October had unfortunately persuaded certain souls that to place the Virgin in the Church would be to diminish her by attenuating the privileges that are proper to her. To dispel these fears, the Pope gathers together a number of expressions: the Mother of God occupies “the most excellent position” and it is one which is “properly hers,” (“the word *proprium* has been left out in many translations), “the highest place so that we might be able to call her *Mother of the Church*.”

The Title Mother of the Church.

The last part of this paragraph is generally the object of inexact translations: “so well that we can honor her with the title *Mater Ecclesiae* for her glory and our consolation” is one example. Let us point out two nuances:

1. The translation must read “we might be able to” rather than “we can honor her.” The Latin is ambiguous as usual when a subordinate clause calls for the subjunctive independently of its meaning and solely by reason of the construction in which it is found. The Italian text, which is ordinarily the expression of the original version and can be used to settle a question in doubtful cases, uses the conditional: *potremmo*, we would be able. Similarly the French translation distributed by the press service has *nous pourrions*, we could or would be able.

2. It seems impossible to attach immediately “for her glory and for our consolation” to *Mater Ecclesiae*. In the Latin text, these words are separated from what precedes by a semicolon and are attached to a subject and verb which the translations suppress but which form a complete clause: “*idque* in ejus honorem *cedat* in nostrumque solatium.” This clause is joined to the first *ita ut*, which governs the entire sentence. We must then read:

We hope that the Marian question will be disentangled in such a way that her most excellent position will be recognized by a common consent . . . and that this will tend to her honor and our consolation.

Briefly, the title Mother of the Church in the discourse by Paul VI does not have the importance which 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 expression; the Pope uses this expression only in passing, in a

conditional mode, and within a subordinate clause far from the main thought of the sentence.

Why this reserve? It is because the title poses some difficult problems. There are several meanings for the word *Church* and for the word *mother*. Depending on the meaning of the two words, the title will either have a valid sense or not, and that entails numberless problems, some of them very subtle.

As for the word *mother*, it has at least two very different meanings. Mary is the Mother of Christ because she engendered Him corporally; on the other hand, she is mother of Christians *in the purely spiritual sense of regeneration in the order of grace*, and in this order, as St. Augustine observes, “she is engendered by Christ” rather than that she engenders him.⁹ In this connection, the change which was introduced without discussion in the title of the schema when it was reprinted in 1963 causes a problem. Until then it read: “Mary Mother of God and Mother of Men.” The commission had adhered to a repetition of the word *mother* because of the difference between the two meanings. The new title, a more synthetic one, sacrificed this nuance in saying “Mary Mother of the Church,” that is to say, of the Head and members.

The linking of the words “Mother of the Church” likewise poses some thorny problems, which would not have been raised by more traditional expressions, such as “Mother of the Faithful,” for example. The same holds for all those titles which relate the maternity to persons and not to the collective term, Church. So, for example, the Church is our mother. If Mary is Mother of the Church, does she not seem to become our grandmother, as St. Francis de Sales said curiously?¹⁰ Then too, Mary is a member of the Church. How to get away from the impression that she would be her own mother?

One of the difficulties with the expression is that it suggests that Mary is exterior to the Church as a mother is with regard to her daughter, whereas Mary is in the Church and the two are not adequately distinct but profoundly involved in one another and both of them in Christ. Must we then adopt this expression and enter into the disputes which it would certainly raise?

Actually the questions that will be presented are the following: Is this title, relatively new from the dogmatic point of view and unknown to the East,¹¹ the best means of showing how Mary surpasses the other members of the Church?

If this means is retained, what precise meaning is to be given to the title? Where shall it be placed? In the foreground, in the very title of the schema, or only in the body of the text? Alone, or together with other formulas? Paul VI sets the example in using this last method. In his discourse of October 11, he thus addresses himself to the Virgin: “May the Church recognize you as its mother, its daughter, and as its sister.”¹² These complementary expressions appear necessary for the stability of doctrine once this difficult road has been chosen.

It is evident, however much everyone may be desiring unanimity, that the problem is beset with difficulties. A prediction would be overbold on my part. It is better to acquire perspective and fit the problem considered into a larger context.

