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LUKE 1:26-38, 39-45 AND ACTS 1:14: EXEGETICAL APPROACHES FROM LATIN AMERICAN MARIOLOGY AND DOCUMENTS SINCE VATICAN II

*Antonio Larocca, S.M.C., S.T.D.**

Introduction

Biblical exegesis must take into account the original context in order to understand the intention of the sacred writers,¹ the role of the Holy Spirit, and the Church's tradition and teaching which guarantee the unity of the revelatory message.² Scriptural studies are dedicated to deepening the understanding of and indicating the sense of the Holy Scriptures for today's world. This study is based on my doctoral thesis on the Spiritual Maternity of the Virgin Mary, a study which dealt with the Virgin Mary's participation in the events occurring before the birth of Christ and also on the Infancy accounts as seen within the light of the Acts of the Apostles.³ My intention is not to present a detailed analysis of the texts but rather a study directed toward bringing together the structural elements which are of

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¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) (revised in accordance with the Official Latin Text promulgated by Pope John Paul II), no. 110: citing *Dei Verbum*, 12, 2.

² CCC, no. 119: citing *Dei Verbum*, 12, 3.

³ Antonio de Jesús Larocca Grosso, S.M.C., "La maternidad espiritual de María. Acontecimiento, permanencia y actualización de su presencia" (S.T.D. diss., International Marian Research Institute, University of Dayton, 2007).

value for Mariology and also for a biblical ecclesiology. This supposes a relation between the Marian texts and their inculturation within the different local churches.

Since Vatican II, the documents from the Magisterium and from the Latin American Conference of Bishops (CELAM) contain bibliographical references which attempt to develop within Marian devotion a biblical, anthropological, liturgical and ecumenical perspective. The CELAM documents attest to the inculturated and evangelizing dimension of Mariology, especially as related to South America. At a 2006 conference co-sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Culture and CELAM, Cardinal Paul Poupard, longtime President of the Pontifical Council for Culture, spoke about "a mariological principle of cultural dialogue." He referred to the CELAM document from Santo Domingo (1992) which presented the Virgin Mary as the model disciple and missionary. She who carried Jesus in her flesh also shared in the mysteries of salvation that destine all humanity for the New Creation.⁴ Indeed, the visit of Our Lady of Guadalupe was a turning point in the evangelization of the new continent. As Pope John Paul II said, the "mestiza face of the Virgin of Tepeyac" and the way Mary entrusted Juan Diego to announce her message provided "an impressive example of a perfectly inculturated evangelization."⁵ It was a pedagogy and a sign of the inculturation of the faith, a providential manifestation which renewed the missionary impulse for the spread of the Gospel.⁶

⁴ Paul Cardinal Poupard, "Diálogo cultural y analogía de la fe," in *La pastoral de la cultura en América. Una nueva mirada al alba del Tercer Milenio*, ed. CELAM (Bogotá: Pontificium Consilium de Cultura, 2006), 274, restating "las Conclusiones de Santo Domingo."

⁵ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America* (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women Religious, and all the Lay Faithful on the Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: The Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America; Mexico City, January 22, 1999), no 11, n. 21: his Address at the Opening of the Fourth General Conference of Latin American Bishops (October 12, 1992), no. 24.

⁶ CELAM, *V Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano y del Caribe, Aparecida, 13-31 de mayo de 2007*, Conclusión no. 4; cf. n. 3: *Documento de la IV Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano, Santo Domingo, 1992*, Conclusión no. 15.

Contributions of Vatican II

Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium* is, according to John Paul II, "in a certain sense a Magna Charta of *Mariology* for our times."⁷ There, after placing Mary within the context of the mystery of Christ and of the Church and relating her to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,⁸ the document noted her dignity as Mother of God, Mother of Christ and of all believers, and continued presenting Mary within the History of Salvation as the Mother of the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. The text indicates the relationship between the woman, the Mother of the Redeemer, and the promise of victory over the serpent (Gen. 3:15).⁹ The figure of the woman is associated with the virgin spoken of by the prophets,¹⁰ and the figure of the woman is associated with the Son from the very beginning.

In the Gospel of St. Luke, Mary is greeted with the expression "Rejoice and have no fear"; she is the daughter of Zion¹¹ who, in the fullness of time, will give birth to the One who will assume our human condition, from within her body, for our Redemption.¹² Originally Zion referred both to a people and a district of Jerusalem where the people from the north had taken refuge after the fall of Samaria. The term "Daughter Zion" also came to refer to the remnant of Israel who would figure in the reunification of the dispersed people and would be the means for sustaining the hope for the coming Messiah. Luke identified the Virgin Mary with the "Daughter Zion," a name which appeared in a text of the prophet Micah written in the second half of the seventh century before Christ. The reference in *Lumen Gentium* (no. 55) is the first time a Church document applied this title to Mary.

⁷ John Paul II, Discourse at the General Audience (Vatican, 2 May 1979), no. 3. (Text may be found on the Vatican Website.)

⁸ *Lumen Gentium* (LG), nos. 52 and 53.

⁹ LG, no. 55.

¹⁰ Isa. 7:14; Mic 5:2-3; Matt. 1:22-23.

¹¹ Zech. 9:9; Zeph. 14-19; Nunzio Lemmo, "Maria, 'Figlia di Sion,' a partire da Lc 1,26-38. Bilancio esegetico dal 1939 al 1982," *Marianum* 45 (1983): 175-258.

¹² LG, no. 55.

