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Lumen Gentium, NOS. 55 to 59

James T. O'Connor

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Lumen Gentium, NOS. 55 TO 59

Introduction

After the first proposed schema on Mary (Dec. 1962) was rejected by the bishops and it had been decided to incorporate the conciliar teaching on Our Lady into *Lumen Gentium*, a draft of this new document was presented to the bishops on September 15, 1964. This draft contained two texts, called the *Textus Prior* (prepared March 1964) and the *Textus Emendatus* (revised July 1964). The TP of March 1964 was actually the working document for the drafting commission.

On October 27, 1964, a new *Textus Emendatus*, with revisions based on conciliar discussions held in September 1964, was given to the bishops; the relatio on it was given in the October 29, 1964 session. These texts are found in *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, vol. 3, pt. 6, pp. 10ff. This TE (Oct. 1964) then replaced the two texts of September 15, 1964 (*Acta Synodalia . . . Vaticani II*, vol. 3, pt. 1, pp. 353ff.) which we have called the draft (TP and TE) of September 1964. The TE of September 1964 is, then, the TP of October 1964. It is this which was the actual working document, and it is this text which we translate in what follows in order to show how the various changes were incorporated into it, as well as giving the official explanations for the changes.

Lumen Gentium, 55-59

Paragraphs 55-59 of Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium* all fall under the general title "The Role of the Blessed Virgin in the Economy of Salvation," a general heading already contained in the *De Beata*. The aim of these paragraphs is to give a general outline of Mary's life and work as these can be discerned from Sacred Scripture and Tradition. My procedure in treating the matter will be to give a translation of the *Textus Prior* of Octo-

ber (the Textus Emendatus of Sept. 1964), then pass over it again in review to indicate the changes incorporated into the text during subsequent discussions.

Paragraph 55. (49 in Prior of Sept., 53 in T.E. of Sept., becoming 55 in the Textus Emendatus of Oct. 1964.)

The TE of Sept., 1964 (the Prior of Oct., 1964) reads:

The Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and the Tradition which is to be venerated describe (*describunt*) [1.] the role of the Mother of the Savior in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light, and propose it as something to be examined. And indeed from the beginning of the history of salvation described in the books of the Old Testament, by which the advent of Christ into the world was gradually prepared, the figure of the woman, the Mother of the Redeemer, is gradually brought to light (*in apicium profertur*) [2.] more clearly, if the ancient documents are considered, as they should be (*ut oportet*) [3.], in the light of further and full revelation [4.], as they are read in the Church. Thus, she is already prophetically foreshadowed (*adumbratur*) [5.] in the promise concerning the victory over the serpent (cf. Gn. 3:15) which promise was given to the first parents who had fallen into sin. [6.] This is the Virgin who will conceive and bear a Son, whose Name will be called Emmanuel (Is. 7:14); Mt. 1:22-23; cf. Mic. 5:2-3). She stands out among the humble and poor of the Lord who with trust hope for and accept salvation from Him. Finally, with her [7.], after a long expectation of the promise, the times are fulfilled and the new Economy is established when the Son of God assumed human nature [8.] so that, by the mysteries of His flesh, He might free man from sin.¹

1. *Describunt* becomes ostendunt. In the TE of Oct. 1964² the "describe" was changed to read "show forth." Some of the bishops had wanted to say that the Old and New Testaments "insinuate" (*innuunt*) the role of the Mother of the Lord. The Commission decided on "show forth" and notes that the subject of this verb is Sacred Scripture and the Tradition which is to be venerated.

¹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 12.

² *Ibid.*

ed.³ The "which is to be venerated" is a somewhat awkward translation but it aims to catch the force of the Latin which reads "*Traditio veneranda*" and not, as one might expect, "*Traditio venerabilis*." It is not simply a "venerable tradition" being spoken of here, but of that unique Tradition of the Church which must be venerated and adhered to.

2. The *in apricum* was changed to *in lucem*, without any change in meaning at suggestion of the bishop of Dalat, Viet Nam, Simon Hoa Nguyen-Van-Hien.⁴

3. *Ut oportet* was ultimately dropped and the reason for this is not very clear. By Nov. 17, 1964, when the last changes and relatio on Ch. 8 were done, it still remained. In order to make the text clearer in distinguishing between the process of salvation history and the clearer way we understand that history in the light of fuller revelation, thirteen bishops had requested a re-writing of the section on how the Scriptures were to be read, but included the "ut oportet" in their re-writing. The Commission responded to their suggestion by re-working the text as we presently find it, thereby achieving the clarity desired while adhering more closely than the proposed suggestion to the TE as previously corrected.⁵ Three bishops indeed had requested that the "ut oportet" be modified by adding the phrase "ut oportet in theologia," thus clearly distinguishing between how the SS is to be understood in itself and how it is to be read for theological use. The Commission, which had dropped the "ut oportet" in its reworking of the text, rejected this suggestion in favor of its own reworked text.⁶

4. *Sub luce ulterioris et plenae revelationis considerantur* stays the same except that *considerantur* becomes "*intelliguntur*" in LG. The "*intelliguntur*" is part of the reworking of the sentence, found in the relatio of Nov. 16, 1964.⁷ We shall return to the significance of this change below.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 742; cf. also, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 25.