2. WHAT IS AT STAKE AND THE CONDITIONS FOR SOLUTION

The difficulties which were raised at the Council could have been foreseen. They had appeared during the course of international Mariological congresses, and they have had century-long roots. The reason I wrote my book *La Question Mariale*¹³ was to remove the fuse from this explosive situation (which some would prefer to forget or deny), for it is not by an ostrich-like policy that it will be resolved. I do not believe that the problem is objectively serious. Dogma relative to the Virgin which no Catholic denies is precisely enough defined so that at bottom there cannot be any serious problems. But the situation is psychologically tense here and there, even if only at the Council. A solution is urgent and everybody hopes for one, for the sake of the Catholics first of all and then for the sake of ecumenism. How, in fact, could one join in an ecumenical dialogue on the Virgin as long as the internal differences and difficulties of Catholicism are not surmounted?

The divisions, of which the Blessed Virgin is presently the object constitute a recent phenomenon, one that is artificial and abnormal. Of herself, the Blessed Virgin is a factor only of unity — she in whom a union was effected between God and the human race to be saved, the unity of a new creation where there is now neither “male nor female, neither Jew nor Greek . . .” I said to one of my Italian friends the day after the famous vote: “The Virgin remains the mother of unity; it is on the plane of our human narrowness, our errors, our sins that divisions are found.” These divisions must be transcended.

How? The fourth chapter of *La Question Mariale* treats this subject *ex professo*. The solution would entail restoring the value of what is essential and putting the accessory into the background, trying to retranslate the essential in Marian doctrine into a more universal language, closer to Scripture, Tradition, the Greek and Latin Fathers, closer to the lives of men today; in other words, into a more pastoral language.

Let us be honest and not try to hide the sore point of the problem. In a little more than a century, the papacy, which had previously said little about the Blessed Virgin in its pronouncements, has given us a great abundance of documents. The texts of Pius XII alone take up seven hundred closely printed pages.¹⁴ These texts certainly have a great importance and great authority. Nevertheless, it is very necessary to understand their significance: (1) The greater number are given over to exhortation, preaching, praise. To this category belong the encyclicals on the Rosary, the exhortations addressed to groups of pilgrims, etc. Their object is not to provide doctrinal norms but to rekindle piety. Save for very rare exceptions, the literary form of these documents is not that of a dogmatic constitution meant to furnish doctrinal standards. The conciliar text then ought not to be a mere collection of formulas taken from such papal documents. (2) These texts do, of course, represent tradition and are themselves examples of it, but they are also, in a measure that has to be made clear, representative of tendencies peculiar to certain times and places — namely, Latin piety of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and, more precisely, of Italian piety.¹⁵ The Popes belong to that nation whose religious spirit is remarkable without, however, mingling

purely and simply with the general spirit of the Church. Their immediate flock and surroundings are this same country, which they had not left for more than a century. It would be neither good nor possible for them to make abstraction of this circumstance. It cannot be denied that this piety does have its particular traits: Its laudatory style, rich in epithets, its profuseness, its propensity for multiplying titles of the Blessed Virgin, etc. Other nationalities do not necessarily feel at ease with this particular approach.

Newman once wrote:

These manifestations of devotion . . . have been my great cross . . . and I do not believe that I love Our Lady any the less for all that . . . These things are good for Italy; they are not good for England.¹⁶

It is a fact that the language of these documents causes difficulties among the Orientals. To reinterpret, retranslate the doctrine of the encyclicals in the light of all sources would not be to diminish them but to give them their full value by freeing them from all particularism.

A few rapid examples will give an idea of what such a task would be.

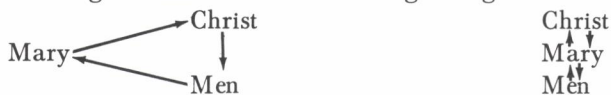
Let us take this sentence by Benedict XV: "Mary gave up her maternal rights for the salvation of man . . . As much as it was proper to her, she immolated her Son . . . so that it can be truly said that she redeemed the human race together with Christ."¹⁷ "*To give up her maternal rights*" does not have a strictly juridical sense. It is a metaphorical expression of the bonds between mother and son. In fact, if a man gives his life for his country and his mother approves or even encourages him, it will not be said, except in poetic or epic language, that she *gave up her rights*. A mother does not have strict rights over the life of her son, who is not a *thing* but a *person*, endowed with autonomy; the latter does not commit an injustice if he sacrifices his life without asking her permission. Besides, such a thing simply is not done. The truth that the Pope expresses in this somewhat hyperbolic language, characteristic of Italian piety, is that Jesus is the son of Mary and that in virtue of the bonds of nature made deeper by grace, the sacrifice of Christ belongs in a sense to Mary. What the priest says to the faithful at Mass *meum ac vestrum sacrificium* is true on another level between Christ and Mary.

