HISTORICAL CONCRETIZATIONS OF

THE MARIAN CHARISM
MARIAN PROFILE OF CLASSICAL ORDERS

Introduction

In 1839, when Pere Lacordaire wanted to reestablish the Dominican Order in France, he was faced with the restrictions put in place by the French Revolution. In his letter to the French people, Pere Lacordaire pointed out that after trees are cut down, new shoots spring from the stumps and additional trees rise from buried seeds. His analogy was that religious life cannot be suppressed for long but will reemerge from new shoots and buried seeds, as he put it, “Oak trees and monks are eternal.”¹

The Holy Spirit has given and continues to give to the Church a marvelous variety of charisms through the founders and foundresses of religious communities. This particular essay focuses on the orders founded before the seventeenth century, which we will refer to as “classical orders” in deference to their longevity.

The very existence of these orders today demonstrates a wonderful resilience, made possible only by the Spirit. These orders have borne the ravages of time, through which they have flourished and diminished, burned with the enthusiasm of charismatic fervor and lost their visions as well. They have basked in the sunshine of development and generous endowment, and survived the storms that suppressed their ministries, closed their houses, and drove them into exile.

From their origins, through their periods of growth as well as their darkest hours, each of these orders has carried a distinct attachment to the Virgin Mary, seeing in Mary a mother and protectress. She has been a source of strength, especially in those moments when they struggled to reemerge, cautiously at first and slowly as the oak trees do.

Ideally, this study should be accompanied by another study on the Christological focus of these orders because the basic thrust of these orders is Christological. Hopefully, we can explore that dimension in a future study but the reader should keep in mind the Christological context in which the Marian profile is situated.

This study will focus on seven orders: Benedictines, their brother and sister Cistercians, as well as Carmelites, Franciscans, Dominicans, Servites, and Jesuits. Our special focus will be on the Marian vision in relation to the understanding of these orders regarding the religious life and their own charisms. For this reason, we may overlook some who made great contributions to Marian theology in favor of lesser known figures whose writings pertain more directly to Mary and the religious life.

The origins of the classical orders span a thousand years, from the founding of Monte Cassino in 529/530 to the approval of the Jesuits in September, 1540. The Marian profiles of these orders offer wide-ranging possibilities. However, the prospect of a millennium's worth of names and ideas evokes the astute, if seldom observed, caution to preachers of the fifth master of the Dominican order, Humbert of Romans, that good hosts don't place the whole cow on the table but serve select parts.2

Benedictines

Within the next twenty years, the Benedictine family, monks, nuns, and oblates will celebrate great anniversaries, culminating in the fifteenth hundredth anniversary of the move of Benedict and his followers to Monte Cassino in 529 or 530. It would be hard to overemphasize the contributions made to the life of the church by the monastic family of St. Benedict and his sister St. Scholastica.

While later religious orders came to be associated with particular Marian practices, traditional monasticism concentrated upon its liturgical foundations. Thus it might seem that identifying the specific Benedictine Marian spirituality might elude us. However, as Paul VI affirmed, the liturgy itself is the surest foundation of sound Marian devotion.3

Within the Benedictine monastic movement, foundational understandings of the relationship between Mary and religious life have developed. The Rule of St. Benedict guides the monks and nuns in the ways of "holy reading," lectio divina, and provides detailed descriptions of the Liturgy of the Hours. Within this context of holy reading and the liturgy we can situate a Benedictine Marian profile.

Fr. Luigi Gambero, S.M., noted that, by the eight century (the approximate end of the Patristic period), devotion to Mary in the Eastern part of the Church was a popular movement arising from the faithful. In the West, Marian devotion took form principally in monastic circles with the majority of Marian writings originating in the Monasteries.

The Fathers of the Church had already commented on Mary's virginity, her divine maternity, and had found in the Eve/Mary comparison an illustration of Mary's human cooperation in salvation. As Fr. Gambero pointed out, the element that was keenly fostered in the monastic setting was the awareness of a personal relationship between Mary and the believer. For the monastics, men and women, the idea of a personal relationship with Mary was foundational for Marian spirituality within the consecrated life.

In addition to the theme of personal relationship, there was also that of Mary as a model. Athanasius, Ambrose, Jerome, and other Fathers had portrayed Mary as a model for consecrated virginity. The idea of Mary as a model continued to be developed among the monastics. A Cistercian author comments, “Monks through the ages tended to regard Mary as the embodiment of monastic virtues and a precursor of that freedom from sin which will someday be ours in Christ.”

In Marialis Cultus, Paul VI singled out the prayer of the seventh-century Benedictine abbot and archbishop, Ildephonsus of Toledo, articulating Mary's role in our union with her Son: “I beg you, holy Virgin, that I may have Jesus from the Holy Spirit, by whom you brought Jesus forth. May my soul receive Jesus through the Holy Spirit by whom your flesh conceived Jesus... May I love Jesus in the Holy Spirit, in whom you adore Jesus as Lord and gaze upon Him as your Son.”

Marian reflection was nurtured within the monastic regime of Lectio and liturgical life. A homily of the English Benedictine doctor of the Church, Saint Bede the Venerable (d.735) relates the example of Mary with liturgical practice, contemplation, and the cultivation of virtue:

She burned with spiritual love for the Son she so joyously conceived ... It is an excellent and fruitful custom of holy Church that we should sing Mary's hymn

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5 Ibid.
at the time of evening prayer. By meditating upon the Incarnation, our devotion is kindled, and by remembering the example of God’s mother, we are encouraged to lead a life of virtue. Such virtues are best achieved in the evening. We are weary after the day’s work and worn out by our distractions. The time for rest is near, and our minds are ready for contemplation.\(^8\)

The understanding of Mary’s maternal intercession found a home within monastic settings. Ambrose Autpertus (d. 781), a Benedictine monk in Southern Italy, asks, “For is she not the mother of the elect, since she gave birth to their Brother? I mean to say, if Christ is the Brother to believers, why is not she, who gave birth to Christ, the Mother of believers?”\(^9\) He recognizes Mary’s intercessory role, as he appeals, “...help them, whom you bore in bearing your only Son. Pray to your only Son for the many who go astray.”\(^10\)

Paul the Deacon (d. ca. 799), a monk of Monte Cassino and a teacher in Charlemagne’s court, urges monks to imitate Mary’s virtues: “Let us rejoice with all our heart in our advocate...for no one does she intercede with her Son in vain.... Certainly, this is the service that most pleases her: that we should imitate her most holy life, loving what she loved and shunning what she shunned ... “\(^11\)

The ninth-century abbot Paschasius Radbertus (d. 865) encourages the nuns of Soissons to recognize their relationship with Mary: “And so, love the Mother of the Lord, who for your sake bore the immortal Bridegroom. She is his sister and yours as well because she did the Father’s will and so became a mother. Mary is your relative, not in the flesh but in the spirit...”\(^12\)And again, he instructs the nuns to follow Mary’s example, “...if you wish to be true virgins, practice humility and try to imitate the Mother of the Lord with all your heart, for she calls herself a handmaid.”\(^13\)

The renewal of Benedictine monasticism that began in 909 at the French monastery at Cluny spread to over two hundred monasteries. The strong Marian devotion that accompanied this renewal found expression in the title, *Mater*

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\(^10\) Ibid.


