

MARY IN THE DIVINE PLAN:  
A SURVEY OF MARIOLOGICAL WRITINGS PREVIOUS TO THE 1954  
DECLARATION OF THE CANADIAN BISHOPS

by  
Sister Mary Thomas Hawco, R.S.M.

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## INTRODUCTION

On October 14, 1954, there was issued a Declaration of the Canadian Catholic Hierarchy on the Role of Mary in the Divine Plan.<sup>1</sup> The document developed two themes:

(1) Mary the perfect example of redeemed humanity, and (2) Mary the model of the creature's total abandonment to God's will.

The following dissertation will endeavour to point out the gradual evolution in theological thinking that is behind these two comparatively new themes. It will cite related ideas from recent writings of theologians and acts of the Magisterium which gradually brought these two themes into clear focus. Finally, it will show by the addition of a typical lesson plan on one of the themes, that Marian doctrine can be organically related to the kerygmatic presentation of salvation history.

Background

Pope Pius IX, in answer to the requests of the hierarchy and laity, including heads of state, proclaimed on December 8, 1854, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception to belong to the deposit of faith. And Pope Pius XII, as if to further enhance this special prerogative of Mary,

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of the Canadian Catholic Hierarchy on the Role of Mary in the Divine Plan (Ottawa: "Le Droit" Printers, 1954), 12 p. Hereafter abbreviated to Declaration.

in another ex cathedra pronouncement on November 1, 1950, declared that her Assumption henceforth belonged to this same deposit.<sup>1</sup> Just three years later on September 8, 1953, Pope Pius XII, wishing to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, issued the encyclical letter Fulgens corona, designating the year 1954, a Marian year. He exhorted bishops and pastors all over the world to promote Marian activities to help the faithful know Mary better, and in knowing her to return through her to Christ. It was in fulfillment of this request of the Holy Father's, and as a fitting conclusion to the year of celebrations, projects and Marian publications throughout Canada, that the Bishops issued a joint pastoral letter in the autumn of 1954.

The Declaration of the Canadian Bishops dealt principally with two aspects of Mary's life:

Theme A: Mary is the perfect example of redeemed humanity which has recovered its original integrity;

Theme B: Mary is the model of the creature which abandons itself entirely and unconditionally to the will of its Creator.

#### Significance of the Letter

This is a presentation of Marian doctrine which has been stressed by contemporary theologians. Here we

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<sup>1</sup> Pius XII, Munificentissimus Deus (New York: The Paulist Press, 1951), 30 p.

have passage or transfer of concepts from private theology to the official Magisterium. This means these concepts are now the voice of the Holy Spirit and have an authority and urgency they did not have before. These two themes on Mary, since they now belong to the Magisterium of the Church, may be taught without apologies. They should be taught if we believe that doctrinal progress is the work of the Holy Spirit for the needs of the Church at the moment. The topic is a pertinent one at the present time for several reasons: Vatican Council II, in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, paragraph 103, associates Mary in the celebration of Christ's mysteries, and refers to her as the "most excellent fruit of the redemption."<sup>1</sup> The same Council's Constitution on the Church has a chapter devoted to our Blessed Lady in the mystery of Christ and the Church.<sup>2</sup> It is also noteworthy that the Holy Father, in closing the third session of Vatican Council II, devoted two-thirds of his address to Mary.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Paul VI, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (New York: N.C.W.C., 1963), p. 31.

2 Paul VI, Second Vatican Council: Constitution on the Church (New York: N.C.W.C., 1964), pp. 61-69.

3 Cf. "Discours prononcé par S.S. Paul VI de la clôture de la troisième session du Concile," La Documentation Catholique, T.LXI (6 décembre, 1964), pp. 1537-1546.

In this age of aggiornamento when eschatology, the teaching of the "last things," is being highlighted-- "moving into the foreground,"<sup>1</sup> it is fitting that the eschatological aspects of Mary's redemption receive due attention. As we should consider Christ both as the Saviour of souls and as "the Lord of the Return,"<sup>2</sup> likewise ought we look on Mary both as our model of holiness and the model of "what humanity will be when restored in Christ at the end of time."<sup>3</sup>

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1 Joseph Goldbrunner, Holiness is Wholeness and Other Essays (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), p. 62.

2 Ibid.

3 Declaration, p. 6.

PART I

MARY PERFECT EXAMPLE OF REDEEMED HUMANITY  
SURVEY OF MARIOLOGICAL WRITINGS

This thesis has at its heart two themes dealing with Mary's place in the economy of salvation. The study of the background of each theme will proceed in an identical manner.

After a brief glance at Pope Pius IX's Ineffabilis Deus, December 8, 1854, defining the Immaculate Conception, we shall examine significant theological writings and Church documents issued during the seventeen years immediately preceding the Marian Year, 1954, the year in which was issued the Declaration of the Canadian Bishops. We shall seek points that are increasingly stressed, and new viewpoints that probably lead up to the two propositions that the Canadian Bishops put forward in their Collective Letter.

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## 1. Pius IX.

On December 8, 1854, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary was solemnly declared by Pope Pius IX to be a dogma of faith:

We ... DECLARE, AND PRONOUNCE, AND DEFINE, that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her Conception, has been, by a special grace and privilege of Almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, preserved and exempted from every stain of original sin, is revealed by God, and consequently is to be believed firmly and inviolably by all the faithful.<sup>1</sup>

By this definition the Pope implies that Mary was in need of redemption and was actually redeemed. Sanctified by God's grace at the first moment of her existence, Mary's soul was never deprived of that sanctification which Adam, and through him, the rest of mankind had forfeited by sin. Nowhere in the Apostolic letter is recounted what our original heritage consisted in, but we are told that God sent his Son in order "that what was likely to be lost in the case of the first Adam, should be restored with advantage on the part of the second."<sup>2</sup>

In an excellent passage of the Bull concerning Mary's fullness of grace and eminent sanctity, the Pope gives

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1 Pius IX, Ineffabilis Deus (Dublin, M.H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1954), pp. 22-23.

2 Ibid., p. 1.

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us the perfect example of this restoration. The passage is a step towards the first of the two themes developed by the Canadian Bishops, that is, Mary the perfect example of redeemed humanity. Here is the text:

Wherefore He enriched her, so wonderfully far and away beyond all the angelic spirits and all the saints, with the plenitude of every celestial favour drawn from the treasury of the Divinity, that she, entirely free as she always was from every stain of sin, and all beautiful and perfect, presented such a full measure of innocence and sanctity, that a greater than it, under God, is not understood; and no one except God, can ever in thought comprehend. And in truth, it was wholly becoming that she, ever shining with the splendours of the most perfect saintliness, should gleam with glory; and free absolutely, as she was, from the very stain of even original guilt, should obtain the most decisive triumph over the old serpent.<sup>1</sup>

Of special importance is the impact the Bull had in effecting a deep and widespread interest in Mary's privileges and unique status. Pope Pius XII notes that as an immediate effect of the Bull "studies were undertaken with new enthusiasm, which gave due prominence to the dignity and sanctity of the Mother of God."<sup>2</sup> Theologians have made the same observation. One of them writes: "With the solemn definition of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady by Pope Pius IX a new era dawned for Mariology. It

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1 Ibid., p. 2.

2 Pius XII, Fulgens corona (New York: The Paulist Press, 1953), p. 5.

marked the beginning of an ever increasing awareness of Mary's true dignity, and of her relation to Christ and to the human race."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. George D. Smith.

In this limited survey of theological thinking on Mary, we shall, as noted previously, examine theological writings of the seventeen years preceding the Canadian Bishops' letter. We begin with a 1938 book from England.<sup>2</sup> This book may be considered as fairly reflecting the development Mariology had reached by that date. It was, incidentally, translated into German in 1947.<sup>3</sup> A revised English edition appeared in 1954.<sup>4</sup>

Canon Smith asserts that "it is only when we know what Christ came to restore that we appreciate what it was that Adam lost, what was that likeness to God imprinted upon man in the moment of his creation."<sup>5</sup> Hence in the

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1 Firmin M. Schmidt, "Universal Queenship of Mary," Mariology, ed. J.B. Carol (3 vols.; Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1957), Vol. II, p. 505.

2 George D. Smith, Mary's Part in Our Redemption (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd., 1938), xi-187 p.

3 ————. Die Stellung Mariens im Erlösungswerke Christi, Ausdem Englischen übertragen von B. Erasmi (Paderbon: Schönigh, 1947), 263 p.

4 ————. Mary's Part in Our Redemption (2nd ed. rev.; New York: Kennedy and Sons, 1954), 191 p.

5 Smith, op. cit., p. 2. [All references to Smith hereafter are to the 1938 ed.]

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prologue of his book he recounts the history of man's elevation to the supernatural state and his fall from grace. A review of that story and the effects of Adam's sin upon the human race will help us see the implications embodied in the phrase "original integrity"<sup>1</sup> as used by the Bishops, and will add to the clarification of their statement: "Mary is the perfect example of redeemed humanity which has recovered its original integrity."

When God created man to his own image, Canon Smith states, man became by nature a free and intelligent creature. But above this natural due God endowed him with sanctifying grace which transformed his nature, deified his powers, and admitted him "to an intimacy of reciprocal love with the Creator."<sup>2</sup> Supernatural charity was to be the incentive of all his actions, the reward for his submissiveness, a share in the bliss of God's own knowledge and love. By the preternatural gift of integrity man was freed from any conflict between the flesh and the spirit: "His whole nature was perfectly balanced, his sentient faculties in complete subservience to his mind and will, and these in

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1 Canon Smith gives the narrower meaning to the word "integrity": the preternatural gift of freedom from conflict between the flesh and the spirit. Ibid., p. 4.

The Bishops take the broader view: "What God wanted man to be when he created him." Declaration, p. 6.

2 Smith, op. cit., p. 3.

turn subject by grace to God."<sup>1</sup> Man was not to suffer death. Instead, the natural tendency of his body to disintegration would be checked by the free gift of immortality. And, too, he would be free from those sufferings and trials which have afflicted mankind since the Fall.<sup>2</sup>

Through an act of disobedience Adam fell from grace. Together with him all mankind was deprived of those supernatural gifts which were to be their heritage. With the loss of sanctifying grace the likeness of God was erased from their souls, and they were born into a state of sinfulness.<sup>3</sup> No sooner had Adam and his consort, Eve, sinned than their passions rebelled, and "straightway began that warring of the elements within their bodies which is the source of suffering and the cause of death."<sup>4</sup>

After this description of original integrity, in his prologue, Canon Smith goes on to say that God did not leave man in this condition of sinfulness but through the divine plan of Redemption reconciled him to himself in his Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 4.

2 Ibid., pp. 4-5.

3 Ibid., pp. 9-12.

4 Ibid., p. 17.

5 Ibid., p. 19-24.

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Mary, Canon Smith continues, is herself one of the redeemed. Since she was a descendant of Adam, and her conception not virginal, she must be redeemed from the sin which would be her natural heritage. Her redemption, however, was not ordinary. He writes:

But if Mary is redeemed, she is singularly redeemed; singularly both as to the manner and as to the excellence of her redemption. We, conceived in original sin, are delivered from sin by being cleansed from its stain; Mary was delivered by being preserved from it.<sup>1</sup>

Mary, immaculately conceived, he further states, was given a super-abundance of grace befitting the dignity of her vocation as Mother of God. She was impeccable, and with this privilege of impeccability went freedom from concupiscence.<sup>2</sup> As objectively redeemed, then, she is endowed with sanctifying grace beyond all other creatures whether we consider the initial grace of the Immaculate Conception or other added graces during her lifetime. Her graces are "super-excellent," and, Canon Smith continues, "not only is she unequalled and unapproached, but she is positively unapproachable and incomparable."<sup>3</sup> Thus, we cannot compare, he concludes, the holiness of any other human being with Mary's except in that it is the holiness of a creature.

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1 Ibid., p. 47.

2 Ibid., pp. 49-53.

3 Ibid., p. 102.

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Canon Smith holds that, like to her Son in all things, Mary submitted to death and shared with Christ his complete triumph. But again like that of her Son, her body did not suffer corruption. Assumed into heaven, Mary enjoys the glory of an anticipated resurrection: "God, loving his mother above all creatures, must give her a glory which anticipates the glory of all others."<sup>1</sup>

Conclusion.-- Canon Smith, summing up Catholic tradition, points out that Mary, like us, needed redemption, and was redeemed through the merits of her Son. But her redemption differs from ours in its manner and excellence. Exalting her above all creatures, he sets her up as the exception to humanity--which she is--singularly redeemed, like to our First Parents in grace before the Fall--the object of our admiration. The only similarity between Mary and the rest of redeemed humanity lies in her type of sanctity, that belonging to creatures. Otherwise, she is beyond our greatest expectations not only in the dignity of her vocation but in her "super-excellent" perfections. Not even in her assumption into heaven, "a glory which anticipates the glory of all others," is there given any hint of Mary's being our pattern, our hope of future glory. While Mary's privileges, therefore, are extolled and her uniqueness

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

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emphasized, Canon Smith would have us admire her for her own sake.

The Canadian Bishops, on the other hand, while recognizing Mary's singular redemption and its super-eminent and privileged manner, see in her for humanity, not merely an object of veneration and admiration but also a model of its own order. They write:

She is, in fact, a mirror which reflects, without the least shadow, the righteousness of God; and though she cannot, because of her divine maternity and her initial victory over sin, be placed on an equal footing with the rest of mankind, she nonetheless remains the model 'par excellence' of redeemed humanity.<sup>1</sup>

Mary's holiness, they tell us, reached a "glorious summit" unattainable by any other creature, but they add, "the sanctity of the Mother of God remains the sanctity of a created person, a human person, an adopted child of God,"<sup>2</sup> thereby intimating that Mary is the pattern of all others to be sanctified.

In her Immaculate Conception Mary typifies, according to the Bishops, the souls of the just who enter into the presence of the all-holy God; in her Assumption she foreshadows our complete redemption when the body will have been joined to the soul in Eternal glory. Thus Mary is "not only all that God wanted man to be when He created

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

him," but "what God wants man to be after having re-created him still more marvellously by the redemption and the Cross."<sup>1</sup>

### 3. Charles Feckes.

The next book in our survey is the work of the German theologian, Charles Feckes,<sup>2</sup> who draws his inspiration from and bases his doctrine on the ideas of the great Mariologist, M.J. Sheehan.

Fr. Feckes begins his book by sketching the portrait of Mary, filling in its details later. He writes:

She was to be the first among the new children of God. She was to be the type of all the redeemed, the one purely human model of a holy progeny. In her the Redeemer was to win his proudest victory and his noblest triumph over sin, death and Satan. Mary was to be that new creature that would come forth from the redeeming hand of God.<sup>3</sup>

Fr. Feckes while acknowledging Mary's spotless purity and fullness of grace as personal privileges notes also their universal significance. Mary's immaculateness and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> The Mystery of the Divine Motherhood: A Theological Portrait of Mary, translated by G.D. Smith (London: Coldwell, 1939), 184 p.

[The original publication is Das Mysterium der gottlichen Mutterschaft: Ein dogmatisches Marienbild (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1937), 184 p.]

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

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abundant grace, he says, "were bestowed upon her that she might be the perfect model of the new redeemed creation."<sup>1</sup>

These privileges, he continues, appear more marvellous and splendid when we consider that Mary's conception was not virginal. Her redemption entailed her preservation from the effects of original sin with which, in accordance with her purely human origin, she was involved.

Mary is a Bride redeemed. But she is a Bride pre-redeemed, a Bride redeemed by anticipation. She is the first of the redeemed and a type of them all. In her what happens in us in smaller measure was accomplished in a super-excellent way.<sup>2</sup>

Since it is a greater victory to preserve from sin than to cleanse from sin contracted, Fr. Feckes reasons that in Mary, the Redeemer has won his greatest and most complete victory over Satan and his powers.

Mary's Immaculate Conception sets her at a great distance from us. It is, nevertheless, writes Fr. Feckes, that which also brings her near to us. The same economy of Redemption applied to Mary as it applies to us. But in her what we are progressing towards has already taken place. Mary is "the most glorious proof of what we may hope for in Christ Jesus."<sup>3</sup> Again, in her Immaculate Conception, he further states, we have the reason for her "anticipated

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1 Ibid., p. 20.