Contributions since Vatican Council II

Since the Council, various biblical exegetes have investigated references in both the New and the Old Testament which relate in some way to the Daughter of Zion. J. M. Salgado, pondering whether the offspring of the Daughter of Zion related to the spiritual maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, concluded that the birth and the spiritual maternity should not be understood as separate, but as something related integrally "to the people of God and its spiritual structure."¹³ This relationship indicates the continuity of God's people, accompanied by the prophets and the scribes; it shows the way God's promises developed and were progressively realized through the action of the Holy Spirit through Israel as exemplified in the Daughter of Zion—the one who gives birth to the new people of God which is the Church of Christ, where the life of all people is united to the life of God. The Old Testament scriptural passages on the pains of childbirth and on the New Testament woman about to give birth to a son (Apoc. 12) are all related to the scattered people of Israel.¹⁴ This feminine figure, both bridal and maternal,¹⁵ points to Mary's messianic maternity which includes Christ and the community of all the redeemed.¹⁶

The theological vision of these scriptural verses occurs through a process of prefiguration and then the fulfillment of the event. Based on the post-Resurrection focus of the

¹³ Jean-Marie Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle de la Très Sainte Vierge Marie: Écriture Sainte, tradition vivante (pères, magistère), considérations théologiques à la lumière de certains principes de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Città del Vaticano: Pontificia Accademia di S. Tommaso e di Religione Cattolica: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990), 18, n. 1, citing H. Cazelles, "La fonction maternelle de Sion et de Marie," in *Maria in Sacra Scripture: Acta Congressus Mariologici-Mariani in Republica Dominicana anno 1965* (ACMSD), vol. 6 (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1967), 165-178.

¹⁴ Mic. 4:8ss.; Isa. 66:7-8; 62:2; 63:16; Apoc. 12:5, 10-17. These corresponding intertestamental biblical references can be found in *La Nueva Biblia de Jerusalén* (Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998): 1832-1833.

¹⁵ J. Ratzinger, *La figlia di Sion, la devozione a Maria nella Chiesa* (Milan: Jaca Book, 1979); see also J. Ratzinger, *Maria, Chiesa nascente* (Cinisello Balsamo [Milano]: San Paolo, 1998), 53-59.

¹⁶ Bertrand Buby, *Mary of Galilee, Vol. II. Woman of Israel—Daughter of Zion* (New York: Alba House, 1995), 57-60.

evangelists, the first chapter of St. Luke's gospel—specifically the verses which refer to the time before the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-56)—give evidence that the maternity of Mary was a fulfillment of the promises made in the Old Testament. The theme of the maternity is seen in the proto-gospel of Genesis 3:15, which relates Mary to Eve, mother of the living; it is especially visible in Mary's role at the Annunciation, the Purification, and the Death of Jesus.¹⁷ But it is the reference to Mary as the Daughter of Zion in *Lumen Gentium*¹⁸ that, in a sense, officially opened the exegetical-biblical interpretation of the understanding of maternity in a much larger context.¹⁹ The CELAM document from Santo Domingo affirmed:

Mary is the Jewish woman who represents the people of the old Covenant with all its cultural reality. However, she opens herself to the newness of the Gospel and is present in our lands as common mother, both of the native peoples and of those who have come here. From the outset, she encourages the fresh cultural synthesis that constitutes Latin America and the Caribbean.²⁰

This broader view of Mary as Daughter of Zion has led not only to a rereading of the texts of Luke, John, and Paul, but has also led some authors to develop Mary's role as disciple,²¹ to re-evaluate discipleship and, at the same time, to make a deeper study of the ecclesiological and eschatological senses which this title possesses.²² Luke's account, which gathers together the mariological tradition united to the mystery of the Incarnation, implies a specific underlying direction. Since Vatican II, the Magisterium and, specifically, the Latin American bishops

¹⁷ *María la madre del Señor. Plan de formación teológica del Instituto de Teología a distancia* (Madrid, 1986), 241.

¹⁸ LG, no. 55.

¹⁹ LG, nos. 53, 61, 63 and the title "Mary, Mother of the Church" proclaimed by Pope Paul VI.

²⁰ CELAM (*Santo Domingo*, 1992), 229.

²¹ Stefano De Fiore, *María, Madre de Jesús. Síntesis histórico salvífica* (Salamanca, 2003), 77-80; 88-90, 369-371.

²² Matthias Wenk, *Community Forming Power: The Socio-Ethical Role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 12-44.

(CELAM) have developed a contextualized approach which unifies the criteria of investigation and relates Mariology to devotion and to religious piety.²³

Presence of Mary in the Gospel of St. Luke

This exegetical inquiry is based on the study of the Lukan texts (especially 1:26-56) made following the Vatican Council, in order to understand the underlying context where the historical, pneumatological, eucological, theological, and pastoral dimensions come together in the person of Mary as presented by St. Luke. Unfortunately, the pneumatological dimension has not yet become as evident as other aspects.

Among the Gospels dealing with the Infancy, St. Luke's is noted for references to the maternal presence of Mary with regard to Jesus.²⁴ Many exegetes have seen in Luke's treatment of the Annunciation a reference to the messianic maternity of Mary connected with the Daughter of Zion theme²⁵ which then points to Mary as the universal mother of all people.²⁶ Despite the interpretations in favor of relating the messianic maternity of Mary to the Daughter of Zion image, above all from scholars in the 1940s and 1950s,²⁷ there is yet some hesitation about this interpretation.²⁸ S. C. Napiorkowski believes there is not sufficient evidence to affirm that the evangelist is referring to Mary as the Daughter of Zion, but he does see in

²³ *Path from Puebla: Significant Documents of the Latin American Bishops since 1979*, ed. Edward Cleary, trans. Phillip Berryman (Washington, DC: Secretariat, Bishop's Committee for the Church in Latin America, NCCB, 1989), 14-21; note esp. no. 9 on p. 16.

²⁴ René Laurentin, *Maria nella storia della salvezza* (Torino: Marietti, 1972), 25.

²⁵ A. Serra, "Biblia (Lucas)," in *Nuevo diccionario de mariología*, ed. S. De Flores and S. Meo (Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1988), 319-320; H. Caselles, "Fille de Sion et théologie mariale dans la Bible," *Études mariales* (BSFEM) 21 (1964): 51-71.