⁵ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 136.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 156.

5. *Adumbratur* had originally been *praevidetur* in the Prior of Sept. 1964.

The "adumbratur" was proposed for change by some bishops who wanted "praevidetur" (foreseen) substituted for it, but the Response in Oct. 1964 was that this was not pleasing to the biblical experts on the doctrinal commission.⁸ The dispute over this word continued until the end. In the relatio of Nov. 16, 1964, we see that 144 bishops asked that the word "designatur" be substituted for the "adumbratur," while 13 bishops had asked that a weaker expression than "adumbratur" be used. The Commission responded that the words "prophetic[o] [sic] adumbratur" accurately expressed the oracle (i.e. of Gen. 3:15).⁹

6. The word *similiter* was added before the reference to Isaiah to show that the proposed mode for reading the SS (i.e., under the light of further revelation) applied not only to Gen. 3:15 but to all the texts.¹⁰ The Commission refused to pass judgment on the literal sense of Is. 7:14, etc.¹¹

7. The words *praecelsa Filia Sion* were added after the "With her finally" in the TE of Oct. 1964, because over 40 bishops had requested such an insertion. It was added, however, as the relatio notes, "without biblical references."¹²

8. *Humanam naturam assumpsit*. To this *ex ea* is added in the TE of Oct. 29, 1964.¹³ The reason for the insertion was to make it clear that the new Economia of salvation was inaugurated with Mary since her Son was to be the Redeemer.¹⁴

In presenting this section to the bishops on Sept. 16, 1964, Cardinal Roy of Quebec, the relator, speaking of the sections which summarize the life and work of Mary as drawn from SS and Tradition, said: "The Sacred Page however is read, as it should be—under the light of complete revelation and of the

⁸ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 26.

⁹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 136.

¹⁰ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 26; vol. 3, pt. 8, pp. 156-157.

¹¹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 157.

¹² *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 25.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

exposition of the Fathers and the ecclesiastical Magisterium.”¹⁵ He notes that the text does not avoid those SS passages which, according to many non-Catholics, offer difficulties for the Church’s Mariology.¹⁶

Cardinal Silva Henriquez of Chile referred to the use of SS in his intervention, noting that, in the TE of Sept. (the Prior of Oct.), SS was:

. . . frequently cited not literally but according to its sense, and thus the reason why the references occur with the particle “cf.” This however does not signify that the literal sense of all the citations is called into doubt. Nevertheless there are cases in which the literal sense does not seem to be sufficiently clear. To avoid ambiguity—it is desired that the places in which the literal sense is used be cited literally, omitting the particle “cf.” which can be reserved for those texts in which the sense is somewhat amplified or is accepted with an interpretation added by sacred tradition.¹⁷

Cardinal Bea also returned to this point—but more critically. Noting that the Chapter states that it does not intend to settle questions freely disputed among theologians, he goes on to say that it “then affirms that the Blessed Virgin is ‘prophetically foreshadowed’ in the promise made to our first parents, etc.” Yet, he adds, this point is fiercely disputed (*acriter disputari*) among Catholics themselves.¹⁸ He states that, in other cases as well, the SS are explained “in sensu determinato” as if their meaning was evident from the text alone.¹⁹ And he cites as examples the words of Christ on the Cross to Mary and John, and those things which are said about the sanctification of John in the womb.²⁰

Bishop Hadrian Djajasepoetra of Djakarta goes even further and notes that the three Synoptic Gospels, “which more closely

¹⁵ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 436; cf. also, *ibid.*, p. 367.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 453.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 455.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 457.

approach the primitive apostolic preaching," only mention one appearance of Mary in the public life. Only John puts her at Cana and at the Cross. "If we sincerely wish to follow evangelical truth, we should say that Mary almost disappears in the public life of Jesus."²¹

The nature of the interventions and of the ultimate changes in the text are themselves sufficient to indicate that the focus of discussion on paragraph 55 centered on the correct manner of reading and understanding the Sacred Scriptures. The very effort made by the Council to root its presentation of Our Lady and her role in the Christian Economy in the revealed word—and this from directly theological as well as ecumenical motives—reflected, by way of concrete application, the conciliar discussions on *Dei Verbum*, discussions which focused on the interrelation among Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture, and the Magisterium. The questions raised are manifold: What is the connection between Old and New Testaments? What is the nature of the Old Testament prophecies? What insight does the fullness of revelation give us into the true meaning of earlier partial manifestations? Is there a specifically Catholic way of reading Scripture?