2 Ibid., p. 107.

3 Ibid., p. 108.

resurrection and glorification."<sup>1</sup> Mary, exempt from the law of sin is exempt from the law of death; therefore she is "the first and most excellently redeemed child of the eternal Father."<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Feckes' approach to Mary directs our attention not to her as an individual, isolated because of her unparalleled privileges, but towards her as the pattern of our final redemption.

This picture of Mary, except for its more elaborate development, is identical with that image of her portrayed by the Canadian Bishops who also see her as the model of humanity "when restored in Christ at the end of time."<sup>3</sup> For Fr. Feckes and the Bishops, then, Mary was not only specially chosen and adorned to be the Mother of the Word Incarnate, but she represents the community of the redeemed in glory. Assumed body and soul into heaven, she is our pledge of victory, our hope of eternal salvation.

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1 Ibid., p. 129.

2 Ibid., p. 131.

3 Declaration, p. 6.

## 4. Matthew Smith.

We shall now consider the American publication, Unspotted Mirror of God.<sup>1</sup> Here Monsignor Smith assures us that the "absolutely gratuitous exemption" from original sin in Mary's Immaculate Conception is rightly called a "singular privilege" granted to Mary alone. It is rightly said, too, that she was preserved immune from the original stain, for though all other creatures of God are "purged" from the sin after its contraction, Mary was "prevented" from contracting it. It follows then that Mary needed the Redemption not to "restore" her to grace, for she was never "dead in sin," but to "preserve" her in grace. Therefore Mary is redeemed in a "special and singular manner."<sup>2</sup>

Monsignor Smith, in the following citations describes the need for redemption on the part of all creatures, Mary included, and shows the mode of Mary's redemption to be one of prevention. Our status is as follows:

All descendants of Adam with the exception of Mary and Jesus are wholly under the law of original sin. They spring from Adam materially and seminally. The body lies not under the guilt but under the effects of original sin, and the stricken body dispositively causes the soul to contract the guilt of original sin. The soul, at the moment of union with the body, contracts the stain, and all men, with the exception of Mary and Jesus, contract both the debt and the stain. All need a Redeemer to destroy the stain contracted.<sup>3</sup>

1 Matthew Smith, Unspotted Mirror of God (Denver, Col.: Register College of Journalism, 1943), 286 p.

2 Ibid., p. 166.

3 Ibid.

But the status of Mary is different:

She was partially exempt from the law. She sprang from Adam materially and seminally, like the rest of us, for she was born in the ordinary way of mother and father. The stricken body would have dispositively caused the soul to contract the stain of original sin in her case as in ours, but the soul at the moment of union with the body was prevented by the infusion of grace from contracting the stain. Mary contracted the debt of original sin, but not the stain. She needed a Redeemer to prevent her from contracting the stain. The grace that thwarted the stain in her case came through God's pre-view of the death of her Son on Calvary.<sup>1</sup>

Mary's impeccability throughout life has not been defined, Monsignor Smith continues; nevertheless, her will being infallibly effected by grace to cooperate with it, she was kept from actual sin. This privilege of Mary's was unlike that of our first parents': "Sin, before their fall, was far more difficult to them than to us, but they could sin."<sup>2</sup> It was through the merits of Christ's death on the Cross that this freedom from actual sin on Mary's part was made possible. Hence, again, in this sense, she "gained by the Redemption and needed a Redeemer."<sup>3</sup>

The rank, then, to which Mary was raised is unique and unattainable by any other pure creature. She possesses "the greatest dignity that, in the economy determined by

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1 Ibid., pp. 166-67.

2 Ibid., p. 178.

3 Ibid., p. 179.

God, can be accorded a created person."<sup>1</sup>

While some theologians hold that the natural law of death applied to Mary, Monsignor Smith believes it was "by special disposition of God that Mary suffered and died."<sup>2</sup> Although it was not until some seven years after the publication of his book that the dogma of the Assumption was defined, he wrote: "No authority doubts it."<sup>3</sup> After her death, Mary's body was rejoined to her soul; thus her soul and body are now in heaven. Her Assumption, having preceded our resurrection in time and dignity "must be considered as an exemplar of our glorification of body as well as soul."<sup>4</sup>

Conclusion.-- In this study of selected writings by authors from different countries, Monsignor Smith, we conclude, is exceptional in his manner of expressing Mary's singular redemption. Note the following: Mary was "preserved immune"; all other creatures are "purged"; Mary needed redemption "not to restore grace" to her soul for she was "never dead in sin," but to "preserve her in grace"; the grace that "thwarted the stain" came through God's "pre-view" of Christ's death on Calvary.

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1 Ibid., pp. 179-180.

2 Ibid., p. 180.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 199.

The very title of his book, Unspotted Mirror of God, places Mary in the unique position she holds above all other creatures. Monsignor Smith makes us still more aware of that "privileged" person she is by his apt phrasing. The general tone of his writings, unlike that of the Canadian Bishops, however, does not lead to the discovery that Mary, the singularly redeemed one, is the pattern of restored humanity. He does consider Mary's Assumption as being the "exemplar" of our glorification and in this sense parallels what the Canadian Bishops say of Mary's anticipated resurrection.

#### 5. Father James.

We next turn to Ireland to a work on Mary by Father James, O.F.M. Cap.<sup>1</sup>

In his original creation man shared with God His Life, by sanctifying grace; and other wondrous gifts, amongst them immortality of the body, were his portion. In such a supernatural state the soul directly drew its life from the inexhaustible source of Godhead; intellect and will, short of beatific vision, shared in the feast; and body was the docile instrument of a spirit made 'in the image and likeness of God' (Gen. 1:26).<sup>2</sup>

This is Fr. James' brief but enlightening account of man's primitive integrity. Through the sin of disobedience,

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<sup>1</sup> The Mother of Jesus (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1945), vii-159 p.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

he recounts, man fell from this supernatural state, was stripped of Godliness, sentenced to death and exposed to the power of the evil one.

But in Mary Immaculate, "humanity was again possessed by God."<sup>1</sup> In the first instant of her being, God filled her soul with the life of grace. So marvellous in its consequences was the Immaculate Conception that Mary was "the very birth of holiness in humanity."<sup>2</sup>

Mary was not only entirely separated from sin, Fr. James continues, but God took complete possession of her being. It was precisely this possession by God, he asserts, that gave to Mary's Immaculate Conception so divine a character. Mary needed to be redeemed but the power of redemption reached her in a special way: "Instead of restoring her to God, redemption in Mary's case preserved her for God; instead of raising her it prevented her from falling."<sup>3</sup>

The Immaculate Conception was a prelude to all Mary's other privileges: necessary knowledge, unerring definitive judgments, immunity from every form of personal sin and imperfection, and a plenitude of grace far exceeding that of any other creature.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 47; cf. "She was a child of Adam and Eve as if they had never fallen." T. Harris, Mary the Blessed the Beloved (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd., 1949), p.1.

2 James, op. cit., p. 47.

3 Ibid., p. 56.

4 Ibid., pp. 57-60.

The triumph of God over sin and evil, Fr. James states, is begun in Mary. Mary, "the one sinless creature," who is "the sign of our salvation," represents a "restoration," a "re-creation."<sup>1</sup> We "may look up to her, the flower of humanity, and say that she is one of us. ... In her, by the power of God, we began our return from exile."<sup>2</sup> Fr. James strengthens his argument with a question. He asks:

Has not God been generous with us and extended to us that reflection of the Immaculate Conception to be found in the Baptism of water and the Holy Spirit?<sup>3</sup>

At her death, Mary was taken into heaven, "body being re-wedded to soul."<sup>4</sup> Thus, the difficulty that man finds in raising his thoughts to heaven, Fr. James continues, was provided for by Christ's own resurrection and that "same gesture of loving condescension which we recognize in the Assumption of our blessed Lady."<sup>5</sup> Mary has been welcomed before the Throne of God, where she is now, "as she was on earth, glorified it is true, but still the same."<sup>6</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 61.

2 Ibid., pp. 61-62.

3 Ibid., p. 62.

4 Ibid., p. 154.

5 Ibid., p. 155.

6 Ibid.

Conclusion.-- When treating of Mary's "special" redemption, Fr. James gives a résumé of man's state of happiness prior to his rebellion. Like Canon Smith, again, Fr. James gives a vivid description of Mary's exceptional redemption, so unique there is no other copy of it. On the other hand, he clearly indicates that Mary, being the mother of the Redeemer, plays an all-important role in salvation: to be for us a supernatural pattern, one on whom we creatures can fix our gaze as we strive for the perfection we must attain before entering heaven. In this second aspect he takes the same approach as does Fr. Feckes, but he uses somewhat more expressive language.

The Bishops' letter reflects an identical joyous note as that pervading the above portrait of Mary. Both writings show that Mary shares in a more eminent manner than the rest of humanity the redemptive graces; they note, too, that we can become through a "re-creation" (in Baptism) what Mary was from her conception. The Bishops in their emphasis on the eschatological aspects of both the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption are one with Fr. James who also leads us through a study of these privileges of Mary to reflect on the everlasting joys which await the faithful people of God.

## 6. M.-M. Philipon.

The significance of our next work to be surveyed is well indicated by its title, Le Vrai Visage de Notre-Dame.<sup>1</sup> Père Philipon asserts that since from all eternity, Mary was predestined to become the mother of God's Son, it is only fitting that God would bestow upon her a rich treasure of graces and privileges necessary for such an exceptional vocation. Thus, Mary, a true daughter of Adam's race, through an unprecedented gift of God, totally escaped the moral contagion which infects all human nature since the Fall. From the very first she appears "resplendent with purity, dominant over evil: Immaculate."<sup>2</sup>

The mother of the Son of God, was preserved from sin "in a more radical and more sublime manner"<sup>3</sup> than any other creature. Christ offered his life for all mankind but made the Sacrifice most of all for his mother. She was not freed from sin but preserved from contracting it, the unique privilege of her Immaculate Conception being "the

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1 M.-M. Philipon, Le Vrai Visage de Notre-Dame (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1949), 211 p.  
 [Translated as The Mother of God by John A. Otto (Westminister, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1953), 154 p.]  
 The original French text was used in this survey.

2 Ibid., p. 36.

3 Ibid., p. 38.

first fruit of his redeeming blood."<sup>1</sup> Despite this pre-eminence, Père Philipon reminds us, Mary remains nonetheless, one with us in our human nature--"the first of the redeemed, the masterpiece of the Redemption."<sup>2</sup>

As a consequence of her Immaculate Conception Mary regained "the wonderful harmony of our nature before the Fall."<sup>3</sup> Full of grace, her soul was so richly endowed that it was morally impossible for her to sin. In her there was no disordered concupiscence, in her body no place for corruption, and in her heart, no faintheartedness. Furthermore, her understanding was such that she could not deviate from truth; her will, fixed on God, could not weaken; her keen sensibilities were always perfectly regulated and ordered to God and to what was good. Never, concludes Père Philipon, was there a purer, more virginal creature. She "was the ideal woman, harmonizing in Herself, to a unique degree, all the riches of nature and of grace."<sup>4</sup>

In considering the positive aspects of the Immaculate Conception, Père Philipon states that by this privilege

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1 Ibid., p. 38.

2 Ibid., p. 39.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 40.

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Mary was raised already to a degree of holiness far superior to the combined holiness of all the angels and saints. He writes that "the soul of the Immaculate, crystal pure, was endowed with an incomparable divine splendour"<sup>1</sup> and was so overflowing with grace that next to Christ, she is "the masterpiece of God."<sup>2</sup>

Sanctifying grace so divinized Mary's whole being, he continues, that she is the image most resembling the Blessed Trinity. She received the grace of adoption and is its prototype for all members incorporated into Christ. In Mary, this initial grace increased until, assumed soul and body into heaven, she was totally transformed in God.<sup>3</sup>

Père Philipon reminds us, sinful members of the human race, of the necessity to reflect on the singular privilege of the Immaculate Conception. This will give us, he says, an insight into the profusion of graces and gifts bestowed upon Mary. The angel of the Incarnation, he adds, must have marveled at "the 'fullness of grace' in a daughter of men."<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 41.

2 Ibid., p. 42.

3 Ibid., p. 43.

4 Ibid., p. 127.

Père Philipon holds that Mary died. Her body was not subject to corruption, but instead, her Son prepared for her "a miraculous and signal resurrection."<sup>1</sup> In virtue of this anticipated resurrection, he concludes, nothing, except for the divine splendour of her Son, can compare to the grace of Mary, "the ideal of womanhood."<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- The whole of Père Philipon's book is woven around the theme that Mary's eminent redemption was in view of her role as mother of the Redeemer. As the beauty and perfection of Mary's immaculate person unfolds before us, we cannot but marvel, as Père Philipon suggests the angel of the Incarnation must have done. Yet, we are inclined to remain aloof from one so superior and so inimitable. The author's approach does not, in the least, provoke us to see in her blessedness, the type of that which will be ours in the glory of Eternity. For example, the Bishops of Canada refer to Mary's sanctity as that of "an adopted child of God"<sup>3</sup> in order to show us that a measure of her holiness is within our reach to attain. Père Philipon uses a similar statement<sup>4</sup> which in its context prompts us to

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1 Ibid., p. 137.

2 Ibid., p. 138.

3 Declaration, p. 5.

4 Philipon, op. cit., p. 43.

look to Mary, and in considering her Immaculate Conception to ascertain the effects of baptism in us. Thus there is a definite difference in reaction. In the latter case, admiring Mary's immaculateness leads us to admire the wonderful change wrought in the soul cleansed from sin through the waters of baptism. In the former, we are led, not merely to admire the beauty of a soul possessed by God, but to rejoice that we, too, can, in the holiness of our divine adoption, resemble Mary.

#### 7. Otto Semmelroth.

We turn now to the German theologian, Otto Semmelroth, S.J., to survey his work on Mary as the original pattern of the Church.<sup>1</sup> Fr. Semmelroth begins with a general observation that in the early Christian era Mary was considered by the Fathers and theologians as the type of the Church. As the feeling of the "wholeness and oneness" of the Church was gradually lost, he writes, so, too, was lost the idea of Mary as the Church's representative.

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1 Urbild der Kirche: Organischer Aufbau des Mariengeheimnisses (Würzburg: Echter-verlag, 1950), 118 p. [Translated as Mary Archetype of the Church, by Maria Von Eroes and John Devlin (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), xiv-175 p.]

The quotations used in the above survey have been newly made from the original German edition.

2 Ibid., p. 10.

Consequently, for centuries devotion to Mary was based, not upon the redemptive idea that she is a part of "the very mechanism of salvation,"<sup>1</sup> but rather upon the personal relationship with her Son. With the rediscovery of the true nature of the Church in recent times there has come, however, a reawakening of the part played by Mary in the economy of salvation--Mary as the representative of the Church. Fr. Semmelroth writes:

If we ask ourselves the question which, of all the mysteries of Mary, is the one that links Mary most intimately with the centre of salvation, we are led back immediately to the mystery of Mary as the Type of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

To be redeemed, Fr. Semmelroth explains, is to be filled with Christ's life; it is a sharing in the divine life of the Trinity, thus a freedom from inherited original sin. Christ healed sin-laden humanity and transformed her into the Church. Made up of members, filled with Christ's life through baptism, the Church in its essence is free from original sin from the first moment of its existence. Mary, preserved from original sin through her Immaculate Conception, therefore, stands as the Archetype of the redeemed Church. She proclaims that the Church is redeemed, and that the redeemed Church is humanity incorporated into Christ. Mary, too, needed redemption, since having

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1 Ibid. , p. 10.

2 Ibid. , p. 39.

descended from Adam in the natural way, she would have contracted the stain of original sin but for the "pre-envisaged merits of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Semmelroth further states that since the body was created for the soul and the soul for the body, a human being is complete only when the two are united. The fullness of Redemption, therefore, includes redemption of the body as well as of the soul. The more grace will reign in the Church and in the individual members, the more the body will share in the redemption. Only when the Church with its members will have been taken up into glory will redemption be complete. Since Mary is the Archetype of the Church, the redemption of the material world must appear in her as complete. Fr. Semmelroth concludes: "It is she in whom the Church has obtained the fullest (the total, the complete) redemption."<sup>2</sup>

Assumed into heaven, Mary as Type of the Church, he continues, must reveal in her glorified body, the redeemed state of the physical world at the end of time. We who have not yet received complete redemption, will be perfected in eternity after the resurrection of our bodies.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 97.