The equally hyperbolic expressions which follow, "Mary *immolated* her Son . . . she *redeemed* the human race" likewise call for delicate interpretation. These words have a meaning which must not be taken strictly. In brief, such a sentence, legitimate in the context of the literary style that is used, would have no place in a dogmatic constitution. We may add that it would be a cause for astonishment if not of scandal for the Eastern Orthodox whose literary forms also display a real verbal profuseness but along a quite different line. This holds *a fortiori* for the Protestants.

The various expressions which deal with Marian mediation also call for examination, reassessment and interpretation. The papal texts freely make use of the schematic which places the Virgin as an intermediary of grace between Christ and ourselves: "Innumerable graces flow from her heart as from a fountain," says Pius XII. And again, "Grace passes through her," "through her hands," etc. L. Matellan, who

has collected a good number of texts on this theme, speaks of the realism of all these expressions.¹⁸ Rather, what we have here is symbolism. These images may not be taken materially, certainly not in the strict sense of the term. They do, of course, signify something, but it would be useful to make clear just what in these expressions may be true absolutely, what relatively, and what is true approximately. Certain Christians, even Catholics, feel more disconcerted than helped when they are told that the Virgin comes between Christ and ourselves. This disturbs them because taking the figure literally, as some poorly enlightened preachers sometimes do, Christ would appear further away and Mary closer to us; we would have immediate contact with her and not with Him. Now this is false; nothing is more immediate than the presence of the Creator to His creature, nothing is closer than that supernatural actuation of the soul by God which constitutes grace.

To the imaginative schematic according to which Mary would be an intermediary placed between Christ and ourselves, who sees that our requests go to her Son and who sends us back His graces, certain theologians oppose another in which Mary intercedes in the order of ascending mediation, but in which Christ alone acts in descending mediation.¹⁹ The two diagrams given here could illustrate these two notions.



Neither of these representations is exact. We must rise above them. Mary is not so much placed between Christ and ourselves as she is in Christ, in a perfect and reciprocal interiority, receiving the utmost fullness of His grace and His glory, communing from within in all that He is and all that He does, participating in His entire work, present to the entire mystical body by an active intercessory presence, but in Christ.

We see that there is no question of proscribing the usual titles and figures, but of clarifying their meaning, dispelling their ambiguity, regulating their correct usage, and avoiding derisory and abusive expressions. This can lead to more moderation in the use of legitimate figures that some preachers employ as if they were to be taken in their absolutely literal sense; it can lead to more moderation in regard to certain titles. It is a fact that Pius XII systematically removed the term *Coredemption* from his encyclicals, and that he made less and less use of the title *Mediatrix*, in order not to obscure the biblical doctrine of one Mediator. John XXIII refrained completely from using either of the two titles in question. It is not that he was less attached to Mary's cooperation in the work of salvation and to her maternal function with respect to men. But evidently he was searching for a purer language, one that lent itself less to ambiguity.

During the last few centuries, Mariology has continued to accumulate titles, formulas, theories, all along a very well-defined line, but often sprouting forth in offshoots that require an occasional pruning. It is important to understand better and to give a more prominent place to what is essential, for certain materialistic, petty, narrow and individualistic viewpoints either diminish Mary's greatness or artificially inflate it. It

all comes to the same thing: an ungraceful caricature which disfigures the Virgin's spotless countenance and keeps her from being loved in the royal simplicity, in the glorious poverty in which God has established her.²⁰

It would be better to grasp the glory of Mary in her very humility, in her simplicity, and in her very poverty, in the grace which is the source and measure of these virtues, to place Mary's privileges back again within the framework of the function which gives them meaning, to construct a more functional Marian theology, better situated in salvation history.

