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Thomas A. Thompson
University of Dayton

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THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE LITURGY: 1963-1988

The Virgin Mary has been commemorated in the earliest Eucharistic prayers, and Marian feasts have long been part of the liturgy. However, formal consideration of the role of the Virgin Mary in Christian worship and on the relation between Marian devotion and liturgy was stimulated by Vatican II and its revision of the liturgical calendar and the liturgical texts. It was continued in *Marialis cultus* (1974), the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (1986), and the documents of the Marian Year (1987-88). Here will be outlined the development of the ecclesial consciousness of the Virgin Mary's role in liturgy—initiated at Vatican II, affirmed and developed in *Marialis cultus*, and presented in the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.

I. VATICAN II TO *MARIALIS CULTUS*

Liturgy and the Virgin Mary at the Council

The first document of the Council, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum concilium [SC]*), spoke of the Virgin Mary and Marian devotion in an indirect but significant way. Popular devotions, it said, should be congruent with, be derived from, and lead to the liturgy (SC, 13). The sole reference to the Virgin Mary in the entire document is found in the section on the liturgical year: "In celebrating this annual cycle of Christ's mysteries, the Church honors with a special love the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of Christ" (SC, 103).¹ Prepared before the Council's

¹For the evolution of this text, cf. Luigi Della Torre, et al., *La Vierge dans la prière de l'Église* (Maison Mame, 1968), 228-229.

discussion on the Virgin Mary, this article anticipated the decision to consider the Blessed Virgin in relation to Christ and the Church.²

It announced what to some appeared a new way of considering the Virgin Mary in liturgy: Mary's role in the liturgy is determined not so much on the number of Marian feasts, but on the "special love" with which the Church honors the Blessed Virgin who is joined by "an inseparable bond" to the saving work of Christ celebrated and made present in liturgy. This article had a major influence on *Marialis cultus* (which made explicit reference to it five times), on the Roman Calendar (one of its organizing principles),³ and on the General Introduction of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.⁴ It also, as we shall see, influenced the vocabulary of *Marialis cultus*.

The second major reference of Vatican II to the Virgin Mary and the liturgy is found in chapter eight of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen gentium* [LG]). Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is recommended, especially the "liturgical cult" (*cultus liturgicus*). The Council "urges all the Church's children to foster wholeheartedly the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin" (LG 67). The article recommends that, in addition to Scripture and the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the liturgy itself be a way of studying, under the Church's magisterium, "the duties and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which always refer to Christ, the source of all truth, sanctity, and devotion."⁵

There is one reference to the Virgin Mary in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC, 103) and one reference to lit-

²Cf. Frederick M. Jelly, "The Theological Context of and Introduction to Chapter 8 of *Lumen Gentium*," *Marian Studies* 38 (1986): 43-73.

³*Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts* (hereafter cited *DOL*; Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 3774.

⁴*Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (hereafter cited *CMBVM*; New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., ©1987, 1988), no. 1.

⁵A last minute intervention from the Theological Faculty of the Marianum was responsible for the insertion of "liturgy" as a locus of study of the Blessed Virgin (*La Vierge dans la prière*, 231).

urgy in chapter eight (on the Blessed Virgin) of the Constitution on the Church (*IG*, 67). In this way, the Council established a triangle: the Virgin Mary, liturgy, and the Church. The postconciliar task was the exploration and the study of the many bonds by which they are related. On 21 November 1965, at the promulgation of the Constitution on the Church, Paul VI spoke of the "synthesis" which the Council presented on the Virgin Mary. "It is," he said, "the first time, and it fills us with joy to say it, that an ecumenical council has presented so vast a synthesis of the Catholic doctrine on the place which Mary has in the mystery of Christ and of the Church."⁶ Similarly, it can be said that the Council provided the elements, later developed in *Marialis cultus* and the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, leading to a synthesis concerning the Virgin Mary's role in the liturgy. This synthesis enables us to speak of the Marian dimension of liturgy and the liturgical dimension of Marian devotion.⁷

After the Council to 1974

The implementation of the Council's directives on the liturgy began immediately after the promulgation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Paul VI presided over the most extensive reform of the liturgical books in the history of the Western rite. The work was confided to a special commission (Concilium) which, under Cardinal Lercaro,⁸ was to implement the directives of the Council and to provide the liturgical texts. Among the first of its responsibilities was the formulation of the liturgical calendar.

Some apparently were concerned that the reforms to be proposed by the special commission would not be favorable to Marian devotion. In the 1967 apostolic exhortation *Signum magnum*, Paul VI addressed those who had such

⁶*La Documentation Catholique* 61 (1964): 1543.