Looking at the final text of paragraph 55—developed as a result of the discussions and changes—one can discern at least partial answers to some of these questions, answers furthermore in noteworthy harmony with the text of *Dei Verbum* as that document was finally promulgated.²²

The very first sentence of article 55 has a double subject, Sacred Scripture and Tradition. In reference to these, *Dei Verbum* says: "Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture constitute the one

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 459.

²² Fr. Avery Dulles in an excellent article ("Vatican II and the Church's Purpose," *Theology Digest* 32, 4 (1985): 341ff.) has demonstrated the coherence found among the documents of Vatican II when they speak of the purpose or mission of the Church—a remarkable coherence when one remembers the number of documents and the period of years involved in the discussions which produced them. A similar study is needed to show the coherence in the Council's teaching on Sacred Scripture and the Council's own adherence to the principles of exegesis which it taught in *Dei Verbum*.

sacred deposit of the Word of God, committed to the Church" (*Dei Verbum*, no. 10). It is the two of these together, according to *Lumen Gentium*, no. 55, which show forth the role of the mother of the Savior. It is to be noted, furthermore, that God's revelation is not only a progressive disclosure in Himself and His plans for mankind's salvation, but also a progressive understanding on our part of what it is that He has revealed. This realization shows the significance of the change in the text of article 55 noted above in no. 4. The Scriptural documents are not only to be "*considered* in the light of further and full revelation" but are to be "*understood* in the light of further and full revelation." In the light of the fullness of revelation we are not "reading back into" the documents something which is not really there, but something which is truly there but only fully understood when read in the perspective of the completed work. In response to various suggestions, the Council refused to pass judgment on the literal meaning of many of the Scriptural texts—Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2-3, as cited in paragraph 55, being specific examples of that decision. In doing so, however, the bishops explicitly affirmed that Mary was "prophetically foreshadowed" in texts such as these. The apparent contradiction in those two positions is removed, I think, when one considers the ambiguities attendant upon any discussion of the "literal" sense of a statement. As used in exegetical discussions, the literal sense of Isaiah 7:14, for example, is concerned with the meaning directly intended to be conveyed by the human author at the time he wrote or spoke the words in question. Often enough the meaning of the spoken or written word in this specific sense of literal can be discerned. Not infrequently, however, this notion of a "literal sense" cannot be adequately discerned. This is true not only because time, culture, patterns of thought, insufficient awareness of the historical context, etc. limit an *interpreter's* understanding but also because there are times when the full meaning of the text escapes or runs beyond the author himself. Most of us have had the experience of writing something and, upon reflection, saying, "The words just don't express all that I intended." But there is also the experience of, upon reflection, realizing that "I've actually said more there than I clearly real-

ized at the time. It's better or more complete than I first perceived." The discussion of the *sensus plenior* contained in Scripture too often centers on the fuller meaning put into the words by the divine Author, neglecting the fact that there are elements of meaning which exist at the periphery of a human author's mind or psyche—consciously, indistinctly, or even unconsciously—which find their way into his or her speech and writing. Are such items to be excluded from the "literal" sense of what the author spoke or wrote, by a somewhat arbitrary definition on an interpreter's part? Perhaps. But perhaps it is also true to say that, just as life is often stranger than fiction, so the meaning of the spoken or written word will actually exceed what literary analysis "allows" it to mean. Who then really should have the courage to say, "This is all and only what Isaiah meant"? Not the Church. She is humble enough to realize that at least part of what an author had in his perspective—either directly or indirectly, explicitly or at the very periphery of consciousness—as he wrote may be beyond our grasp to determine, and so she normally abstains from efforts to determine the "literal" sense of a passage in the narrow sense of "literal" often employed today. But like the human author who, upon reflection, says, "There's more there than even I perceived at first," the Church will, in the light of later and fuller revelation, look upon the Scripture and say, "More is being conveyed, more than first appears." In doing this, of course, the Church is faithful to the statement of John the Evangelist who, having quoted Isaiah, wrote: "Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him" (Jn. 12:41). Thus, the Mother of the Savior, declares *Lumen Gentium*, is actually "prophetically foreshadowed" in the Old Testament. This is undoubtedly part of the divine plan for the interrelation of the Old and New Testaments. As *Dei Verbum* teaches: "Therefore God, the inspirer and author of the books of both Testaments, has wisely arranged it that the New should lie hidden in the Old and that the Old would be manifest in the New" (*Dei Verbum*, no. 16). Mary is, moreover, declares the Council, the "outstanding Daughter of Sion" with whom the "new Economy of salvation is established" since the eternal Son takes "human nature from her" so that we may be saved by the mysteries