2 Ibid., p. 108.

3 Ibid., pp. 105-110.

Conclusion.-- In nearly identical statements the Canadian Bishops and Fr. Semmelroth express their agreement that Mary is a fundamental part in "the mechanism of salvation."<sup>1</sup> The Bishops judge that important role to be "the perfect example of redeemed humanity"; Fr. Semmelroth explains that the redeemed Church is humanity incorporated into Christ through baptism. He sees Mary in her Immaculate Conception as Type of the Church in her essential holiness, a Church freed from original sin from the first moment of its existence, and while on the way, as well as in eternity. The Bishops, also, assert that Mary is the pattern of redeemed humanity but consider it under the aspect only, of a "humanity restored in Christ at the end of time."<sup>2</sup>

#### 8. Pius XII.

Apart from the major works of individual theologians, a large number of lesser writings, particularly periodical articles, were being published in the years preceding 1950, the year in which Pope Pius XII defined the dogma of the Assumption of Mary. Indeed, these writings and discussions that ensued were the providential preparation for the

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1 Declaration, p. 2; Cf. Semmelroth, op. cit., p. 10.

2 Declaration, p. 6.

dogmatic definition itself. These writings need not be analysed here;<sup>1</sup> it will be sufficient to consider their climax and crown, the dogmatic definition.

In one of the most important papal interventions of modern times, November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII declared Mary's Assumption into heaven as an article of faith.<sup>2</sup> We quote from the Apostolic Constitution that embodied the definition:

We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.<sup>3</sup>

The Pope showed the harmony of the doctrine of the Assumption with the other privileges of Mary and concluded that God willed Mary's exemption from the general law of death:

She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.<sup>4</sup>

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1 For two comprehensive bibliographies of writings on the Assumption previous to 1950, see Ephemerides Mariologicae, Vol. I ([May], 1951), pp. 133-151; The Thomist, Vol. XIV (January, 1951), pp. 133-160.

2 Pius XII, Munificentissimus Deus (New York, The Paulist Press, 1951), 30 p.

3 Ibid., p. 22.

4 Ibid., p. 6.

The glorification of Mary's virginal body was, he says, but an essential aspect of that complete triumph over sin and the supreme crown of Mary's privileges.

The document has recently been described as highlighting an "inner" privilege of Mary's person and thus it appears to go contrary to the present trend of focussing attention upon "her active relationship to the redemption of humanity."<sup>1</sup> Not all commentators, however, agree with this evaluation.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Marian study received new impetus from Munificentissimus Deus for it proved to be an incentive to theologians to continue to seek new insights into the mystery of Mary. As a result many new Mariological concepts developed.<sup>3</sup> A fairly recent writer states: "The dogma exhibits the Blessed Mother as the first-fruits of the redemption, not the entire harvest."<sup>4</sup> It is clearly

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1 Alois Müller, "Contemporary Mariology," Renewal in Dogma, Vol. I: Theology Today, ed. Feiner, et al. (3 vols.; Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 111-12.

2 Cf. Graham Greene: "The definition of the Assumption proclaims again the doctrine of our Resurrection, the eternal destiny of each human body, and again it is the history of Mary which maintains the doctrine in its clarity. The Resurrection of Christ can be regarded as the Resurrection of a God, but the Resurrection of Mary foreshadows the Resurrection of each one of us." Life, Oct. 30, 1950, p. 58.

3 Cf. J.B. Carol, "The Apostolic Constitution Munificentissimus Deus and Our Blessed Lady's Coredemption," American Ecclesiastical Review, Vol. CXXV (October, 1951), p. 255; Carlo Balic, "Mary and the Church," American Ecclesiastical Review, Vol. CXXXIX (July, 1958), p. 1.

4 George W. Shea, "The Assumption," The Mystery of the Woman, ed. Edward D. O'Connor (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956), p. 93.

indicative then that the definition of Mary's glorification of body gives renewed hope to struggling humanity, the hope that having, with the grace of God, overcome sin, they will share on Resurrection Day in Christ's complete triumph over the world and Satan.

9. Louis Lochet.

We shall consider next a periodical article by the French writer, Louis Lochet.<sup>1</sup>

The pure light of Mary's Assumption is capable of dissipating all prevailing error, writes Abbé Lochet. This revelation supplies the Christian with the answer to the value and the future of earthly realities. It is sufficient, he concludes, "that she be there, our sister in heaven; both as part of our universe, transformed into glory, and that part of ourselves, saved, in order that all hope may revive."<sup>2</sup>

Since humanity has been glorified in the person of Mary, Abbé Lochet continues, we have the assurance of entering finally into the glory of Eternity. In her we see "earthly reality" penetrating heaven and "there restoring the lost paradise."<sup>3</sup>

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1 "Actualite de l'Assomption," La Vie Spirituelle, T.LXXXIII (Novembre, 1950), pp. 339-54.

2 Ibid., p. 345. Translation used throughout this survey is directly from original text.

3 Ibid., p. 346.

She is the proof that "the way leading from earth to heaven has been opened and the transmutation begun of carnal and mortal humanity into a glorious and incorruptible humanity."<sup>1</sup> Mary is already in heaven beckoning us to follow. "In her, humanity is transformed and the world reaches its goal."<sup>2</sup>

Mary's role, in God's plan, Abbé Locket further states, is to be both type and example. That which happens to Mary, happens to the Church. The members of the Mystical Body needed to be assured of being with the Saviour for all Eternity. It was sufficient for this fulfillment to happen to Mary to signify the destiny of the Church: "In her, the Church following her Saviour has taken possession of heaven, the new humanity has already entered bodily into glory."<sup>3</sup>

In the mystery of the Assumption we have "the most perfect glorification that a mere creature has ever received."<sup>4</sup> Mary's immaculate soul, filled with an abundance of grace from the beginning, continued to be adorned with graces throughout her whole life until her Assumption into heaven. Of the grace of the Assumption, Abbé Locket

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1 Ibid., p. 346.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 347.

4 Ibid., p. 349.

writes: "The greatest of all is this last glory, the crowning of all God's gifts."<sup>1</sup> Mary in glory, he concludes, is the type of the new creation, the pledge of a new transformation and the final triumph of humanity into the glory of the risen Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Abbé Locket's treatise may be judged as the development of a thought similar to that contained in the following statement of the Canadian Bishops' letter: "By her Assumption she foreshadows the resurrection of our bodies."<sup>3</sup> Abbé Locket and the Bishops, then, see in Mary's Assumption the perfect example of all gloriously resurrected bodies at the end of time. Mary, body and soul in heaven, is the proof and the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise that we shall share in the final triumph of the risen Christ in God, his Father.

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1 Ibid., p. 350.

2 Ibid., pp. 350-351.

3 Declaration, p. 6.

## 10. Hugo Rahner.

In our next treatise, the Austrian theologian, Fr. Hugo Rahner, S.J., develops the relationship between Mary and the Church.<sup>1</sup> He begins with the assertion that in us, the members of the Church, the Church's mystery must be realized. Mary was the first to become immaculate, but we, too, must through the power of the Spirit become immaculate. In each of us must be achieved the victory over Satan--that victory already a fact in Mary. Each of us must strive to regain the Paradise, lost to us, but from which Mary was never exiled. In Mary's case, by a unique privilege, a free gift granted her, she was conceived and born immaculate. We conceived and born in sin become sinless at the moment of incorporation into the Church. All of us then, receive in part, this same grace that is Mary's through the same redeeming blood of Christ. He writes:

And so the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God is in all truth the goal, the sum total, the pledge and the very beginning of our own redemption.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Maria und die Kirche (Innsbruck: Marianischer verlag, 1951), 127 p.

[Translated as Our Lady and the Church (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, Ltd., 1961), x+131 p.]

The quotations used in the above survey have been newly made from the original German edition.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

The prerogative of the Immaculate Conception, he continues, was enhanced by the Virgin birth and Mary's perpetual virginity. The Fathers of the Church saw in the Virgin birth a foreshadowing of man's rebirth through the Holy Spirit. Thus, to them, Mary, ever Virgin, is the pattern of the new life of the redeemed.<sup>1</sup>

The final phase of Mary's life, her assumption into heaven, he continues, is also a prefiguration of the Church's sharing now and for all time, in the glory of Christ. What happened to Mary's body is not an exception. It is already a fulfillment of the glorious resurrection in heaven which is not only promised to the members of the Church but already given it here on earth, through sacramental graces. In Mary the entrance into the glory of Christ is already realized; for her the Beatific Vision is a reality. For us it is yet to come.<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- In this summary of patristic thinking we are very close to the theme of the Canadian Bishops' letter. In some respects Fr. Hugo Rahner says more than the Bishops. For example, he sees in the Virgin birth the pattern of our rebirth through the Holy Spirit.

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1 Ibid., pp. 31-40.

2 Ibid., pp. 117-120.

He, too, like the Bishops, notes Mary's triumph over Satan not only in her immaculateness of soul but in the sharing in Christ's glorious Resurrection of her body and soul assumed into heaven. Here again he develops his theme somewhat further than do the Bishops when he explicitly states that we share here on earth, through sacramental graces, the holiness which is Mary's in heaven. Our final glory, as seen in the light of Mary's final glory sometimes seems very far away, but Fr. Hugo Rahner implies that we have the heavenly reality close at hand in the soul at one with God through sanctifying grace.

#### 11. Alois Müller.

We shall now study a writing by the German theologian, Alois Müller. This article translated in 1952 as "The Basic Principles of Mariology," first appeared the year previously.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Müller starts with a basic proposition: God's plan for the salvation of the world is union with himself and participation in the grace-life of the Trinity through the Son of God become man. He distinguishes a twofold element in grace, formal and material. In the formal

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<sup>1</sup> Theology Digest, Vol. II ([Autumn], 1954), pp. 139-144.

The original article is "Um die Grundlagen der Mariologie," Divus Thomas (Freiburg), Vol. XXIX (December, 1951), pp. 385-401.

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element grace is considered as that which makes holy; in its material element, that which makes us like to Christ. The material distinction indicates a difference in the quality of vocation, and this distinction in quality conditions one of quantity in the formal element. Now, Mary's vocation to grace is unique, the highest possible in the Mystical Body. Because of its uniqueness, no other member could aspire to an equality of grace with her, since she is given a grace to suit the sublimity of her vocation.

Because of her physical motherhood, Dr. Müller continues, Mary participated to the greatest degree in the grace of the Incarnation; hers was therefore the "perfect participation of humanity"<sup>1</sup> in the grace of salvation. But Mary's grace, the culmination of the Church's grace, is of the same kind as all other graces. The difference lies in that hers is the fullness of grace while the other members receive partial grace according to the measure of God's favour.

This difference in Mary's grace and ours is not only one of degree. Dr. Müller points out that one standing near the top of a mountain is closer to the one on the summit than is the one at the bottom of the mountain. Yet neither one of the two, who are alike in that they are on

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1 Ibid., p. 142.

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the way to the top, is as high as the one at the pinnacle.

Ancient tradition, says Dr. Müller, holds that "God has only one plan of salvation; he has set up only one order of grace" which is fulfilled "where grace is perfect, in Mary."<sup>1</sup> He agrees with Scheeben (thus with Fr. Feckes) that Mary received "the supreme, most perfect participation in Christ,"<sup>2</sup> but adds that she is, nevertheless, of our order. Mary's perfect fullness of grace makes her our ideal model, "unattainable, but not merely different in degree."<sup>3</sup>

Conclusion.-- Dr. Müller impresses his readers with the simplicity of his comparisons between Mary's perfect grace and the partial grace of the Church members. We, like the mountain climbers, may strive to approach Mary in grace, yet are reminded by the place she holds at the "pinnacle," of the dignity and uniqueness of her sublime grace of divine motherhood. Although he stresses the unattainability of Mary's perfect grace, Dr. Müller concludes that her grace is the grace of a creature who, because of the uniqueness of her vocation, participates more fully in the membership of Christ than does any other member.

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1 Ibid., p. 142.

2 Ibid., p. 143.

3 Ibid.

The first theme of the Bishops--who had pastoral care in mind--can be better understood as the result of such a theological orientation. Dr. Müller's approach also leads us to see Mary's perfect humanness. We rejoice to have such a perfect pattern.

12. Fulton J. Sheen.

In the next work of our survey, an American issue,<sup>1</sup> Monsignor Sheen states that since Mary is what we were all meant to be, the Church in her liturgy has her speak of herself as "the Eternal blueprint in the mind of God."<sup>2</sup> Mary did not exist at the beginning of time, he continues, but God had her in mind from all eternity. Again, when God sent his Son to redeem the world, that Son "was born of a Mother whom He chose before He was born."<sup>3</sup> This is "the only instance in history,"<sup>4</sup> he reminds us, where the Mother willed her Son and the Son, the Mother.

Monsignor Sheen holds that Mary, though immaculately conceived, was in need of redemption. She "was redeemed

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1 Fulton J. Sheen, The World's First Love (2nd ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952), vii+285 p.

2 Ibid., p. 5.

3 Ibid., p. 7.

4 Ibid.

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in advance, by way of prevention, in both body and soul."<sup>1</sup> She is, he adds, "the first effect of redemption, in the sense that it was applied to her at the moment of her conception and to us, in another and diminished fashion, only after birth."<sup>2</sup>

If we excluded Mary from the effects of redemption, Monsignor Sheen continues, we would of necessity have to exclude her from membership in the human race. He tells us that we need someone on the human level to be our hope and example on our way through life. We have Christ as our Model, but "He is also the Person of God!"<sup>3</sup> When we consider the sanctity of Mary, he concludes, we know we can become more holy; because she is sinless, we can become less sinful.

Conclusion.-- Monsignor Sheen is very close to the thinking of the Canadian Bishops when he calls Mary "the Eternal blueprint." This indeed is a sound synonym for "the perfect example." Many others of his statements parallel those of the Bishops. He emphasizes the fact that Mary's greatness depended upon the redemptive will of God, and that Mary is wholly dependent upon her Son who chose

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1 Ibid., p. 10.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 12; Cf. Declaration, pp. 4-5.

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her before he was born. Monsignor Sheen remarks that the instance where a Son is able to choose his mother is unique: "The only instance in history";<sup>1</sup> the Bishops write: "It happened only once in history."<sup>2</sup>

By drawing to our attention the fact that Mary is the model of creature holiness Monsignor Sheen encourages us to bring Christ's redemptive merits to fruition in our person. Here again the Bishops of Canada have used the same approach. They state that although Mary's holiness reached a "glorious summit,"<sup>3</sup> her sanctity is but the sanctity of a human person. Although we do not aspire to the enjoyment of the fullness of the Immaculate Conception, we are consoled in that, with her, the perfect representative of our race, we may share in the glory of eternal life.

## 13. Pius XII.

An entire year, December 1953 to December 1954, was dedicated by Pope Pius XII as one during which special honor would be given Mary. This was in recognition of the one hundredth anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in 1854. The

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1 Sheen, op. cit., p. 7.

2 Declaration, p. 3.

3 Ibid., p. 5.

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encyclical letter, Fulgens corona, September 8, 1953, announced the Marian Year.<sup>1</sup> Because of its pertinency and its contribution to a renewed interest in Mary,<sup>2</sup> the encyclical letter will be studied here.

In his encyclical letter, Pope Pius XII summarizes the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception showing its foundation to be in Scripture and tradition. If even for one moment Mary had been without grace, the Pope asserts, there would not have been that perpetual enmity between Mary and the Serpent implied in Gen. 3:15. Tradition concludes from the words of address, "full of grace," and "blessed among women," that all grace was within Mary who was never subject to sin.

The Pope shows that the dignity of divine motherhood necessitated Mary's immaculateness and triumph over sin. He assures us, however, that Mary's exemption from original sin does not alter the fact that she was in need of redemption. He writes:

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1 Pius XII, Fulgens corona (New York: The Paulist Press, 1953), 24 p.

2 Joseph Clifford Fenton, "Our Lady's Queenship and her Immaculate Conception," American Ecclesiastical Review, Vol. CXXXIII (December, 1955), p. 401; René Laurentin, Mary's Place in the Church, translated by I.G. Pidoux (London, Burns and Oates, 1965), p. 44.