\(^12\) Paschasius Radbertus, *Cogitis me*, 18; PL 30, 146D, *Mary in the Middle Ages*, 75.

\(^13\) Ibid., 79.
Misericordiae. This title appears in the writings of the second abbot of Cluny, St. Odo, emphasizing the loving care of Mary for the individual.¹⁴

For the Cluniac reform, Mary was a model of monastic life. This idea is articulated by the fifth abbot of Cluny, St. Odilo: “Mary’s life and virginity should be like a picture for us, from which you should draw examples of how to live, for in it examples of probity are impressed as in an original model, showing what you ought to correct, what you ought to shun, and what you ought to hold onto.”¹⁵

During the tenth century, images of Mary in monastic churches became the centers of pilgrimage. These monastic shrines continue in our times at Ettal, Andechs, Mariendorf, Marienrode, and Fulda in Germany, Georgenberg-Fiecht in Austria, Einsiedeln in Switzerland, and Monserrat in Spain. In the first half of the eleventh century, new hymns and Marian sequences appeared. Whether or not the Alma Redemptoris Mater and the Salve Regina had monastic origins is not certain but clearly these hymns found a welcome home in the monasteries.

**Cistercians**

A new impetus was given to Marian devotion around 1098 when St. Robert, St. Stephen Harding, and other monks arrived at Citeaux. Their monastic church was named for Mary and the accounts of their foundations record: “It has been decided that all our monasteries are to be founded in honor of the Queen of heaven and earth.”¹⁶

On feast days in which both Jesus and Mary were celebrated, such as that of the Annunciation, Purification (Presentation), and within the season of Advent, the Marian aspects received full attention. Specific Marian feasts, such as the Nativity of Mary and the Assumption, became occasions for special honor to Mary. Cistercian abbots preached Marian homilies on these days. Few homilies have been preserved from the over six hundred mediaeval Cistercian monasteries and yet these few illustrate the association made between Mary and the monastic vocation. We will consider only two selections.

Aelred of Rievaulx (d. 1167) describes Mary as a model of both the contemplative and active elements in the Cistercian life:

> Saint Benedict or rather the Holy Spirit in Saint Benedict did not say and decree that we like Mary be intent only on lectio, and lay aside work like Martha, but he commended both to us, allotting certain times to Martha’s work and certain times to Mary’s work. In the Blessed Mary, our Lady, these two activities were

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¹⁴ *Mary in the Middle Ages*, 88.
¹⁵ Odilo of Cluny, *Sermo* 14; PL 142, 1029D, *Mary in the Middle Ages*, 94.
perfectly present. The fact that she clothed our Lord, that she fed Him, that she carried Him and fled with Him into Egypt – all this pertains to physical activity. But she treasured all these words, pondering them in her heart, that she meditated on His divinity, contemplated His power, and savored His sweetness – all this pertains to Mary.17

John of Forde (d. 1214) recognizes in the beloved disciple a model for both contemplative and active aspects of religious life:

To stand by the cross of Jesus means to be with the blessed mother of Jesus and the bride of the Word, and with the companions of His bride, and to lift one's eyes to the crucified, fixing them there, pondering on these treasures of immense love with a very deep sense of devotion…

Yet the name ‘mother’ or ‘bride’ may be applied quite justly to anyone who is moved by motherly affection to bring forth and to train sons for God, to anyone who has entered completely into the pure love of God …If anyone is blessed with both these gifts, so that zeal for his brother’s salvation is no hindrance at all to the exercise of divine love; and love for God is no obstacle to the duty of saving others, then that person is not simply blessed but manifestly very specially and greatly blessed. A person like this has won a place next to the cross of Jesus, a very close place, one next to the Lord’s mother, who was both mother and bride to the only Son of God.18

The Statutes of 1281 express the certainty that the Cistercians are distinct from other orders in having Mary as their patron and protectress.19 The Statutes of 1318 speak of Mary as “our most special advocate.”20

Franciscans

In the period after the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI instructed religious communities to recover their charisms by being “faithful to the spirit of their founders, to their evangelical intentions, and to the example of their

19 “Cum beatissima Dei Genitrix Virgo semper Maria singularis excellentiae dignitate merito sanctis omnibus super laudabilis ab omnibus fidelibus sit multipliciter honoranda et principali­ter ab Ordine nostro, qui speciali ipsius patronatu ac patrocinio prae ceteris Ordinibus insignitur…” Statuta (1281), cited in Goffredo Viti, O. Cist. and Malachia Falletti, O. Cist, “La Devozione a Maria nell’Ordine Cistercense,” Marianum (1992), 316.
20 “nostra specialissima avvocata” Statuta (1318), cited in Goffredo Viti, O. Cist. and Malachia Falletti, O. Cist, “La Devozione a Maria nell’Ordine Cistercense,” Marianum 54 (1992), 316.
sanctity." In an eminent way, members of the Franciscan family have sought to draw inspiration from the life of St. Francis.

The key to the Marian inspiration of the Franciscan life lies within the experience of Francis. Bonaventure recounts that after restoring the chapel at San Damiano, Francis began to repair another "deserted" chapel, Santa Maria degli Angeli, known as the Portiuncula. He did this because he was "moved by the fervent devotion he had toward the Lady of the world." Francis made his residence at the chapel because he believed that the angels often visited there and because of "his special love for the mother of Christ."

Francis appealed to Mary for assistance in understanding his vocation:

While her servant Francis was living in the church of the Virgin Mother of God, he prayed to her who had conceived the Word full of grace and truth, imploring her with continuous sighs to become his advocate. Through the merits of the Mother of Mercy, he conceived and brought to birth the spirit of the truth of the Gospel. 

Bonaventure attributes the growth of the brotherhood to Mary's help: "... the shepherd Francis led the little flock of twelve friars to St. Mary of the Portiuncula, so that there, where the Order of Friars Minor had its beginning by the merits of the Mother of God, it might also grow with her assistance." 

Bonaventure also tells us that "The holy man loved this spot more than any other in the world." Francis asked to be taken there when he was dying and "At his death he commended it to the friars as a place most dear to the Virgin."

