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Peter Fehlner

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THE FRANCISCAN MARIOLOGICAL SCHOOL AND THE COREDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT

*Fr. Peter Fehlner, F.I. **

Many years ago, during a casual conversation, Fr. Juniper Carol, founder of the Mariological Society of America, mentioned to me the three crusades, during the half century between 1927 and 1977, of Fr. Charles Balić, the indefatigable promoter of Mary Immaculate and of the subtle Marian Doctor, Bl. John Duns Scotus. These crusades were 1) the anti-debitist, linked to the promotion of the Immaculate Conception in the speculative realm, 2) the coredeptive, and 3) the assumptionist.¹

The first, although now attracting little attention from theologians, surely deserves more, since its objective is to counter tendencies, still very much alive in the Church and among various groups of theologians, to minimize the essential difference between preservative and liberative redemption, and so the crucial practical import of the dogma. St. Maximilian Kolbe has given that crusade for the Immaculate another form: not theological, but rather spiritual-pastoral. He gave this the name of *incorporation* of the dogma into the life of the Church as basis of renewal. The last-mentioned crusade, that concerning the Assumption, so closely related in the life and death of St. Francis to the Portiuncula or St. Mary of the Angels in Assisi, and expounded with such exceptional depth by St. Bonaventure and Bl. John Duns Scotus, had a glorious conclusion in 1950,

*Father Peter Fehlner, a member of the Friars of the Immaculate, has been for many years the editor of *Miles Immaculatae* and a promoter of St. Maximilian Kolbe. He is now involved also with a new publication, *Immaculata Mediatrix: Rivista internazionale di teologia mariana*.

¹ Cf. Peter Fehlner, F.I., "Fr. Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M.: His Mariology and Scholarly Achievement," *Marian Studies* 43 (1992): 17-59, here p. 21.

with the dogmatic definition by Pius XII in *Munificentissimus Deus*. This definition exerted not a little influence on the Marian doctrine of Vatican II and its ecclesial significance.

The middle crusade, assigned to Fr. Juniper, among the friars known as "Secretary of the Coredemptrix" as well as Secretary of this Society, is still very much a significant part of the current coredemptive movement, seeking a dogmatic definition of that mystery which historically links the divine Maternity to Mary's Assumption, efficacious mediation of all grace to humans and angels in the Church, and intercession for them before the throne of mercy. The link here with St. Francis is perfectly clear from his conversion and call to religious life: to be perfectly conformed to Christ Crucified by sharing the compassion of the sorrowful Mother. Coredemption is but another title for the central place of that Mother in the spirituality of Francis, Bonaventure, James of Milan, Jacopone da Todi—to mention only a few of the giants of the first Franciscan century.²

Fr. Balić did not invent these crusades. Like all Franciscan mariologists, he inherited them from St. Francis, a Marian saint if ever there was one, and the founder of a radically Marian orientated Order.³ The distinctive feature of that orientation, from the Order's founding in 1209, has always been the Immaculate Conception, under that name or some equivalent, such as Spouse of the Holy Spirit, because this mystery constitutes the heart of the Founder's mission "to rebuild the Church."⁴

² For illustrative texts, see Peter Fehlner, F.I., "Il mistero della corredenzione secondo il Dottore Serafico san Bonaventura," in *Maria Corredentrice. Storia e teologia*, vol. 2 (Frigento: Casa Mariana Editrice, 1999), 11-91, here 80-91.

³ Johannes Schneider, O.F.M., *Virgo Ecclesia facta: The Presence of Mary in the Crucifix of San Damiano and in the "Office of the Passion" of St. Francis of Assisi* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2004), has perhaps the best-documented illustration of this affirmation.

⁴ Stefano Cecchin, O.F.M., *Maria Signora Santa e Immacolata nel pensiero francescano. Per una storia del contributo francescano alla mariologia* (Città del Vaticano: PAMI, 2001); idem, ed., *La "Scuola Francescana" e l'Immacolata Concezione. Atti del Congresso Mariologico Francescano, S. Maria degli Angeli, Assisi, 4-8 dicembre 2003* (Città del Vaticano: PAMI, 2005).

This radically Marian-orientated Order early on produced a school of theology well known for its consistently Marian character, with special emphasis on the Immaculate Conception and Marian mediation: "Mary is our Mediatrix with Christ as Christ is our Mediator with the Father," is how Henry of Avranches summed up Franciscan spirituality circa 1240,⁵ and in almost the same words St. Bonaventure summed up the core of Franciscan Mariology a generation later.⁶ A more recent scotistic mariologist, Fr. Ruggero thus summarized the doctrinal basis of this mediation as it appears in the writings of Duns Scotus: Christ is the greatest work of the Father, as Mary is the greatest work of Christ the Savior and Head of the Church.⁷

When I say "Franciscan Mariology," I do not particularly refer to Mariology in the form of a treatise. Rather I have in mind what St. Bonaventure meant in answer to the question: Why do we find so little on Mary in Scripture? His reply: Mary is in Scripture, and so in theology, because for St. Bonaventure theology is first of all the study of the Sacred Page, not in the form of a treatise, but in that far profounder and more fundamental fashion which underlies every theological tract. Because Mary is present in every verse of Scripture, shaping as it were from within as a revelation of her Son and our Head, she is present throughout all of theology.⁸ Precisely for this reason the Franciscan mariological school, from its very start, provided the potential for such a treatise, synthesizing our knowledge of Mary, both as to content and form, in itself and in relation to

⁵ Henry of Avranches, "Legenda S. Francisci versificata," in *Legendae S. Francisci Assisiensis saeculis 13 et 14 conscriptae*, Analecta Franciscana, vol. 10 (Ad Claras Aquas: Typis Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1926), 448: *Mediatrix Virgo beata ad Christum, Christus ad Patrem sit Mediator*.

⁶ St. Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2: *Mediatrix est inter nos et Christum, sicut Christus inter nos et Deum*, where the second *nos* includes all who have Mary as Mediatrix. Elsewhere St. Bonaventure gives the reason: As God comes to us through her, so we return through her to the Incarnate God: *Commentarius in Evangelium Lucae*, 1, 70. No exceptions are envisioned.

⁷ Ruggero Rosini, O.F.M., "Maternità spirituale di Maria secondo i principi della teologia scotista," in *Immacolata Mediatrix* 2 (2002): 177-195, here 183, note 30. The texts of Scotus on which this assessment is based are: *Ordinatio III*, d. 7, q. 3 and q. 1.

⁸ St. Bonaventure, *Collationes in Hexaemeron*, c. 13, n. 20.

every other theological treatise. Thus it shows why and how "our theology"⁹ is a marianized theology: because its origin passes at every point through Mary, first witness to faith.¹⁰ This is particularly evident in two giants of the first generation of Franciscan theologians: St. Bonaventure and Bl. John Duns Scotus.

First I would like to sketch the major features of this school, effectively the same for more than seven centuries, as they find their source in St. Francis himself and in the two giants just mentioned. In a second section I will point out just how the coredemptive question (contrary to many misconceptions of the Franciscan thesis on the absolute primacy of Jesus and Mary as a choice between the Incarnation as willed independently of the redemption, or the Incarnation as occasioned by the fall of Adam and Eve) was present in a prominent way from the beginnings of Franciscan mariological thought. For the perfection and centrality of the Cross of Christ in Franciscan spirituality (viz., the redemption, and with it the coredemption, so great that that redemption could not be greater in any possibly better world) depends on the fact of the Incarnation and Immaculate Conception being willed prior to any consideration of sin: not as a possible hypothesis, but as a revealed truth about what God in fact actually willed: *quod fecit quia decuit Matri Dei*.

