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# Summary and Analysis of Chapter VIII of Lumen Gentium

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## Appendix VI

### Summary and Analysis of Chapter VIII of LUMEN GENTIUM

Ch. VIII: The *Blessed Virgin Mary*, Mother of God, in the *Mystery of Christ & of the Church* (52-69)

—*Preface* (52-54)

- a. Mary's relation to *Christ* in the divine plan of redemptive Incarnation (52)
  - 1) God *revealed* that to save us He sent His Son "born of a *woman*" (Gal 4:4f)
  - 2) The Church keeps this mystery in her *faith*: "incarnate . . . of the Virgin Mary" (Creeds)
  - 3) Celebrating this mystery the Church *remembers Mary* "in the *first place* . . ." (Mass)
- b. Mary's position in the *Church* (53)
  - 1) United to *God* in highest degree after Christ
    - a) She *received God's Word* in heart and body and *gave him to the world*, thus being recognized as *Mother of God and of the Redeemer*
    - b) *Redeemed* by Him in a *more sublime* way and intimately united forever to Him, she is *Mother of the Son of God*, and thus favorite *Daughter of the Father*, and preeminent *Temple of the Holy Spirit*
  - 2) United to *mankind* most closely after Christ
    - a) *Preeminent* among creatures yet one with Adam's offspring *in need of redemption*
    - b) Their *mother*: cooperated in charity with Redeemer in their birth (Augustine)
    - c) *Preeminent* & altogether singular *member* of the Church, *exemplar* in faith & charity
    - d) *Honored* by Church as *Mother* (Benedict XIV)

- c. Declaration of *Council's intention* (54)
  - 1) *Positive*
    - a) Describe *Mary's role* in mystery of *Incarnate Word* (55-59) & of *Church* (60-65)
    - b) Describe *duties of redeemed* to Mother of Christ & Mother of mankind (66-67)
  - 2) *Negative*
    - a) Not give *complete doctrine on Mary*
    - b) Not decide *questions left to theologians*
    - c) Not hinder *lawful opinions* on Mary, highest after Christ, nearest to us (Paul VI)
1. Role of Blessed Virgin in *Economy of Salvation*, i.e., "in the mystery of *Christ*" (55-59)
  - a) Mary was *foretold* in the Old Testament (55)
    - 1) *Genesis 3:15*—foreshadowed in promise of victory given to our sinning first parents
    - 2) *Isaiah 7:14* & *Micah 5:2f*—the virgin who would conceive and bear Emmanuel
    - 3) *Preeminent* among Lord's *poor and humble* awaiting Him
    - 4) "*Daughter of Zion*" beginning new plan of redemptive Incarnation of God's Son
  - b. Mary *accepted* to be Mother of God's Son at *Annunciation*: its profound meaning (56)
    - 1) God's *plan*: *free consent of woman* should precede Incarnation
      - a) *Reason*: having contributed to death, *woman* should be involved in *giving life*
      - b) *Fulfillment* of plan in *Mary*, who gave *Life itself* to world
    - 2) God *prepared* Mary for this consent
      - a) *Holy & free from sin*, as recognized by *Fathers* (especially *Eastern*)
      - b) *Uniquely holy from conception*, greeted as "*full of grace*" by *angel*
    - 3) Mary *cooperated by consenting* to the divine word freely
      - a) *Extent* of her cooperation

1. Becoming *Mother of Jesus* in *Incarnation*
2. Serving as *Lord's Handmaid* in her Son's *redemptive* work
  - b) *Testimony of Fathers* to her free cooperation, not just passive involvement
    1. "*Cause of salvation*" by her faith and obedience (Irenaeus)
    2. *New Eve: obedient & faithful, mother of living* (Several early Fathers)
  - c. Mary was united to her Son in His work on earth from virginal conception to death (57-58)
    - 1) In Christ's *hidden life* (57)
      - a) At *Visitation*, when Elizabeth praised her & John the Baptist leaped with joy
      - b) At Christ's *birth* when she showed Him to shepherds and Magi
      - c) At His *Presentation* in Temple when she heard Simeon's foreboding prophecy
      - d) At His *Loss* in Temple when she kept in heart words about Him not understood
    - 2) In Christ's *public ministry* (58)
      - a) At *Cana* where her intervention occasioned Jesus' first sign as Messiah
      - b) When she *was praised* for hearing & keeping God's word rather than only for flesh and blood relationship
      - c) At *foot of Cross* when, advancing & persevering in her pilgrimage of faith, she was united to Him in His sacrifice and given by Him to disciple as mother
    - d) *After Christ's Ascension* (59)
      - 1) Mother of Jesus was *united* to Apostles & others in *prayer, awaiting Christ's Spirit*
      - 2) Immaculate Virgin was *assumed bodily* to heaven and *exalted* as Queen of universe, to be more closely *conformed to her Risen Son*
2. The Blessed Virgin & the *Church*—i.e., "in the *mystery* (of Christ &) of the *Church*" (60-65)