of His flesh. In proclaiming Mary "outstanding Daughter of Sion," the Council is giving us a "global reading" of O.T. pre-figurations of Mary—again without giving a specific exegesis to substantiate this declaration. How one reconciles the Council's teaching with the opinion of some exegetes that the identification of Mary as the Daughter of Sion is "an identification that is quite dubious" is a question which falls outside the scope of the present commentary.²³

Paragraph 56 (same numeration in previous drafts as seen above in no. 55. It became 56 in TE of Oct. 29, 1964.)²⁴

The TE reads:

Moreover, the Father of mercies willed that the consent of the predestined mother [1.] should precede the incarnation, so that, just as a woman contributed to death so also one would contribute to life. [2.] Moreover because the Blessed Virgin could not be less than was fitting for the Mother of God, [3.] it is not to be wondered at that, among the holy Fathers, the usage prevailed according to which they called the Mother of God completely holy and immune from all spot [4.] or stain of sin, fashioned and formed by the Holy Spirit into a new creature as it were. Enriched by the splendors of a totally singular [5.] sanctity from the first instant of her conception, the Virgin of Nazareth is, by the command of God, saluted by the Angel of the annunciation as "full of grace" (cf. Lk. 1:28) [6.], and she herself responds to the heavenly messenger, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word" (Lk. 1:38). Thus Mary, the daughter of Adam, consenting to the divine word, became the mother of Jesus, the unique Mediator [7.], embracing the saving will of God with a full heart and hindered by no sin so that she dedicated herself totally as the handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, serving under Christ and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, the mystery of redemption. Rightly therefore the holy Fathers considered [8.] Mary as being used by God not merely passively but cooperating in human salvation with a free faith and obedience. For she is, as St. Irenaeus says,

²³ R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1977), p. 465.

²⁴ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 12.

"obedient and is made the cause of salvation for herself and the whole human race." Therefore, the ancient fathers [9.], in their preaching, were accustomed to assert: "The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosened by the obedience of Mary; what the virgin Eve bound by her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith"; "through the virgin Eve death appeared, through the Virgin or the Virgin Mary life appeared"; and, making a comparison with Eve, called Mary, "mother of the living" and offered almost as a proverb, "death through Eve, life through Mary."²⁵

1. Three bishops wanted that a reference to Mary's awareness of the mystery of the Incarnation be added after the words "predestined mother." The Commission refused this request without giving a reason.²⁶
2. The "*Quod praecllentissime valet . . . mundo effudit*" ("This is most especially true of the Mother of Jesus who poured forth on the world the Life itself which renews all things—") is added in TE of Oct. 29, 1964²⁷ to the previous texts and ultimately the words "*et a Deo donis tanto munere dignis praedita est*" ("and who was enriched by God for so great a task by suitable gifts") are further added.
3. The reference to the Virgin as not capable of being other than was fitting for the Mother of God, which is actually an application of the "*potuit, deuit, fecit*" axiom was dropped at the request of many bishops because the certitude of its application in particular cases can only be seen *post factum*.²⁸
4. The "*naevo*" was dropped also at the suggestion of the bishop of Dalat, Viet Nam.²⁹
5. The "*singularis prorsus*" had been added to the Sept. Prior already in the TE of Sept., as had the reshaping of the first sentence.
6. Some 10 or so bishops petitioned that the "*gratia plena*" be replaced with some phrase such as "*summe Deo grata*," etc. The

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

²⁶ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, pp. 157.

²⁷ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 13.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Commission said the "gratia plena" should remain given its wide use in the Church. The Commission added that no position is taken in the text about the philological controversy among the exegetes as to the proper way to translate the "ke-charitomene."³⁰ This dispute, like the one on the "adumbratur" continued up to the relatio of Nov. 16, 1964. At that stage it is reported that almost 40 bishops were still asking that the "gratia plena" be either retranslated or that the reference to Luke's Gospel be withdrawn. The Commission refused, referring to its previous response.³¹

7. The "unique mediator" was dropped by suggestion, as not being required in the context.³²

8. "The holy fathers considered etc." was changed to "consider" in the present tense, to show the perennial value of the patristic doctrine.³³

9. "Non pauci" was added in TE of Oct. 1964³⁴ in the reference to the Fathers. This was done for greater accuracy.³⁵ Basically the rest of this paragraph remains the same, except for minor stylistic changes.