PART I. THE FRANCISCAN MARIOLOGICAL SCHOOL

A. St. Francis of Assisi: *Mater Dei, Virgo Ecclesia facta, Sponsa Spiritus Sancti*

When we hear the phrase "Mariological School," we think of one or another of the academic features characteristic of an organized, cohesive study of the mystery of Mary in revelation promoted by a group of theologians over a period of time. Here

⁹ On the concept of "our theology," cf. Bl. John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, prologus, p. 3 and 4.

¹⁰ In John Paul II's writings, the concept of a special Marian presence at the heart of the Church is developed in *Redemptoris Mater*. Cf. texts adduced by Schneider, *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, xxviii ff.; for the reiteration of that doctrine by Pope Benedict XVI, see his homily for the Annunciation, March 25, 2006.

I have in mind something prior to the emergence of a school of thought in the narrow sense: a deliberate, conscious approach to the praise and service of Mary, resting on a doctrinal basis that eventually will give rise to a distinctive school in the narrower sense. The first we see in St. Francis, inspiring the Marian teaching of Bonaventure; the second is already beginning to emerge in the unfinished work of the subtle Doctor, for this reason also known as the Marian Doctor.

According to both Thomas of Celano and St. Bonaventure,¹¹ St. Francis could not exalt Mary in praise or serve her too much, because it was she who brought our Lord and Savior into our midst and made possible for us direct access to Him. *De Maria numquam satis*.¹² St. Francis is clearly a Marian maximalist, a position clearly bearing on his way of thinking about Mary. If we understand who Mary is, what she has done and continues to do, then we can never exalt her too much, because we cannot come close to matching, let alone exceeding, what the Blessed Trinity has done for her. Of course St. Bonaventure warns against attempting to maximize our Marian prayer and doctrine with stupidities which in fact do not exalt but demean the Virgin Mother of God. But the more we grasp of the mystery objectively (e.g., the Immaculate Conception), the greater must be our praise, devotion and service objectively. For St. Francis, just as the absolute primacy of Christ appears after the triumph of the Cross as Christ's Kingship over all creation, so the mystery of the Spouse of the Holy Spirit or Immaculate Conception appears as the Queenship of Mary gloriously crowned as Mistress of heaven and earth. In the practical order this constitutes the doctrinal foundation for her

¹¹ Thomas of Celano, "Vita secunda S. Francisci," 198; St. Bonaventure, "Legenda maior S. Francisci," ch. 3, 1; 7, 1; 9, 3 (both works found in *Analecta Franciscana* 10; see n. 5 above).

¹² St. Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4: *Mariae nemo nimis potest esse devotus*. Scotus echoes this when he writes (in *Ordinatio III*, d. 3, q. 1, 34): *si auctoritate Ecclesiae vel auctoritati Scripturae non repugnet, videtur probabile, quod excellentius est, attribuere Mariae*. When the two great doctors warn against exaggeration, they have in mind not the denial of the principles just stated, but their subjective misapplication in asserting as most excellent what in fact is contrary to Revelation or to sound reason.

universal mediation of grace in the Church and among the Angels, the indispensable basis for realizing the purpose of the Franciscan Order, the rebuilding of the Church: to be without stain or spot, that is, immaculate.¹³

These themes converge on the sacrifice of Calvary, hence the importance of perfect conformity to the Crucified through the maternal mediation of Mary in order to accomplish the glorification of the Church. This consists precisely in the completion of the Body of Christ, formed by Mary, so that in and through Christ the Father sees in us what He sees in His Only-begotten Son. This entails on the part of Mary a dual relation: one to Christ, as His Mother and so on Calvary Mother of the Church (*Virgo Ecclesia facta*), and to the Holy Spirit, as His instrument in realizing the Incarnation and animating the Church as Body of Christ. Once we see this, we see why Mary is firstborn daughter of the Father, and how St. Francis' Marian thought rests profoundly on Trinitarian insights, which underlie the Franciscan thesis on the absolute predestination of Christ and Mary. This marianized Christology (in St. Maximilian M. Kolbe) will ultimately yield a key to a pneumatology-ecclesiology in the mystery of Mary's person as Virgin Mother: in relation to the Holy Spirit and in relation to the Church as Virgin-Mother of the faithful.¹⁴

Careful examination of the St. Francis' *Salute to the Virgin*,¹⁵ whence comes the title *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, and whose composition is to be related not only to the Portiuncula, St. Mary of the Angels, effectively celebrating Mary's Assumption and mediation of all graces in the Church, but also to Francis' conversion experience under the tutelage of the Immaculate Coredemptrix, particularly reveals how it stresses the joint centrality of the divine Maternity and Incarnation. Thus it reveals how thoroughly the Marian thought of St. Francis was permeated precisely by those three notes stressed by Paul VI in

¹³ See Schneider, *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, Introduction and Part One.

¹⁴ Peter Fehlner, F.I., *St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, Martyr of Charity, Pneumatologist: His Theology of the Holy Spirit* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2004).

¹⁵ Latin text and commentary easily available in Schneider, *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, 69ff.

Marialis cultus: the Trinitarian, Christological-pneumatological, and ecclesial.¹⁶

Similarly, the antiphon for the *Office of the Passion*,¹⁷ whence comes the title *Sponsa Spiritus Sancti*, or Immaculate Conception, whose composition was profoundly linked to the Poverello's conversation with the Crucified in San Damiano, the moment when Francis was stigmatized interiorly, reveals the same. This time, however, it does so in relation to the consummation of Christ's mission on the Cross. The mystery of what is today called the coredemption, based on the "Franciscan thesis," stands at the very center of this Office and unique antiphon. The identification and labeling of this mystery will be a contribution of the Franciscan Mariological school.

Two doctrinal themes, anchored in the conversion experience of the Poverello in the Church of San Damiano, are well demonstrated by Fr. Schneider¹⁸; themes that become central to the Franciscan Mariological School emerge from this unlimited devotion to Mary as Mother of God: a sense of her unique mediation, first as an active co-cause of the Incarnation and then as spiritual Mother of the Church and its members; and then, as a consequence, a sense of her person as one capable of being the Mother of God and our Mother. For she is Spouse of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin made Church, who is able to bring into this world the Son of God and Savior by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and, by the operation of the same Spirit, make of the Church virginal Mother of Christ in the minds and hearts of the faithful. Thus, in chapter 10 of his *Regula bullata*, St. Francis insists that all the friars are obliged to have in themselves "the Spirit of the Lord and His holy operation," nowhere so fully realized as in the Mother of God and our Mother.

This sense of Marian mediation of all grace will be a prominent feature of the Christology and Mariology of St. Bonaventure. This sense of her person in St. Francis will later emerge in Duns Scotus' formulation of the theology of the Immaculate

¹⁶ Paul VI, *Marialis cultus*, nos. 25-29.

¹⁷ Latin text and commentary in Schneider, *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, 103ff.

¹⁸ Again citing his *Virgo Ecclesia facta*.

Conception, metaphysical ground of Mary's universal mediation, as the Incarnation is the ground of Christ's.

We are not dealing here with two partial aspects of a single mediation, but with a single mediation, entire in Christ *with* a Marian mode; thus, for the same reason, the mission of the Son involves the mission of the Spirit and divine Maternity. Mediation in the supernatural order entails a divine and maternal aspect, prefigured in the formation of man as male and female (Gen. 2:18-25)¹⁹; in Bonaventure a dual dimension to a single mediation consummated on Calvary, but ultimately grounded in the dual complementary missions of Word and Spirit²⁰; and in Scotus founded respectively in the Incarnation and Immaculate Conception. This noted, it is easy to see how the profound insight of St. Maximilian ascribing the same name to the Spirit and Mary²¹ is a kind of synthesis of these two great Marian Doctors.