²⁶ Zech. 2:14-15, 9:9-10; Zeph. 3:14-17; Jl 2:21-27; Matt. 21: 5; John 12:15-16; Luke 1:28-33s, 1:49a, 54-55.

²⁷ A. G. Hebert, G. A. F. Knight, M. Thurian, and H. Sahlin, cited in *María en el Nuevo Testamento. Una evaluación conjunta de estudiosos católicos y protestantes*, ed. R. E. Brown et al. (2. ed.; Salamanca: Sígueme, 1986), 130, n. 75.

²⁸ A. Strobel and others, cited in *María en el Nuevo Testamento*, ed. R. E. Brown et al., 132, n. 79.

the writings of John at least the beginning of this type of symbolism in Luke.²⁹

1. The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38)

The gospel of Luke gives the dialogue between Mary and the angel, and Mary's acceptance of her messianic motherhood (1:28-38). The greeting *kekharitomene*, or the Latin *Ave gratia plena: Dominus tecum: Benedicta tu in mulieribus*,³⁰ correspond to Old Testament greetings.³¹ Doming Muñoz León³² points out that the Annunciation in Luke corresponds to a passage of the Old Testament: the Son of God is conceived by the Holy Spirit, and the perfect participle greeting *kekharitomene*, itself carrying an indication of the messianic "Rejoice" first addressed to the daughter of Sion, is then made to Mary. *Kekharitomene* contains the historic salvific message.³³

Laurentin believes that the origin of the material found in Luke's gospel is Mary herself³⁴ which would not only confer an eschatological dimension but would also indicate a presence of Mary within the primitive community.³⁵ Although Mary was not considered the center of the mystery—rather the center

²⁹ Stanislaw Celestyn Napiórkowski, "Ecumenismo," in *Nuevo diccionario de mariología*, 651.

³⁰ *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Clementinam* (Madrid: B.A.C., 1966), 1334.

³¹ Cf. Gen. 6:8, Noah; 2 Sam. 15:26ff., David; and Exod. 33:12-17, Moses.

³² Domingo Muñoz León, "Itinerario espiritual de María del 'Dios de los Padres' a 'Dios Padre,'" in *De Trinitatis Mysteriorum et Mariae, Acta Congressus Mariologici-Mariani Internationalis in Civitate Romae Anno 2000 celebrati* (Città del Vaticano: P.A.M.I., 2004), 263-265. Muñoz León here refers to I. de la Potterie, "La figlia di Sion. Lo sfondo biblico della mariologia dopo il Concilio Vaticano II," *Marianum* 49 (1987): 356-376, and, in the same note 20 (on p. 263), to various other authors who treated the greeting ("Alégrate") of Luke 1:28 in relation to Zeph. 3:14-17; Joel 2:21; Zech. 2:14f.; 9:9f.; S. Lyonnet, H. Cazelles; L. Deiss; E. G. Mori.

³³ A. M. Calero, "María, sierva de Dios Padre," *Estudios marianos* 66 (2000): 111-147 (the theme of this volume: *Dios Padre y María*).

³⁴ René Laurentin, "Ce que le recouvrement Lc 2, 41-52 enseigne sur Marie," *Ephemerides mariologicae* 43 (1993): 213-226.

³⁵ A. Serra, "Biblia (Lucas)," in *Nuevo diccionario de mariología*, 333. The author comments that this is the function of Luke 2:19 which refers to the visit of the Shepherds at Bethlehem: "La iglesia apostólica (en la persona de sus pastores) tomó conciencia de que María era un trámite obligado para llegar a conocer los albores de la encarnación" y sus alcances a la luz de la revelación pascual.

was the Son to whom she was to give birth—surely she meditated on the great event in light of the messianic promises which enveloped and surrounded it. She experienced in her person the promises given at the time of the angel's announcement of her inexplicable maternity.³⁶ This interior disposition was for Mary an act of faith in the promises given to the people of Israel, now enveloped and centered in her person and in the maternity announced at the Annunciation. This is a type of self-determination and self-realization, an expression of the dynamism of her personal act of faith.³⁷

Fr. Raymond Brown notes that there are patterns of annunciation greetings.³⁸ One example is the annunciation to Moses who had a specific salvific mission.³⁹ The expressions which are associated with the Daughter of Zion—for example "Rejoice Mary . . . the Lord is with you" and "Do not fear Mary" (Luke 1:28-30)—are interpreted by various authors as a clear indication of a call to a vocation, to an election, to a ministry of salvation whose final destiny⁴⁰ is consistent with its beginnings. In Mary there was a significant originality, a beauty, caused by the redemption worked by Christ. For De Fiores the mariological value of the Annunciation can be seen in four patterns of interpretation which are not contradictory and which help in the understanding of our interpretation of the spiritual maternity of Mary. These four patterns are: 1) the pattern of a marvelous (or miraculous) event, 2) the pattern of a vocation, 3) the apocalyptic pattern, and 4) the pattern of a covenant—all four patterns are applicable to Mary, the Daughter of Zion.⁴¹

³⁶ Muñoz-León, "Itinerario espiritual de María," 266-267.

³⁷ María José Franquet Casas, *Persona, acción y libertad. Las claves de la antropología en Karol Wojtila* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1996), 198-230.

³⁸ *María en el Nuevo Testamento*, ed. R. E. Brown et al., 114-117.

³⁹ J.-M. Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle*, 23, n. 4, citing M. Miguéns, "Servidora del Señor," in *ACMSD* (1965), 4:73-110, and also a study by A. Spindeler, "Knecht Gottes und Magd des Herrn," in *ACMSD* (1965), 4:111-121.

⁴⁰ Luke 1:35, 2:48-51; John 1:1-11, 19:25-27; Acts 1:14.