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Christ the Lord in a certain most perfect manner really redeemed His mother, since it was by virtue of His merits that she was preserved by God immune from all stain of original sin.<sup>1</sup>

The Pope points out the relationship between the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. Since Mary's Assumption, he says, has been shown "as the crowning and complement of the prior privilege bestowed upon her,"<sup>2</sup> the wisdom of the divine plan in preserving Mary from original sin, can be seen more clearly. The two privileges of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, he continues, stand out at the beginning and at the end of Mary's earthly life, the total glorification of her body being the complement of the perfect innocence of her immaculate soul.

The centenary celebration was decreed, the Pope declares, to revive a sincere devotion to Mary, and to encourage Christians to "conform their lives to the image of the same Virgin."<sup>3</sup> Here especially, we note that the Bishops' letter echoes the ideas embodied in Fulgens corona.

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1 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

2 Ibid., p. 10.

3 Ibid., p. 11.

## 14. René Laurentin.

In our next book to be surveyed Abbé Laurentin<sup>1</sup> asserts that Mary's destiny began with a free act on God's part, a singular act, which without any merit of her own "diverted"<sup>2</sup> her from all sin. Noting Mary's place within the human race as a result of the gift of the Immaculate Conception, he writes:

By her total sanctity, which renewed the regal sanctity of our first parents, Mary is raised above all men; alone perfectly pleasing to God, in all her being as in all her actions, she is not only the first of creatures and the queen of creation, she is also the representative and advocate of mankind.<sup>3</sup>

Mary's divine motherhood brought about a new relationship with God, Abbé Laurentin continues. To emphasize the superiority of this relationship he compares it with the relationship established by the baptismal character. Both the divine motherhood and the baptismal character, he explains, draw favours from God which, in the case of the

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1 René Laurentin, Court Traité de Théologie Mariale (Paris: P. Lethiellieux, 1953), 187 p.

[Translated as Queen of Heaven: A Short Treatise on Marian Theology, by Gordon Smith (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd., 1956), 142 p. The text provided for this English translation was "revised, corrected, brought up to date and amplified by the author."]

The original French text was used in this survey.

2 Ibid., p. 72; "ecarte."

3 Ibid., p. 73.

## MARY PERFECT EXAMPLE OF REDEEMED HUMANITY

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divine motherhood, is in a measure beyond comparison: "It draws the plenitude of grace, by anticipation and in a manner morally infallible."<sup>1</sup> The baptized Christian receives sanctifying grace and the character correlatively. The baptismal character establishes a relationship with the Son of God and renders the receiver capable of knowing and serving the Father. Mary received a fullness of grace at the Immaculate Conception. At the Annunciation she received an imprint equivalent to the baptismal character, which was not only the basis of a relationship with her Son, but which also "configured" her to the Father.<sup>2</sup> This new relationship entails not only "a new modality of her fullness of grace," he concludes, but "a new deepening of it in proportion to her new greatness."<sup>3</sup>

Mary's virginity, Abbé Laurentin further states, is another result of the Immaculate Conception. The grace which preserved her from original sin kept her equally free from its personal consequences to soul and body: "The mystery of Mary's integral virginity, like that of the Assumption," he asserts, "is a mystery of bodily integrity which reminds us of that link between soul and body which is essential to the Christian mystery."<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 83.

2 Ibid., p. 84.

3 Ibid., p. 85.

4 Ibid., p. 87.

It was appropriate, Abbé Laurentin reasons, that Mary, who is "the universal model of all the redeemed,"<sup>1</sup> should die, since Christ the Redeemer chose to die. And since she was assumed into heaven, Mary, in her own person, anticipates all the states of the Church: "She realizes personally and in advance that which the Church realizes collectively and later, from stainless origin to bodily glorification."<sup>2</sup> He further states that even if Mary were to experience the privilege of the Assumption without death, she would still be "the complete type" of the immaculate Church since, according to St. Paul, on the last day the Church will not die. Mary, in this case, would be more fully "the eschatological image of the incorruptible Church."<sup>3</sup>

In Mary, body and soul in heaven, Abbé Laurentin concludes, "the Church on its way to the parousia already realizes the completion of its mystery. In this first member, who has always gone ahead of it, she attains its goal, its rest and its completeness: bodily presence, without veil, and without end, beside the risen Christ."<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 95.

2 Ibid., p. 96.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

Conclusion.-- There are many points of resemblance between the various statements in the Bishops' letter and those of Abbé Laurentin. Both treatises state that Mary was redeemed by a free act on the part of God--a redemption totally unmerited by her. Her "singular" redemption raised Mary "above the level of all creatures" (Abbe Laurentin); and therefore she cannot "be placed on an equal footing with the rest of mankind" (the Bishops). Mary's sanctity "renewed the regal sanctity of our first parents" (Abbé Laurentin); thus, she has recovered humanity's "original integrity (the Bishops).

When pointing out Mary's place as the representative of mankind, the Bishops do not use the term "Church" as does Abbe Laurentin. They imply it, nevertheless, in the phrase "humanity restored in Christ." Both treatises introduce in very similar statements the comparatively new theological expression "eschatological." The Bishops term Mary's holiness as "eschatological"; Abbé Laurentin sees Mary as the "eschatological image" of the Church. By her Assumption, the Bishops reason, Mary foreshadows the resurrection of our bodies; in Mary, body and soul in heaven, Abbé Laurentin similarly affirms, "the Church, on its way to the parousia, already realizes the completion of its mystery."

## 15. Walter J. Burghardt.

We shall now examine a work from the United States. This essay entitled "Theotokos: The Mother of God," had its origin in the form of a lecture given at the University of Notre Dame in the early autumn of 1954.<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Burghardt asserts that Christ anticipated in Mary the great things being gradually accomplished in the members of the Church. Mary is thus a type of the Church, announcing and preceding it.

Like Mary who was conceived immaculate, the Church through her baptized members is conceived without sin, free from sin from the first moment of her existence. The Church, therefore, is the antitype of Mary, the perfectly redeemed creature who at no time came under the penalty of sin. Fr. Burghardt says:

Mary conceived without sin is Mary redeemed; and Mary conceived without sin, Mary redeemed, prefigures the whole community of the redeemed which is the Church, fashioned without sin from the lanced side of the Crucified.<sup>2</sup>

Man, though redeemed from sin, is free to sin, Fr. Burghardt further states. Hence the Church which in its

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<sup>1</sup> Walter J. Burghardt, "Theotokos: The Mother of God," The Mystery of the Woman, ed. by Ed. D. O'Connor (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956), pp. 5-30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

essence is without sin has its sinful members. Redemption is a life-long process not complete in baptism. Its members share in the redemptive graces more or less perfectly as they are free from or burdened with sin. As a result, the holiness of the Church in all its members will be fully realized only when, in the second coming of the Saviour, redemption will be complete.

Here again Mary is our exemplar. In her who knew no sin, original or personal, redemption finds its perfect realization. Fr. Burghardt writes:

In our Lady we see God's design for redeemed humanity; in her we discover in its ideal state the sinlessness which is of the Church's essence, yet is realized not at once, but from day to day, through sin upon sin, till humanity be gathered up in Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Until the soul and the body have been united to live eternally with God, Fr. Burghardt continues, redemption is incomplete. Mary in her Assumption is, therefore, the prototype of redeemed humanity. She is the pattern for us who must await the general resurrection "when the body will be transformed and the whole man, soul and body, will confront his Creator in an eternity of knowledge and love."<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Burghardt's view parallels that taken by the Canadian Bishops: that Mary by her unique

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1 Ibid., p. 27.

2 Ibid., p. 28.

redemption foreshadows the beauty of the redeemed in the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>1</sup> His approach is similar to that of Semmelroth who also compares the cleansing effects of baptism on each member incorporated into the Church with Mary's Immaculate Conception.

It is interesting to note that Fr. Burghardt's lecture and the Bishops' letter produced around the same time, the early autumn of 1954, were both alike in their objective -- a particular contribution to the Marian Year celebrations.

#### 16. Karl Rahner.

The last treatise to be studied in this survey is a work by the Austrian theologian, Karl Rahner, S.J.<sup>2</sup>

Fr. Karl Rahner affirms that the concept of Mary as type of the perfectly redeemed is the source of everything that can be said about her. "The grace of God should accomplish its most sublime work where it enters the world most intimately -- in Mary," he says; therefore Mary is "necessarily the exemplar of the Redemption, the type and

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1 Declaration, p. 6.

2 "Le principe fondamental de la théologie mariale," Recherches de Science Religieuse, T. XLII (Automne, 1954), pp. 481-522.

Translation in this survey is directly from original text.

the perfect representation of the Church."<sup>1</sup> And because of her perfect cooperation in the Redemption, Mary should also be the most perfectly redeemed, since the one is brought about by the other.

It is quite legitimate to hold that certain scriptural passages, such as the one referring to the woman at enmity with the devil, and the woman clothed with the sun, allude to Mary, he continues. It may be concluded, then, that Mary is "the type of man redeemed most perfectly, the pure representation of the highest sense of the Church."<sup>2</sup> Again the words gratia plena refer to Mary's fullness of grace. It is, therefore, correct to say that "Mary is a person who, by grace, has been perfectly redeemed and who actualizes most fully what the grace of God works in humanity and the Church."<sup>3</sup> From a consideration of these texts, it can be deduced, he concludes, that Mary "is passively and actively the one who has been redeemed in the most perfect manner."<sup>4</sup>

He now proceeds to justify the use of the term "in the most perfect manner." In heaven, as well as on

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1 Ibid., pp. 499-500.

2 Ibid., p. 502.

3 Ibid., p. 503.

4 Ibid.

earth, he states, there is a difference in the graces bestowed on individual souls. In heaven God bestows grace according to each one's works; on earth God's initial grace differs in individual souls thus effecting the measure of gifts communicated by the Holy Spirit; and finally, there is a difference in the intensity of interior graces. He concludes that "she who, through a faith intrinsically proportioned to the Event, has received in her body the Redeemer in person, for herself and the world, should be also the One who, in this respect, has been redeemed in the most perfect manner."<sup>1</sup>

Conclusion.-- Here we find not just the uniqueness, nor the sublimity of Mary's redemption being stressed but its perfection. Fr. Karl Rahner sees Mary as the member of the Church most perfectly redeemed--redemption in a most perfect manner. His insight into Marian theological thought not only finds an echo in the first theme of the Bishops' letter but it is also a noteworthy contribution to the theological arguments of contemporary Mariologists. In his discussion of the bestowal of grace, he goes one step further in his thinking than do the theologians mentioned in this survey, for he notes how grace differs in individual souls in heaven, as well as in those on earth.

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1 Ibid., p. 508.

He concludes that the unique grace of divine motherhood and Mary's perfect correspondence with this grace through faith makes her, actively and passively, the one redeemed in the most perfect manner.

These added notes of Fr. Karl Rahner's seem to have brought us to the peak of discussion centered around the theme: Mary the perfect example of redeemed humanity. His treatise, therefore, serves as a fitting close to this part of our survey.

#### 17. Summary of Findings.

This concludes our survey of writings bearing a similarity with the first of the two themes in the Declaration of the Bishops of Canada; namely, that "Mary is the perfect example of redeemed humanity which has recovered its original integrity."

We can see a progression as we look back. At the beginning of this period what is generally stressed is the fact that Mary's Immaculate Conception is understood as Mary's being redeemed. She was not exempted from redemption but like all the rest of mankind depended for salvation upon Christ's salvific act. Although Mary is redeemed as we are, the manner of her redemption differs, she being redeemed in a more sublime manner. Her anticipated redemption preserved her from original sin and from its

debt due all members of Adam's race. While not all agree that Mary died, yet all are one in agreeing that, body and soul in heaven, she has attained the ultimate perfection of redemption--the glory of her risen Son.

Next to be stressed is the fact that Mary's perfect redemption is not a thing isolated but has bearing on our redemption. In the holiness of her Immaculate Conception, freedom from any personal sin, and her glorious Assumption, some theologians see her as a model of the glorified state of the redeemed in heaven, while others refer to her as a model--or more precisely, a pattern--not only of the fullness of redemption in heaven but also of the partial redemption of humanity on the way to its final destiny.

Finally, with only a slight difference in terminology and mode of expression, the patristic concept of Mary, as representative of the Church, was renewed and developed.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary theologians explain Mary as the image or Archetype of the redeemed Church, humanity incorporated into Christ;<sup>2</sup> as the creature with a fullness of grace corresponding to her unique vocation and therefore the exemplar of all other human beings whose grace is of the same order but differing in degree;<sup>3</sup> as the eschatological ikon of the

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1 Cf. Hugo Rahner, Maria und die Kirche, 1951.

2 O. Semmelroth, 1950.

3 A. Müller, 1952.

fully redeemed Church in glory;<sup>4</sup> as the person, fully redeemed because she realizes the most complete and radical reception of the salvation of humanity, and therefore is the type and perfect representative of the redeemed Church.<sup>5</sup>

Thus we see a gradual progression and shift of emphasis. At the beginning of our survey, Mary was considered as the exception, the privileged one, "our tainted nature's solitary boast," one different from us. At the end of our survey, not the difference, but the resemblance is what receives attention: She is the pattern of what we will be, even though we will be but faint copies of her excellence, lesser recipients of the same redemption she received from Christ. Mary's privileged redemption was first considered in contrast with ours; now it is contemplated in comparison with ours. And we will not be wrong in looking upon this shift in emphasis as the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, giving us deeper and ever more consoling insight into the mystery of grace in Mary and the mystery of grace in ourselves.

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<sup>4</sup> R. Laurentin, 1953; cf. The Canadian Bishops, 1954.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Rahner, 1954.

## PART II

MARY MODEL OF RESPONSE TO GOD  
SURVEY OF MARIOLOGICAL WRITINGS

So much attention has been given to the subject of Mary's great privileges and consequent sublime redemption that one is apt to underestimate--if not to overlook altogether--the part played by her free and total openness or receptivity to divine action. Since the second half of the Bishops' letter deals with the theme: Mary model of the creature which abandons itself entirely and unconditionally to the will of its Creator, this present study will have a twofold purpose. We shall note the parallel existing between the ideas stressed in the letter and those occurring in other doctrinal writings, and trace the evolution of theological thinking which culminated in the Declaration. Again, our survey will include Mariological writings of an approximately seventeen-year period. It will begin with Canon Smith's book which sets forth the traditional Mariological thought up to that time; it will end with a work produced towards the latter part of the Marian Year.

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## 1. George D. Smith.

Canon Smith in his book, Mary's Part in Our Redemption,<sup>1</sup> asserts that Mary's free consent given at the Annunciation on behalf of the human race, was the beginning of a perfect harmony with God's redemptive will. There was no faltering in Mary's faith. As soon as she understood what the divine design was, she answered unhesitatingly: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). Her motherhood, then, he concludes, is a fully human and deliberate act, a free choice, a heroic and obedient submission to the expressed will of God:

Our Lady's response to Gabriel's divine message gives us the key-note of her whole existence. She is the handmaid of the Lord, God's submissive and obedient instrument, to be used by Him as He thinks fit, her purpose always in perfect conformity with His, and with that of her Son, the Redeemer. This complete harmony of will between Mother and Son begins in the moment of the Incarnation and persists throughout eternity.<sup>2</sup>

Mary's obedience rested upon faith, Canon Smith continues. She did not know what the future held for her. She had, nevertheless, sufficient knowledge of it to be able to conform her will, deliberately and responsibly, with that of her divine Son. She was fully aware of the

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1 George D. Smith, op. cit.

2 Ibid., p. 69.

sufferings divine motherhood would entail, but she willingly submitted. The Gospels reveal Mary's sorrow, suffered in joyous resignation, drawing her closer to her Son.<sup>1</sup>

Her actions, and words to Christ and the waiters at the miracle of Cana (John 2:1-11), Canon Smith states, reveal her attitude of life to be "complete conformity with His will and with the will of His Father."<sup>2</sup> Two other incidents, Matt. 12:50 (concerning "mother, brother, and sister"), and Luke 11:28 (concerning "the keeping of the word of God"), convince us that Christ understood Mary to be his "handmaid," ever ready to yield to his desires.