In the Franciscan school, and first of all in St. Francis himself, Christ and Mary are involved, apart from any consideration of sin, in a work of mediation for the rest of the elect. Although from the gnoseological point of view of our theology here and now, demonstration of the Immaculate Conception rests on the prior recognition of our redemption as perfect, ontologically *a parte rei*, the perfection of that redemption derives in fact from the mediation of Christ and Mary: real, even had Adam not sinned.²²

¹⁹ Dominic Unger, O.F.M. Cap., "Franciscan Christology," *Franciscan Studies* n.s. 2 (1942): 428-474; Peter Fehlner, F.I., "Redemption, Metaphysics and the Immaculate Conception," in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross V* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005), 186-262, here pp. 232-234; Settimio Manelli, F.I., "Genesis 3:15 and the Immaculate Coredeмпrix," in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross V*, 263-322, here pp. 276-277.

²⁰ See St. Bonaventure, *III Sent.*, d 10, a 2, q 2, et ad 4. See also Peter Fehlner, *The Role of Charity in the Ecclesiology of St. Bonaventure* (Rome: Editrice "Miscellanea Franciscana," 1965), 90-93, where more texts of the Seraphic Doctor can be found.

²¹ See St. Maximilian Kolbe, *Scritti* [hereafter abbreviated SK] (Rome: ENMI Editrice Nazionale M.I., 1997), nos. 1318, 1319.

²² Ruggero Rosini, *Mariologia del beato Giovanni Duns Scoto* (Castelvetrosio (IS): Editrice Mariana "La Corredentrice," 1994), 97ff.

Evidently, the Marian thought of St. Francis, like his profound theology in general, fountainhead of the famed Franciscan school of theology and philosophy (and some would add science), when described in terms of the three possible modes of "our theology" in a time of pilgrimage,²³ is contemplative. For St. Bonaventure, without this form of theology it would be impossible to perfect or develop the other two, namely, symbolic and academic (or proper). On the other hand, without a sound symbolic and academic presentation it would be impossible for the vast majority to grasp the mind of St. Francis and similar saints on the mysteries of faith.

B. St. Bonaventure and the Maternal Mediation of Mary

St. Bonaventure and Bl. John Duns Scotus are hardly the only representatives of Franciscan Marian thought during the "golden age" of Franciscan theology. When the Marian doctrine of the Evangelical Doctor St. Anthony, of Conrad of Saxony, James of Milan, Peter of John Olivi, John Peckham, Servussantus of Faenza, Jacopone da Todi—to mention just a few—is taken into consideration and the range of themes treated—sometimes in the form of sermons, popular and theological, sometimes in the form of monographs, sometimes in the form of liturgical and hymnal texts—then one can understand how, from all these riches, a Mariological school in the proper sense might arise under guidance of a contemplative genius.²⁴ In Scotus that thought begins to reveal its basic structure and formal character as a theological treatise.

The first of the two theological giants is the Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure. He touched on almost every possible Marian theme, with insights profoundly traditional, yet going far beyond any to be found in most of his contemporaries or

²³ St. Bonaventure, *Itinerarium Mentis in Deum*, 1, 7; idem, *Christus unus omnium Magister*, 1.

²⁴ Cf. appendix of Peter Fehlner, F.I., "Il mistero della corredenzione secondo il Dottore Serafico San Bonaventura," in *Maria Corredentrice. Storia e teologia*, vol. 2 (Frigento: Casa Mariana Editrice, 1999), 79-91, for a sampling of texts from the golden age.

immediate predecessors or disciples.²⁵ Curiously the only theme tending to unify all this reflection is that of Marian mediation, where mediation embraces not only her role in our saving encounter with Christ, but also His coming into this world.²⁶ From this perspective Mary is seen both as gate to earth for God and as gate to heaven for those saved by Christ.

In this, St. Bonaventure is faithful to his concept of our theology as practical: *theologia est speculationis gratia, ut boni fiamus et principaliter ut boni fiamus*.²⁷ It is the key role of Mary as Mediatrix throughout the entire economy of salvation, including the saving of the angels, that gives the mystery of Mary its importance, not only as subject of a specific treatise (which Bonaventure might have written, but in fact did not), but also as a mystery coloring and qualifying every other facet of "our theology," even our knowledge of the Trinity. Mary, under and with Christ, is a unique public person as Mother of God, and the unique, central, preeminent praxis which perfect motherhood entails is mediation. Every form of mediation in the historical order is defined in relation to the mediation between father and son characteristic of maternity in the active sense. For Bonaventure, any kind of mediation in the divine order is that inherent in the position of the Word as middle person between Father and Holy Spirit. Where, by divine decree, these two forms of mediation are joined in the joint predestination of Christ and Mary as Son and Mother, we find the practical basis of a theology of salvation, or what St. Maximilian calls the "vertex" of divine and created love.²⁸ Bonaventure, then, as mariologist, is rightly considered the classic doctor of Marian mediation. And the classic study of this theme in Bonaventure, that of Lorenzo Di Fonzo in 1938, effectively

²⁵ Peter Fehlner, F.I., "I discorsi mariani di san Bonaventura," *Immaculata Mediatrix* 4 (2004): 17-65; idem, "Bibliografia Mariana-Bonaventuriana," *Immaculata Mediatrix* 4 (2004): 241-256.

²⁶ Lorenzo Di Fonzo, O.F.M.Conv., *Doctrina Sancti Bonaventurae de universali mediatione B. Virginis Mariae* (Rome: Editrice "Miscellanea Francescana," 1938).

²⁷ St. Bonaventure, *I Sent.*, prologus 3.

²⁸ St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, SK, no. 1318.

indicates that Bonaventure touched on nearly every possible dimension of this, including in a special way what subsequently came to be known as coredeemption and the place of Mary in the Church as its "memory."

Bonaventure did this, first because the doctrine of universal Marian mediation is a part of Catholic tradition, but more so because this doctrine is the principal basis of Franciscan spirituality orientated both toward Christ crucified and toward the renewal of the Church in view of the second coming of Christ. On the other hand, as a number of scholars have noted, some Franciscan in orientation, Bonaventure is not entirely consistent.²⁹ He seems at the level of faith to support coredeemption as an aspect of Marian mediation, and his approach to the divine Maternity as active rather than passive surely indicates a subordinate active role as Mediatrix on Calvary. But, at the level of theology, his denial of the Immaculate Conception and insistence that Mary was redeemed liberatively, indeed, that genuine redemption must exclude preservative redemption, seems to point to a denial of the title Coredeмпtrix and essentially to withdraw the angels both from Christ's mediation and from membership in the Church.

I would prefer simply to admit that Bonaventure, like Thomas, is inconsistent on certain questions, above all on the question of the absolute primacy of Christ, a very traditional position, but one denied in connection with the problem of the universality of redemption and transmission of original sin. Where the absolute primacy of Christ and His Mother is denied, and the concept of a *debitum peccati* eventually introduced, even in Mary, from which she must be freed—preservation from sin being only a special form of liberative redemption, there remains effectively no sound basis for a unique, active mediatory role for Mary on Calvary and at the Altar (that is, within the sacramental system of the Church centered on the Eucharist as an extension of Calvary). And for this reason there can be no real universal Marian mediation of

²⁹ Cf. Juniper B. Carol, *De Corredemptione Beatae Virginis Mariae disquisitio positiva* (Civitas Vaticana: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1950), 162-164.

grace in the Church qualitatively different from the intercession of the saints and therefore on which that of the saints depends, hence no universal Marian basis for all spirituality, particularly Franciscan.

Some have tried to claim on this basis that support of coredemption is not essential to the Franciscan mariological synthesis. Contrariwise, failure to affirm this calls into question the unique active role of Mary at the initiation of our redemption with the Incarnation.