⁴¹ Stefano De Fiores, *María, madre de Jesús. Síntesis histórico salvífico*, trans. F. Torres Antoñanzas; Agape 33 (Salamanca: Secretariado Trinitario, 2003), 93-97.

All these events are centered in the prophetic messianic message which flows from the interior of Mary and is projected forward in her life and in the mystery of salvation.⁴² This foundational grace corresponds to her appropriation of the salvific mystery. This founding grace has a salvific trait designating Mary as the Daughter of Zion and pointing to the grace of her Immaculate Conception and of her Glorious Assumption, the mystery of the full integrity of human body and soul. As CELAM (*Puebla*) notes:

Mary is blest among women. The Immaculate Conception offers us in Mary the visage of the new human being redeemed by Christ, in whom we find an "even more wondrous" (Collect of the Nativity of Jesus) recreation of the Paradise project. Mary's Assumption makes clear to us the import and destiny of the body that has been sanctified by grace. In the glorified body of Mary, material creation begins to share in the resurrected body of Christ. Mary assumed into heaven is the full integrity of humanity, body and soul, now reigning in glory and interceding for those human beings who are wayfaring through history. These truths and mysteries shed bright flashes of light on a continent where the profanation of the human being goes on constantly, and where many curl up in a passive fatalism.⁴³

Gabriel Roschini centered his interpretation on the pneumatological aspect. He related grace to the presence of the Holy Spirit in Mary at the Annunciation. This grace was not only for her physical maternity but also for her spiritual maternity. In her fullness of grace, she was related to all Christians—through her universal mediation, her spiritual maternity, and her perpetual virginity she was related to the Body of Christ, Head and members.⁴⁴

⁴² J.-M. Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle*, 24-25.

⁴³ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 298 (i.e., *Evangelization in Latin America's Present and Future: Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Puebla de Los Angeles, Mexico, 27 January—13 February 1979*). The English translations of texts from this document, here and below, are taken from *Puebla and Beyond: Documentation and Commentary*, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979).

⁴⁴ In A. Amato, "Espíritu Santo," in *Nuevo diccionario de mariología*, 702-703, see esp. n. 61; G. M. Roschini, *Il Tuttosanto e la Tuttasanta. Relazioni tra Maria ss. e lo Spirito Santo* (2 vols.; Roma: Marianum, 1976-1977), Parte II. *Sintesi dottrinale*, 51-119.

In relation to the Lukan account of the Annunciation, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the Holy Spirit prepared Mary with grace⁴⁵ as a way of bringing to realization the loving design of the Father.⁴⁶ "In Mary, the Holy Spirit *manifests* the Son of the Father, now become the Son of the Virgin."⁴⁷ Through Mary the Holy Spirit begins to extend the grace of Christ to all people,⁴⁸ and "at the end of this mission of the Spirit, Mary became the Woman, the new Eve ("mother of the living"), the mother of the 'whole Christ.'"⁴⁹

The biblical references given in these articles of the *Catechism* come from Zephaniah and Zechariah in the Old Testament⁵⁰ and from Luke, Matthew, John and Paul in the New Testament.⁵¹ The Lukan text of the Annunciation opens an interpretive perspective that is not limited to the physical aspect of Mary's maternity, but looks towards a greater maternity coming about through the Holy Spirit: her relationship to her Son's Mystical Body—to Christ, the Head, and to all the members of his body. The meaning of the text contains not only the fact of the incarnation within Mary but also its extended meaning, expressed as the grace of the Holy Spirit given to those with faith in Christ⁵² and the process of relating and incorporating those "who accept him," "who believe in his name, who are "born . . . of God" into his Body (John 1:13-14).⁵³

2. *The Visitation (Luke 1:39-45)*

The visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth presents many elements which can be related to the spiritual maternity, especially if one considers the parallelism between Zachariah and Mary, Elizabeth and Mary, Jesus and John the Baptist. For Laurentin, the annunciation to Zachariah was an expression of

⁴⁵ CCC, no. 722.

⁴⁶ CCC, no. 723.

⁴⁷ CCC, no. 724.

⁴⁸ CCC, no. 725.

⁴⁹ CCC, no. 726.

⁵⁰ Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 2:14.

⁵¹ Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 2:11; Rom. 4:18-21; Gal. 4:26-28; John 19:25-27.

⁵² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, q. 106 a.1.

⁵³ Ignacio de la Potterie, *Maria en el misterio de la Alianza* (Madrid: B.A.C., 1993), 175-192.

justification by the law (Luke 1:16), whereas the Annunciation to Mary expressed justification by grace (Luke 1:28-30), the justification spoken of by Paul.⁵⁴ When dealing with messianic maternity Laurentin says that Mary's search for a sign of confirmation was not *ad intra*, as if to deal with a psychological doubt⁵⁵; Mary's question was a desire for a confirmation or sign *ad extra*. Mary wished to share with Elizabeth that which she bore within her, namely, the grace transmitted by the Holy Spirit.

For De Fiores, the greeting of Mary evokes within Elizabeth a response of jubilation at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and causes a profession of faith in Christ which is comparable to a doxological confession on her part.⁵⁶ Elizabeth bestows three titles on Mary: "Blessed are you among women" (Luke 1:42), "the mother of my Lord," (Luke 1:43), and "blessed is the one who has believed" (Luke 1:45). Mary as mother and believer is united to the mission of her Son; she transmits the word of the Son and makes possible the communication of the Spirit to Elizabeth who rejoices in Mary's maternity and is filled with that Spirit.⁵⁷ This moment of the Spirit involves the various persons found in the Gospel of Luke, and Mary expresses with joyful grace the sentiments given by the Spirit. After Pentecost, the apostles came forth from the Cenacle to announce the outpouring of the Spirit (Heb. 2:1-4) as an expression of messianic joy.⁵⁸ According to Laurentin, this expression of the action of the Holy Spirit in Mary and the grace and the joy of the moment of Incarnation are extended and developed in the Visitation.⁵⁹ Pope John Paul II, in his commentary on the Visitation, affirmed that Mary is like a living tabernacle bringing

⁵⁴ Laurentin, *Maria nella storia della salvezza*, 28.