⁷Danilo M. Sartor, O.S.M., "Le feste della Madonna: Riflessioni e suggerimenti per la loro celebrazione," *Notitiae* 262 (1988): 333.

⁸Instruction *Inter oecumenici*, on the orderly carrying out of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 26 September 1964, *DOL*, 276.

apprehensions: "There need be no fear," he said, "that the reform of the liturgy—now progressing under the motto, 'The rule of faith establishes the rule of prayer'—involves any diminution of the 'altogether singular' veneration of the Mother of God. Conversely, there need be no fear that an increased liturgical or personal veneration of the Mother of God could either obscure or lessen the worship offered equally to the Word Incarnate, the Father and Holy Spirit."⁹

On 14 February 1969, Paul VI approved the general norms for the liturgical year and the new General Roman Calendar. He again stated that there was no conflict between the purpose of the liturgical year, which is "the unfolding of the whole mystery of Christ," and "the splendor of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary 'who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son.'"¹⁰

However, the publication of the Roman Calendar confirmed the suspicions of those who thought that the Virgin Mary would not fare well in the new liturgy. Some did not understand the reasons for the changes in the Marian feasts: the Annunciation and Presentation were listed as feasts "of the Lord"; some feasts became optional memorials (The Immaculate Heart of Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel); others were dropped (The Holy Name of Mary, Our Lady of Ransom).

In 1971, Girolamo M. Morreale charged that the special commission "proceeded from an anti-Marian Christocentrism" and was intent on reducing the "excessive cult of Mary." "Six feasts have disappeared (among them two converted feasts of the Lord), seven are reduced to an inferior degree. . . . We have regressed by a thousand years."¹¹ An

⁹DOL, 3880.

¹⁰DOL, 3756.

¹¹Girolamo M. Morreale, *Il culto mariano nel nuovo calendario: esame critico et proposte* (Caltanissetta, 1971), 7, cited in "La Riforma liturgica è antimariana?" *Notitiae* 8 (1972); 41-50. For a comparison of the feasts in the new and the old Missal, consult the *Calendrier Marial* in Dom Billet, "L'exhortation apostolique, *Marialis cultus*," *Esprit et vie* (3 March 1974): 558.

Italian clerical review agreed with Morreale, "It is undeniable that there has been a qualitative and quantitative regression of Marian devotion. The liturgical reforms appear profoundly anti-Marian. . . ."¹²

A reply to Morreale was given in *Notitiae*, the official commentary of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship. After correcting Morreale's counting of the Marian feasts, the author stated again the principle for determining the Virgin Mary's place in the liturgical year:

This firm well-founded principle of the "inseparable bond" which unites Christ and Mary had to be the guide for the reform of the calendar and the Missal and it should also be the guide to its interpretation. Instead of "liturgical mathematics," which divides Mary from Christ, care has been taken that in the new fundamental books of the Roman liturgy, Mary appears united to Christ as the work of our redemption is celebrated in the course of the liturgical year.¹³

While some thought that the Virgin Mary had been slighted in the liturgical reforms, others had difficulties relating the traditional Marian devotion to the post-conciliar church. The period, from about 1965 to 1974, has been described as the time of "the Marian crisis." *De Maria numquam satis* seemed to be replaced by *de Maria nunc satis*. There were no arguments against Marian devotion: there was simply a silence about Mary. In Cardinal Suenens' description, it was

a time of considerable lessening of appreciation for Mary, if not among the faithful in general, at least in intellectual circles. There was a reaction against a Marian theology which was too essentialist, deductive, abstract, and concentrated on her privileges in a context that was not Christological. This reaction was opposed to a Marian devotion that remained on the edge of liturgical renewal, was too dependent upon private revelations, and too remote from biblical theology.¹⁴

¹²Morreale, *Il culto mariano*, 41.

¹³"La Riforma liturgica," 43.

¹⁴Joseph Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost* (New York: Seabury, 1975), 196.

Marialis cultus was a response to "the Marian crisis" and the questions of many who wondered whether Marian devotion could be integrated into the orientations of Vatican II; it was also a response to those who believed that the Virgin Mary had not fared well in the liturgical reforms. Work on the document began in 1970; it underwent two drafts and a papal revision before Paul VI signed it on 2 February 1974.¹⁵

II. *MARIALIS CULTUS*

The introduction of *Marialis cultus* gives the occasion and reason for its publication. The occasion was the implementation of the liturgical reforms requested by Vatican II and the promulgation of the liturgical books of the Roman rite. The purpose is stated twice: "for the right ordering and development of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary" (title) and a "dialogue on the place the Blessed Virgin Mary occupies in the Church's worship" (*Intro.*). The document is not about the Blessed Virgin Mary, but about Marian devotion and the Virgin Mary's role in the Church's worship.