In this way we would rise above the opposition of particularisms, which tend to set themselves up as laws and rise above expressions that differ only in nonessentials.

Ecumenism would benefit also for two reasons:

1. Dialogue would become possible on a solid basis, which is presently lacking, for as our separated brethren speak with one Catholic after another, they get lost.
2. The return to the sources, the retranslation of Marian doctrine in terms that are more biblical, drawn more extensively and intensively from tradition, less exclusively Latin and less bound to local devotions would be of itself more accessible to separated Christians of good will than the present language of modern Mariology. It would offer a program suited for their research and their reflection.

May our Lady help us to transcend everything that smacks of what is too particular, too novel, too relative, so that we understand her more purely, so that she becomes once again among Catholics and to a greater extent among other Christians what she should never have ceased to be: a sign of unity in Christ.

NOTES

1. Sources for the history of the conciliar text on the Blessed Virgin. The press service supplied generous, abundant, and varied information: There were daily bulletins in seven languages (see those for the periods when the Marian Question was being discussed: September 30-October 3; October 24-31). The hectographed bulletins were complemented by press conferences also given each day under the aegis of responsible bishops, by experts involved in the debates. Each day, to obtain information, I personally followed the French conference given by Abbé Hautmann, which was especially comprehensive. (It lasted from an hour and a quarter to two hours.) To this were added special conferences by the Fathers of the Council, for example, the one by Cardinal Suenens, which was widely disseminated in the press and reported by *Information Catholique Internationale*, November 15, p.9: "The present text," says the Cardinal . . . who remains the outstanding theologian of the Legion of Mary, 'must be completely redone and better tied in with the ensemble of the schemas on the Church, in order that it become an integral part of them'" etc.

This information was relayed by the newspapers, some of which had the benefit of sources over and above the normal channels, such as *l'Aventure d'Italia* in touch with the immediate entourage of Cardinal Lercaro, one of the four moderators; *il Tempo*, echo of the most influential members of the Curia, which in all its numbers between October 25-30 campaigned against the integration of the Virgin into the Church and returned to the question on November 1 (see note 5 below); *La Croix*, whose director, Father Wenger, was personally present at the debates (see in particular the issues for October 1-3; 25-31; and November 14). We must also single out *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *il Messagero*, *il Corriere della Sera*, *La Libre Belgique*, the *Divine Word News Service*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, etc. Finally, numerous religious conferences and meetings were sources of information coming directly from the bishops, the Fathers of the Council. Let us cite, by way of example, the *Semaine Catholique* of Toulouse, where, on November 10, Bishop Garrone declared: "The vote dealing with the schema on the Blessed

Virgin was, *at least on one side*, quite impassioned.”

Among the bi-monthly reviews let us single out above all *Information Catholique Internationale* No. 204, November 15, pp. 2-3; 9-10; *Documentation Catholique* 60 (1963), No. 1413, December 1, cc. 1436, 1438, 1441, 1445, 1574-1576, 1585; *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1963, IV, quad. 1723, pp. 635-8.

Of the monthlies see R. Rouquette in *Etudes* 319 (1963), pp. 397; M. Villain in *Rythmes du Monde*, 1963, p. 65.

Consult also the following: R. Laurentin, *L'Enjeu du Concile, Bilan de la première session* (Paris, Seuil), 1963, pp. 47-9, and *Bilan de la seconde session*, ib., 1964, chapters 2,5,6; A. Wenger, *Vatican II, I ère session* (Paris, Centurion, 1963), pp. 147-148; B. Kloppenburg, O.F.M., *Concilio Vaticano II*, vol. 2, (Petropolis, Vozes, 1963) and Vol. 3, now in the course of publication. There one can find a resume of each of the conciliar interventions as, for instance, that of Cardinal Ottaviani, p. 222.

I prefer to group these references together instead of multiplying them in the style usually employed for a “scholarly exposition.”