In recognition of this special attachment of St. Francis, the Feast of Our Lady of the Angels of the Portiuncula is celebrated by the Franciscan Family on August 2.

A characteristic of Franciscan spirituality and theology is a Trinitarian thrust and an emphasis on the Incarnation. The Trinitarian emphasis is evident in Francis' prayer, "A salutation to the Blessed Virgin Mary," in which he addresses Mary as the one "who are the Virgin made Church." Mary is seen in a Trinitarian light, as the one who is "Chosen by the most holy Father in heaven, Whom He consecrated with His most holy beloved Son, and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete."

23 Ibid., 35.
24 Ibid., 20-21.
Bonaventure tells us that Francis' great love of Mary is joined to the Incarnation: "He embraced the mother of the Lord Jesus with an indescribable love because she had made the Lord of Majesty our brother and because through her we have obtained mercy. After Christ he put all his trust in her and made her his advocate and that of his friars." In the titles that Francis attributes to Mary, she is related to the Incarnation:

- Hail, His Palace!
- Hail, His tabernacle!
- Hail, His Dwelling!
- Hail, His Robe!
- Hail, His Servant!
- Hail, His Mother!

In composing his "Office of the Passion," Francis created an antiphon to Mary that was to be recited at the end of each psalm. The antiphon places Mary in a Trinitarian context:

- Hail Virgin Mary
- Among the women born into the world,
  There is no one like you.
- Daughter and servant of the most high and supreme King
  And of the Father in heaven,
- Mother of our most holy Lord Jesus Christ,
- Spouse of the Holy Spirit,
- Pray for us.

Clare of Assisi, the "offshoot" and the "most faithful disciple" of Francis, in her letter to Agnes of Prague depicts Mary as a model of a life centered on Christ with the Franciscan virtues of humility and poverty, as well as of virginity:

- May you cling to His most sweet Mother who gave birth to a Son whom the heavens could not contain. And yet she carried him in the little enclosure of her holy womb and held Him in her virginal lap... So, just as the glorious Virgin of virgins carried Him physically, so you too, following in her footsteps especially those of humility and poverty, can without any doubt, always carry Him spiritually in your chaste and virginal body....

We can be grateful to the Franciscan family for enriching the Church with the fruits of their Marian theology. We need only to think of St. Antony of Padua, St. Bonaventure, Blessed Duns Scotus, and St. Maximilian Kolbe as

25 Ibid., 95.
27 Francis, "Antiphon for the Office of the Passion," in Francis of Assisi, 141.
28 Clare to Agnes of Prague, "Letter 3."
well as the great contributions that Franciscans made to understanding the mystery of the Immaculate Conception.

A brief study of the constitutions of the Conventual Friars shows the importance of the mystery of the Immaculate Conception. The Conventual Friars are instructed “to establish an intimate communion of life with her” as a way of strengthening their vocations.

The Capuchins consider Mary within the Franciscan vocation to poverty: “For she, the companion of her Son’s poverty and suffering, and, as experienced witness, is the way to arrive at the spirit of the poor and crucified Christ.”

Mary is the one who carries the words of the Gospel in her heart.

In the light of the missionary commitment of the Capuchin Franciscans, Mary is named as the “Mother of the Good Shepherd,” who gave birth to Christ and was present “at the morning of Pentecost at the beginnings of evangelization.”

Dominicans

As Dominic, a canon of the Cathedral of Osma in Castile, was traveling through the Midi along with his bishop, Diego, in 1203, they encountered the strong concentration of Cathars and Waldensians in the region around Toulouse. Three years later, Bishop Diego and Dominic joined the efforts of the Cistercian abbots, appointed by Pope Innocent III, to win the local population back to the Catholic faith through preaching.

By late 1207, Diego had died and the Cistercian abbots had returned to their monasteries, leaving Dominic and a few associates. They continued to preach wherever the people were, in towns and villages, despite the hostility they often met. As Dominic made his way through the rough terrains, in good weather and bad, he “praised and blessed God, singing in a loud voice, Ave Maris Stella. And when he finished that, he began the Veni Creator Spiritus.”

Dominic gathered those who came to join him in a community of preaching brothers. An early account reports that he entrusted the community to the

29 Constitutions (Rome), 78.1, 1984, 133.
30 Constitutions (Rome), 56 1984, 105-107.
31 Constitutions (North America), 54.3, 1990, 58.
32 Constitutions (North America), 1.6, 1990, 26.
33 Constitutions (North America), 179.2, 1990, 125.
Virgin as its special patron. An indication of this special Marian devotion is that the formula of vows, which may be traced to Dominic’s lifetime, includes a promise of obedience to Mary: “I ... make profession and promise obedience to God and to Blessed Mary ...”

At a critical moment in the Order’s development, Dominic decided that the friars should not be clustered in one location but sent out. Dominic dispersed the friars from their home in Toulouse to Paris and to Spain, on the feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1217.

Blessed Cecilia was the first nun to make profession to Dominic in the monastery in Rome. Years later, Blessed Cecilia recalled that Dominic witnessed Mary sprinkling water on the sleeping friars. Cecilia stated that Dominic had shared with herself and the other nuns a vision that he had of heaven, in which, failing to find his sons and daughters, he discovered them beneath Mary’s mantle.

M.- H. Vicaire, in accord with other Dominican historians, notes that Cecilia’s accounts are “embellished with embroideries or exaggerations ... [and] a touch of the marvelous.” At the same time, Cecilia’s facts are often corroborated by other sources, for which reason, Vicaire concedes, “it would be wrong to ignore them.”

Rather than attempt to sort out the fact from the embellishment, it may be more beneficial to concentrate on the perception behind the accounts, which is a belief in Mary’s particular love and protection for Dominic and for the Order.

This same conviction is present in Gerard de Frachet’s collection of anecdotes of the early years of the Order (composed around 1260). Gerard comments on the second master Jordan of Saxony, “Our Master was as devout as possible to blessed Mary, since he knew how watchful she was concerning the development and care of the Order, over which he was in charge with her assistance.”

After one of the friars was healed of a demonic possession, the friars adopted the practice of singing the *Salve Regina* after Compline. Blessed Jordan re-

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35 Constantine of Orvieto, *Legenda Constantini Urbevetani*, 31, MOPH, XVI, 308. Constantine of Orvieto, a Dominican who later was bishop of Orvieto.


fers to visions of the Virgin during the singing of the *Salve* by a "certain man," whom most commentators assume was Jordan himself:

A certain man, both religious and trustworthy, has told me that, in spirit, he often saw the Mother of our Lord prostrate before her Son praying for the security of the whole Order, as the friars were singing: 'Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us.' I mention this so that the brethren reading it may be inspired to even greater devotion in praising the virgin.  