Mary corresponded perfectly with every grace merited for her by Christ, Canon Smith continues. Her co-redemptive activity, that is the application of Christ's merits to herself and others, though of the same order as ours, is unique and beyond our emulation. "The more perfectly a member is redeemed," he explains, the more perfectly he cooperates with grace, and thus the more perfectly he becomes a co-redeemer. In her endowments for the work of co-redemption Mary, he says, is not only "unequaled and unapproachable," but "positively unapproachable and incomparable."<sup>3</sup> Hence in meriting subjective redemption,

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1 Ibid., pp. 70-78.

2 Ibid., p. 78.

3 Ibid., p. 102.

## MARY MODEL OF RESPONSE TO GOD

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that is, in her Christ-like activity, she "appears upon a pinnacle which no other member can approach."<sup>1</sup> Her perfect conformity with Christ's will began with her first conscious act of love. It became actual when she united her fiat with the "ecce venio" of her Son, and it continued throughout her entire life.

As a consequence of Mary's perfect docility to the Holy Spirit, her complete correspondence with every grace and total abandonment to God, Mary's soul reached a degree of sanctity unsurpassed by that of all other creatures: "Redeemed most perfectly by her Son, she has most perfectly co-redeemed herself."<sup>2</sup> Her fulfillment of God's will, however, was not "according to human frailty but according to all the perfection of which any mere creature is capable."<sup>3</sup> It was animated, Canon Smith concludes, by a love which can be measured only by the graces concomitant with the dignity and office of divine motherhood.

Conclusion.-- Canon Smith sees Mary's receptivity and openness to the divine will in the "larger framework" of her special role in the work of redemption. Her co-redemptive activity, he asserts, is of the same type as

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1 Ibid., p. 103.

2 Ibid., p. 105.

3 Ibid., p. 109.

ours, but because of her singular endowments, it is beyond our approach or emulation. There is no suggestion on his part that we, even in a small way, could imitate Mary in her surrender to God's will. He treats her cooperation in faith and obedience as another Marian doctrine which reveals the fruitfulness of Christ's redemptive act applied, in a special manner, to her soul. It is an inevitable reaction of one predestined to divine motherhood, and freed from the distracting demands of concupiscence.

The Canadian Bishops, on the other hand, note that in her unconditional assent to the Angel's message, Mary is a "true model of obedience." Its impact is weakened, however, by the addition of "though she be but a model."<sup>1</sup> Yet the implications become clearer with the conclusion that her words of assent "determined the essential attitude of man."<sup>2</sup>

Canon Smith's assertion that Mary united her fiat with the ecce venio of her Son parallels very closely the thought and expression of the Bishops' statement: "Her 'Yes' at the Annunciation was the perfect echo of the eternal 'Amen' of her Son."<sup>3</sup> But the Bishops go on to make Mary

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1 Declaration, p. 11.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 7.

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the model of our submission. This Canon Smith does not do. Indeed, we may say he takes the opposite approach in stating that Mary, because of the richness of her endowments is positively unapproachable in her Christ-like activity. Here, then, we see that the Bishops' viewpoint represents an advance over Canon Smith's presentation.

## 2. Charles Feckes.

We turn next to Charles Feckes, the Cologne theologian whose work, The Mystery of the Divine Motherhood, we have already analyzed in chapter one.<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Feckes begins with the assertion that the Martha-Mary incident recorded in Luke 10:38-42, interpreted figuratively--as also the liturgy interprets it--"provides a general survey of the life and significance of the Mother of God."<sup>2</sup> As Martha welcomed Christ into her home at Bethany, and waited diligently upon him, so did Mary at the Annunciation welcome the Incarnate God into her womb, and consent to become his handmaid. We see her fulfill all that was implied in her fiat in the giving of her flesh to the Son of God, nourishing his body until birth, and caring for him until her surrender of him on Calvary. The more sublime attention given Christ by

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1 Feckes, op. cit.

2 Ibid., p. 14.

Martha's sister, he continues, has its parallel in Mary's deep faith, and the humble obedience of her constant fiat. Thus, the combination of the services of Martha and Mary gives us, he concludes, a complete portrait of Mary.<sup>1</sup>

In a study of Mary's answer to the Angel of the Annunciation, Fr. Feckes states that Mary's decision could have come only from "a heart that was constantly ready."<sup>2</sup> That in her, surrender to the divine will "assumes its purest, its most perfect, its most complete and unsurpassable form."<sup>3</sup> She devotes herself, body and soul to God, and "all her powers are ready in his service."<sup>4</sup> He sees in Mary, then, a model of that self-surrender characteristic of womankind. Her life was a life of continuous living in the obscurity of faith, and in the patience of expectation. If Mary, a mere creature, could reach such heights of self-giving, he concludes, "this order is among the things that we may hope for."<sup>5</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Feckes and Canon Smith are very alike in their descriptions of Mary's self-giving, but

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1 Ibid., p. 19.

2 Ibid., p. 74.

3 Ibid., p. 76.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., pp. 115-116.

unlike in describing its significance for us. Contrary to Canon Smith's assertion that Mary's co-redemptive activity, though of the same type as ours, is beyond our emulation, is Fr. Feckes' clear-cut conclusion. "This order is among the things we may hope for" furnishes an incentive to renew our efforts to be open to God's initial graces, and to give complete physical and moral surrender to his purposes. With the Bishops of Canada, Fr. Feckes would have us see in Mary the model of the creature fully aware of God. This previous theological development serves, therefore, as a remote support for the Bishops' statement.

### 3. Matthew Smith.

In surveying again the work, Unspotted Mirror of God,<sup>1</sup> we note that Monsignor Matthew Smith holds that although Mary, the greatest of God's created persons, could not sin, she was free to cooperate with God's design. Her divine maternity was not forced upon her. Her reply to the Angel of the Annunciation was given freely. In her lowliness of spirit she refers to herself, nevertheless, as the "handmaid" which, literally, means "slave girl" of the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Matthew Smith, op. cit.

2 Ibid., pp. 31-32.

## MARY MODEL OF RESPONSE TO GOD

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In the inspired words, the Magnificat, he continues, Mary declares her unworthiness as a creature to become the mother of God the Son. In enumerating all that has been done for her and to her, she acknowledges her dependence on the Creator.<sup>1</sup>

When treating of Mary's cooperation in obedient faith, Monsignor Smith--to show the contrast with Eve's disobedience--quotes generously from the Fathers. A part only of one such quotation--that from St. Irenaeus--will be cited here: "'The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve tied through her faithlessness, this, the Virgin Mary untied through her faith.'"<sup>2</sup>

The Fathers, he continues, infer that Mary's consent to the Incarnation and death of Christ was "properly human acts."<sup>3</sup> And he writes that the astonishing courage shown in her adherence to Christ when everybody else either

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1 Ibid., pp. 42-44.

2 Ibid., p. 237.

3 Ibid. "Human acts" here are distinguished from those which are merely "acts of man." The distinction is commonly made in moral theology. Cf. John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan, Moral Theology, Vol. I (New York: Wagner, 1960), p. 12: "Those acts are called human of which man is the master, and he is master of his actions in virtue of his reason and his will, which faculties make him superior to non-human agents that act without reason and freedom."

attacked him or weakened in their faith in him, was "the greatest triumph of faith mankind has ever seen."<sup>1</sup>

Monsignor Smith explains earlier in his treatise that Christ's words to his disciples recorded in Luke 11:27-28, and in Matt. 12:46-50 show that he valued spiritual relationship more highly than physical relationship. Mary was free to accept or reject the motherhood of God. Therefore, he holds, as did St. Thomas, that she conceived Christ not only in her womb, but in her heart through faith.<sup>2</sup>

All real relationship, he later states, requires a certain dependence; the relationship we creatures bear to God, our Creator, demands complete dependence. The greater the value and quality of being we possess, the greater is this dependence on God. Mary being the greatest of creatures, and the mother of the Word Incarnate, is more dependent on God than is any other mere creature.<sup>3</sup>

Conclusion.-- In their commentaries on Mary's fiat, it was noted by Monsignor Smith and the Bishops that her response was a free and total surrender of herself to God. Monsignor Smith's phrase "properly human acts" reinforces his statements on Mary's freedom of action and

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1 Ibid., p. 262.

2 Ibid., p. 96.

3 Ibid., pp. 265-66.

reveals an advance in the theology of Mary over the previous writers. It also makes us more aware of the fact that we all belong to the same big family--God's people. Monsignor Smith makes explicit mention of Mary's faith and obedience, contrasting it with Eve's disobedience and unbelief. The Bishops, however, speak only of her obedience. But they present to us Mary's obedient assent as the model on which to base our relationship with God. Mary's words, they assert, "determined the essential attitude of man."<sup>1</sup>

Both writings remind us of the dependence on God correlative with our creaturehood. Monsignor Smith explains the reason for Mary's greater dependence; the Bishops note that she alone acknowledged this dependence by a complete gift of self. There is agreement also in the interpretation of Christ's words to the woman who praised his mother, and to those who announced the presence of Mary and the brethren: Christ's value of perfect fidelity to the will of the Father.

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration, p. 11.

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## 4. John Kearney.

We shall now give a synopsis of the thoughts relevant to our theme in the work of John Kearney, C.S.Sp., an Irish lecturer and writer.<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Kearney begins with the assertion that since God's infinite happiness is in his mind and his will, it is necessary that creatures conform to the divine will in order to share eternal bliss. An act of obedience, then, was required of Adam in order to manifest this conformity. Adam failed. A creature, each moment dependent on God for his existence, by an act of disobedience, broke the unity of will.<sup>2</sup>

An examination of the recorded words of the Annunciation, Fr. Kearney continues, reveals Mary's contrasting attitude. God had prepared her by grace for the sublime moment of the Incarnation. She cooperated so closely with initial graces that in her, God's design had been perfectly accomplished. Mary knew, and acknowledged that all she possessed came from the Creator.<sup>3</sup> To her, a creature "drawn out of nothing,"<sup>4</sup> preserved by that same power from

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1 "Mary, Full of Grace, Humble of Heart," Our Blessed Mother, ed. Bernard Fennelly (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1947), pp. 127-42.

2 Ibid., pp. 129-30.

3 Ibid., pp. 137-38.

4 Ibid., p. 139.

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falling back into the "original nothingness"<sup>1</sup> from whence she came, and hence "the absolute property"<sup>2</sup> of a loving God, the divine will meant everything. From the abundance of her heart the answer came:

'I am the born woman slave of the Lord,  
'Let Him do to me as He wills.'<sup>3</sup>

These are the exact Greek words inspired by the Holy Spirit and recorded by Luke 1:38, Fr. Kearney explains. He adds: "The Greek word (doûle) means a woman who was born in slavery--not a woman who was reduced to slavery, but a woman who from her first moment was a slave."<sup>4</sup>

These words, Fr. Kearney continues, reveal to us the secret of Mary's holiness, of her cooperation with God's grace. Mary understood and was always conscious of the all-important truth that God is everything, the creature is nothing: Man, an essentially dependent being, is forever dependent upon God, the one independent being.

Because of the humility of her heart, Mary's soul was open to divine action. In the same way, Fr. Kearney asserts, humility will open our souls and prevent us from opposing God's will. He continues:

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1 Ibid., p. 139.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 140.

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Our humility, our willing recognition of our position as creatures - knowing our place and keeping it - is the foundation of our spiritual life. To live as affectionate, obedient children of God, guided by His Will, and accepting His cross, this is humility and holiness as far as we are concerned.<sup>1</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Kearney states the purpose and necessity of creatural conformity with God's will. Reflection on this universal obligation brings Mary closer to us, and strengthens our hope of being capable of following her, though it be at a distance.

Not unlike Monsignor Smith and the Bishops, Fr. Kearney notes Mary's deep insight, and attitude of complete dependence. His term "woman slave" is synonymous with Monsignor Smith's translation "slave girl." Both terms, together with Fr. Kearney's explanation of their derivation, expand the concept of "perfect handmaid" as used in the Bishops' letter. Note the likenesses of ideas and mode of expression here. Fr. Kearney asserts that Mary, a creature "drawn out of nothing," and prevented from falling back into that "original nothingness," is the "absolute property of God." The Bishops write: "A relative being which exists. ... because of a continued act of creation, ... Mary is ... completely dependent upon God."<sup>2</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 140.

2 Declaration, p. 6.

While Fr. Kearney suggests, indirectly, that we ought to pattern our openness of soul on Mary's, the Bishops explicitly refer to Mary as the ideal of such unrestricted surrender.

5. Otto Semmelroth.

We return now to Fr. Semmelroth's book on Mary as type of the Church.<sup>1</sup> In this work, Fr. Semmelroth states that beginning in the Middle Ages devotion to Mary was no longer based on the redemptive idea that a part of the very mechanism of salvation is enclosed within her, but rather on her personal relationship with Christ. Men revered her because of her contribution as a person in her intercessory powers, and not because of the fact that the reality of redemption found personal expression within her.<sup>2</sup>

In recent years, however, Fr. Semmelroth explains, along with the renewal within the Church herself, a Marian movement encourages the search for Mary at the very centre of God's redemptive plan. Thus, the concept of earlier Christian times, that Mary represented the mystery of redemption, is being united with the later veneration of her person. This union will engender, he perceives, a true Marian devotion based on reality.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Semmelroth, op. cit.

2 Ibid., p. 9.

3 Ibid., p. 11.

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From a study of the Eve-Mary parallel of patristic writings, Fr. Semmelroth concludes that Mary is the type of the Church.<sup>1</sup> He explains that the word "type" can mean a moral example as the result of a relationship which exists between the type and the spiritual entity which it personifies.<sup>2</sup> As a representative of the Church to which she has a real inner connection, Mary can be considered as the moral example in personal attitude and Christian behaviour for the Church's members. We must model our lives, he states, in accordance with the life led by the Archetype. The life of grace caused Mary to act in a very special and perfect manner; it is Mary's attitude, however, that the Christian must copy. Her attitude, Fr. Semmelroth adds, followed from a close union with Christ, a fact revealed in her words at the Annunciation.<sup>3</sup>

Salvation is the re-establishment of the union of God with man through the Incarnation of the Son of God, and through acts of oblation culminating in the Sacrifice of the Cross, Fr. Semmelroth continues. Since Mary freely consented to the coming and the redemptive work of the Redeemer, she consented to both aspects of Redemption

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1 Ibid., pp. 15-20.

2 Ibid., p. 22.

3 Ibid., pp. 24-25.

(objective and subjective). As representative of mankind she received the redemptive graces for herself and the whole Church. Each individual, on his part, must freely accept and ratify these graces. Otherwise, Christ's redeeming work, though complete in itself, remains unfulfilled in the individual.<sup>1</sup> As a "typical example"<sup>2</sup> of openness and receptivity, Mary induces the members of the Church to cooperate with their own redemption in the way she cooperated with the redemption of the entire Church. By imitating Mary's attitude, Fr. Semmelroth concludes, the individual will be led to a fuller sharing in the Christ-life.<sup>3</sup>

Mary was redeemed, Fr. Semmelroth asserts, in the same manner as the whole Church, that is through the merits of Jesus Christ. In Mary, however, the Church pronounced her fiat to the work of Christ, so in Mary she received her holiness and fullness of grace. But the essence of the Church, which is holiness, does not reach the same degree of perfection in all its members. Men realize the Church's essence by an act of will. The Church, therefore, is always working towards fulfillment.

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1 Ibid., pp. 43-54.

2 Ibid., p. 68. "typisches Beispiel"

3 Ibid., pp. 69-70.

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And since in Mary, is contained the entire fullness of grace, it is here that Mary becomes a true model and example. She is the ideal image in which mankind's awareness of being the Church must be perfected, and against which they can examine their own attitude of receptivity toward the fullness of redemptive grace.<sup>1</sup> In this respect the Church, Fr. Semmelroth asserts, has Mary as her pinnacle and central point and truly "existing ideal."<sup>2</sup>

Every human being, by his death, Fr. Semmelroth continues, gives himself back to God thus rendering final cooperation in his subjective redemption. Mary fulfilled this role of submissive receptivity for herself and the Church when she made the final surrender of her will to God. It is fitting that she died, Fr. Semmelroth concludes, both by the constant moral surrender of her entire being and by a physical death.<sup>3</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Semmelroth's treatise and the Bishops' letter begin by stressing a solid Marian devotion based on Mary's fundamental position at the very centre of the economy of salvation. Both see Mary's attitude of docility to be expressed in her fiat and note that Mary-like

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1 Ibid., pp. 100-103.