2. Two factors were at play. (1) For two or three centuries, the Holy See had rarely consulted the bishops; the only consultations of any magnitude were those which had preceded the two Marian definitions. Then too, at the time of the antepreparatory consultation launched by John XXIII in 1959, the first idea which came to many was that of asking for a new definition. There were certain currents of propaganda that started this movement. (2) The directive of John XXIII and the progress of the conciliar work led to the conviction that the task proper to Vatican II did not call for the making of definitions. The ecumenical objective accented this conviction as regards Marian questions.
3. The arguments of the two cardinals are summed up in *Documentation Catholique*, 45 (1963), No. 1413, col. 1574-1576. Also to be found there are the translation of a note signed by Cardinal Silva which answers five objections against the integration. Here is the first of the five answers: “To those who say that in not giving the Blessed Virgin a separate schema, her honor is being tainted, we answer: to separate the most worthy of all the members in order to give her the greatest dignity is to go against her rather than to serve her, for, in the devotions of the faithful, we must avoid separating Mary from the body of Christ, which is the Church.”
4. In *La Croix* for October 31 we read: “During the two days which preceded the vote on the Marian schema, the leaders of the two theses published various notes. Conferences were multiplied. The newspaper *il Messaggero* said, for example, that on one day, Father Rahner gave five conferences. In the other camp, Father Balic had prepared a commentary on the schema favoring an autonomous text, which was sent to the Fathers. There was also an important conference given to the Brazilian bishops by Cardinal Ruffini. The Fathers even found leaflets at their places. Finally, at the entrance of the basilica, some bishops distributed a text, signed by five Oriental bishops, two Malabar bishops from India and three Ukrainian bishops, asking for a vote against the integration, and that for ecumenical reasons.”
5. According to *il Tempo*, the “English schema” of Dom Butler had in view to limit the doctrinal content “only to the tradition held in common with the Orthodox” (October 26), and to reduce it to “a mere chapter, to be included in the general schema on the Church, which *will attenuate the most recent dogmas on Mary*, such as the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption.” On October 29, *il Tempo* added: “Father Butler . . . maintains that in order to meet with the separated brethren of Central Europe, it is necessary to *attenuate the maximizing* of modern Mariology and to include in the definition of the Church only that which had been thought about the Madonna until the year 1054, when the schism between the Catholics and the Orthodox occurred. All the developments, all the subsequent dogmas would have to be *passed over in silence or much attenuated*.”

Dom Butler succeeded in getting a protest printed, which appeared after the vote, in the issue for November 1: “Abbot Butler . . . has personally declared that the schema prepared under his direction absolutely does not intend to minimize devotion to the Virgin; on the contrary, by going back and re-examining, it intends to build the foundations on which the recent dogmatic definitions on the Madonna will shine clearly before all. The schema contains the following sentence: *Mary was preserved immune from any original sin, and she was assumed into heaven body and soul as the image-type and hope of the Church.*”

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Significant also is this answer of *il Tempo* (October 28) to the ones favoring the Virgin's inclusion in the Church: "The decision . . . concerns . . . above all the authority of the Church. In effect a vote in favor of attenuating the Virgin's glory in order to favor the Protestants in some region would put a territorial decision on the same level as, if not directly above, the decision of the universal Church, which has its center in Rome and in the Pope. Would attenuating the Madonna's glory make it easier for the majority of the separated brethren to understand the Church? *The Anglicans venerate the Virgin as much as Catholics; the same can be said of the Orthodox. And as for the immense multitudes of Africa and Asia, they find it natural to accept a Mediatrix between themselves and God. Accustomed as they are to the cult of ancestors who are mediators with the divinity, it will not seem difficult for them to understand a religion in which a human being claims to address himself directly to God.*"

The African bishops appreciated neither this judgment about the mental backwardness of their peoples nor this suggestion to make the Blessed Virgin a substitute for ancestor worship.