- a. Mary's *salutary (efficient) influence* on Church: *maternal intercession & care* (60-62)
  - 1) *Preliminary note*: Mary's maternal role to mankind, a *subordinate participation* in Christ's unique mediatorship (60)
    - a) Mary's maternal role *does not diminish* Christ's unique mediatorship because
      1. her role *depends on God's pleasure*, not on any inner necessity
      2. her role is *totally derived from Christ's merits*
      3. her role *depends on His mediation & draws its power* therefrom
    - b) Mary's maternal role *fosters immediate union with Christ*
  - 2) *Foundation* of Mary's *present* maternal role in Church: her *past* relationship to Christ as His (61)
    - a) *Mother*: she conceived, brought forth, nourished, presented Him, was united with Him in suffering
    - b) Singularly *generous associate & humble handmaid of the Lord*
      1. By obedience, faith, hope, & charity she *cooperated* with Him in his saving work of *restoring supernatural life to us*
      2. Thus she is *our Mother* in the order of *grace*
  - 3) *Nature* of Mary's *motherhood of grace* enduring in the Church (62)
    - a) Mary's motherhood of grace, *begun* with consent given at *Annunciation & sustained* beneath Cross, is *exercised now* by her *until all reach heaven* as she
      1. continues to win for us gifts of salvation through her *intercession*
      2. *cares in maternal charity* for the pilgriming brethren of her Son
      3. *is thus invoked* as Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Helper, *Mediatrix*
    - b) Christ's mediatorship *not imperiled or added to* by her motherhood

1. His mediatorship *incommensurate with anything created*—yet two analogies:
  - a. *Christ's priesthood* variously shared by ministers & faithful people
  - b. *God's goodness* variously shared by His creatures
2. His unique mediatorship *stirs up participative creaturely cooperation*
- c) Hence, experiencing it, *Church professes Mary's subordinate maternal role* so as to *adhere to Christ more intimately through her influence*
- b. *Mary's exemplarity* in the Church: *Type and model* of the Church (63-65)
  - 1) *Mary & Church as a whole*: She is *type* of Church as *virgin & mother*—*ontological* aspect of exemplarity (63-64)
    - a) *Mary* as archetype (Ambrose) (63)
      1. *Virgin* who conceived not by knowing man but by obeying & believing God, overshadowed by Holy Spirit
      2. *Mother*
        - a. of *Christ*, whom *God* has placed as *firstborn* among many brethren
        - b. of the *faithful*, in whose birth & development she cooperates (Augustine) (cp 53)
    - b) *Church* as antitype (64)
      1. *Mother*
        - a. of *Christ*, i.e., of His life in faithful—[cf. 65, last 2 sentences]
        - b. of the *faithful*
          - 1) by *preaching and baptism*
          - 2) in a motherhood *analogous* to Mary's: children conceived of Holy Spirit and born of God
      2. *Virgin*
        - a. Keeping her *pledge in fidelity* to Christ her *Spouse*

Summary and Analysis of Chapter VIII

- b. Preserving *faith, hope, charity* after example of *Mother of her Lord*
- 2) Mary & members of Church: She is *model—moral aspect* of exemplarity (65)
  - a) Mary is model of perfect response to *Christian vocation* of holiness
    - 1. *Holiness* in Church's life
      - a. Perfectly *attained* already by Church in *Mary*
      - b. Still *object of striving* by Church in the *rest of the faithful*
    - 2. *Mary, exemplar* for Christians in virtues of *faith, hope, charity* and *accomplishment of divine will*
      - a. *Church's way: contemplating Mary*, intimately part of salvation history, Church *enters mystery of Incarnation* more deeply and *becomes like Christ her Spouse*
      - b. *Justification* of this way of becoming Christ-like by imitating Mary
        - 1) *Mary*, mirroring *central truths* of faith, *summons faithful* to *Christ's sacrifice & love of Father* when she is preached & venerated
        - 2) *Church* becomes *like Mary her Type*, advancing in faith, hope, charity and conformity to divine will
  - b) Mary is model in the *apostolic dimension* of Christian vocation
    - 1. On level of *divine* motherhood: apostolate resembles her virginal motherhood
    - 2. On level of motherhood *in grace*: her *maternal love* is model for *apostles* cooperating in *Church's mission of engendering Christ in souls of others*
- 3. *Devotion* to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Church (66-67)
  - a) Church's *special veneration of Mary* (66)
    - 1) *Foundation*: her involvement in mystery of Christ
    - 2) *Origin*: venerated earliest under title "*Mother of God*" and in *intercessory prayer* ("*Sub tuum*")

- 3) Early manifold *growth*: veneration, love, invocation, imitation
  - 4) *Nature*: essentially different from adoration of Christ & Trinity: leads there
- b. Council's *practical norms* (67)
- 1) For *all*: foster devotion to Mary, especially in liturgical cult and in Church-endorsed devotions as well as through veneration of images in Church-approved ways
  - 2) For *preachers & theologians*: avoid both exaggeration & narrow-mindedness, explain Mary, guard against leading anyone into error about Church's true Marian teaching
  - 3) For *faithful*: know in what true devotion to Mary consists—knowledge of her excellence as God's Mother, filial love for her as our Mother, imitation of her virtues
- Epilogue*: Mary, *sign of sure hope & solace* for God's people in pilgrimage (68-69)
- a. Already glorified in body & soul in heaven, as *image & beginning* of the Church *as it will be* in future age, Mary *shines forth* also for *pilgrim* Church on earth as a *sign of sure hope & solace* until the Lord's day (68)
  - b. Hence Council's *prayer* that she intercede for entire People of God (69)
    1. Among *separated brethren* many honor her as "Mother of the Lord and Savior"
    2. *Oriental*s join in cult of the "Mother of God" (Theotokos)
    3. Let *all believers in Christ* ask that the "*Mother of God and Mother of men*" now exalted in heaven *in the communion of saints intercede* with her Son that *all peoples*, Christian or ignorant yet of Christ, come together in the *one People of God*, for the *glory of the Trinity*

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