The results of the changes are such that paragraph 55 stands as one of the chapter's strongest statements on Mary's cooperation in the Redemption. It is a cooperation not simply limited to the consent which she gave at the Annunciation, but rather which extends to the person and work of her Son so that under Him and with Him her dedication serves the mystery of redemption. It is, moreover, a cooperation which is active, flowing from the free faith and obedience of a heart totally dedicated. The freedom, spontaneity and active nature of Mary's dedication to the work of salvation is a truth correlative to the truth that, in every work of grace, it is God who takes the initiative. At times, indeed, this initiative is so described that human freedom is depicted as standing in total receptivity, a description which hard-

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 158.

³² *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 27.

³³ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 159.

³⁴ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

ly avoids the notion of total passivity. Such is not in fact the case. The mystery of grace and especially of its prevenient nature must always be rooted in that transcendent causality of God which is capable of begetting not mere passive reception but rather spontaneity and freedom. As such, the sacred humanity of Christ Himself and the uniquely graced humanity of Mary always remain the paradigms against which the theorems on grace must be measured. It is because of the wholly mysterious nature of God's causality that Mary's role can be described as that of obediential *causality*, a truth illustrated by the patristic citations which conclude the paragraph.

Paragraph 57. (Became 57 in TE of Oct. 29, 1964.)

It reads:

Moreover, this union of the Mother with her Son in the work of salvation is manifested from the time of the virginal conception of Christ until His death; in the first place, indeed, when Mary, arising with haste to visit Elizabeth, is greeted by her as blessed, because of her faith in the promise of salvation, and the precursor is sanctified [1.] in the womb of his mother (cf. Lk. 1:41-45); at the nativity indeed when the Mother of God joyfully showed to the shepherds and Magi her first-born Son, who did not diminish but sanctified her virginal integrity [2.]. When indeed she presented him to the Lord in the Temple [3.], having made the offering of the poor, she heard Simeon simultaneously foretell that her Son would be a sign of contradiction and that a sword would pierce the soul of the mother so that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed (cf. Lk. 2:34-35). His parents found the boy Jesus, when He had been lost and they had sought him with sorrow, in the Temple, occupied with the affairs of His Father; they did not understand His words, but His mother preserved all these things to be meditated upon in her heart (cf. Lk. 2:41-51).^{35a}

1. Speaking of visitation, TE of Oct. 1964 substitutes "exultavit" for the "sanctificatur" of the TE.³⁶ This is probably due to

^{35a} *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

criticism of Cardinal Bea (cf. above, p. 78). The relatio of Oct. 1964 states that it is proposed for elimination because "a healthy exegesis of the text does not sustain this interpretation. . . . As a result the very word found in SS is used."³⁷

2. The "non minuit sed sacravit" appears in all four drafts. This is not the way it was found in the originally proposed Constitution of Dec. 1, 1962. Speaking of the "virginitas in partu" that document said:

It was completely necessary that the Son, Who adorned His Mother with particular love—and who willed the corporeal integrity of the Mother to remain incorrupt and unstained in childbirth itself so that "the glory of her virginity remaining she might pour out on the world the eternal light". . . .

Footnote 31 at that point cited the documentation for the "virginitas in partu," viz. the profession of faith by Nicephoras, Patriarch of Constantinople and accepted by Leo II (D. 314, no. 3); the Tome of Leo the Great; the Lateran Council which "although not ecumenical in the technical sense nevertheless expresses the mind of the Church both Latin and Greek"; and Ambrose and Augustine. The footnote then added:

And it is commonly taught that this doctrine must be held "fide divina et catholica." But, some modern authors think that the virginity of the Blessed Virgin in partu hardly consists in any incorruptibility, and they say that the virginity in partu is identical (*univocam*) with the virginity ante partum. Cf. MITTERER A., . . . ; GALOT J.,³⁸

In the context of the proposed Constitution's text, it is quite clear that the position of Mitterer and those who agree with him is being rejected.

The subsequent discussion on this point showed opposition to the proposed Constitution's teaching as well as support for it.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

³⁸ *Acta*, vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 92ff., esp. pp. 95, 114-15.