6. *Il Tempo* presented the official schema thus: "It was prepared by the Pontifical Marian Academy, which has Father Balic for president and Cardinal Ottaviani, Secretary of the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office as its protector. While the English draft limits its detailed investigation on the Madonna to the period of time preceding the separation of the Orthodox from the Church, for the simple strategic reason of presenting to the Council only those aspects of Mary that are common to Catholics and to the Orthodox . . . the original schema takes into account the great popular movement of recent times which assigns to the Virgin a unique position in the Church as Coredemptrix Naturally there is question of presenting this revealed truth in a manner acceptable to the Protestants, and, consequently, it remains the objective concern of the institute headed by Father Balic" (October 27).
7. *Osservatore Romano*, December 4, p. 2, col. 3.
8. *Summa theologica*, III, q. 8, a. 4, c.
9. *De sancta Virginitate*, 6, P. L. 40, 399.
10. *Introduction à la Vie dévote in Oeuvres complètes*, Paris, 1875, t. 1, p. 78: "She is the Mother of our sovereign Father and consequently our grandmother." It is Christ who is here referred to as "sovereign Father" for having engendered us to grace. (Editor's note: None of the three English translations of the *Introduction to a Devout Life* which have been consulted contain the word *grandmother*. See the translation by Msgr. John K. Ryan published by Harper in 1949, where on page 63 the above sentence is rendered: "She is the Mother of our sovereign Father, and consequently she is our own Mother in an especial way.")
11. On the late origins of this title and the rarity of its use by the magisterium, which seems to have avoided it for a long time, see R. Laurentin, "La Vierge Marie au concile," in *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, 48 (1964), p. 43.
12. "Sua madre, e figlia, e sorella eletissima," (*Osservatore Romano*, October 12, p. 1). Whenever the title Mother of the Church was, on occasion, used in tradition, it was ordinarily with such compensatory remarks.

In his homily at Nazareth, the Pope came back to the Maternity of Mary and to her connection with the Church. "She is . . . the Mother of Christ, and, therefore, the Mother of God and our mother . . . the model of the Church (see *La Croix* for Tuesday, January 7, 1964). The text is significant. In a concrete situation, the Pope does not use the ambiguous title of *Mater Ecclesiae*, but instead those which refer Mary's maternity to Christ and to each man (*our* mother): the maternity is concerned with persons. When he wants to bring up Mary's relation to the Church taken collectively, Paul VI does not say *mother*, but *model* of the Church.
13. R. Laurentin, *La question mariale* (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1963).
14. O. Bertotto, *Il magisterio mariano di Pio XII* (Rome, ed. Paoline, 1958), pp. 39-750. At that date, Pius XII's Marian work was not yet ended.
15. R. Laurentin, *La question mariale*, 2nd edition, p. 184.
16. J. H. Newman, *Histoire de mes origines religieuses*, 2nd French edition (Paris, 1868), p. 301. Cf. the original text in *Apologia pro Vita Sua, being a history of his religious opinions* (New York, Longmans, Green, 1947), p. 176.

17. Benedict XV, "Inter sodalicia," March 22, 1918, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 10 (1918), p. 182: ". . . ita cum Filio patiente et moriente passa est et paene commortua, sic *materna in Filium jura* pro hominum salute *abdica*vit, placandaeque Dei justitiae quantum ad se pertinebat Filium *immola*vit, ut merito dici queat: Ipsam cum Christo humanum genus redemisse."
See R. Laurentin, *La question mariale*, p. 180, note 7, on the somewhat softened use of these expressions in the "Mystici Corporis," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 35 (1943), p. 247.
18. S. Matellan, C.M.F., *Presencia de Maria en la experiencia mistica* (Madrid, Cocolsa, 1962), pp. 150-154; cf. *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques*, 48 (1964), p. 111.
19. R. Laurentin, *La question mariale*, p. 74.
20. The problem of the golden mean and of its criteria is treated in *La question mariale*, pp. 98-126.
21. *ib.*, Epilogue, pp. 161-171.

THE INTELLECTUALS are, as it were, the radar of Christianity, the antennae of the community of the faithful. They should keep the church in tune with the transfigurations in the psychology of man. If the Christian intellectual is a natural scientist, he is in contact with the changes in human environment effected by science; if he is a social scientist, he is an expert in man's psychological response to the alternation of the world in which he lives; if he is a sculptor, painter, poet, novelist, or literary critic, he is sensitive to the word or image that touches the psychology of living men. This Christian intellectual should communicate his sensitivity for the life of his time to the theologian.

This dialogue may lead to growth in the psychology of communication of the word of Salvation. It may precipitate a new emphasis on aspects of the truth which have remained veiled in other periods of culture but which become at once relevant to the new psychology of man. — *Adrian van Kaam, C.S.Sp.* Excerpt from his article, "A Psychology of the Catholic Intellectual," in *INSIGHT* (Spring, 1963).