By the mid-thirteenth century, the friars sang Matins of the Little Office of Our Lady in the dormitory, as they rose from sleep. When this time and location were criticized, Humbert of Romans, the Master of the Order, explained that saying Mary's Office under such circumstances was reverent because the friars began the day in her service. He acknowledges that one of the reasons for reciting her Office in this way was to allow more time for the friars to study during the day, but he believes that the zeal which the friars manifest in her service and in the service of her Son should offset any slight.

He then recalls all the ways in which the friars honor her even above the ways of many of the other orders. First of all, he observes: "Unceasingly through the office of preaching, it praises, blesses, and preaches her Son and herself." Secondly, the *horarium* (daily schedule) begins with her office and ends with the *Salve*, thus beginning and ending each day with Mary. This allusion to beginning and ending moves Humbert to recall the tradition of Mary's help to Dominic: "She herself was the greatest helper in beginning the Order, and it is hoped that she may lead it to a good end."

Humbert remarks: "When anything concerning her is sung in Church, the friars sing more devoutly and solemnly, as is evident in the antiphons, the daily processions, and in the commemorations of her."

Mary was seen to have intervened in a dramatic way when Pope Innocent IV decided to revoke the privileges that had been granted the Dominicans and Franciscans. The day that he signed the bull *Eisi animarum*, November 21, 1254, he became paralyzed and he died on the following December 7. The new Pope, Alexander IV, reversed the decisions and expressed his affection for

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41 Ibid., 70-72.
42 Ibid., 71.
43 Ibid., 71-72.
the Order. Humbert, the Master at the time, addressed a letter to the Order which concluded: "I commend each and all of you to the grace of the Savior and to His most glorious Mother, our Advocate, who is believed to have been the special patron of the order in these days."

Catherine of Siena, a fourteenth-century Dominican woman often returns to the image of Mary sending out the disciples after the Resurrection as an image of ministry: "And because Mary dismisses them from herself, they did not think, therefore, that the love was diminished, nor that they were deprived of the affection of Mary.... You ought not to seek your own consolation, for the honor of God and the salvation of souls." In her *Dialogue* Catherine depicts the Father associating the Order with Mary, through the tradition that Mary showed the scapular of the habit to Blessed Reginald:

But for his more proper object he [Dominic] took the light of learning, to uproot the errors that at that time had arisen. He took the work of the Word, My only-begotten Son. Rightly, he seemed an apostle in the world, with such truth and light he sowed My word, lifting the darkness and giving the light. He was a light that I offered to the world by means of Mary, set in the mystic body of the holy Church, as an uprooter of heresies. Why did I say, 'by means of Mary'? Because Mary gave him the habit, the work given to her by My goodness.

The Christological framework in which devotion to Mary can be found is illustrated by the traditional altarpieces in Dominican churches. William Hood, in his book on the Dominican artist Fra Angelico, notes: "It was the custom...to dedicate the main altarpiece to the Virgin with the Child, accompanied by saints, Dominican and otherwise. However, the symbolic focus of these altarpieces was less Marian than Christological, and these Christological themes bore directly on the Dominican mission and the Order's own liturgical customs."

While the Virgin and Child might occupy a central position in these altarpieces, the surrounding panels developed a central theme focused on Christ as Savior depicting His Incarnation, Passion, Death, and Resurrection, and especially the Eucharist.

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46 *Il Dialogo*, CLVIII, 539-540.
47 Ibid., 45.
48 Ibid., 107. For the side panels of these altarpieces, saints were chosen to demonstrate the Order's association with the ministry of the apostles. Thus, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, or another apostle might be balanced by Dominic and Peter Martyr, or Thomas Aquinas.
We cannot overlook the role of the Dominicans and the rosary. Most scholars today affirm that the rosary had a gradual development and that in its earliest stages, the Carthusians made significant contributions in the process.

The oldest extant connection of St. Dominic and the rosary is found in an affirmation by the Dominican Jean de Monte, bishop of Treves (1419-1442), that St. Dominic preached on the Psalterium Mariae. The Dominican Alan de la Roche (1428-1479) attributed the origin of the rosary to a vision of the blessed Virgin to St. Dominic. The Dominican historian M.-H. Vicaire comments that Alan “at the close of the fifteenth century propagated, simultaneously and with equal effectiveness, his Rosary confraternities and so-called facts of Dominican history hitherto unknown — learnt, he said, by revelation.”

Although born in Brittany, Alan de la Roche (1428-1470) joined the reformed province in Holland. While serving as a director of the confraternity of Our Lady and St. Dominic at Douai in Belgium, he encouraged the members to adopt the Psalterium Mariae Virginis, which combined the repetition of the Hail Mary with reflection of the lives of Jesus and Mary. Alan’s zeal for this devotion caused other churches to create similar confraternities, which evolved into Confraternities of the Rosary.

The Dominicans in Holland and in Cologne promoted the confraternities of the Rosary after Alan’s death. From Cologne the confraternities spread under Dominican auspices into Italy.

Dominicans played a role in developing the Rosary. The Dominican author of Our Dear Lady’s Psalter, in 1483, grouped the Hail Marys in groups of ten around fifteen events of the lives of Jesus and Mary, similar to our present ones with the exception that the second last glorious mystery combined the Assumption and the Coronation and the last one was the Last Judgment. Previously, each Hail Mary had its own scriptural reference. Another Dominican Alberto da Castello applied the word “mystery” to the events which were reflected upon.

Apparently, the Dominicans at the Minerva in Rome were accustomed to chant the rosary. They began to chant a Gloria Patri after the decades, just as was done at the end of the psalms.

The Masters of the Dominican Order began to assign friars to preach the rosary. The Dominican Pope Pius V approved the enumeration of the fifteen mysteries.

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50 Vicaire, viii.
decades of the rosary in 1569 and also attributed the success of the Christian defeat of the Muslim ships, on October 7, 1571, to the public recitation of the rosary.

Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, while not associating St. Dominic with the rosary as some popes had done, recalls the Dominican preaching on the Rosary: “The history of the Rosary shows how this prayer was used in particular by the Dominicans at a difficult time for the Church due to the spread of heresy.”

Writing to the Order on January 1, 2008, the Master of the Order, Fr. Carlos Azpiroz Costa, encouraged rosary preaching among Dominicans:

I am proposing that we begin to renew our preaching way of life through re-discovering the Rosary as a means of contemplation and an instrument of prophetic preaching. In many ways the Rosary, as a uniquely Dominican contribution to the life of the Church, has slipped from our grasp. And, yet at the same time, the Rosary remains very much alive among us.

The *Constitutions* urge the daily recitation of the rosary: “This form of prayer leads us to the contemplation of the mystery of salvation in which the Virgin Mary is intimately associated with the work of her Son.” The *Constitutions* regard the rosary as a “characteristically Dominican devotion,” which is “particularly appropriate to our Order,” and which “the brothers should fervently preach.”