For "pastoral reasons" the bishops of Japan wished no mention made of corporeal integrity.³⁹ The bishops of Indonesia said that the "virginitas in partu" should not be taught "modo physico,"⁴⁰ thus at least implicitly supporting the presentation of Mitterer. Fr. Janssens, the Jesuit General, said that the text wanted not only to affirm the "virginitas in partu"—which fact he said no one doubted—but even to define the anatomical mode of this virginity, and he claimed that only since Ambrose have the Fathers of the Church been clear on this point.⁴¹ [In this, of course, he was factually wrong, unless he did not consider the *Protoevangelium of James* a part of patristic literature.] The German-speaking episcopal conferences asked that Mitterer and Galot not be condemned explicitly in the notes and implicitly in the text.⁴² The bishops of Scandinavia wanted the word virginity to be substituted for "corporeal integrity"⁴³ and in this they found support from Cardinal Doi of Japan.⁴⁴

When the whole Constitution was rewritten so as to be included in LG, the phrase "Who did not diminish but sanctified her virginal integrity" was the expression used to teach the "virginitas in partu." The *relatio* on this point stated: "It is affirmed in liturgical and traditional words that the birth of Jesus was virginal. It appears to the Doctrinal Commission that this is sufficient and sufficiently clear."⁴⁵ In the footnote, only the major references are given, and the reference to Mitterer and Galot is not found. This last is not odd since the entire tone of the document has become a positive presentation. And this is the way the presentation on the "virginitas in partu" remained in the TE of Oct. 1964 and in the Constitution LG as promulgated. That the promulgated paragraph of *Lumen Gentium* is in fact teaching a physical integrity of Mary after childbirth is evident from the text itself ("virginal integrity"), from the references to the

³⁹ *Acta*, vol. 2, pt. 3, pp. 305 and 311.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 848.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 681.

⁴⁵ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 369.

Magisterium found in the footnotes, and perhaps most clearly from the footnote citation to St. Ambrose, the "anatomical" nature of whose teaching on the *virginitas in partu* had already been pointed out—and objected to—by Fr. Janssens. And, in fact, the Ambrosian citation is very explicit (the "sine dispendio claustrorum genitalium virginis partus exivit"—cf. text above). 3. The whole phrase about the finding in the Temple is found in TE, but not in Prior and is also found in LG. The reason for the addition is given in the *relatio* in these words:

From this it appears that the divine mystery transcends every created intellect and can only be accepted by faith. Mary stands forth as an example of such faith, conserving all these things in her heart. The sentence about this episode was added lest the Council appear to pass over those texts which seem to offer a difficulty for some persons.⁴⁶

All else remains basically the same with the exception of two minor stylistic changes (an *autem* and a *vero*). With the exception noted, there is practically no change from the Prior of Sept., except that it did not have the "sanctificavit" reference to John.

Apart from the doctrinal matters taught by the paragraph—and already, I hope, sufficiently commented upon—it is to be noted that paragraph 57 stands as a defense of the substantial "historicity" of the mysteries of the Visitation, the presence of the shepherds and Magi, and the Presentation and Finding in the Temple. This is clear, I think, from the whole mode of presentation, as well as from the opening sentence which states that it aims to show the union of Mary with Christ in the work of salvation—a work which is real and not simply some homiletic or doctrinal reflection on the part of the Evangelists Matthew and Luke. Such a view of the "Infancy Narratives" coincides, of course, with the affirmation of *Dei Verbum* which states that the Gospels "whose historicity [the Church] unhesitatingly affirms, faithfully hand on those things which Jesus the Son of

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

God, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation . . ." (*Dei Verbum*, no. 19).

Paragraph 58.

It reads:

During the public life of Jesus His Mother appears significantly [1.], at the beginning indeed when, at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, moved by mercy, she brought about by her intercession the first sign of the effusion of messianic grace (cf. Jn. 2:1-11) [2.]. In the course of His preaching she accepted [3.] the words by which her Son, extolling a Kingdom beyond the reasons and bonds of flesh and blood, proclaimed blessed those hearing and keeping the word of God (cf. Mk. 3:35 par. Lk. 11:27-28), as she herself was faithfully doing (cf. Lk. 2:19-51) [4.]. Indeed, the unceasing union of the Mother with her Son shone forth especially when she stood, not without the divine intention (concilio), by the cross (cf. Jn. 19:25), suffered grievously with her Only-begotten, associated herself with His sacrifice with her motherly spirit, lovingly consenting [5.] to the immolation of the victim born of her: and, finally, when she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as mother to the disciple, the figure of the faithful [6.] (cf. Jn. 19f:26-27).⁴⁷

1. It was proposed that the line on the public ministry read: "In the course of His preaching the Blessed Virgin appears in some way separated from her Son and she heard the words. . . ." The response of the Commission was that this idea, put in a milder form, is expressed by the phrase, "extolling a Kingdom beyond the reasons and bonds of the flesh" and therefore the suggestion (the bishop of Jakarta's?; cf., above, p. 78) was not admitted.⁴⁸

The opening phrase in the Prior and TE read "Durante vita publica Jesu" and this became "in vita etc." of TE of Oct. 1964⁴⁹ and remains such in LG.