A clue to the solution may be the curious omission of any mention of the title "Spouse of the Holy Spirit" on the part of Bonaventure, equivalent of Immaculate Conception. Where one might expect Bonaventure to quote from the famous antiphon of St. Francis, he always substitutes the title "Sanctuary of the Holy Spirit."³⁰ This is all the stranger, since contemporaries, like Conrad of Saxony, in his commentary on the Hail Mary,³¹ carefully explain the title *Spouse of the Holy Spirit* in a way pointing toward the Immaculate Conception, and the majority of friars were promoting this implicitly immaculist title throughout Europe during the thirteenth century. Why did Bonaventure hesitate on this title? Perhaps because he saw it as pointing to what, since the time of St. Bernard, no major theologian Bonaventure considered sound had supported, namely, the Immaculate Conception, and what St. Anselm, while laying down one of the traditional principles supporting the doctrine, himself denied. In his mariological teaching St. Bonaventure was deeply influenced by both and, hence, while explaining the maternal mediation of Mary, he hesitated

³⁰ Cf. Jean Galot, *Marie, Mère et Corédentrice* (Paris: Parole et Silence, 2005), 74-77. The author shows how the two titles, Spouse and Sanctuary, are not opposed, but complementary, the first denoting Mary's relation to the Holy Spirit as Immaculate, and the second her relation to the Son of God as His Mother or Tabernacle by the work of the Holy Spirit. Cf. also the reflections of M. Hauke, "The Mother of God," in *Mariology: A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and Consecrated Persons*, ed. M. Miravalle (Goleta CA: Seat of Wisdom Books, 2007), 167-212, here pp. 207-212.

³¹ Conrad of Saxony, *Speculum Beatae Mariae Virginis* (Quaracchi: Typis Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1904, new ed. 1974), a work for many centuries attributed to St. Bonaventure.

to explain a Marian title of St. Francis of which he was not entirely convinced.³²

With this we can immediately appreciate the Mariological contribution of Scotus in building on the Marian thought of Bonaventure as an interpretation of St. Francis, but also as correction of an ambivalence at the heart of Bonaventure's potential synthesis, both christologically and ecclesiologicaly. This is achieved in affirming the absolute primacy of Christ and the Immaculate Conception, or the joint predestination of Jesus and Mary, or what Bonaventure says of Mary: a unique "hierarchy" over all other hierarchies, angelic and ecclesial, by reason of her unique place in the order of the hypostatic union, as guiding truth (not first principle) of the "economy," or the *deciuit* in theology as taking precedence over the *potuit* in determining the *fecit*—what God has decreed and done and why, in the old axiom characteristic of the Franciscan Mariological school: *potuit, deciuit, ergo fecit*.³³ God actually did among the many possibles what was the most perfect.

C. Bl. John Duns Scotus

Scotus is rightly acclaimed for his teaching on the Immaculate Conception, acknowledged in former times as the *opinio minorum*, thus implicitly recognizing the presence of this mystery in St. Francis, and now, after Bl. Pius IX, a theological approach acknowledged as reflecting accurately the tradition of the Church.³⁴

But this is hardly the only point discussed by Scotus in one form or another, under one title or another. Nearly every point of contemporary mariologies appears in his works.³⁵ And if

³² Rosini, *Mariologia* . . . , 75-76, n. 4.

³³ On the axiom, see Rosini, *Mariologia* . . . , 80, n. 16.

³⁴ See Angelo Amato, "Criterio formativo della 'Milizia' fondata da S. Massimiliano Kolbe," *L'Osservatore Romano* (7 Dec., 2003): 11, where he expressly says that, since the dogmatic definition of 1854, the *opinio Minorum* as formulated by Scotus is recognized as part of Catholic tradition.

³⁵ Again citing Rosini, *Mariologia* . . . ; also, on Scotus and Vatican II, see his *Il Cristocentrismo di G. Duns Scoto e la dottrina del Vaticano secondo* (Vicenza: Tipografia Editrice "Esca," 1993); idem, *Il Cristo nella Bibbia, nei Ss. Padri, nel Vaticano secondo* (Vicenza: Tipografia Editrice "Esca," 1980).

quantitatively his Marian discussions occupy less space than those of Bonaventure, they are, qualitatively speaking, highly systematic and consistent at the level of the *analogia fidei*, or hierarchy of truths.

At the core of this synthesis stands the Immaculate Conception, key to the absolute predestination of Mary as Mother of God, conjointly with Christ her Son, King of the universe and Head of the Church, to supreme glory and enjoyment of God. Thus predestined they constitute what subsequently came to be called the order of the hypostatic union: an order not occasioned by sin, but decreed prior to this and as the reason for creation. With Scotus' stupendous defense of the absolute primacy and Immaculate Conception, the basis was laid for a coherent explanation of Marian mediation and the unique role of Mary on Calvary as Coredemptrix, consummating her active role in bringing to pass the hypostatic union at the Annunciation as Mother of the Incarnate Son of God.

Without doubt, Scotus' subtle and effective demonstration of the possibility (the *potuit*) of the Immaculate Conception in terms of perfect redemption: preservative, as basis of liberative in the only actual economy of salvation, has rightly been praised as a work of genius. But we should not overlook how the argument depends objectively on the fittingness or *deuit* of the Immaculate Conception in relation to what God primarily decreed (or the *fecit*) before the foundation of the world or redemption from sin committed: the absolute predestination of Christ as man and Head of the elect to supreme glory and enjoyment of God, together with that of Mary to be His Mother in virtue of the will and merits of Christ. Thus, in the order of the hypostatic union, as the Incarnation is the connatural basis of such a goal for Christ, so for Mary the Immaculate Conception is the most fitting basis of her election as Mother of God and "Full of grace": unique participant in the supreme grace of fruition of God, and so our Mediatrix in the Mediator.

Here is how one recent commentator³⁶ organizes in three groupings the various Marian themes treated by Scotus

³⁶ Rosini, *Mariologia* . . . , table of contents and pp. 14-15. Also helpful as guide to the mariological thought of Scotus is an anthology of essays: *La dottrina mariologica di Giovanni Duns Scoto*, ed. Roberto Zavalloni and Eliodoro Mariani (Roma: Edizioni Antonianum, 1987).

expressly in view of this "synthesis." In the first group are those truths about Mary in relation to Christ: her joint predestination with Christ, the divine Maternity, and her fullness of grace—respectively bases of her unique natural and spiritual bond to her Incarnate Son. A second group treats those concerning herself: the Immaculate Conception, most fitting basis for one jointly predestined to highest glory with Christ; her perpetual Virginity and virginal marriage to St. Joseph as most perfect of marriages in view of the ultimate goals of marriage as basic type of new covenant and means of spiritual procreation³⁷; and her Assumption, actual enjoyment of that highest glory. A final list deals with those in relation to us: her universal Mediation, her spiritual Maternity, and her veneration.

This outline is only one reconstruction among many other possibilities. Nonetheless, it is sufficient to illustrate the profound interdependence of the single truths within a coherent synthesis, one which has a profound impact on many other key themes of theology, such as original justice, original sin and the *debitum justitiae*; the temptation of the angels and our first parents in relation to Christ and Mary; the difference of suffering and death in relation to the innocent and guilty; death, burial and resurrection in reference to Christ and Mary; merit and relative infinity of sin in regard to redemptive and coredemptive sacrifice in expiation of sin by a creature; the dual filiation in Christ, divine and human, in relation to the whole Christ, Head and Body; Marian mediation qua intercession as an immediate influence in the souls of men; the identity of fullness of grace in Christ and Mary; moral rather than physical causality as characteristic of Christ as man, of Mary and of the Church in the distribution of grace; hyperdulia based primarily on the holiness of Mary's person (Immaculate Conception) rather than on the role of Mary (divine Maternity).