⁵⁵ René Laurentin, "Bulletin sur la Vierge Marie," *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 54 (1968): 505.

⁵⁶ De Fiores, *Maria madre de Jesús*, 98-99.

⁵⁷ Max Thurian, *Maria, Madre del Señor, figura de la Iglesia* (Zaragoza: Hechos y Dichos, 1973), 101.

⁵⁸ Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle*, 26-27, n. 9, citing A. Martinelli, "Maria nella Bibbia. Note critiche e delucidazioni," *Marianum* 27 (1965): 293-393.

⁵⁹ René Laurentin, *Structure et théologie de Luc I-II* (Paris: Gabalda, 1957), 79, n. 2; Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle*, 27, n. 10.

Jesus who is within her, and who radiates his presence by her actions and words, so that Elizabeth might be able to recognize his presence within her.⁶⁰

In this communication of the Holy Spirit to her cousin Elizabeth and her son, John the Baptist, Salgado presents Mary as an instrument of salvation—*causa facta est salutis*. Mary is an instrument of the Spirit in the history of salvation, and the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth is a coming together of the New Testament and Old Testament, embracing her and their two graced maternities to become part of the one plan of God.⁶¹ Ignacio Calabuig interprets the visit of Mary to her cousin Zachariah as a salvific episode in which the Holy Spirit is the protagonist; it serves as the proto-Pentecost of the New Testament.⁶² It is Christ himself, the Risen One, who gives, through the maternity of Mary, his holiness and his Spirit to those who live the way of faith: "Redemption is a gift of the Spirit through the Son who unites Humanity to the Father and to the Son." The CELAM document from the Puebla conference sees Mary's faith demonstrated in her Visitation to her cousin Elizabeth and proclaims Mary a model for the Church in the order of faith, a faith which developed throughout her life—through the finding of Jesus in the temple and the wedding feast at Cana, to Calvary and her witness at the foot of the Cross. Mary's life is one of openness to the Word, of pondering on it, and acting on it as the Perfect Disciple (see Luke 2:51). By her faith, Mary is the one in whom is realized the greatest fulfillment of grace: "Blessed is she because she has believed" (Luke 1:45).⁶³ Upon his arrival in Mexico in 1979, Pope John Paul II spoke of faith and faithfulness, urging his hearers to be like Mary pondering in her heart and storing things there (Luke 2:51), meeting the mysteries of life intimately and faithfully:

⁶⁰ John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (Rome, 2003), no. 55.

⁶¹ Salgado, *La Maternité Spirituelle*, 28, n. 16, citing H. Cazelles, "Mariologie et théologie," *Ephemerides mariologicae* (1970): 88.

⁶² Ignacio M. Calabuig, "Maria donna dello Spirito," in *Maria, icona e modello dell'umanità redenta da Cristo. Atti della Terza Seduta Pubblica, Vaticano, 7 novembre 1998*, ed. Pontificio Consiglio della Cultura (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), 35-36.

⁶³ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 296.

... She does not reject it or cast it aside when it is incomprehensible to her or takes her by surprise; instead she ponders it and stores it up in her heart (Luke 2:51). And when it sounds harshly in her ears, she confidently persists in her dialogue of faith with the God who speaks to her ... Thanks to her faith, Mary is the faithful Virgin in whom the greatest beatitude finds fulfillment (Luke 1:45).⁶⁴

3. The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-56)

The joyful spirit from the Annunciation is present throughout the first chapter of St. Luke and arrives at its deepest level in Mary's Magnificat. Some authors have attributed the words of the Magnificat to Elizabeth; others have preferred that they be left unasccribed.⁶⁵ The majority accept the attribution of the Canticle to Mary, especially taking into consideration the references to Mary's being blessed (Luke 1:45, Luke 1:48) which express the Marian sense of the text. The order is the following: Annunciation, fulfillment, event, celebration of that which has taken place. As John Paul II has commented, "The Magnificat, drawn from the Old Testament and in the spirituality of the Daughter of Zion, surpasses the prophetic texts on which it is based, revealing in it a 'fullness of grace' and the beginning of a divine intervention which surpasses the messianic expectations of Israel: it is the holy mystery of the Incarnation of the Word."⁶⁶

The relation between the canticle of Mary, the canticle of Anna, and the events of the two books of Samuel can be understood as traditional reliance and consciousness of an event which is of key importance for Israel—mainly the restoration of the monarchy. In the first book of Samuel the last Judge chooses Saul to be the first king, succeeded by David. The second book is an account of the kingdom of

⁶⁴ John Paul II, Homily at Guadalupe, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 71, no.3 (1979): 165-166.

⁶⁵ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 41, n. 46.

⁶⁶ Juan Pablo II, "En el Magnificat María celebra la obra admirable de Dios" (Audiencia General, 6 de noviembre 1996; available on Vatican Website [www.vatican.va]: John Paul II, Audiences, 1996).

David who attains the political and religious unity of Israel. The Prophets remind the people of the fidelity to the covenant, and the priests maintain the temple and its worship. These events show the importance of Jerusalem as the gathering point for the peoples and the place of God's message to his people. All these transformations take place in the period of a century.