Mary is seen to have a special relationship with the Order, as “the immensely caring mother of our Order.” Mary is referred to as “Queen of Apostles,” which is certainly a choice title for Mary in a preaching Order, although it may be a recent addition to the *Constitutions*. The *Constitutions* present Mary as an example: “She is an example of meditation on the words of Christ and of acceptance of one’s mission.”

The contemplative Dominican Nuns (who began before the friars) started their first monastery in 1207 on the compound of the former pilgrimage church of Our Lady of Prouille. As the friars do, the Dominican Nuns promise obedience to Mary in their profession of vows. Mary is also regarded as “the loving

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55 Ibid., 129, 65.
56 Ibid., 189, 3, 76.
57 Ibid., 67, 2, 46.
58 Ibid.

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mother of our Order.”

Mary is recognized as the “Mother of Mercy, Queen of Apostles and Virgins.”

The nuns see themselves at prayer with Mary: “persevering in prayer with Mary the Mother of Jesus, they ardently long for the fullness of the holy Spirit...”

The nuns make explicit the Dominican practice of singing the Salve Regina, “…the nuns before the silence of night begins, should sing Compline and in the antiphon Salve Regina commend themselves together to the protection of the Blessed Virgin.”

Carmelites

In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the advances of Saracen armies had diminished the Christian possessions in Palestine to a small strip of land on the coast. Hermits, who had previously dwelt near holy places in Palestine gravitated towards Wadi‘ain es-Siah on Mount Carmel. Sometime between 1206 and 1214, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, St. Albert, composed a formula of life for these hermits.

According to St. Albert’s Rule, the hermits were to remain in individual hermitages. A key passage instructs them: “All are to remain in their cells or near them, meditating day and night on the law of the Lord and being vigilant in prayer, unless otherwise lawfully occupied.”

Albert’s rule called for a chapel in the midst of their hermitages. This chapel was dedicated to Our Lady. There may have been several reasons for dedicating the chapel to Mary. A laura (hermitage) of Byzantine monks had previously occupied the location and their chapel may have already borne the name of Mary, as was common for Byzantine hermits.

More significantly, considering the number of reminders of Mary throughout the Holy Land, during the time of the crusaders, in the form of altars at holy places or articles reputed to have been associated with Mary it seems that Mary was considered the “Lady” of Palestine.

Mt. Carmel would especially be associated with Mary, as some spiritual interpretations compared Mary with the references to Carmel in the Old Testament (1 Kings 18:42-45; Song of Songs 7:6). Emanuele Boaga, O. Carm. asserts that Mary would have been considered “The Lady of the Place.” This would follow the practices of feudal Europe. If Jesus were the Lord of the Holy Land

59 The Book of Constitutions of the Nuns of the Order of Preachers, 152, 3 (USA, 1987), 79.
60 Ibid., 91, 56-57.
61 Ibid., 1, 4, 30.
62 Ibid., 81, 3, 54.
then Mary would have been the Lady, the “Domina Loci” would be the patroness of the people of the area. John Baconthorpe is the first one to apply the title “Domina Loci,” “the Lady of the Place,” to Mary.\textsuperscript{64}

Between 1238 and 1291, as the Saracens progressively reoccupied the area around Mount Carmel, groups of the hermits resettled in Europe. At first they opted for isolated locations but eventually they assumed various ministries and adopted a more mendicant form of life, while struggling to preserve the contemplative basis of their vocation. Papal letters address them as the “Hermit Brothers of St. Mary of Mount Carmel.”

Christopher O’Donnell speaks of the manner by which the Marian identity of the hermits supported them during this period: “But it is important to note that in the traumatic conditions of the 13th century, when the Order was struggling with its identity and even its existence was threatened, it looked to Mary as the foundation and meaning of its life.”\textsuperscript{65}

Their chapels were dedicated to Mary, under various titles, the most common being the Annunciation. From the 15th century, Carmelite tradition held that the scapular of their order had been given by the Virgin Mary. Emanuele Boaga asserts that there are questions regarding the date and location of the vision. He concludes by agreeing with Ludovico Saggi, “It has to be said that it is not possible to prove that the vision is false, but at the same time the proofs offered for its historical validity are not sufficient.”\textsuperscript{66}

There are also historical questions regarding the “Sabbatine Privilege,” which was said to have been first given in a document to the Carmelites by Pope John XXII. The privilege was approved by a number of other popes. Pope Pius XII expressed the privilege in this sober way: “Certainly, this most holy mother, in line with the tradition called the Sabbatine Privilege through her intercession with God will surely obtain in the shortest time possible, the heavenly homeland for her children who are expiating their sins in purgatory.”\textsuperscript{67}

As with the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Servites, a number of people desired to be associated with the Carmelites in various levels of commitment. They hoped to share in the spiritual merits of the religious. In their earlier forms, those more seriously related confraternities received the “sign” of the

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{66} Ludovico Saggi, cited in Boaga, 101.
\textsuperscript{67} Pius XII, \textit{Neminem proteo latel} (February 11, 1950), cited in Boaga, 109.
order, which was the white cloak that the Carmelites wore over their habit. Up to the 15th century, only religious could wear scapulars, the sign of their identity as religious. Later, members of the Carmelite confraternities began to wear a modified form of the Carmelite scapular. Within the larger grouping of the Confraternities emerged the Carmelite Third Order.68

Even as the friars engaged in ministry, the call to return to the cell to ponder the Word of God remained. In the 15th century, monasteries of women Carmelites were formed. The association with Mary remained a strong tradition. St. Teresa of Avila counseled her sisters: “May Our Lord be pleased that we live our lives as true daughters of the blessed Virgin.”69

Teresa of Avila regarded the Carmelite habit as an indication of Mary’s protection: ‘May the mercy of God help me. In Him I have always trusted through His most sacred Son and the Virgin, our Lady, whose habit I wear through the goodness of the Lord.”70

Teresa of Avila reminded her sisters that they belonged to Mary in a special way:

I have no other remedy than to approach His mercy and to trust in the merits of His Son and of the Virgin, His mother, whose habit I wear so unworthily, and you wear. Praise Him, my daughters, for you truly belong to our Lady. Thus you have no reason to be ashamed of my misery since you have such a good Mother. Imitate her and reflect that the grandeur of our Lady and the good of having her for your patroness must be indeed great.71

One of the reasons John of the Cross was drawn to the Carmelites was because of its Marian orientation. A witness at the canonical process for John of the Cross’ beatification declared: “He was so devoted to Our Lady that every day he recited the Office of Our Lady on his knees ...and when he went on a journey all his talk and conversation were about the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin, and he sang hymns dedicated to Our Lady.”72

John of the Cross offers Mary as an example of one who was always moved by the Spirit. According to John, Mary “raised from the beginning to this high

68 Boaga, 121-135.
70 Ibid., 263.
71 Ibid., 305-306.
state, she never had the form of any creature impressed in her soul, nor was she moved by any, for she was always moved by the Holy Spirit."\(^73\)

After the Second Vatican Council the renewed Constitutions for the friars had a chapter on "The Blessed Virgin Mary in Our Life." The Nuns had a chapter in their renewed Constitutions, "The Marian Life of Carmel."