The word "significantly" (*signanter*) was objected to by one bishop, noting that the Synoptics make only one reference to

⁴⁷ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, pp. 14-15.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Mary in the public life (cf. p. 78 above, Bishop of Jakarta). The Commission responded that the word should remain, "having taken into account the Gospel of John."⁵⁰

2. "*Primum signum effusionis gratiae messianicae*" in first two drafts and in the TE of Oct. 1964,⁵¹ becomes "initium signorum Jesu Messiae" in LG. This was because one bishop noted that the effusion of messianic grace was already evident in the life of the infant Jesus.⁵²

3. The "*accepit verba*" of Sept. Prior, of Oct. Prior and TE of Oct. becomes in LG "suscepit." The reason for this was that the "suscepit" was considered to indicate better "an action of internal reception."⁵³ On this whole passage, the relatio of Sept. 1964 says:

Then there are cited the words of the Lord by which they are called blessed who hear the word of God and keep it. In this way it is signified that the Kingdom of God transcends merely carnal bonds, without there arising thence any blame for His Mother (*vituperium pro Matre*), who faithfully kept that word, as is twice affirmed in Luke.⁵⁴

4. "*Ita etiam B. Virgo in peregrinatione fidei processit*" ("Thus the Blessed Virgin also advanced in the pilgrimage of faith etc.") is added by TE of Oct. 1964,⁵⁵ and LG to previous texts. The addition is a clear indication that Mary, too, lived by faith, a faith that grew and developed as it had to face each new manifestation of God's Will for her and for her Son.

5. It is noted in the Relatio of Oct. 1964 that over 25 bishops had insisted that the "consenting" be retained in the reference to Mary's role on Calvary.⁵⁶ In fact it was retained.

6. The "fidelium figurae" reference to John at the Cross which is found in first two and in TE of Oct. 1964⁵⁷ is dropped at the

⁵⁰ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 160.

⁵¹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 14.

⁵² *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 160.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 369.

⁵⁵ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 14.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

time of the Nov. 16, 1964 relatio. This is probably due to criticism of Cardinal Bea and others, (cf. above, p. 78). Indeed twelve bishops asked that it be removed saying that the assertion that John was the "figure of the faithful" was "not certain from the sacred text nor from the documents of Tradition."⁵⁸

Again, it is the Council's use of Sacred Scripture which warrants comment when considering paragraph 57. The historical value of the Marian appearances in John's Gospel is explicitly affirmed in face of the objection which would have limited Mary's undoubted appearances in the public life to those cited by the Synoptics alone since they, by supposition of the objection, "more closely approach the primitive apostolic preaching" (cf. above, pp. 78-9).

In respect to Our Lady's appearances in the Gospel of John it is explicitly taught that it is by her intercession that the first of the signs of Jesus is brought about. And the Council did not hesitate to tackle an even more difficult text when it refers to Mark 3:35. There are those who process to find in Mark's Gospel (especially in Mk. 3:20-21, 31-35) an indication of a less than favorable view of Mary on the part of Jesus Himself or of the most primitive Christian communities, an unfavorable outlook mitigated later by Matthew and especially by Luke and John.⁵⁹ The Council, in line with Catholic tradition, refuses to read Mark that way, holding that admittedly difficult and quite ambiguous verses in Mark should be read in the light of the overall N.T. presentation of the figure of Mary. The Council is not stating that Mark is being corrected by Luke and John, but that a proper understanding of Mark himself can only be had by considering his texts in the context of the entire N.T. revelation. It is, I think, for this very reason that, in the citations given in the paragraph, Luke 11:27-28 is given along with Mark 3:35. The Lucan passage is not the parallel of the Marcan one, but rather,

⁵⁸ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 161.

⁵⁹ Cf., for example, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke I-IX* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1981), pp. 316, 341, 722-25; R. Brown, et al., *Mary in the New Testament* (N.Y.: Paulist Press, 1978), pp. 51ff.

as the *relatio* indicates (cf. above, no. 3), one of the two Lucan texts which show that Mary did indeed faithfully keep the word of God. In doing this, the Council is being faithful to the principles for correct exegesis which it sets forth in paragraph 12 of *Dei Verbum* where, having already spoken of the importance of the study of the various literary forms, the Council teaches that:

. . . to correctly discover the sense of the scriptural texts, no less attention must be paid to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture, taking account of the living Tradition of the whole Church and taking account of the analogy of faith, since Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted according to the same Spirit by whom it was written.

What the Council is saying is that, failure to exegete the four Gospels as aspects of the "whole Gospel" will lead to distortions not only in one's view of Mary, but also in one's view of Mark or Matthew or Luke or John.