The royal figure is also a collective figure (representing one people); similarly, Mary also establishes a unity and gathering people together. As "the mother of my Lord" and as "the daughter of Zion," she is an eschatological figure. And so, Mary's canticle of praise, like the hymn of Anna at the birth of her son Samuel, expresses her personal situation, but it also casts its light forward on other situations within the context of salvation history.⁶⁷ Mary, as did Anna (1 Sam. 2:4-10), speaks of the liberation of those who are suffering, the lifting up of the humble, and the casting down of the mighty. This shows a deep sense of the divine mercy and action of the Spirit which, in a sense, synchronically occurs within her (Luke 1:46-47) and which develops diachronically throughout the history of salvation of all people (Luke 1:50-53)—the people of Israel and of the New Israel (Luke 1:54-55).

Pope John Paul II makes mention of this historic intervention of the Holy Spirit⁶⁸ united to the mission of the Son. In *Redemptoris Mater*, he explains that, as Mary praises the action of the Holy Spirit in her person and in her people, she not only recognizes and extols it, but, within the historic center of the person of her Son, she also indicates the goal of all human action and places it within the mystery of human salvation, of which she herself is the "first witness." She is, he says, "totally dependent upon God and completely directed towards him, and, at the side of her Son, she is *the most perfect*

⁶⁷ Manfred Hauke, *Introduzione alla Mariologia* (Lugano: Eupress, 2008), 55, n.97: citing E. Peretto, "Magnificat," in *Nuevo diccionario de mariologia*, 1224-1237; S. M. Manelli, *Mariologia biblica* (2. ed.; Frigento, 2005), 213-245; A. Valentini, *Maria secondo le Scritture* (Bologna, 2007), 133-164.

⁶⁸ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 53 (Encyclical, "On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World," 18 May 1986).

image of freedom and of the liberation of humanity and of the universe. It is to her as Mother and Model that the Church must look in order to understand in its completeness the meaning of her own mission."⁶⁹ Although there are different theological interpretations of the Magnificat,⁷⁰ it is undeniable that it has a sense of *goel* (redemption-liberation) as the underlying liturgical theme which is part of the Lukan account of the Magnificat.⁷¹

As Pope Paul VI expressed so well, the Magnificat does not present Mary as "a timidly submissive woman or one whose piety was repellent to others," but as one "who did not hesitate to proclaim that God vindicates the humble and the oppressed, and removes the powerful people of this world from their privileged positions." She presents to us, he said, "the perfect model of the disciple of the Lord: the disciple who builds up

⁶⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, no. 37 (Encyclical, "On the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Life of the Pilgrim Church," 25 March 1987, Vatican Translation, no. 37, esp. n. 93: citing the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation*, 97).

⁷⁰ Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"* (Rome, 6 August 1984; Washington, DC: USCC, 1984), esp. Chap. X, "A New Hermeneutic," no. 5: "The new *hermeneutic* inherent in the 'theologies of liberation' leads to an essentially *political* re-reading of the Scriptures. Thus, a major importance is given to the *Exodus* event inasmuch as it is a liberation from political servitude. Likewise, a political reading of the *Magnificat* is proposed. The mistake here is not in bringing attention to a political dimension of the readings of Scripture, but in making of this one dimension the principal or exclusive component. This leads to a reductionist reading of the Bible."

⁷¹ Bibliography: Du Pont, J., "Le Magnificat comme discours sur Dieu," *Nouvelle revue théologique* 102 (1980): 321-343; Escudero Freire, C., *Devolver el evangelio a los pobres. A propósito de Lc 1-2* (Salamanca, 1978), 183-221; Hamel, E., "La donna e la promozione della giustizia nel Magnificat," *Rassegna di Teologia* 18 (1977): 417-434; id., "Le Magnificat, le femme et la promotion de la justice," *Cahiers marials* 113 (1978): 157-175; id., "Le Magnificat et le renversement des situations," *Gregorianum* 60 (1979): 55-84; Molina Prieto, A., "Mensaje liberador del Magnificat y sugerencias marginales," *Ephemerides mariologicae* 36 (1986): 57-88; Muñoz, H., "Beata te che hai creduto!" *Parola, spirito e vita* 6 (1986): 100-105 [Magnificat]; Pikaza, X., "El Magnificat, canto de liberación," *Misión abierta* 69 (1976): 230-247; Schnackenburg, R., "Il Magnificat, la sua spiritualità e la sua teologia," in his *La vita cristiana. Egesi in progresso e in mutamento* (Milan, 1977), 215-234; Villar, E., "El Magnificat en la teología de la liberación," *Ephemerides mariologicae* 36 (1986): 89-112; Balthasar, H. U. von, *Marie pour aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1988), 63-68.

the earthly and temporal city while being a diligent pilgrim towards the heavenly and eternal city; the disciple who works for that justice which sets free the oppressed and for that charity which assists the needy; but above all, the disciple who is the active witness of that love which builds up Christ in people's hearts."⁷²

Anointing is the sign which accompanied the election of Saul and then of David anointed by Samuel. The kingly, as well as the prophetic and priestly classes, were confirmed by an anointing which pointed to the presence and the action of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, but also was a preparation for the new alliance. In the Magnificat, Luke describes the messianic joy of Mary who sings of the liberation of her people as well as the humility of his servant, the mother of the Son, the descendant of David, who is King of a priestly and prophetic people by grace through the work of the Holy Spirit. At the same time, the Magnificat refers to the action of the Holy Spirit who is present in the history of the people of God and of all peoples who are faithful to the Lord. CELAM (*Puebla*) sees Mary's canticle as the expression of the spirituality of the poor of Yahweh and of the prophecy of the Old Testament which points to the new Gospel and is proof of the Lord's love for the humble, those empty of pride, who place all their confidence in God's mercy:

The Magnificat mirrors the soul of Mary. In that canticle we find the culmination of the spirituality of Yahweh's poor and lowly, and of the prophetic strain in the Old Testament. It is the opening proclamation of Christ's new Gospel, the prelude to the Sermon on the Mount. . . . [Mary is] the model for all those described by Pope John Paul II: "Those who do not passively accept the adverse circumstances of personal and social life and who are not victims of 'alienation,' as the expression goes today, but who instead join with her in proclaiming that God is the 'avenger of the lowly' and will, if need be, depose 'the mighty from their thrones.'"⁷³

⁷² Paul VI, *Marialis cultus*, no. 37 (Encyclical, "On the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary," 2 February 1974).