On March 25, 2001, Pope John Paul II presented a letter in honor of the 750th Anniversary of the Scapular. In his letter, the Pope recalled that generations of Carmelites "in their journey towards the holy mountain, Jesus Christ Our Lord, have sought to model their lives after the example of Mary." The Pope affirmed that "contemplation of Mary flourishes in Carmel." Mary "knew how to be open to the Word of God... [and] was educated and formed by the Spirit [and] was able to read her own life experience in the light of faith."\(^74\)

The Pope commented that the Carmelite scapular is a sign of "the continuous protection of the Blessed Virgin" as well as an awareness that devotion to Mary "must become a habit... a permanent way of Christian living...of prayer and the interior life...the sacraments and concrete exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy."\(^75\)

On May 16, 2001, the feast of St. Simon Stock, the Prior General of the Carmelite Friars, Fr. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm. and the Superior General of the Discalced Carmelites, Fr. Camilo Maccise, OCD, presented a letter, With Mary the Mother of Jesus, on the anniversary of the Scapular.

They spoke of the scapular as "this ancient symbol based on a venerable tradition." They assert: "The central truth of the vision story is the lived experience of Carmel, its Patroness has protected it and ensured its perseverance; Mary's prayers are powerful in securing eternal life."\(^76\)

The letter explains that the symbol of the scapular for Carmelites has meant Mary's care for the members of the Order even after death. The letter notes: "Patronage is a two-way relationship. We receive Mary's care; in turn we are called upon to imitate her and to honor her through fidelity to her Son."\(^77\)

The letter reminds us that the scapular is a habit that relates one to the Carmelite Order: "Our tradition shows the firmest conviction that the habit


\(^75\) Ibid., 5.

\(^76\) Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm and Camilo Maccise, OCD (Superiors General), "With Mary the Mother of Jesus: Our Lady in the Life of Carmel," Carmel in the World 40, no. 3 (Aylesford, England: May 16, 2001), 22.

\(^77\) Ibid., 26.
and the Scapular have no salvific effect unless we see their meaning as Mary's habit which affiliates us to the Carmelite Family, and we live according to her example.”

The generals of the two branches of the Order assert that the scapular is a treasure of the Carmelite Family and to be enrolled in the Scapular is to be associated with the Family of Carmel: “In particular we should stress that the one wearing it should have a relationship with Mary in addition to expecting favour from her. If we are to be clothed in Mary’s habit, we should strive to be clothed also in her virtues. The Scapular is one of the means of directing people to Mary and thus to her Son.”

Servites

Around 1245, seven cloth merchants in Florence, who were members of a fraternity dedicated to the Virgin Mary, decided to live together in penance and poverty. They began to wear a habit of lay penitents, and sought a place “where they could be undisturbed for contemplation.” These men were canonized by Leo XIII as the Seven Holy Founders.

The Legenda asserts that from the start “all the local people immediately began to call them by the familiar name, Friar Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” Initially the distinguishing marks of this group were its poverty, solitude, and contemplation as well as devotion to Mary.

The Legenda indicates that the number of people who came seeking spiritual direction caused some of the group to seek out deeper solitude, moving to Monte Senario, a mountain about eight miles outside of Florence. Nevertheless, people continued to come even to the mountain. The account demonstrates the tension between the contemplative solitude they sought and the spiritual help that was requested of them. This pull between the contemplative and the apostolic elements continued through the history.

The Legenda recounts that the Blessed Virgin appeared to the Dominican, Peter of Verona (Peter Martyr) who was preaching in Florence at the time. Mary said that these men had been chosen for “her special service.” Their habit was to be “a sign of the humility of the Blessed Virgin Mary and an unmistakable symbol of the pain she suffered in the most bitter Passion of her Son.

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78 Ibid., 30.
79 Ibid., 34.
81 Ibid., 32, 232.
82 Ibid., 52, 254.
The habit is black and suggests the color with Mary's widowhood, as apparently black was worn by widows.

Although the brothers received approval from the Church in 1256, they came under the scrutiny of the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, which was seeking to suppress the smaller groups of mendicants. The Servites quickly disassociated themselves from the mendicants. This allowed them to survive, however, it unwittingly lessened their commitment to poverty. A commentary on their constitutions notes: "with the weakening of the characteristics of poverty and solitude, service to Mary remained the principal primitive and specific element, and therefore it was developed in a special way."\(^83\)

The oldest accounts of the saints, beginning with the fourteenth century, stress the *servitium Domini*, service of the Lord, as the ideal. However, because of a sense of imperfection and inability to live this service fully, the friars make a complete dedilico, dedication, to Mary to enable them to bring about this total dedication to the Lord. The Servite Historical Commission comments, "...the friars served Mary through the entire *servitium Domini*. Consequently every act of this service constituted in its turn a service to Mary."\(^84\) Thus, the friars saw their life together, their liturgical life, and their apostolic life as service of the Lord through dedication to Mary.

The *Legend* indicates how the author and presumably the other Servites saw themselves in relation to Mary. The Order is said to be uniquely devoted to Mary and takes its name from her.\(^85\) While other Orders might seek her help in their needs, they also seek the help of their founders but the Servites are single-minded: "They are singularly dedicated to her; she is their special refuge, the only mother and sovereign to whom they can and should turn in their need for themselves or for the Order." As Mary has a special care for each member of her Order, the members bear a responsibility for such a great protectress:

But this privilege carries with it an obligation. More than those of other Orders, the friars of her order are called to be holy in her sight and excel in pious works. Called to serve a Lady so great that she deigns to take this special care for them, they are likewise called more than others to purity of heart.\(^86\)

The first chapter of the oldest surviving constitutions, the *Constitutiones antiquae* (before 1295), concern acts of devotion towards the Blessed

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84 Ibid., 8.
85 *Legenda de Origine Ordinis fratrum Servorum Virginis Mariae*, in *Sources for the History and Spirituality of the Servants of Mary*, vol. I, from 1245 to 1348 (Sotto il Monte, Bergamo, Italy: Servitium Editrice, 2000), 201-202.
86 Ibid., 202-204.
Virgin Mary, *de reverentiis beatae Marie virgini exhibendis*. We will just note a few of these

- community Mass of St. Mary on Saturdays and Wednesdays,
- a *Vigil of Our Lady* every evening with three readings,
- the hebdomadarian, at the beginning of every canonical hour, having said the *Pater Noster* quietly, immediately adds the first *Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum...* and the friars reply *Benedicta tu in mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui...*”
- The *Salve Regina* at the end of every hour and after the community Mass is not to be omitted...”
- Every evening, the *Salve* is to be sung with great devotion after the reading of the *Vigil of Our Lady*, when this is sung; when and if the *Vigil* is not sung, the *Salve Regina* is to be sung at the end of Compline. All the friars present in the priory, including the provincials and other officials, are to take part from the very beginning, having put aside every other task; and the bell is to be rung so that the friars cannot put forward excuses.
- Every church of our Order and high altar are to be erected and consecrated in honor of Our Lady, when there are no particular obstacles...