2 Ibid., p. 103. "existierende Idealtät"

3 Ibid., p. 109.

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awareness of God is "the secret of all perfection."<sup>1</sup>

Fr. Semmelroth contends that Mary's part in salvation is one of receptive co-redemption. Her assent to the Incarnation and the completion of that assent on Calvary embraced universal redemptive grace, hence she is the type of the Church accepting redemption. The Bishops, while not explicitly stating nor developing Mary's co-redemptive role, assert that her continual self-giving merited the coming of the Redeemer and led her "towards her astonishing destiny of Co-Redemptrix of the universe."<sup>2</sup>

There is agreement also that the same redemptive grace applies to Mary as to us. Though the Bishops do not theorize on the different degrees of receptivity displayed by each of the redeemed, they conclude, as does Fr. Semmelroth, that Mary is "the ideal of a humanity freely and totally submitted to divine action."<sup>3</sup>

Fr. Semmelroth introduces a new aspect of Mary's redemptive role by presenting her as the pattern of final surrender of one's will to God, in death.

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1 Declaration, p. 6.

2 Ibid., p. 7.

3 Ibid.

## 6. Louis Lochet.

We shall next re-examine the periodical article, "Actualité de l'Assomption."<sup>1</sup> In this essay Abbé Lochet asserts that Mary's role in the plan of salvation "is to be both type and example."<sup>2</sup> Her faith in the Incarnation of the Son of God, her caring for him, hearing his words, following him to Calvary and offering him in Sacrifice on the Cross is "Mary summing up in herself the mystery of humanity united to Christ,"<sup>3</sup> in the Church.

Mary, as mother, submits and consents to God's plan, willingly placing herself at his disposal and freely acquiescing in his direction of her life. The giving of herself is such, Abbé Lochet states, that "she has completely lost herself in this gift of love."<sup>4</sup> Through faith and the operation of the Holy Spirit acting in her, the Word becomes Incarnate, and Mary enters into union with the Father. The Church, he continues, made up of members believing in and consenting to God's promises, and submitting to the operation of the Holy Spirit, is also a Mother.

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1 Lochet, op. cit.

2 Ibid., p. 346.

3 Ibid., p. 347.

4 Ibid.

In her Assumption, Abbé Locket asserts, Mary bears witness to God's faithfulness in his promises. Here she is the pattern of all Christians and thus of the Church. Reflection on Mary's final glory, he continues, "will protect us from despair and forewarn us against presumption and against vain desires to bring about by our own efforts and to organize by our own industry, some sort of artificial paradise."<sup>1</sup>

There is a close link, Abbé Locket further states, between Mary's virginity and her Assumption. She, who was prepared from the first moment of her existence to receive the Son of God, corresponded with an ever-yielding and docile spirit. She did not depend on the will of man for her fruitfulness, nor for her exaltation. Wishing to become the least she chose to be as a servant, and became the greatest in a glorious triumph. He concludes: "This abyss of greatness ... is the answer to the abyss of littleness which she delighted in."<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Abbé Locket and the Bishops are alike, not only in their giving prominence to Mary's attitude of acceptance, lowliness of spirit, acknowledgement of creaturehood and consequent spirit of dependence, but

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1 Ibid., p. 349.

2 Ibid., p. 350.

also in the thought and in the expression of their respective conclusions -- Mary "has completely lost herself in this gift of love";<sup>1</sup> Mary made "a complete gift of self."<sup>2</sup>

A parallel also appears between Abbé Locket's statement that Mary did not look to man for her fruitfulness, and the Bishops' reference to her life in union with Christ as that "which the 'will of the flesh' (John 1:13) could not give."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, Abbé Locket asserts that Mary's triumphal entry into heaven will keep us from despair, and also from presumption in thinking we can of our own strength regain paradise. The Bishops remind us that "it is the eternal temptation of man to desire self-sufficiency and to make a god of himself."<sup>4</sup> Christians, they later add, who know the truths about Mary "should not surrender themselves naively to official optimism, nor should they despairingly seek shelter within themselves."<sup>5</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 347.

2 Declaration, p. 6.

3 Ibid., p. 7.

4 Ibid., p. 10.

5 Ibid., p. 12.

## 7. Hugo Rahner.

We shall here re-examine the treatise María und die Kirche, written in 1951.<sup>1</sup> In this work Fr. Hugo Rahner, who based his study on the Fathers of the Church, judges the patristic attitude as an attempt "to see the Church in our Lady, and our Lady in the Church."<sup>2</sup> An aspect of this Mary-Church analogy, he says, is Mary, Mother of the Redeemed. Mary gives birth to Christ; the Church gives to its members, the community of the redeemed, a new life in Christ. Mary's free consent united God and man in her womb, and opened the way to God's grace for herself, and all mankind. But whereas Mary was conceived and born full of grace, the beginning of our rebirth in grace is at baptism. Mary, as the Mother of the Redeemer, is the mother who gave birth to this new life. Thus, she is a type of the redeemed Church.

Mary, he further states, is not only the mother of our new life in Christ, but she it is "who announces, daily, the Church's power as a mother over the progress in our spiritual lives."<sup>3</sup> The Fathers, he continues, liked to link the aspect of our spiritual growth with the

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1 Hugo Rahner, op. cit.

2 Ibid., p. 13.

3 Ibid., p. 76.

particular incident in the gospel where Christ proclaimed his mother and brethren to be those who did his Father's will (Matt. 12:47-50). Christ, here, did not deny any human relationship with his mother, but he gave her the highest praise possible to be given a mother. Mary had fulfilled perfectly the will of the Father, when, in virtue of her fiat, she had become the mother of the Word Incarnate. Christ's response implies that from that time forward his mother's fiat will find an echo in the hearts of all those who submit to the will of God by following him.<sup>1</sup>

Mary, then, he continues, is the example for the members of the Church whose spiritual lives ought to consist in the daily carrying out of God's will. In becoming more Christ-like, we, in a spiritual sense, give birth to Christ. Whenever there is a growth in holiness in the Church, Christ is born; there, Christ is in his fullness, however imperfect individuals may seem. Mary's growth in holiness consisted in an ever-increasing identification with Christ. She, like her Son, showed a mysterious inner strength as she daily met joys and sorrows with the same ease and tranquility. Here Mary is our true model, but adds Fr. Hugo Rahner:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

It rests with us, through our own training of ourselves and our own efforts, to make each day of our lives a journey from the Nazareth of our baptism to the Golgotha of union with Christ in His sufferings.<sup>1</sup>

The core of the mystery of Mary and the Church, he concludes, is faith, humble obedience, love and complete trust in the workings of the Holy Spirit. He advises us to look into our own heart to ascertain the depth of its trust in God and its openness to receive the Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- As already noted, Fr. Semmelroth places Mary's central role in God's plan, as effectively receiving redemptive grace for herself and the Church as a whole; Fr. Hugo Rahner sees it as mother of the Redeemer and thus of the redeemed. In both cases Mary becomes a type of the Church.

Fr. Hugo Rahner's interpretation of Christ's words concerning "mother, brother and sister" is essentially the same as that given by Monsignor Smith and the Bishops. The implication that Mary's fiat would find an echo in the hearts of those who do the will of God gives an added significance. It suggests our ability to draw yet nearer to Mary in our imitation of her attitude toward God.

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1 Ibid., p. 92.

2 Ibid., p. 77.

Fr. Hugo Rahner (1) indirectly compares the grace received at baptism with Mary's special grace at the moment of the Incarnation; (2) parallels our daily increase in grace through union with Christ's sufferings, with Mary's growth in grace from her fiat at Nazareth to its culmination on Calvary. The Bishops note that it was because of her gift of self--her intimacy with God--that Mary was able to make the journey.<sup>1</sup>

#### 8. Alois Müller.

"The Basic Principles of Mariology," an English translation of an important German treatise, will now be re-examined.<sup>2</sup> In this work Dr. Müller holds that the Fathers see Mary's decisive action as consent to the divine maternity. This action combined her faith in God and her obedience to him. By it she prepared the way for the Church, which is also a Mother in its giving birth to men in baptism. The Fathers contend, he continues, that the action of the Church is applied to each individual in

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<sup>1</sup> Note Fr. Hugo Rahner's phrasing: "It rests with us ... to make each day of our lives a journey from the Nazareth of our baptism to the Golgotha of union with Christ in His sufferings."

Cf. The Bishops expression: "... a complete gift of self ... which will lead her from Nazareth to Bethlehem, from Bethlehem to Calvary." Declaration, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Müller, op. cit.

whose heart Christ is given birth through faith in God's word, and reborn through baptism.<sup>1</sup> Thus, for them, Mary and the Church are one in the union with God through grace. In Mary and in each Christian soul the birth of Christ is fulfilled under the same condition--a preparation through faith for the Word of God. When we refer, therefore, to Mary as the total, all inclusive, absolute completion of the Church, Dr. Müller continues, we think of the Church in its most general and fundamental aspect, that of responding to and receiving grace from God through Christ.<sup>2</sup>

God's plan for the salvation of the world, Dr. Müller states, is union with himself, and participation in the grace-life of the Trinity through the God-man. This union is achieved through man's free surrender to God in faith in the sacrament of baptism. In this light, Dr. Müller notes, the Fathers see Mary's fiat compare with the faith expressed by every member of Christ's Body; her physical motherhood, with the birth of Christ in the heart of every Christian.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 140.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 141.

Mary's grace, Dr. Müller continues, consists in the fullest possible participation of humanity in the Incarnation. This perfect fullness of grace directed to divine maternity brought about a relationship with Christ which surpasses in dignity "the order of nature, of grace, and of glory."<sup>1</sup> But, he adds, Mary's spiritual maternity through faith in God's word, sanctified her yet more. To strengthen this argument he cites St. Augustine on the blessedness of faith, and Christ, on conformity with his Father's will. Thus, "that what constitutes Mary's dignity as mother of God," he declares, "is that wherein all Christians can also become similar to her."<sup>2</sup> The order of grace, he concludes, has its roots in the union of the human and divine natures in Christ; nor does tradition advocate two orders of grace, one for Mary, the other for the rest of mankind.<sup>3</sup>

Conclusion.-- Dr. Müller develops the Mary-Church analogy under the aspect of Mary's fullness of grace. Basing his argument on the writings of the Fathers, he shows that the graces received through faith and baptism are similar to Mary's received in virtue of her fiat.

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1 Ibid., p. 143.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

Although his thesis, as he himself indicates,<sup>1</sup> is in accord with Fr. Semmelroth's opinion, his conclusion that we can become like to Mary in her spiritual motherhood is more convincing. The Bishops' assertion that Mary is "the ideal of a humanity freely and totally submitted to divine action"<sup>2</sup> can be viewed as Dr. Müller's argument in summary.

9. Fulton J. Sheen.

In our next book to be re-examined, The World's First Love,<sup>3</sup> Monsignor Sheen states that of all of us, God has two pictures: one of what he intended us to be; the other of what we really are. Mary conforms so closely with God's pattern for her, the two pictures make one. He writes:

The Ideal that God had of her, that she is, and in the flesh. The model and the copy are perfect; she is all that was foreseen, planned and dreamed. The melody of her life is played, just as it was written.<sup>4</sup>

Even though her redemption was already completed, Monsignor Sheen continues, Mary had not yet ratified or accepted it before her consent to becoming the mother of

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1 Ibid., p. 139.

2 Declaration, p. 7.

3 Sheen, op. cit.

4 Ibid., p. 5.

the Word Incarnate. God respected her freedom, and therefore before she could accept the free gift of redemption, she had to confirm these gifts by an act of will. This she did by a free and total self-surrender. Her fiat was thus a free act.

Freedom, which is our own, is the only perfect gift of God, Monsignor Sheen reminds us. He then goes on to say:

And yet here a creature totally, yet freely, surrendered her will, so that one might say that it was not a matter of Mary's will doing the will of her Son, but of Mary's will being lost in that of her Son.<sup>1</sup>

Cooperation is the mark of womanhood, Monsignor Sheen continues. In Mary's reply to the Angel we observe cooperation at its best. We have here "acceptance, resignation, submission."<sup>2</sup> There is present, in varying degrees, in everyone who cooperates with God's will, he further states, "the beautiful picture of Woman ... making the Total Gift, accepting a Divine assignment, being submissive for heaven's holy purposes."<sup>3</sup> Mary calls herself a handmaid and becomes "the prototype, the pattern-Woman,"<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ibid., p. 25.

2 Ibid., p. 27.

3 Ibid., p. 81.

4 Ibid., p. 82.

the fulfillment of "total and complete dedication."<sup>1</sup>

On the occasion recorded in Matt. 12:48-50, Christ, Monsignor Sheen asserts, revealed the great Christian mystery that true relationship is not physical but spiritual. And the true bond which unites us to one another is obedience to the will of God. He writes:

He who called His Mother, 'Woman,' is now telling us and her that we can enter a new family with her, as He has already taught us to enter into new bonds with His own Heavenly Father. If we can call God 'Our Father,' then we can call her 'Our Mother,' if we do the Will of the Father.<sup>2</sup>  
(Italics mine)

Conclusion.-- Monsignor Sheen is one with Fr. Feckes in focussing attention on the fact that it is characteristic of woman to give herself.

He uses a similar approach to the mystery of Redemption as does Fr. Semmelroth. Each individual must respond in a free surrender of will to the ratification and acceptance of redemption. And here he stresses Mary's freedom of action. This concept is a development of recent origin, and serves as a background for the ideas expressed in the Bishops' letter.

Monsignor Sheen's assertion that our freedom is the only perfect gift of God corresponds very closely with the Bishops' statement that freedom lies in loving

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1 Ibid., p. 127.

2 Ibid.

and serving God. His implication that conformity with God's will is acceptance of a God-given vocation, is new to our present study. The Bishops' similar statement that "man was created to praise, worship, love and serve Him," interprets his phrase "Divine assignment."<sup>1</sup> Monsignor Sheen attaches a meaning beyond what the Bishops give and what has already been noted hereto, to Christ's words recorded in Matt. 12:48-50: Christ tells Mary and us that we can be united to one another and to her, as Mother, through obedience to the will of the Father.

#### 10. René Laurentin.

We return once again to the treatise, Court Traité de Théologie Mariale.<sup>2</sup> Here Abbé Laurentin asserts that the mystery of Mary is "that of a free destiny open to the sometimes disconcerted orientations of the Spirit."<sup>3</sup> A definite progression in holiness can be noted as a characteristic of this destiny for Mary's faith increased until it reached its fulfillment in the Beatific Vision.

St. Luke's Gospel, he continues, gives us access to Mary's inner life. There we see her in her lowliness

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1 Declaration, p. 11.

2 Laurentin, op. cit. The translation throughout this work has been made from the first French edition.

3 Ibid., p. 11.

as prototype of the poor and humble. Her ponderings, her reactions, her actions, and her words reveal an attitude of faith, obedience and thankfulness towards God. St. Luke, he says, understood Christ's reply to the woman who called his mother "blessed" to be his rejection of the worldly idea attached to glory and an adherence to glory based on faith.<sup>1</sup>

As the Eve-Mary parallel progressed in the early Church, he continues, it became gradually clearer that the parallel was real as far as situation was concerned, but the respective actions formed a contrast. He arranges it thus:

Parallel situation: In the two cases, a woman, a virgin performed a moral act which involved the salvation of all humanity. The opposing position: Eve defied God and disobeyed, whereas Mary believed and obeyed.<sup>2</sup>

In later centuries, he further explains, parallel to the Eve-Mary contrast, another, the Eve-Church contrast developed. In scriptural symbolism the woman typifies the redeemed creature. From the three feminine figures, Eve, Mary, the Church, arises "a general idea of the transfiguration of redeemed humanity and of its cooperation in its own salvation. Mary appears as the typical and out-

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1 Ibid., pp. 20-22.