Given the sublimity of the mystery surrounding her unique, incomparable holiness stressed by St. Francis, the natural mystery surrounding motherhood, the supernatural mystery

³⁷ The influence of the Franciscan Mariological tradition as articulated by Scotus can be gauged by the importance of the teaching of St. Bernardine, St. Lawrence of Brindisi and Cardinal Lorenzo Brancati de Lauria on the development of Josephology concurrently with the rise of modern devotion to the great Patriarch.

surrounding the One whose name is "I am who am," and in a sense the still more mysterious character of someone who is only creature, yet Mother of God, it is probably impossible in a time of pilgrimage to work out a totally complete and absolutely final synthesis in the form of a methodological outline of our belief about the Virgin Mother. It is quite another matter to arrive at a synthesis as an expression of a coherent understanding of Mary's person and role in relation to Christ and the Church in the economy of salvation. Here the mystery of the Immaculate Conception is the key and once we grasp that, we can easily see how the broad sketch of the mystery of Mary in chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium* is anticipated precisely by Scotus.

Here is what Scotus has effectively done. By placing at the very center of the economy of salvation, prior to any consideration of the need of redemption, the joint predestination of Christ and Mary to the highest glory: for Christ a pure gift of the Father, for Mary as His Mother a pure gift through the merits and mediation of her Son, Scotus has laid the basis for the presence in her, through the mediation of Christ, of the fullness of grace. In Christ that same fullness is basis for His mediation as Head of the Church, and therefore in her, under and in Him, is basis also for a unique mediation: maternal, in reference to the rest of the elect (angels as well as men). The character of this maternal mediation in the Mediator, based on her unique fullness of grace and holiness in virtue of the Immaculate Conception, is such that when in fact the salvation of the elect requires their redemption in view of sin, her salvation takes the form, not of liberative but preservative redemption. This Marian mediation, further, becomes the basis for that extraordinary devotion to the Queen of angels and men and of the universe particularly characteristic of St. Francis in relation to Christ and Mary as his King and Queen. Coredemption in this scenario simply sums up what the Immaculate Conception of Mary means for the work of our salvation when transposed from the first moment of her existence to its consummation on Calvary: her presence in the Church as its central principle of animation by the work of the Holy Spirit, her Spouse. Thus in brief: *the fullness of grace-Immaculate Conception explains why*

Mary, under and with Christ, is Mediatrix, and her maternal mediation in turn founds that extraordinary devotion or consecration to her we note in the thought and experience of St. Francis.

While there are many well-known and important Franciscan mariologists after Scotus,³⁸ all of them share an approach to Mariology for the most part identical with that of Scotus. Those of the first generations after Scotus through the time of the Council of Trent were preoccupied with what St. Maximilian calls the need to incorporate the theology into the doctrine of the Church, that is, with a dogmatic definition. Nonetheless, the synthesis as a whole and those single themes not fully expounded by Scotus before his early death (1265-1308) were considerably developed by his immediate disciples and those in the succeeding generations. Thus Peter Aureoli and Bartholomew of Pisa were particularly important for their contributions to understanding the absolute predestination of Mary jointly with Christ, St. Bernardine of Siena for the popularization of the entire synthesis, Francesco della Rovere (Sixtus IV) for preparing and issuing the first papal statements on the Immaculate Conception,³⁹ Cornelius Musso⁴⁰ and other scotistic theologians at the Council of Trent for securing the statement that the universality of original sin did not apply to Mary, an official recognition that redemption as liberative and preservative is not a univocal, but an analogical concept which renders any attempt to define preservative redemption as liberation from a *debitum peccati* impossible, whether this be

³⁸ Cecchin, *Maria Signora Santa*, 170ff.

³⁹ Francesco della Rovere, O.Min., *L'orazione della Immacolata*, ed. Dino Cortese (Padova: Centro Studi Antoniani, 1985). Authorship of this discourse, once ascribed to Fantino Dandolo, Bishop of Padua, is now recognized as belonging to the future Sixtus IV. In addition to showing this Pope to have been one of the profoundest students of Scotus, this discourse also documents the biblical foundations of the scotistic mariological tradition, and indicates the intimate relation between the arguments for the Immaculate Conception based on perfect redemption and those on the unique sanctity of Mary befitting her absolute predestination with Christ as His Mother, heart of the scotistic *deciuit*.

⁴⁰ On Musso, see Roger Bartmann, O.F.M. Conv., "Cornelius Musso, Tridentine Theologian and Orator," *Franciscan Studies* n.s. 5 (1945): 247-276.

christo-typical (the more traditional thomist) or ecclesio-typical (transcendental thomists like Rahner).⁴¹ Further, it implies that liberative redemption be understood in relation to preservative, the more perfect form of redemption. Hence, the redemption as immediate purpose of Christ's sacrifice must be set in the context of the Incarnation as primarily willed by God for its own sake as basis of the maximal glorification of God in a man who is God. During the counter reformation the first manuals of scotistic Mariology began to appear, the most famous being that in the *Summa* of Angelo Vulpes. This treatise begins with an exposition of Mary's joint predestination with Christ and includes the first known use of the terms objective and subjective redemption in an explanation of how Mary Immaculate, and she alone, can actively participate with Christ in effecting both.⁴²

Despite the considerable literary production of the scotistic mariological school, in a very true sense the Franciscan School of Mariology, its success theologically, like the propagation of the Marian piety of St. Francis as expressed in the *Salute* and *Antiphon*, depended far more on the continuity and wide extension of a single oral tradition expounded in schools from the elementary through the university level, whose substance was faithfully handed on by those subscribing to it. Despite the disaster of the French Revolution and the secularization which followed, especially for the university level centers, the tradition survived, above all because the Church in 1854 made that tradition its own. That fact thereby guaranteed, despite the absence of Scotus in the neo-scholastic revival of the late-nineteenth century, the survival of and approval for the dogmatic metaphysics underlying the mystery of the Immaculate Conception. In the twentieth century this metaphysical Mariology made a startling comeback under the leadership especially of Fr. Charles Balić and St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, martyr of charity, because so profoundly consecrated to Mary Immaculate in life and in death.⁴³

⁴¹ Cf. Ruggero Rosini, O.F.M., "Il pensiero del beato Giovanni Duns Scoto sulla Corredenzione Mariana," in *Maria Corredentrice. Storia e teologia*, vol. 2 (Frigento: Casa Editrice Mariana, 1999), 93-128, here pp. 94-95, n. 3.

⁴² Carol, *De Coredemptione*, 205-207.

⁴³ Cf. Fehlner, "Fr. Juniper B. Carol," 45-47.

**PART II. FRANCISCAN MARIOLOGY AND THE
RISE OF THE COREDEMPTIVE MOVEMENT**

A. St. Francis

The nucleus of Franciscan piety and thought, above all theological, is to be found in the Crucifix of San Damiano and the Office of the Passion composed by the Poverello in connection with this experience of Christ's calling him to repair the Church at the intercession of Mary, to make it truly without spot and wrinkle (cf. Eph. 5:27), an extension of the Immaculate beauty of Mary as Virgin-Mother, an incorporation of all the children of Mary into the whole Christ, in whom and through whom they return to the Father.⁴⁴

Franciscan theology and Mariology, then, are in the best sense a theology and Mariology of the Cross, of redemptive sacrifice, whence the importance of perfect conformity to Christ crucified as a consequence of the mediation of Mary, Queen of the Angels. Careful examination of the San Damiano Crucifix as an icon of all this reveals precisely the unique role of Mary in the sacrifice of Christ. For us, as for Francis, Mary's role is the basis for collaboration in this mystery. Among all the many figures around the Crucifix, Mary occupies a unique place transcending that of the rest and on which the rest depend for their participation in the mystery. St. Francis, praying for enlightenment concerning his vocation, heard the voice of Christ, saw the lips of the Crucified in the icon moving and felt in his heart the impression of the five wounds of Christ, eventually on Alvernia to be manifested in his body two years before his death on October 4, 1226. At a certain point he found himself in the icon, exactly in the place of John. With this we are given a major clue as to how St. Francis understood John 19:25-27 and passages related to this concerning the purpose of Christ's conception and birth (Bethlehem in his piety) and Apocalypse 12 and 21 concerning the triumph of Christ and the heavenly Jerusalem on earth, particularly associated with St. Mary of the Angels. Thus Bethlehem, Calvary-Eucharist, and the Assumption are the three focal points of his vocation, with the Cross at the