These practices demonstrate a liturgical thrust of the Servites. The recent introduction to the *Constitutions* observes that “A particular awareness of the presence of the Mother of God permeates the entire liturgy...the prescription of acts (bows, genuflections) express the awareness of the friars that they are *servants* and of the merciful intercession of Our Lady.... This presence of St. Mary is emphasized in the more important acts of the life of the order.”

This introduction points out that the Marian devotion of the early Servites is expressed in the Liturgy:

The figure of the Mother of God never had a separate place in the liturgy of the Servants of Mary: She is always incorporated into the most broad appreciation of the paschal mystery, which permeates the entire year. The liturgical year always follows the basic shape of the Roman Church’s calendar, but, underlying it is a quite different, welldefined structure: It begins with the birthday of the Virgin and unfolds right through to her Assumption, with special attention to the Marian festivals and a regular emphasis on the Marian celebration on Saturdays.

In the fifteenth century, the lay groups who associated themselves with the Order, emphasized the relationship of the habit with Our Lady’s presence at the Passion. Servite churches began to have side altars dedicated to the Pieta. Attention was given to the Sorrows of Mary. The societies related to the

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88 “Introduction” *Liturgical Sources*, in *Sources for the History and Spirituality of the Servants of St. Mary* (Sotto il Monte, Bergamo, Italy: Servitium Editrice, 2000), 170.
Servites had been known as the “Confraternities of the Habit of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” Pope Innocent X, in 1645, allowed the name to be changed to the “Confraternities of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin.”

The devotional practice of the Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows developed during the first part of the seventeenth century. Among the devotions approved by Pope Paul V on February 14, 1607, for the confraternities established in Servite churches was the recitation of seven Our Fathers and seven Hail Marys in honor of the seven sorrows of the Blessed Virgin. The writings of the Servite Arcangelo Ballottini contributed to the emphasis on the Sorrows of Our Lady in Servite spirituality.

In a book, written in 1608, he encouraged Servite tercaries to recite the sorrowful mysteries of the Rosary daily, mindful of Mary’s sufferings during the Passion. By 1617, references begin to appear to the “Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows,” although its origin is not known. The traditional form of this prayer includes the recitation of an Our Father, followed by seven Hail Marys for each of the Sorrows, as well as introductory and closing prayers.89

In 1668, the liturgical feast of Our Lady of Sorrows was approved and in 1669, the Prior General Giulio Arrighetti stated that Our Lady of Sorrows was the principal patron of the order. In 1694, it was declared that “The spirit of our foundation and order is to meditate often, even constantly, on the sorrows of the holy Mother of God and to strive to teach this devotion to the whole world, if this is possible.”90

The image of the suffering Mother opened the hearts of many Servites to humble service for suffering people. In the 19th century, St. Anthony Pucci, a pastor of a poor parish, drew from Mary’s sufferings sensitivity to the needs of his people.

In recent years, Servites have reframed the emphasis from Mother of Sorrows to Mother of Compassion, with a focus on Mary’s sharing the sufferings of the sisters and brothers of her Son. The Historical Commission observes: “Today, by a return to its sources, the order has rediscovered the abiding foundation of its devotion toward the Mother of God: service, regardless of the more or less specialized devotion under which Mary is venerated.”91

89 Order of Friar Servants of Mary, Rosary of Our Lady of Sorrows (Chicago, IL: Friar Servants of Mary, 1990), 7-12.
90 Borntrager, Mary, 10.
91 Borntrager, Mary, 11.
The present *Constitutions* affirm the Marian charism of the Order:

In order to serve the Lord and their brothers, Servites, from the very beginning, have dedicated themselves to the Mother of God, to her whom God himself blessed among all women. They have turned towards her in their own journey towards Christ and in their task of bringing him to men.\(^{92}\)

Since we desire to express the charism of the Order, we give ourselves in service to others and thus prolong the active presence of the Mother of Jesus in the history of salvation.\(^{93}\)

**Jesuits**

J. de Guibert, S.J. has written, "In order to understand a school of spirituality with depth, we must first of all study the supernatural experience which is its basis and point of departure."\(^{94}\) Jesuit spirituality in general and its Marian aspects are closely related to the experience of St. Ignatius.

Mary plays a key role in the early stages of his conversion, as can be seen in his autobiography. In May, 1521, Ignatius' legs were wounded in a battle between the French and Spaniards over the border of the two countries. The French delivered him to the Loyola family castle. While convalescing, he read a life of Christ and a life of the saints, which were instrumental in his conversion. In his autobiography, written in the third person, he recounts a vision he experienced:

One night while he was awake, he saw clearly an image of Our Lady with the holy child Jesus. From this sight he received for a considerable time very great consolation, and he was left with such loathing for his whole past life and especially for the things of the flesh, that it seemed that all the fantasies he had previously pictured in his mind were driven from it.\(^{95}\)

He began to write out some of the things he was reading, using red ink for the words of Christ and blue for the words of Mary. When Ignatius was well enough, he set out on a journey. He spent the first night in vigil at the chapel of Our Lady of Aranzazu. After settling some debts, he gave money to adorn a statue of Our Lady.

Traveling on a mule, Ignatius met a Moor and they accompanied each other on the road. After they parted, Ignatius was troubled because the Moor had

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\(^{92}\) Constitutions of the Order of Servants of Mary, 5, in Borntrager, *Mary*, 13

\(^{93}\) Ibid., 69, 13.


denied the perpetual virginity of Mary. Ignatius wondered if he should stab the man, "He thought he had done wrong in allowing the Moor to say such things about Our Lady and that he was obliged to defend her honor." Uncertain what to do, he resolved at a fork in the road to let the mule either follow the Moor or go the other way. The mule went the other way.