2 Ibid., p. 38.

standing realization of this cooperation and of this transfiguration."<sup>1</sup>

At every moment of her life, Abbé Laurentin concludes, Mary freely corresponded in an extraordinary way with an unflinching and unswerving response to God's design. And her life, like ours, was a gradual ascent from time into eternity.<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Abbé Laurentin notes Mary's freedom of action, obedient attitude and growth in sanctity. His explanation that Christ rejects worldly glory embodies the sense generally applied to the same situation in the works surveyed here. He follows the Eve-Mary parallel to the introduction of the three figures, Eve, Mary, the Church. This is a significant development. It emphasizes Mary's obedient faith. It draws attention to the fact that her exaltation was dependent upon her cooperation. It shows that in corresponding with God's design Mary is our representative and model. Finally, in the light of this background, the implications of the term "New Eve"<sup>3</sup> used by the Bishops begin to unfold.

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1 Ibid., p. 39.

2 Ibid., pp. 67-69.

3 Declaration, p. 6.

## 11. Paul Hinnebusch.

We shall next consider "The New Eve," a periodical article from the United States, by Paul Hinnebusch, O.P.<sup>1</sup> The title of this article suggests the theme of the entire work: Mary, the New Eve, the perfect associate of Christ in his redemptive plan.

Every Christian, Fr. Hinnebusch states, must help in some degree, by cooperation through his free will, in his own subjective redemption. It is not surprising, then, that Mary, the most perfect of all Christians, was chosen for a special work in the redemptive plan. To this role Mary gave willing consent. "What we do in a lesser degree," continues Fr. Hinnebusch, "she did in a perfect way, for she is the exemplar or model for all."<sup>2</sup> We must look to her, he asserts, for the pattern of cooperation with Christ, if we are to reap the full benefits of the redemptive act.

Mary's fiat reveals her readiness and willingness to serve God. Her assent embraced the entire human race, and thus she was our representative throughout the whole work of redemption. "She did for us," he says, "what we were not yet able to do for ourselves, but what we

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<sup>1</sup> Cross and Crown, Vol. VI (September, 1954), pp. 350-64.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

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must do in due time," that is "merit our salvation."<sup>1</sup>

Mary depended upon God, Fr. Hinnebusch continues, for both the grace of redemption and the grace of cooperation with it. This dependency "is symbolized by the taking of Eve from the side of Adam."<sup>2</sup> Mary, the New Eve, redeemed through the merits of Christ, is totally dependent upon the Sacrifice of Calvary. In this sense, he concludes, she can be regarded as "taken from His side which was pierced by the lance."<sup>3</sup>

Fr. Hinnebusch states further that Mary would be the first to acknowledge this dependency. And this she did by a perfect cooperation with God's grace. He writes:

More truly than St. Paul she could cry out: 'By the grace of God I am what I am' (1 Cor. 15:10). Without Him I am nothing. I am redeemed by Him, I am full of grace, I am preserved free of all stain of original sin in view of the merits of Christ Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

Conclusion.-- By the symbolism attached to Mary's dependency upon Christ, Fr. Hinnebusch adds an utterly new thought to our present study. His development of this symbolism, moreover, helps to extricate and clarify the wealth of spiritual insight contained in the phrases

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1 Ibid., p. 353.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., p. 354.

4 Ibid.

of the Bishops' letter: "New Eve ... born not from His side, but from the wound of His heart, ..." Again, in noting the similarity between the recognition of dependency as expressed by Mary and St. Paul, he emphasizes Mary's humanness, and membership in Christ's Body, the Church. We are consequently more prone to look to her, "a relative being ... redeemed like all of us though it be in a way which is different and better than ours,"<sup>1</sup> for our pattern of daily conformity with God's will.

12. Karl Rahner.

We return next to the periodical article "Le principe fondamental de la théologie mariale," written in 1954, by the Austrian theologian, Karl Rahner, S.J.<sup>2</sup>

Fr. Karl Rahner asserts that because of Mary's faith and obedient consent, the word of God became Incarnate. At the foot of the Cross, in union with the sufferings of the God-man, she merely continued this free assent in faith.<sup>3</sup>

To say "yes" to God, he states, means to give one's entire being to be carried beyond what one is able to

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1 Declaration, p. 6.

2 Karl Rahner, op. cit.

3 Ibid., pp. 483-85.

foresee. Lowliness and obscurity must necessarily accompany such acquiescence since it is made to a God who is incomprehensible, whose ways are not our ways, and whose decision is supreme. Stressing again the continuity and extensiveness of Mary's fiat, he writes: "Her assents at the Incarnation and at Calvary constitute one single act making up Mary's whole life."<sup>1</sup>

Mary's perpetual virginity, he continues, is an outward manifestation of her readiness to submit totally, body and soul, to the will of God. Her entire life, therefore, he concludes, is a complete self-giving to God, and to God exclusively.<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- Fr. Karl Rahner connects Mary's co-redemptive role primarily with her fiat at the moment of the Incarnation, rather than with her oblation at the foot of the Cross. Fr. Semmelroth unites the two, stating that Mary's participation in Christ's Sacrifice on Calvary completed her self-giving at the Incarnation. Here the Bishops seem to differ from both theologians for they appear to associate Mary's essential act with her offering on Calvary. For them Mary's gift of self at the Incarnation merited the coming of the Saviour, and led her "from

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1 Ibid., pp. 493-94.

2 Ibid., pp. 519-20.

Nazareth ... to Calvary, towards her astonishing destiny of Co-Redemptrix of the universe."<sup>1</sup>

Both Fr. Karl Rahner and Fr. Semmelroth see Mary's bodily virginity as an expression of her total surrender of body and soul to God. This judgment enhances the act of self-giving referred to by the Bishops.

### 13. Victorino Osende.

Another work from the United States now to be studied is an essay written towards the end of the Marian Year.<sup>2</sup> In this article Fr. Osende asserts that Mary's fiat was not merely her consent to the realization of the Incarnation, but a manifestation of the complete giving of herself to God. It was a giving that would permit God's redemptive plan to be accomplished in and through her. It was but the beginning phase of her important role in the life, sufferings, and death of her Son. He makes a parallel between her fiat at the Annunciation and Christ's fiat in the Garden of Olives, since both manifest a close union with God and with his holy will. Mary's perfection and awareness of God was evident, also, he

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Victorino Osende, "The Annunciation," Cross and Crown, Vol. VI (December, 1954), pp. 463-68.

tells us, in her faith in the Angel's message; the knowledge of her own nothingness, she later expressed in the Magnificat.<sup>1</sup>

Mary's lack of self-complacency, the profound knowledge of God and herself, and her consequent lowly obedience assured a faithful execution of God's design. "This same humility and annihilation are what make the soul completely docile and submissive to the divine will," Fr. Osende continues. Hence, he adds, our guide to action is Mary's perpetual fiat because of which she is "the model and archetype of a pure creature in all perfection and sanctity."<sup>2</sup>

Conclusion.-- By paralleling Mary's fiat at the Annunciation with Christ's in the Garden of Olives, Fr. Osende adds a new element here. Quite similar, though, is the Bishops' parallelism: Mary's "Yes' at the Annunciation was the perfect echo of the eternal 'Amen' of her Son." Both comparisons reveal Mary's sensitivity and complete abandonment to God's will. In Fr. Osende's parallelism, however, we are made more aware of the humanness of Christ and of Mary, and thus we become more aware of the "reality of redemption."<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ibid., pp. 463-66.

2 Ibid., p. 467.

3 Declaration, p. 11.

Finally, Fr. Osende's assertion that Mary is "the model and archetype of a pure creature in all perfection and sanctity" is the Bishops' letter in summary.

#### 14. Summary of Findings.

This concludes our survey of theological writings associated with the second theme in the Declaration of the Bishops of Canada; namely, that "Mary is the model of the creature which abandons itself entirely and unconditionally to the will of its Creator."

As a result of this study we have observed both a fortunate rediscovery and a salutary progression. The concept held by the early Church concerning Mary's central position in the economy of salvation is being renewed and revitalized. As a consequence, some writers point out, veneration of Mary solely because of her uniqueness and extraordinary intercessory powers, is, on the whole, disappearing. Instead, these writers see emerging a firm patristic devotion. We may not be wrong in seeing this development made even more solid by the recent developments both in Mariology and in the theology of grace.

We notice that the freedom of Mary's assent to the Incarnation is receiving greater emphasis. Our ability to imitate her in faith and obedience, though seeming to be beyond our expectation at first, is now

seen to be within our reach. And since Mary's perfection is meaningful for our perfection, we can, as the Bishops of Canada would have us do, look to her as our example and ideal.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to make a survey of representative Mariological writings published roughly within the seventeen-year period which preceded the publication of the Bishops' Declaration. This work was undertaken to discover ideas relevant to the two themes in the Declaration.

The survey showed a development in thought towards the concepts contained in the Declaration concerning Mary's role in salvation. From the start Mary was recognized as the one most privileged among God's favoured ones, predestined to universal motherhood, full of grace, impeccable. The glorification of her body and soul was but the final triumph of her initial and added graces. It was only to be expected, many theologians implied, that one so endowed would conform perfectly with God's will. Therefore, to them, she who was so privileged and different from us in her redemption, was, in her submissiveness to divine action, inimitable.

A salutary and more meaningful approach to Mary, however, while exalting her above all creatures because of her singular redemption, would have us see in her Immaculate Conception, the pattern of our redemption begun through the grace of baptism; and in her glorious

## CONCLUSION

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Assumption, the final triumph of her sanctity, the fulfillment of the eternal glory which will be ours (though in a lesser degree) in our resurrection.

As the survey progressed, we saw that in spite of the pre-eminence of her privileges and calling, Mary was free to accept redemption. Realizing her creaturehood, she acknowledged her creature dependence upon God by a perfect response to his word and will. And in this total conformity of her intellect and will to God's word and will, Mary becomes our ideal model.

The evolution of theological thinking which led to the Bishops' letter is highly significant. It reaffirmed more strongly than ever, Mary's dignity and pre-eminence. At the same time, instead of tending to give the impression that Mary is totally removed from us, totally different from us, the new thinking shows Mary as relevant for us, as linked to us. Above us she truly is, but, nonetheless, she is the perfect pattern of which we will be imperfect likenesses. Nor did her privileges merely drop from heaven, as the older view might lead us think. Instead, they called for her response--her HEROIC response.

LESSON PLAN ON THEME TWO OF THE DECLARATION

MARY'S RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD AND WILL

Method<sup>1</sup>: Historical - explanatory

Viewpoint: Mary's response to:  
- the word of God (in faith)  
- the will of the Creator (in obedience)

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38).<sup>2</sup>

Aim: To strengthen faith in responding to the divine word (divine plan of the Bishops' letter - theme Two)

To cultivate obedience in responding to the divine will.

Procedure: I. As a prelude to the lesson cite some passages of Holy Scripture which reveal the faith of ABRAHAM:

- Gen. 12:1-8)-Abraham departs from his country
- Heb. 11:8 ) in response to God's -word  
-will
- Rom. 4:11 -"the father of those who believe"
- Gen. 15 -Faith in God's Covenant
- Gen. 22 -Readiness to sacrifice Isaac,  
the Son of Promise

II. Read Luke 1:26-38 (The Annunciation)  
- Give doctrinal summary pointing out how Mary's response (fiat: "Behold ... according to thy word.") means she accepted God's-word-in faith  
-will-in obedience

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1 The three divisions - method, viewpoint, aim - follow the plan of catechesis in: Johannes Hofinger, The Art of Teaching Christian Doctrine (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1957), 278 p.

2 The Holy Bible, New Catholic Edition, 1951, used in this lesson plan.

LESSON PLAN ON THEME TWO OF THE DECLARATION

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III. Explain: "Handmaid of the Lord"  
(The Old Testament spirit of  
the "lowly one," the anawim.)

IV. Show Mary as a link between the Old and  
the New Testament:

1. Mary played a decisive role in the coming  
of the Messiah.
2. Her response in faith and obedience to  
God's offer of personal encounter is the  
perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament  
faith and obedience found in Abraham.
3. Her fiat at the Incarnation included  
Calvary, and thus she participated in  
God's entire plan of salvation:
  - by her obedient Motherhood, that is by  
giving of her flesh to the Incarnate God;
  - by her obedient compassion beneath the  
Cross (Com-passio means "suffering with,"  
"sharing in the Passion.")

Application: Mary is the model of responsiveness to  
God's -word-her faith (intellect)  
-will-her obedience (will)<sup>1</sup>

#### Enrichment

Exercise: Compare the similarities of response in faith  
asked of Mary in Luke 1:32 and that required  
of Abraham in Gen. 13:16, 15:5, 17:6, 17:8;  
also, Luke 1:48 with Gen. 12:2-3.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Paul VI in his speech delivered at the  
closing of the third session of Vatican Council II, Novem-  
ber 21, 1964, requested the Conciliar Fathers "to hold  
high among the Christian people the name and the honor of  
Mary, indicating in her the model of faith and of the full  
response to each call from God, the model of the full  
assimilation of the teaching of Christ and of his charity."  
"Discours prononcé par S.S. Paul VI lors de la clôture de  
la troisième session du Concile," La Documentation Catholique  
T.LXI (December, 1964), p. 1545.

## APPENDIX A

THE 1954 DECLARATION OF THE CANADIAN BISHOPS

Dear Brethren,

As we approach the end of this Marian Year, which has truly rested upon the brow of the Virgin Mary as a radiant crown of glory--"fulgens corona"--everything calls us to meditate once again upon the eminent part which Mary has played in God's plan, that is, in objective reality.

We shall dwell upon two thoughts which are both linked with Our Blessed Lady's perfection and her unique role in the story of our salvation: Mary is, for all generations, the perfect example of redeemed humanity which has recovered its original integrity; and moreover, for our own generation, which seeks to do away with God, she is the model of the creature which abandons itself entirely and unconditionally to the will of its Creator.

Going over these thoughts in our minds, we may hope to penetrate further into the knowledge of the mystery of Mary, Mother of God and our Mother.

Dear Brethren, devotion to the Virgin Mary is not poetry, designed to lighten the austerity of religion nor an ornament to decorate the bareness of faith. Nor is it, as certain would-be intellectuals would have it, a sublimation of polite and proper love, or an idealization of motherhood. Mary is an essential part in the mechanism of our salvation. She belongs to the inner structure of our faith. She is the object of dogmatic definitions; and we speak of the mysteries of Mary as we do of the mysteries of Jesus. To avoid speaking of Mary, under the fallacious pretext of not offending certain susceptible people, would be to alter the message of the Gospel of which the Church is the guardian. It would also be a gross mistake to consider devotion to Mary as an infringement upon the absolute sovereignty of God or as a sacrilegious encroachment upon the one and only mediation of Jesus Christ. A creature of God, Mary is, like each one of us, totally indigent. Included, together with each one of us, in the sentence which was passed upon Adam, she had need, like all of us, of mercy and, like all of us, of redemption. But we must add immediately, and in the same breath, that though our Saviour is also her Saviour, He is her Saviour in a singular, super-eminent and privileged

manner. Mary was redeemed by anticipation. Child of her God and Saviour, she is, at the same time, Mother of her God and Saviour who filled her with all His gifts. This doctrine is the foundation of our devotion. It happened only once in history that a mother desired a Son who had first desired her and thought about her for all eternity. That is why she is "blessed amongst women" (Luke 1, 42), unique and set apart from the rest of humanity. She is the Tower of Ivory, the House of Gold, the Ark of the Covenant, the Mystical Rose. These comparisons, without going beyond the limits of theological moderation, manifest the limitations of our vocabulary when it comes to expressing the glories of Mary and the love of her children. She is, in fact, a mirror which reflects, without the least shadow, the righteousness of God; and though she cannot, because of her divine maternity and her initial victory over sin, be placed on an equal footing with the rest of mankind, she nonetheless remains the model "par excellence" of redeemed humanity.

Let us not be misunderstood. Jesus is the ultimate model of our perfection. At the time of Our Lord's baptism in the river Jordan, (Mt. 3, 17; Mark 1, 11; Luke 3, 22) and of His transfiguration on Mount Thabor (Mt. 17, 5; Mark 9, 7; Luke 9, 35), a voice from heaven was heard to say: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." However, the well-beloved Son of the Father whom Christians must hear and whose ideas and sentiments they must put on (Phil. 2, 5) is not human in His personality. Such is the teaching of faith: the Incarnation does not bring into existence a second person for Christ says, "Amen, Amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I am" (John 8, 58).