⁴⁴ See Schneider, *Virgo Ecclesia facta*.

center. In each instance the mystery of the Savior God has a Marian mode, the central point of focus being what we call coredemption. Here is the origin of the coredemptive movement insofar as Franciscans have occupied an important role in it: precisely in St. Francis himself. In St. Bonaventure we shall soon see how these three focal points become the three key elements in the traditional doctrine of Mary's active role in our redemption: the birth of Christ, the sacrifice of Christ, the distribution of the fruits of Christ's birth and sacrifice, particularly in the Church. Scotus will provide, instead, the theoretical basis for resolving the key objection: how can one in need of redemption also redeem.

B. St. Bonaventure

Perhaps the still best overall sketch of what coredemption connotes is to be found in collation six of St. Bonaventure on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵ The collation was delivered on the feast of the Annunciation in 1268, thus relating the mystery of the Incarnation and divine Maternity to the Cross. Effectively this extends the active participation of Mary as maternal Mediatrix from the Incarnation to its active consummation on Calvary. The exposition of Mary's role in the redemption is clearly active, because it is intended to be the highest exemplification of courage in suffering under the influence of the Holy Spirit, an influence which is present in the mystery of salvation from the Incarnation to the glorification of the Church through the instrumentality of Mary.

The Seraphic Doctor develops the theme in terms of the analogy bound up with the word redemption, namely, paying a *price* for the liberation of someone else. The price is none other than Jesus, Son of Mary. Mary actively brings forth or makes available this *Price*, in supplying not gold or silver but the body and blood of Jesus, by giving birth to Christ in

⁴⁵ Peter Fehlner, "Il Mistero della Corredenzione secondo il Dottore Serafico San Bonaventura," in *Maria Corredentrice*. . . , 2:11-91; idem, "Immaculata Mediatrix: Toward a Dogmatic Definition of the Coredemption," in *Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate: Theological Foundations II*, ed. M. Miravalle (Santa Barbara CA: Queenship, 1997), 259-329.

Bethlehem (cf. Bethlehem in the devotion of St. Francis and the Christmas crib under the altar of sacrifice). She pays this price on Calvary (*redemptio ad sufficientiam*, or objective redemption—cf. the Marian dimension of Alvernia in the life of St. Francis, present in the *Office of the Passion*). Thus Mary actively contributes to the possibility of our collaborating thereafter (*redemptio ad efficaciam*, or subjective redemption—St. Mary of the Angels, plenary indulgence, and life of penance and prayer at heart of Francis' calling) through the mediation of Mary who, because of her paying the price, comes into possession of all the graces won for us by Christ.⁴⁶

What is important here is not the absence of answers to questions and difficulties raised after the death of the Seraphic Doctor, those still being urged today, but the reflection of a traditional belief, particularly as this came to be articulated by St. Bernard and his good friend Arnold of Chartres in the latter's commentary on the last words of Jesus, in particular John 19: 25-27. This is also the passage at the heart of the San Damiano Crucifix, so much at the axis of Mary's maternal mediation as understood in the Franciscan tradition. The inconsistencies within the theological synthesis of Bonaventure are no more reasons for doubting the overall affirmation of the coredemption than the same inconsistencies within the school of St. Bernard are reasons for denying support for coredemption there. These inconsistencies only show that Bonaventure had not fully thought out all the implications of St. Francis' contemplative grasp of the absolute primacy of Jesus and Mary. What the Seraphic Doctor did grasp quite clearly was that the maternal vocation of Mary to be virginal Mother of the Son of God is consummated in her spiritual maternity of the Church, a maternity only accomplished through her sorrows or compassion on Calvary, continued mystically in the Eucharist:

⁴⁶The text of Angelo Vulpes from his *Sacrae Theologiae Summa Ioannis D. Scotti*, where according to Carol the terminology "objective and subjective redemption" first appears in writing, can be found in Carol, *De Corredemptione* . . . , 207 (citation from the fourth part, third tome, p. 422, col. 1 of Vulpes' *Summa*). "Objective" corresponds to redemption *ad sufficientiam* and "subjective" to redemption *ad efficaciam* in St. Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 4, ch. 10. For the relation to St. Francis, see text above.

"Whom she brought forth in joy at Bethlehem, she brought forth in sorrow on Calvary."⁴⁷ The rebirth of believers as members of the Body of Christ is rooted in the compassion of Mary in the sacrifice of Christ; or, in more recent language, the spiritual maternity as an action of Mary has the coredemption as its core.⁴⁸

C. Bl. John Duns Scotus

One will not find in the works of Scotus a sketch of coredemption along the lines of the Seraphic Doctor. What one will find, is a discussion of just those points which are needed to resolve the apparent inconsistencies in the teaching of Bonaventure.⁴⁹

The first and most important point is the affirmation of the Immaculate Conception, precisely as postulated by the perfect character of the Redeemer and redemption, namely, by the absolute primacy of Christ as predestined to glory, and only secondarily as Redeemer. This leads to a formal distinction

⁴⁷ St. Bonaventure, *Commentarius in Evangelium Lucae*, 23, 59: *Unde quem in nativitate cum gaudio peperit, in passione cum doloribus parturivit*. In the *Commentarius*, this text is set in immediate relation to the sword of sorrow prophesied by Simeon, and so reveals the formal dimension of coredemption as an aspect of Christ's redemptive sacrifice, viz., the spiritual maternity of the members of Christ by adoption.

⁴⁸ Cf. Peter Fehlner, F.I., *The Role of Charity* . . . , in particular pp. 74-95. The importance of the Seraphic Doctor's observations on the relation of Head and Body in the mystery of the Church in relation to the maternal mediation of Mary, particularly insofar as this is accomplished "by the Holy Spirit and His holy operation" (St. Francis, *Definitive Rule* [1223], ch. 10), cannot be sufficiently stressed in terms of influence on the subsequent Franciscan tradition. He tells us (*III Sent.*, d. 10, a. 2, q. 2, ad 4): "The Incarnation is not the entire cause [of our adoption], because filiation is completed in the mission of the Holy Spirit." Earlier in the corpus of the question he stated: "The Father adopted us through the Son and Holy Spirit . . . Two factors concur in our adoption, viz., *redemption* achieved through the mission of the Son and *gratification* through the mission of the Holy Spirit." Our return to the Father is effected through Christ's work of redemption; but our actually being in Christ is effected by the indwelling and work of Christ's Spirit in us, a work accomplished through the active cooperation of the Virgin Mother.

⁴⁹ Rosini, *Mariologia* . . . ; Fehlner, "Immaculata Mediatrix-Toward . . ."; and Rosini, "Il Pensiero . . ."

between liberative and preservative redemption as fruit of the sacrifice of Christ, the difference being that between active and passive presence on Calvary. Liberative redemption is initially purely passive on the part of those redeemed. Preservative redemption is passive on the part of Mary in respect to her own fullness of grace; it is active in respect to all others. The reason according to Scotus is this: the Immaculate Conception, like the Incarnation for Christ, is the proximate basis for actively engaging under Him in the one mediation, by which all the elect are saved: salvific before the fall, redemptive thereafter. Preservative redemption in fact is the basis for Mary's being Mother of the Redeemer at Bethlehem and Coredemptrix on Calvary.