⁷³ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 297; citing John Paul II, Homily at Shrine of Our Lady of Zapopan, no. 4 (in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 71, no. 3 [1979]: 230).

In this way Mary shares her complete dedication with all of God's people, especially the poor and the needy, in order to obtain the transformation of society which is the putting-into-action of the terms of the Magnificat.⁷⁴

Juan Esqueda Bifet interprets this canticle as an indication of the faith of Mary and of a complete *disponibilidad* (disposition of availability) to God's saving plan in her very person.⁷⁵ Mary sings of the definitive action of the Holy Spirit on behalf of Israel and on behalf of all of humanity. It is a hymn developed from the message of the Annunciation; it is a recapitulation and a fulfillment of the deeds of ancient Israel and a summary of messianic hope.

4. Pentecost (Acts 1-14)

Pentecost, Passover, and the Feast of Tabernacles are the three great feasts that the people of Israel celebrated in the Jerusalem temple in accordance with the Lord's mandate (Deut. 16:5-6, 16). Jesus participated in each one of these feasts from his childhood (Luke 2:41) and as an adult (John 2:13, 5:1). Originally, Pentecost was considered a harvest feast, a day of thanksgiving; it was celebrated seven weeks after the Passover. At the same time, it was a celebration of the covenant which occurred fifty days after the Exodus from Egypt (Exod. 19:1-6), that is to say, after the Jewish Passover.

The annual renewal of the Sinai covenant did not take place within a strict worship context, but it retained elements which implied a type of liturgy, for example, the announcement of the ritual "curses" and the solemn reading of the law every seven years (Deut. 31:10). The prophets developed a Deuteronomic spirituality which deepened the meaning of the covenant as a compact of love, implying loving obedience (Exod. 19:1-6). The living out of the compact on the part of God and on the part of Israel deepened the sense of the fulfillment of the original promises. To these were added the promise of the New

⁷⁴ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 1144.

⁷⁵ Juan Esquerda Bifet, "Magnificat," in his *Diccionario de la Evangelización* (Madrid: B.A.C., 1998), 444-447.

Testament, which was also part of the original plan of God, but which was transformed as it approached the fullness of time with the revelation of the Word made Flesh.⁷⁶

The Greek word *diatheke*, translation for the Hebrew *berit* (covenant/testament), is used in the formula of consecration of the wine transformed into the New Covenant (Matt. 14:24; Luke 22:20, 1 Cor. 11:25). At the same time, Jesus promised the gift of the Spirit that he would send to transform hearts of stone—prefigured in the tables of the law—into hearts of flesh, rich in blood (Ezek. 36:26-29). In this way the Paschal event (which included the Last Supper, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus), transforms the blood of the Sinai covenant with Christ's own blood. The pouring out of the Spirit, prophesied by the prophet Joel (3:1-5), is accompanied by salvation for all who invoke the name of the Lord: "Then everyone shall be rescued who calls on the name of the Lord; for on Mount Zion there shall be a remnant, as the Lord has said, and in Jerusalem survivors whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 3:5).

Luke recalls this messianic event as he presents the apostles together with women and others close to Jesus and Mary (Acts 1:13-14). He gives it an ecclesial note: "They went up to the upper room where they were staying," and he gives it also a pneumatological note as he speaks about their continuing in unity in the same spirit, prayer, and mission. There is a pneumatological dimension which pervades this Pentecost scene and expresses itself in the figure of Mary, united with these disciples of her Son, for the inauguration of the New Covenant now enacted by her, the Daughter of Zion, on behalf of the Church, the new Israel.⁷⁷ CELAM (*Aparecida*) recognizes Mary as a missionary continuing the Mission of Jesus in the same Spirit, reflecting that, with her appearances to Juan Diego, she presided over a Pentecost for America, opening the gifts of the Spirit to inspire families, communities, and peoples to learn

⁷⁶ X. Léon-Dufour, "Pentecostés," in his *Vocabulario de teología bíblica* (Barcelona: Herder, 1967), 604-608.

⁷⁷ Bienvenu Akodoh, "L'annonce à Marie (Lc 1,26-38) et sa portée théologique de la résurrection à l'Incarnation," extract of doctoral dissertation (Marianum, Rome, 2008), 155-161.

the way of her Son. She entered the fabric of their history and, for the "dignification" of human persons by the Spirit, she drew them toward nobler deeds and actions meaningful to their people:

Mary is the great missionary, continuer of her Son's mission, who forms missionaries. As she gave birth to the Savior of the world, she brought the Gospel to our Americas. In the Guadalupe event, together with the humble Juan Diego, she presided over Pentecost, which opened us to the gifts of the Spirit. Since then, countless communities have found in her the closest inspiration for learning how to be disciples and missionaries of Jesus. We joyfully note that she has become part of the journey of each of our peoples, deeply entering into the fabric of their history and taking on the noblest and most significant features of the people in them. The various devotions and shrines spread all over the continent attest to Mary's closeness to the people, and they likewise manifest the faith and trust that her devotees feel toward her. She belongs to them and they experience her as mother and sister.⁷⁸

The presence of Mary at Pentecost is not peripheral or accidental but includes some fundamental elements: the presence of Mary is the point of reference and communion for the three participating subgroups—the apostles of Jesus, who obviously knew Mary (John 2:1-12); the friends of Christ, who also were familiar with her; and some women who were associated with her. As Laurentin indicates, there is a relationship between the Annunciation and Pentecost. The Spirit's overshadowing of Mary is extended to the infant Church.⁷⁹

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (nos. 1107-1109) underscores the meaning of the New Covenant with a new spiritual worship which implies a new sacrifice, a new priesthood, a new victim—Jesus Christ, then shared by all. Mary the mother of Christ, is present in the mystery of Christ as the catalyst prepared by the Holy Spirit, as the Daughter of Zion who unites all the dispersed children of Israel.⁸⁰ Mary is

⁷⁸ CELAM (*Aparecida*, 2007), no. 269.