It would be heretical, however, to conclude that Christ is not truly man. Flesh of Mary's flesh, blood of her blood, He possesses a complete human nature. The Gospel narrative tells us that "He grew in wisdom and age and grace with God and men" (Luke 2, 52). He was hungry (Mt. 4, 2; 11, 19; Luke 4, 2; 7, 34); He was thirsty (John 4, 8; 19, 28); He fell asleep from weariness (Mt. 8, 24; Mark 4, 38; Luke 8, 23); He manifested His sentiments even to tears--John 11, 36 (Lazarus); Luke 19, 41 (Jerusalem) and His sorrow even to the sweating of blood (Luke 22, 44). No, Christ was not only the appearance of a man. He was truly of the race of Adam, of the family of David, "man of a woman," says St. Paul (Gal. 4, 4); "Mary, His Mother," as the Gospels point out (Mt. 1, 18; Luke 1, 31, 43; 2, 7; John 2, 4; 19, 25).

However, true God of true God, He is also consubstantial with the Father, equal in all ways to the Father, eternal as is the Father, almighty as the Father, filled with majesty, as the Father. Hence it follows that His human holiness is plunged into the glorious abyss of divine subsistence. The holiness of Jesus must be credited to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. It is the unique holiness of the only Son of God. It is fundamentally an incommunicable and ineffable holiness. It is a holiness set apart from all others. This is true to such a point that to imitate Christ is, in final analysis, to let ourselves be assimilated by Him through living not so much like Him as in Him. That is what St. Paul says in an incomparably concise phrase: "Mihi vivere Christus est" "For me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1, 21).

But behold, Mary arises. Though announced prophetically from the very beginning of time as the woman whose seed will crush the devil (Gen. 3, 15), she never pre-existed "at the beginning" (Ps. 108, 3) as did the person of Christ; though she brought into the world Christ and, in Him, all the generations of Christians, she did not exist "in the beginning" (John 1, 1), but was brought forth from nothingness; though Mother of God, she is altogether human in her person as well as in her nature. Thus she is the guarantee of the reality of the Incarnation. Now, if it be true that something would be lacking to the omnipotence of God if the holiness of His Mother did not reach a glorious summit which no creature, be it an angel or an archangel, could ever attain, it is also true that this sanctity of the Mother of God remains the sanctity of a created person, a human person, an adopted child of God.

In Mary, daughter of our race, but "full of grace" (Luke 1, 28) and immaculate from the first moment of her conception, humanity finds a model of its own order. Redeemed but not rehabilitated, she is already what humanity will be when restored in Christ at the end of time--a humanity victorious over the devil and entirely cleansed from the original curse. In this sense, the holiness of Mary is prophetic, or, to use a word which is dear to our contemporary theologians, eschatological. Just as by her Assumption, she foreshadows the resurrection of our bodies, so, by her Immaculate Conception, she foreshadows the beauty of the Kingdom of Heaven where nothing defiled may enter (Apoc. 21, 27). She is not only all that God wanted man to be when He created him; she is what God wants man to be

after having re-created him still more marvellously by the redemption and the Cross. New Eve, mother of a new race, born not from His side but from the wound of His heart, she is the plenitude of that holiness which a human person, completely aware of God, can reach with the assistance of divine grace.

Awareness of God! By close scrutiny, we can see that it is this awareness of God which constitutes the secret of all perfection, and in particular of the perfection of Mary, perfection greater than that of any other creature, visible or invisible. A relative being which exists, like all of us, because of a continued act of creation, redeemed like all of us though it be in a way which is different and better than ours, Mary is, as we all are, completely dependent upon God. She alone acknowledged this dependence by a complete gift of self which merited for us the coming of a God made man, and which will lead her from Nazareth to Bethlehem, from Bethlehem to Calvary, towards her astonishing destiny of Co-Redemptrix of the universe without ever showing the least trace of weakness or the slightest selfish action. Her "Yes" at the Annunciation was the perfect echo of the eternal "Amen" of her Son, and it placed her in a position of ineffable intimacy with God which physical maternity alone cannot explain.

Our Lord was to hear one day that His Mother was looking for Him. He turned to the crowd and asked: "Who is My Mother?" And then, revealing the great mystery of divine filiation, He added: "For whosoever shall do the Will of My Father that is in heaven, he is My brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt. 12, 46-50; Mark 3, 31-35; Luke 8, 19-21).

The Son was taking nothing away from the Mother. On the contrary, He affirmed, by these words, that she had entered upon a mysterious life with Him which the "will of the flesh" (John 1, 13) could not give, but only the complete and loving acceptance of the Will of the Father could give.

Thus, dear Brethren, far from diminishing the majesty of God, true devotion to Mary exalts "the humility of a handmaid" (Luke 1, 48), and proposes the ideal of a humanity freely and totally submitted to divine action. That is why our generation which is witnessing the rebellion of man against God turns now to the Blessed Virgin with such an ardent yearning.

We must only cast a glance upon our world to realize, immediately, that its principal characteristic is a fierce separation from God. Though there have been periods in the world's history when this or that tenet of our religion has been questioned, never before has there been a time when man has yielded to the temptation of denying the very existence of God and of considering an act of worship as a cowardly act of a man who refuses to acknowledge the greatness of history.

Without a doubt, there have always been practical atheists who believe in God but who deny His existence by their behaviour; and unrealistic atheists who, rejecting God, reject nothing but the idea which they have of God and which is empty of all substance; and pleasure-seeking, licentious atheists, who make a god of their belly, as St. Paul says (Phil. 3, 19). Today there is more. In a supreme effort man is attempting to establish a universe which would be entirely shut off from all supernatural influence and to prepare an earthly paradise from which, this time, God would be expelled.

This is an atheism of thought and of life, a positive and absolute atheism, a hateful and aggressive atheism; an atheism filled with enthusiasm, dynamism and hope in its origin, but not, we point out, in its fulfilment.

Without going through all the stages of the apostasy of the modern world, let us recall how man has, little by little, abandoned the idea that the guarantee of his greatness lies in his belief in a God whose likeness he bears on his brow. He sealed off his temporal activities and practised a purely decorative religion to end up with the opposing of science to religion, the establishing of the human mind as the standard of truth and the defining of himself as a chemical accident or a zoological species. God became, in turn, according to the various branches of human knowledge, a simple product of the imagination, a sublimation of the idea of father, the product of a primitive economic organization and at this precise period of our evolving humanity an "alienation of men" (the expression used with the intelligentsia) or a degradation and an opium (the expressions used with the people).

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We must see in this an unprecedented event in the history of mankind. "Modern technology," wrote His Holiness in his Christmas broadcast of 1953, "displays before man so vast a vision as to be confounded by man with the infinite itself." Man asserts himself. Blinded by his discoveries, he adores his own genius. He declares that he no longer needs God to provide food, drink and shelter, or to become a technician or a scientist, and to organize scientifically the social, economic and political world. He proclaims himself his own creator and his own redeemer. He declares himself complete cause and last end, the alpha and omega of the universe. He knows good and evil, according to the promise of Satan to our first parents (Gen. 3, 5). He knows everything and can do everything. In God he sees only an obstacle to his freedom and an opponent of his dignity. God must die. The reign of man has arrived.

This is the crisis through which our world is going, a crisis which is translated into reality by tyranny, the police regime, religious persecution, forced-labour camps, social upheavals, mass exiles, and the nightmare of an apocalyptic war without anyone--scientist, statesman or military expert--who knows how we shall come out of it.

Notice that it is not the scientists that we must censure because of their accomplishments, nor statesmen because of their conferences, nor men of war because of their art, but it is rather the apostasy of our times which places its salvation elsewhere than in submission to God and which, to produce concurrence of opinion in the world and to establish world unity on an indisputable basis, believes it can and even that it must put God aside. All the genius and all the toil of man are necessary to bring about this world unity and the establishment of peace, but with what dazzling clearness have the facts shown us once again, that human efforts by themselves are bound to fail. It is possible with modern technology to organize the world without God, but then, man organizes the world against his fellow-men. "The root of all evils," recalled Pius XII, "by which men are so cruelly afflicted and which throw peoples and nations into anguish, is to be sought, in all certitude, in the fact that many people have forsaken Him who is the fountain of living water, and have dug for themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Idolatry can be found everywhere. It is all around us. It is not limited by geographical frontiers. It is the eternal temptation of man to desire self-sufficiency and to make a god of himself. Strange as it may seem, this is man's most intimate temptation. Recall, if you will, the nature of man's first temptation.

We find it related in the first pages of Genesis. The fallen angel lies to our first parents and introduces doubt in their minds: "Why hath God commanded you that you should not eat of every tree of paradise? ... No, you shall not die the death." Then follows the infernal promise: "You shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3, 5). Adam yielded. He ate of the fruit of rebellion. And with this act of disobedience, the misery of sin and of death entered into the world. Then Jesus came, a new Adam (ICor. 15, 45). By His obedience to the Father, an obedience unto death, even to the death of the cross, (Phil. 2, 8), He brought us life: "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly" (John 10, 10).

But here again, Christ is not, precisely, our model. He is rather our salvation, our only salvation (Acts 4, 12), the one who comes down into the depths of our souls to wipe out our inner misery: our slavery to sin and our condemnation to death (Rom. 5, 15-20). The true model of obedience, though she be but a model, is Our Blessed Lady. She answered unconditionally when the angel asked her to give her consent to God's will: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1, 38). With these very simple words, she determined the essential attitude of man and introduces us to the very core of the reality of redemption. God alone is God, and man was created to praise, worship, love and serve Him. There lies his true grandeur, his freedom, and his salvation.

Dear Brethren, Christians who have learned these truths on their mothers' knees should not surrender themselves naively to official optimism, nor should they despairingly seek shelter within themselves, nor should they nostalgically look with regret upon a past which has disappeared and which naturally they call the "good old times'." They must bring back to this world of ours awareness of God, of His majesty, of His sovereignty, and above all, the awareness of His existence.

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Our Blessed Mother will help us for she knows better than any other creature that she possesses nothing of herself, that she can do nothing by herself, and that all comes to her from God. She is the perfect handmaid of the Lord. That is why she was chosen to bring the Saviour into this world and to reverse the whole course of history. Mother of God and Mother of men, she will hear the prayers of the children of this generation and will bring God anew into the world. For this very generation so filled with apostasy has nevertheless proclaimed her glorious in her Assumption and celebrated her Immaculate Conception with splendour. She cannot forget this nor can she forget that we truly need to learn, from her, submission and true worship.

Such is the special grace that the Vicar of Christ on earth wished to obtain when he announced this Marian Year. At the end of this year of praise and love of Our Beloved Mother, it is the fervent desire of all your Bishops that your hearts may be filled with the fruits of that special grace.

## APPENDIX B

PASTORAL LETTER OF COADJUTOR ARCHBISHOP  
OF TORONTO: EXCERPTS

May, 1964.

## Mary's Immaculate Conception

The people of the ancient covenant, beginning with Abraham, lived by faith in the redemptive design of God, their Lord and creator. From the beginning the Christ that was to come was the source of their grace and their friendship with God; and the whole purpose of the history of Israel was to prepare, purify, and make holy the people for the coming of this Christ in the flesh. When the Church teaches us that, in view of the Christ that was to come the Blessed Virgin Mary was made holy from the first moment of her existence (the Immaculate Conception); this means that the divine guidance in regard to Israel had culminated in this daughter of Sion who gave to the world the universal redeemer, Jesus.

## Mary, Figure in the Believing Community

In the first two chapters of St. Luke's Gospel, our Lady also represents the new Israel, the holy community of those who believe in Christ--in other words, the Church. Mary becomes mother of the Lord through an act of faith. "Blessed is she who has believed," the Scriptures say of her, "because the things promised her by the Lord shall be accomplished" (Luke I:45). She becomes mother of Christ because she believes the Word of God addressed to her and humbly submits to it: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your Word" (Luke L:38). In this faithful acknowledgement of God's Word, the Blessed Virgin Mary not only becomes the model of every Christian who believes and clings to the Gospel in faith, but also the representative and figure of the whole Church which is called into existence or created through God's Word which has become flesh in Christ. Preaching this Word, the apostles sent by Christ establish and extend the community of those who believe. So truly is Mary the figure of everyone who believes, that Jesus did not hesitate to reply to the woman who called his mother blessed, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it"

(Luke 11:28). He also told his disciples that by hearing the Word of God and acting upon it, they become brother and mother to him (cf. Luke 8:21).

#### Mary's Assumption into Heaven

The Blessed Virgin Mary is also associated with the third period of the history of salvation, the age of the Holy Spirit. We read that Mary joined the apostles at Jerusalem as they prayed for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the community. According to the teaching of the Church, the Holy Spirit communicated the glory of the Risen Christ so fully to her that, at the end of her earthly life, she experienced the ultimate fulfilment of salvation. While the rest of the Church must wait until the Last Day for the final judgment and resurrection of the flesh, the Blessed Virgin Mary experiences already now, in the fullest sense, that Christ is "the resurrection and the life" (John 11: 25) and that he who is in Jesus "is not under the judgment but has passed from death to life" (John 5: 24). This is what we mean when we confess the assumption of our Lady into heaven. She is now with her divine son, clothed in her body made imperishable, constantly reminding the Church that Jesus does not want to be alone, but always face to face with another in love. Our Lady, sharing in the glory of her Son, strengthens our hope in the destiny of the entire Church. This was the vision of St. John when, contemplating the age to come, he saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband (Apoc. 21:2).

APPENDIX C

VATICAN COUNCIL II - CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH: EXCERPTS

The Virgin Mary, who at the message of the angel received the word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life to the world, is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved. She is "the mother of the members of Christ. . .having cooperated by charity that faithful might be born in the Church, who are members of that Head." Wherefore she is hailed as a preeminent and singular member of the Church, and as its type and excellent exemplar in faith and charity. The Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother.(No. 53).

.....  
 Adorned from the first instant of her conception with the radiance of an entirely unique holiness, the Virgin of Nazareth is greeted, on God's command, by an angel messenger as "full of grace" (Lk. 1,28), and to the heavenly messenger she replies: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word" (Lk. 1,38). Thus Mary, a daughter of Adam, consenting to the divine Word, became the mother of Jesus, the one and only Mediator. Embracing God's salvific will with a full heart and impeded by no sin, she devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under Him and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, serving the mystery of redemption. (No. 56).

.....  
 The Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and the conqueror of sin and death.(No. 59).

## APPENDIX C

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In the interim the Mother of Jesus in the glory which she possesses body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come. Likewise she shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come (cf. II Pet. 3,10), a sign of sure hope and solace to the wandering people of God. (No. 68).

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## ABSTRACT

In a joint pastoral letter on the role of Mary in the divine plan, written for the Marian Year of 1954, the Catholic Bishops of Canada developed two themes: (1) Mary is the perfect example of redeemed humanity, and (2) Mary is the model of total abandonment and unconditional surrender to the will of the Creator. The present dissertation was undertaken to discover the theological concepts and their evolution which provided the background for the Bishops' letter.

The present work embraces Mariological writings of the seventeen-year period previous to the publication of the letter. The works fall into three categories: Church documents, books, and periodical articles. They represent the theological thought of England, Ireland, France, Austria, Germany and the United States.

Part One treats of the first theme; namely, "Mary is the perfect example of redeemed humanity which has recovered its original integrity." The seventeen-year period begins with the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption considered as singular privileges of Mary. Then there is a gradual shift of emphasis from these privileges as merely personal to their universal significance. Mary, first seen in her fullness of grace and anticipated

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resurrection, is, therefore, above all other pure creatures and beyond our emulation. Later she begins to be looked upon as the perfectly redeemed creature. Finally, she is regarded as the first member of the redeemed, and is associated with all other members who receive the same redemptive graces. In her perfect redemption of soul and body she is considered as type of the redeemed Church and is thus a pattern of our final redemption.

Part Two deals with the second theme; namely, "Mary is the model of the creature which abandons itself entirely and unconditionally to the will of its Creator. Here is stressed Mary's creaturehood and dependence on the Creator, her freedom of action, deep faith, and her submissiveness to God's design. A development was noted here also. Mary was viewed by some writers as so sublime in sanctity as to be inimitable in her actions. Later, she was proposed by others as the model of the Christian's free response to God's word and will.

The survey on the whole showed a rejuvenation and strengthening of Marian doctrine and devotion through a return to patristic Mariological concepts. Mary is considered as type of the Church in via (Theme Two), and in Eternity (Theme One).