This is because, on the premise of the joint-absolute predestination of Jesus and Mary, preservative redemption, being absolutely perfect redemption, is defined first solely in relation to the salvation of the elect by Jesus, whereas the definition of liberative redemption depends in the actual and only economy of salvation on that of preservative, and not vice-versa as in theologies denying absolute predestination. The same mystery unites Christ and Mary in a single work at the beginning, throughout, and at the consummation of the mission of Christ—this by virtue of the working of the Holy Spirit. That mystery is the virginal motherhood of Mary, ontologically speaking, rooted in the Immaculate Conception, as the paschal mystery is rooted ontologically in the Incarnation.

In the mind of Scotus the contribution of Mary is not added to that of Christ, so as to form a predicamental or arithmetic whole, but is found within the perfect mediation of Christ, consequent on the order of the hypostatic union, to which Mary belongs uniquely. This explains the intrinsic Marian mode of that order, in respect not only to the Incarnation, but also to the salvation of the just as adopted children of God. Hence, that salvation envisions the angels as well who were, through the merits of Christ and Mary, preserved from sinning. Thus, salvation also implies some relation to sin, one which may be either preventive or in the case of the elect who have sinned, liberative. The salvation of Mary takes the form of redemption understood as preservative, truly redemption, but analogically.

This is so because the salvation of Mary via the Immaculate Conception is ordained to be the means Christ uses to bring about the preventive redemption of the angels and liberative redemption of mankind.

Some have interpreted a remark of Scotus to the effect that had Mary not been conceived immaculately, she would have contracted original sin. Therefore, she was liberatively redeemed from the *debitum peccati*. Scotus does mention a *debitum*, but never speaks of a *debitum peccati* in explaining the transmission of original sin. This latter is a mental construct devised after the death of Scotus to continue arguments against the Immaculate Conception, even after its approval by the Church. By *debitum* Scotus means a *debitum justitiae*, in the sense of gratitude for the gift of justice and the obligation of using free will first of all to conserve it. For the angels this was a personal obligation for each. For men this was a responsibility of the head of the family as head. Conservation of this by the angels on trial meant conferral of grace and then glory. Failure to conserve this by Adam, on behalf of all his descendants, meant denial of grace on conception and eventually glory.⁵⁰

In the case of Mary, however, Scotus means that without justice Mary would not have received grace, much less a fullness of grace, hence contracting original sin. But it does not mean that she was liberated from a debt to contract original sin, because there is no such debt or obligation. The obligation is to be understood as to a state of justice, and this debt she fulfilled, because predestined to this as the perfectly redeemed (that is, preservatively not liberatively) or, as Scotus says, as one who could not sin or contract original sin, because just (hence, all grace on conception). Therefore, Mary is maximally indebted to Christ, not because she was freed from some debt, when not paid entailing absence of grace or contraction of sin, but because she was preserved from ever having such an unpaid debt. In the present order of salvation, indebtedness arises simply in relation to the supreme grace of predestination

⁵⁰ Cf. Rosini, *Mariologia* ..., 84-89; 95-97.

or mercy. Mercy is not occasioned by sin, but precedes it (even if Adam had never sinned), and in Mary takes the form of the Immaculate Conception, on which is fittingly based the possibility both of the divine Maternity and coredemptive Maternity.⁵¹ The great theological contribution, known as the *opinio Minorum*, the concept of perfect redemption in terms of preservative rather than liberative redemption, was worked out by Scotus to demonstrate the possibility or reasonableness of what God willed and Christ merited as most fitting for one predestined with Him to highest glory, supreme joy or fullness of grace as His Mother.

The other point, often basis of an objection to the very concept of coredemption, concerns the possibility of condign merit and satisfaction for sin on the part of a created person who subordinately to Christ actively cooperates in the redemptive sacrifice. The scotistic explanation of merit *de condigno* and of the relatively infinite character of sin illustrates exactly how an innocent created person, because conceived immaculately (as in the case of Mary), might actively contribute to a redemptive mediation, meriting in a supreme mode (viz., condignly), yet satisfying differently than Christ: Christ by dying, Mary not by dying, but by enduring the suffering of Christ to be Mother of Christ in believers.⁵²

With this we can see how the coredemption is implied in the Immaculate Conception and both are revealed in Genesis 3:15. This revelation of the Immaculate Conception, already implicit in the formation of Adam and then Eve and in the establishment of the covenant with the institution of marriage before the fall, is now confirmed with the announcement of its redemptive character after the fall. Two features distinguish Mary's coredemptive action from the redemptive mediation of Christ.⁵³ The coredemptive action of the Immaculate within

⁵¹ Ibid., 28-32.

⁵² See Rosini, "Il pensiero . . .," 98-116.

⁵³ See n. 19 above for references to studies on this point. Despite denial of the absolute primacy, both Bonaventure and Thomas accept the essentials of this traditional doctrine about the superlative perfection of our redemption, a doctrine connaturally resting precisely on the absolute primacy of Jesus and Mary.

the sacrifice of Christ involves the crushing of Satan's head and the spiritual maternity, the object of her supplication granted through the intercession of her Son with His Father for pardon. The supplication of Mary is her mediation for us with Christ, whereas the intercession of Christ is His mediation for us with the Father—exactly how Henry of Avranches and Bonaventure both describe the core of Franciscan spirituality and apostolate in practice. With this in mind we can come to see how within the Franciscan tradition texts from Judith (crushing the head of Holofernes, figure of Satan) relate Genesis 3:15 to John 19:25-27, and texts from Esther (type of Mary as Queen and Mediatrix) show how the present mediation of Mary in and for the Church has its foundation in the divine Maternity consummated in the coredemption.

From a Franciscan point of view in theology the practicality of the Immaculate Conception consists in being the basis for perfect redemption, in turn the means for realizing in fact what was antecedently ordained before the foundation of the world: the predestination and recapitulation of all the elect in Christ. Such redemption is perfect, precisely because it can effect a recirculation of history, restoring its original direction toward the originally planned recapitulation of all in Christ.

But not merely foundation: that privilege postulates the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God and of the Church; it postulates that virginal motherhood be consummated in virginal or immaculate sacrifice in order to be spiritual motherhood, and without consecration to Christ through Mary, no one can have any part in the consecration or sacrifice of Christ, in that transubstantiation which converts bread and wine totally into the body and blood of the Savior, formed for Him by His Mother and ours.⁵⁴ In a word, the fullness of grace in Mary, corollary of her most perfect justice in the Immaculate Conception, is also the ground of that new justice of grace which we receive in Baptism, superior both to that of Adam and that of the law, and about which St. Paul writes so much.

⁵⁴ See *Mary at the Foot of the Cross VI: Marian Coredemption in the Eucharistic Mystery* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2007), for detailed studies of this theme.