In reading the Gospels this way, however, the Church is not defending any arbitrary exegesis of the Gospels, nor giving support to those who would read into them more than is actually there. The removal of the reference to John as "figure of the faithful" is evidence enough of that.

It is to be noted that there are certain theological advantages to be found in the Conciliar refusal to use John 19:26-27 as a type of "proof text" for Mary's motherhood of the faithful. Too frequently this text is overused in that regard and such overuse can leave the impression that Mary's motherhood of the faithful—and of the Church—rests on one disputed Scriptural text. Such in fact is not the case. There are many reasons why she is the mother of the faithful, several of them spelled out in the selections from Pius XII's encyclicals *Mystici Corporis* and *Ad Coeli Reginam* cited by *Lumen Gentium* in footnotes eleven and fourteen of chapter eight.

Paragraph 59.

It reads:

Since indeed it pleased God not to manifest the mystery of human salvation [1.] before He poured out the Spirit promised by Christ,

we see the Apostles before the day of Pentecost "persevering unanimously in prayer with the women, and with Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers" (Acts 1:14), and Mary, by her prayers, imploring the gift of the Spirit Who had already overshadowed her at the Annunciation. Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved immune from all stain of original sin, having completed the course of earthly life, was assumed to heavenly glory in body and soul [2.], and, exalted by the Lord as Queen [3.] of the universe, so that she might be fully [4.] conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords (cf. Apoc. 19:16) and victor over sin and death.⁶⁰

1. *Solemniter* is added at the time of the Nov. 16, 1964 relatio because the sacrament of salvation had already been manifested many times during the public ministry of Jesus.⁶¹

2. It is noted in the relatio that this article mentions the two doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption "quae dogmata ad invicem referuntur."⁶² This connection was objected to by some bishops (over 20 of them), and by the General of the Jesuits, who wanted the reference to the Immaculate Conception eliminated either from ecumenical motives or because it appeared to say that the Assumption was a consequence of the Immaculate Conception. The Commission refused to change the text, however, saying that the text was not trying to prove the Assumption from the Immaculate Conception, but that a use of the "analogy of faith" was appropriate as was done in *Munificentissimus Deus*.⁶³

It can be noted that the present paragraph speaks of Mary's Assumption in the terms used by Pius XII in defining that doctrine, that is, it does so without any specific reference to her death. The *De Beata* had included a reference to her death in these words: "admirable finally in her demise because although according to an ancient and venerable [*venerabilem*, not *venerandem*] tradition she underwent temporal death. . . ." This statement was among the things objected to by the bishops

⁶⁰ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 15.

⁶¹ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 8, p. 161.

⁶² *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 370.

⁶³ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 28.

when the *De Beata* was discussed, and it did not reappear in any of the drafts for chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*. Thus, a Christian is still able to hold that Mary did not physically die, but was miraculously transformed and assumed when she completed the course of her earthly life.

3. Cardinal Leger objected to the use of Queen, saying the notion was not sufficiently clear to be included in a Conciliar decree.⁶⁴ Nothing came of this objection and the footnote cites *Ad Coeli Reginam* which gives at least some idea of both the reasons for and the meaning of the title. She is Queen, it says, because of her motherhood of the Divine King, and because of her singular cooperation with Him in the work of redemption. As a result she shares in that power by which He now rules hearts and wills.

4. *Plenius* replaces *plene* of previous two texts in the TE of Oct. 1964.⁶⁵ This was because one bishop complained that no creature was "fully" conformed with Christ.⁶⁶

Thus, the section of *Lumen Gentium* which speaks of Mary's role in the economy of salvation ends by noting her presence and prayers at the solemn inauguration of the Church's apostolic mission and by teaching again her bodily assumption into heaven whence, as Queen, she continues the motherly role begun at Nazareth.

Throughout paragraphs 55-59 the emphasis is on Mary's relationship to Christ, her role as His Mother and her association as mother in the work of her Son. In light of earlier theological debates about the so-called "fundamental principle" in Mariology, the Council clearly grounds all Mary's glories and responsibilities in her motherhood of the Incarnate Word. In light of the "Christocentric" — "Ecclesiotypical" — polarities in Marian theology before the Council, *Lumen Gentium*, by the way its final chapter is structured and by stressing Mary's motherhood and her association with her Son in the mysteries of His life, has emphasized that her role vis-a-vis the Church flows from her rela-

⁶⁴ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 448.

⁶⁵ *Acta*, vol. 3, pt. 6, p. 15.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

tionship to and association with her Son, the Church's Head. Her role as Mother of the Christ is what fundamentally gives her a maternal role in relation to the members of His Body, a role which the Council spells out in the subsequent paragraphs.

REV. JAMES T. O'CONNOR

St. Joseph's Seminary

Yonkers, New York