⁷⁹ CCC, nos. 1107-1109. See also Laurentin, *Maria nella storia della salvezza*, 80-85 ("L'orientamento pneumatologico" in Chap. 4. "La riconversione e il suo significato").

⁸⁰ CCC, nos. 721-722.

presented as the woman of the Spirit, as the Spirit of her Son is imparted to the infant Church.⁸¹

In the overshadowing of the Spirit, the grace of Mary's Immaculate Motherhood is imparted to the Church.⁸² Pentecost renews the mystery of the justifying grace of the incarnation, through the work of the Holy Spirit and then transmitted to the work of the disciples.⁸³ Lastly, Pentecost reveals the fulfillment of the worship offered in the synagogue, as described in the pre-Nativity account of Luke, and of the sacrificial account given in Luke's post-Nativity account, in order to celebrate the true liturgical act of Christ that is achieved by the Holy Spirit and imparted to the Church, the Body of Christ and Temple of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁴

Conclusion

In this way Luke conveys that the Spirit who was present in the history of salvation before and after Christ is the same Spirit who, through the mystery of the Incarnation, instituted and guided the pattern of liturgical worship in Israel and in the Church. This same Spirit, who continues to animate the relational, communitarian, and social dimensions of the Church,⁸⁵ made Mary the perfect Daughter of Zion and sign of eschatological fulfillment for the hope of all believers.⁸⁶

Mary, as presented by Luke, is both disciple and missionary. She lives, celebrates, and announces the mystery of Christ and the Church, continually moved by the action of the Spirit. The Spirit who guided the Infant Church continues to guide the Church throughout the ages. With Mary, mother and model of the Church, her Son, the Incarnate Word, continues the transformation of the Church and its members through the Spirit, especially by means of the eucharistic liturgy and presence. The Spirit given to Mary transforms the members of the Body of Christ into missionaries. The CELAM document of Aparecida

⁸¹ CCC, nos. 723-726.

⁸² CCC, nos. 494, 726, 1987.

⁸³ CCC, no. 2640.

⁸⁴ CCC, nos. 797-801.

⁸⁵ Wenk, *Community Forming Power*, 149-172; CCC, no. 1813.

⁸⁶ CCC, no. 972, cf. n. 517; LG, no. 68.

declares of Mary: "She who 'kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart' (Luke 2:19; cf. 2:51), teaches us the primacy of listening to the Word in the life of the disciple and missionary."⁸⁷ The CELAM text from Puebla states that "Mary is the model of ecclesial service in Latin America. . . . Her whole service to human beings consists in opening them up to the Gospel and urging them to obey it: 'Do whatever he tells you' (John 2:5)."⁸⁸

With her appearance at Guadalupe, Mary is the sign of enculturation and evangelization for the peoples of the Latin American continent. She is the maternal face of the Church and sign of the joining of the faith with our history. As the CELAM (*Puebla*) text expresses it:

Among our people the Gospel has been proclaimed with the Virgin Mary presented as its loftiest fulfillment. From the very beginning—with her appearance in Guadalupe and the dedication of a shrine to her there—Mary has constituted the great sign of the nearness of the Father and Christ, inviting us to enter into communion with them; and she has served as a sign endowed with a maternal, compassionate aspect. Mary has also been the voice urging us on to union as human beings and as peoples. And like the shrine in Guadalupe, the other shrines to Mary on our continent are signs of the encounter between the faith of the Church and the history of Latin America.⁸⁹

As the CELAM text from Puebla goes on to say, Mary "is not just the admirable fruit of the redemption; she is also the active co-worker in it. . . . By virtue of her freely proffered cooperation in Christ's new covenant, Mary is the protagonist of history alongside him. Through this communion and participation, the Immaculate Virgin now lives immersed in the mystery of the Trinity, praising the glory of God and interceding for human beings."⁹⁰ Mary is the authentic woman:

She is "blest among women." In her, God dignified woman to unsuspected dimensions. In Mary, the Gospel penetrated femininity, redeemed it, and

⁸⁷ CELAM (*Aparecida*, 2007), no. 271.

⁸⁸ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 300.

⁸⁹ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 282.

⁹⁰ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 293.

exalted it. This is of capital importance for our cultural horizon, where the woman should be much more highly valued and where her social roles are now being defined more clearly and fully.⁹¹

Mary is not only the Spirit-formed bearer of the Spirit (*pneumafora*), as at the Visitation, but she is also *pneumatotípica*, because she typifies the action of the Holy Spirit in herself and also in the history of salvation, adapting and assimilating all peoples in the mission of her Son. The Guadalupe event, with Mary's pneumatic and kerygmatic maternal presence, is at the heart of the Latin American continent and promotes the process of evangelization and ecclesial renewal. Evangelization is the way the Church—for which Mary is mother and model—begets new children:

This process, which is an "inner transformation" and a "renewal of humanity itself," is a real rebirth. In this coming to birth, which takes place over and over again, Mary is our Mother. Glorious in heaven, she is at work on this earth. . . . And her great concern is that Christians enjoy abundant life and attain the fullness of adult maturity in Christ (John 10:10; Eph. 4:13).⁹²

The doctrinal and pastoral lights bestowed on the Church at Vatican II and in the years following it are clearly visible in the pilgrimage of the Church in Latin America as expressed in the CELAM documents.

⁹¹ CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 299.

⁹² CELAM (*Puebla*, 1979), no. 288.