D. Fr. Balić and St. Maximilian

Between the death of Scotus and the Protestant reformation discussion of these ideas, in the context of the development of an ever-more precise theological and devotional understanding of the sorrowful Mother and the prophecy of Simeon, prepared the way for the emergence of an effective title for the doctrine, one linking Mary and Christ in a single work of mediation, yet also clearly distinguishing and properly ordering the contribution of Mary to that of Christ. Particularly important at this time for the popularization of this mystery are the sermons of St. Bernardine of Siena, overlooked by Fr. Juniper Carol in his classic history of coredemptive doctrine, but recently underscored in a study of Fr. Bernardino de Armellada. This scholar effectively demonstrates that the great fifteenth-century preacher reworked the teaching of St. Bonaventure with the help of insights from Scotus.⁵⁵

The beginning of the tragic reformation had at its heart a rejection of the unique mediation of Mary. For the doctrine of cooperation of all the faithful in the work of redemption, namely, a doctrine of good works, of hierarchical and sacramental mediation, there was substituted a teaching on justification and grace in terms of "faith alone" centered on the mediation of Christ alone as sole Redeemer. This was a point blank rejection of the Franciscan *Virgo Ecclesia facta*, one creating a situation in which the doctrine of Mary's maternal mediation as uniquely coredemptive would naturally become a central point of reference for any corrective efforts, or what has been called the counter-reformation. In fact, not only in the Franciscan theological school, but in many others, including the Jesuit, Mary's role as maternal Mediatrix was understood to rest on the Immaculate Conception. From this arose the tendency of many, like St. Francis de Sales, to promote the absolute primacy of Christ and of charity along the lines of Scotus. Others, though not particularly scotistic in speculative matters,

⁵⁵ Bernardino de Armellada, O.F.M.Cap., "La Corredenzione di Maria in San Bernardino da Siena e in San Lorenzo da Brindisi," in *Maria Corredentrice. Storia e teologia II* (Frigento: Casa Mariana Editrice, 1999), 129-168, here pp. 151-152, for a detailed summary of his conclusions regarding the Saint of Siena.

promoted devotion to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts (e.g., St. John Eudes), what subsequently has been called the covenant or alliance of the two Hearts, and therefore basis of the axiom "through Mary to Christ and His Body, the Church."

And with the Tridentine approval of the qualitative rather than quantitative distinction between liberative and preservative redemption, the scene was set for a systematic explanation of coredemption, as in the works of Angelo Vulpes, Carlos del Moral, and of so many religious, particularly Jesuits and Franciscans, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁵⁶ Nor should the immense influence of mystics, such as the Ven. Mary of Agreda⁵⁷ and St. Veronica Giuliani,⁵⁸ be overlooked in the growth of the coredemptive movement. With the definition of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, impetus was given to the promotion of a dogmatic definition of the universal mediation of grace of the Virgin Mother, a definition which would include at its heart coredemption.

The scotistic theological revival of the twentieth century, between the end of the First World War and Vatican II, led by Fr. Balić and given by him an explicitly Marian character, did not culminate, as he had hoped, in a definition of Marian meditation at Vatican II. First, in fact, came the definition of the Assumption in 1950, in whose preparation Balić played a major role. This definition was providential, since from a scotistic perspective it appears as an ultimate consequence of the Immaculate Conception whose realization, in an economy of salvation conditioned by sin, passes through the coredemption.

Hence, despite failure to reach his ultimate goal, Balić did succeed in giving the overall teaching of the Council on Mary a scotistic coloration, particularly with the reaffirmation of the joint predestination of Christ and Mary to glory (cf. *Lumen*

⁵⁶ Carol, *De Corredemptione* ..., 198-382.

⁵⁷ Carol, *De Corredemptione* ..., 229-230; 354-355. For a more recent detailed assessment, see E. Llamas, *Mother Agreda and the Mariology of Vatican II* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2006) and also his "The Immaculate Conception and Marian Coredemption in the 'Mystical City of God' of the Ven. Mary of Agreda," in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross V* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005), 393-440.

⁵⁸ Mother M. Francesca Perillo, F.I., "Marian Coredemption in St. Veronica Giuliani," in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross I* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2001), 237-265.

Gentium, chapter 8, no. 61). A very definite basis was thereby provided for a resurgence of the movement to seek a definition of Marian mediation based on the Immaculate Conception and coredemption as heart of perfect redemption, what St. Thomas means when he calls our salvation the third of the quasi-infinite works of the Creator.⁵⁹ In calling promotion of a dogmatic definition of coredemption a crusade, Fr. Balić meant working for the establishment of the point of departure for realizing in the Church and in the world the ultimate blessings of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.⁶⁰

The Franciscan contributions to the present coredemptive movement by an older contemporary of Fr. Balić, St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, are in some ways even more important.⁶¹ In St. Maximilian the ultimate goal is not simply a dogmatic definition of Marian mediation, including coredemption, but the incorporation of the mystery of the Immaculate Conception into every aspect of ecclesial and human life.⁶² Consecration to the Immaculate means just this: the basis for a maximal participation on the part of all in the consecration and exaltation of Christ on the Cross, so as to realize in its fullness what St. Francis called the mystery of the Mother of God, the "Virgin made Church" to the greatest possible glory of God, and what St. Paul affirms Christ died to make the Church: without spot or wrinkle [cf. Eph. 5:27]. This is a fair rendition of what Scotus means by predestination of man to supreme glory (of God), precisely because this Man is a divine person and His members adopted sons of God by grace. Thus, for Scotus, this is the

⁵⁹ St. Thomas, ST I, q. 25, a. 6, ad 4. The other two quasi-infinities are the Incarnation and divine Maternity.

⁶⁰ For an overview of Fr. Balić on coredemption, see his "Die Corredemptrixfrage innerhalb der franziskanischen Theologie," in *Franziskanische Studien* 39 (1957): 218-287.

⁶¹ For a brief but clear presentation of St. Maximilian's views on coredemption, see SK 1224 and 1229 read as a unit, the first dealing with the Immaculate Conception and the second with her mediation immediately flowing from this, as taught by Scotus, and of which coredemption is a unique feature.

⁶² St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, SK 486; Peter Fehlner, F.I., "*Mariae Advocatae Causa*: The Marian Issue in the Church Today," in *Maria "Unica Cooperatrice alla Redenzione."* *Atti del Simposio sul Mistero della Corredenzione Mariana, Fatima, Portogallo, 3-7 Maggio 2005* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005), 529-577.

primary, absolute goal of the Incarnation, for the sake of which the entire universe was created and man redeemed, all this to be realized in a Marian mode, because this was the finest manner for the elect predestined with Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3 ff.) to share in the life or communion of the three divine Persons.

With this we can grasp how scotistic Mariology provides the key to the meaning of St. Maximilian's childhood vision of two crowns: white and red, purity and martyrdom, in relation to the place of Mary in the mystery of charity, begun at the Annunciation and consummated on the Cross. Mary Immaculate, Virgin Mother (symbolized by the white crown) and Coredemptrix (symbolized by the red crown), is Queen of Martyrs, like St. Maximilian who gave his life for the salvation of his neighbors in prison, and by extension of all who faithfully follow Christ to the end. Total consecration to the Immaculate Heart is the Marian mode of living and dying in Christ.

We can also perceive in the great Marian apparitions of modern times a certain stress on these doctrinal themes of Franciscan Mariology: universal mediation of Mary because the Immaculate, at Rue du Bac; approval of the solemn definition of the Immaculate Conception and encouragement to make that mystery basis of a life of penance and prayer or participation in the mystery of the Cross for the salvation of souls and renewal of the Church, at Lourdes; promotion of reparation to the heart of Mary and the triumph of that Immaculate Heart as the final complement to the victory of the Cross, at Fatima.

My conclusion: this brief sketch should be sufficient to show that once the Franciscan theology of the Immaculate Conception is acknowledged as true, the Marian mode of the objective redemption, both in its foundation in the Incarnation and at its consummation on Calvary, is the maternal Coredemption, basis of Mary's spiritual maternity and mediation of all graces in the Church, namely, the subjective redemption. This is why those who subscribe to the *opinio Minorum* almost connaturally become supporters of the coredemptive movement, what Fr. Balić once described as the most critical issue in contemporary mariology.⁶³

⁶³ Charles Balić, "La corédemption de Marie, le problème central de la mariologie contemporaine," in *Pour le centenaire de Lourdes. Tournée au Canada du T.R.P.C. Balté, O.F.M.*, 7-30 sept. 1957 (Montréal: Éditions franciscaines, 1958), 105-109; in Italian: "Intorno al problema centrale della mariologia odierna. La cooperazione di Maria nella Redenzione," *L'Osservatore Romano* (1 Nov. 1957): 4.