Ignatius went on to the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat. After a general confession, he made a vigil at the altar of Our Lady:

He resolved to watch over his arms all one night, without sitting down or going to bed, but standing a while and kneeling a while, before the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat ... he arranged with his confessor to take his mule and to place his sword and his dagger in the church on the altar of Our Lady ... On the feast of Our Lady in March in the year 1522, he went at night as secretly as he could to a poor man and stripping off all his garments he gave them to the poor man and dressed himself in the desired clothing and went to kneel before the altar of Our Lady. At times in this way, at other times standing, with his pilgrim's staff in his hand he spent the whole night.

Ignatius and his first followers made their vows at Montmatre in Paris on the feast of the Assumption, 1534. Ignatius waited a year after his ordination to say Mass. He prayed to Mary that she might desire to place him with her Son. He said his first Mass in the Basilica of St. Mary Major on Christmas Day, 1538. He made his religious profession at the altar of the Virgin in St. Paul's Outside the Walls.

Joseph de Guibert, S.J. asks, "Were not the graces received from her at Montserrat and at Manresa the starting point of Ignatius' spiritual ascent?" De Guibert speaks of Ignatius' "chivalrous solicitude to honor Mary and a fervent zeal in serving her glory."

It was during his stay at Manresa, that Ignatius composed a good portion of his *Spiritual Exercises*. A very important element in the *Exercises* are the meditations on the life of Christ. Hugo Rahner, S.J. has commented: "It is quite certain that the whole of Ignatian theology and mysticism was essentially Christological. Christ was the sun of his life..."

Within this Christological framework, we find Mary. Dispersed through the *Exercises* are colloquies in which the one doing the exercises asks grace
from Christ and the Father. At times one speaks to Mary, asking the particular grace needed. For instance, in the Third Exercise in the First Week, we read: "The first colloquy is with Our Lady that she may obtain grace for me from her Son and Lord for three things..."101

To get some idea of the role of Mary in Ignatius' view, we can look at the First Contemplation for the Second Week. Ignatius suggests that we listen to the people of the earth swearing and blaspheming. This vision of the depravity of the world creates the context for God's plan. The next phase is to listen to the Divine Persons who seek the redemption of the world. The third step is the scene of the Annunciation: "Then I will listen to what the angel and Our Lady are saying. Afterwards I will reflect on this, to draw profit from their words."102

Maurice Giuliani comments that the crucial answer of the Trinity to the depravity of the world takes place within the room of Mary: "Each step of the contemplation obliges us to keep our eyes fixed at the same time on the Trinity which saves, on the world plunged into sin and on the virgin in whom it is taking place and in whom takes place the union of God saviour and man saved."

The conclusion of the Contemplation is a colloquy in which the one making the meditation speaks to the Three Divine Persons or to "our mother and Lady," asking favors from them.104

The very next contemplation begins with the toils and hardships of Mary and Joseph for the birth of the Lord in a cave. Immediately, the mediation moves through the sufferings of Christ at birth, His poverty, labors, hunger, thirst, insults and injuries, and the culmination at the cross: "that... He might die on the cross, and all this for me."105

This is not a typical Christmas card nativity scene but one that moves quickly from the birth to the Passion. Karl Rahner commenting on Mary's place in the Exercises, explains that Mary represents the image of the redeemed person.106 Rahner states, "The act of God's love is completely successful in Mary.

104 Ganss, 58.
105 Mottola, 71.
... She conceives the Word, to borrow a phrase from the Fathers, simultaneously in faith, heart, and womb."

William W. Meissner, a Jesuit psychiatrist, who has written extensively on Ignatius, considers the significance of the First Contemplation of the Fourth Week, where the Risen Jesus appears to His Mother. According to Meissner, "in his [Ignatius'] mind the images of the Blessed Mother and the Resurrection were intimately linked."107

Meissner points out that as Ignatius concluded the third week on Mary's grief and loneliness, it is not surprising that a meditation involving Mary opens the fourth week, "as though she were the connecting link between the passion and death and the resurrection. The experience of the resurrection seems absorbed into this reunion of the suffering son and the grieving mother."109

Meissner proposes that Ignatius is opening to those completing the Exercises a conversion experience similar to his own:

The movement here is directly derivative from Ignatius' own conversion experience in which the Blessed Mother played such a salient role, so that by implication similar dynamics operative in the setting may well underlie the options Ignatius follows in proposing the structure of the fourth week [in which the individual makes the final choices of conversion].110

The Exercises play a key role in the formation of the sons of St. Ignatius. Central to the novitiate experience is the thirty day retreat on the Exercises, a real grounding in the spirituality of Ignatius. In addition, the Exercises are a means by which Jesuits share their spirituality with others, religious and lay people. As we have seen, just as Mary played a role in Ignatius' conversion, secondary, of course, to Christ, so she has a role in the exercises that Ignatius designed to promote the conversion of others and to form their spiritual attitudes. Ignatius sees her role within the key Christological moments of the Incarnation, the birth, the death, and the Resurrection of Christ.

Conclusions

Each of the classical orders that we have considered has a distinct Marian profile. With the Benedictines, the reflective environment of Lectio and the Liturgy may dispose one toward Marian devotion, as the individual is moved. The Cistercians, members of the Benedictine family, demonstrate a

107 Ibid., 263-264.
109 Ibid., 233-234.
110 Ibid.

120 FR. VINCENT WISEMAN, O.P.
stronger communal devotion to Mary. Among the Orders, the two whose histories are most involved with their Marian devotion have been the Carmelites and the Servites. Of all the Orders, the Servites incorporate Marian devotion into the daily prayer life of the community most especially.

All orders and congregations reflect the intuitions of their founders, yet the Franciscans and the Jesuits retain a special awareness of St. Francis and St. Ignatius. Thus, Franciscans may tend to see the poverty and humility of Mary and Jesuits to see Mary in the context of the mysteries of Christ.

The Cistercians, Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Servites, affirm that they have a special relationship with Mary. This relationship is seen to have begun with the founder himself. The Cistercians and the Carmelites look to the Marian name of their first chapels. St. Francis comes to understand his mission at the Marian chapel, the Portiuncula. Ignatius discerns the steps of his vocation through a series of vigils at Marian chapels.

Orders have clarified their associations with particular Marian devotions. Thus the Dominicans hope for renewed rosary preaching. The Carmelites present the devotion to the Scapular in terms of a deeper interior life in imitation of Mary and listening to the Word. The Servites see in their devotion to Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows an invitation to greater compassion and service for the afflicted.

Both St. Dominic and St. Catherine associate Mary with the ministry of preaching. The Franciscans recall that Mary was present at Pentecost and see Mary as the patroness of their ministry. The Jesuits, using the Exercises, help others to see Mary in the fundamental Christological mysteries.