Since its publication fifteen years ago, studies of *Marialis cultus* have been made.¹⁶ What is proposed here is a summary of the principles of *Marialis cultus* which illumine the relation of the Virgin Mary to the mystery of Christ as celebrated in liturgy, as well as the relation of Marian devotion to liturgy. Fundamental for the Marian dimension of the liturgy, these principles also contribute to an understanding and appreciation of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. Documents from the Marian Year (principally those from the Central Committee for the Celebration of the

¹⁵René Laurentin, "Bulletin sur la Vierge Marie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 2 (1976): 324-25.

¹⁶*Estudios Marianos* 43 (1978) and *Marianum* 39 (1977). Dom Billet, "L'exhortation apostolique," 550-558. Charles W. Neumann, S.M., *Marialis cultus: Mini-Course* (Leesburg, VA: The Catholic Home Study Institute, [1987-88]).

Marian Year) are used to provide examples of the influence *Marialis cultus* has had on Marian devotion and liturgy.

The Virgin Mary in Christian Worship

Every consideration of the role of the Virgin Mary begins with the plan of God and the saving work of Christ. The theocentric and Christocentric orientations for the role of the Virgin Mary are found in the Council; they are present in Paul VI's Marian homilies,¹⁷ and they are the starting point for *Marialis cultus* (MC).

All Christian worship "takes its origins and effectiveness from Christ, finds its complete expression in Christ, and leads through Christ in the Spirit to the Father" (MC, Intro.). Devotion to Mary, which forms a "very noble" part of the Christian worship, is completely related to Christ (MC, 25) and "finds its ultimate justification in the unfathomable and free will of God" (MC, 56). All forms of Marian devotion gravitate "towards this worship [of Christ] as to their natural and necessary point of reference" (MC, Intro.). All devotion expressed toward Mary is ultimately given to Christ: "What is given to the Handmaid is referred to the Lord" (MC, 25).

But there is also an emanation outwards from the center. The bond which unites Mary to Christ is the same which unites Christ to Mary, and exploring the mystery of Christ in all its dimensions eventually leads to Mary. "Every authentic development in Christian worship is necessarily followed by a fitting increase of veneration for the Mother of the Lord" (MC, Intro.). "The Church's reflection today on the mystery of Christ and on her own nature has led her to find at the root of the former [Christ] and as a culmination of the latter

¹⁷"You will find Mary if you have a driving desire to place her in the center of the Christian mystery; devotion to Mary is not an end in itself, but a way which leads us to Christ, and through him to the glory of God and to the love of the Church." *L'Osservatore Romano*, 13 Sept. 1963. For other texts on the Christocentric orientation of Paul VI's Marian teaching, see M. Garrido Bonaño, "La Virgen María en la liturgia restaurada," *Estudios Marianos* 43 (1978): 44-46.

[the Church] the same figure of a Woman: the Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ and the Mother of the Church" (*MC, Intro.*). Mary's presence in liturgy is derived from and dependent upon Christ, the center of worship, who through his saving work embraces all the redeemed, among whom Mary is the first.

The phrase used to describe the close association between Christ and his mother is taken from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Whereas the Constitution on the Church (Chap. 8) simply spoke of the "Blessed Virgin Mary . . . in the Mystery of Christ and the Church," the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Art. 103) used the words "inseparable bond" (*nexu indissolubili*) to describe the relation. Paul VI used this phrase in the solemn profession of faith, 30 June 1968,¹⁸ and, in *Marialis cultus*, he used several similar expressions. A distinguishing trait of *Marialis cultus* is the language of bonding and of union used to describe the relation of Christ to Mary.¹⁹

The Virgin Mary in the Liturgical Year

Marialis cultus illustrates that the liturgy of the Roman rite has adequately and amply illustrated the Council's teaching on the "inseparable bond" uniting the Virgin Mary to the work of Christ. The demonstration begins with a survey of the liturgical year: here the commemoration of the "whole mystery of Christ" makes possible "a more organic and closely knit" (*MC, 2*)²⁰ insertion of the Mother in the cycle of the annual mysteries of her son. The Advent liturgy—

¹⁸"Arcto et indissolubili vinculo mysterio Incarnationis et Redemptionis coniunctionis . . .," *Marianum* 32 (1970): 264.

¹⁹"intimo quodam nexu," *MC, Intro.*; "arctiore conexione memoria Matris in annum cyclum mysteriorum Filii insereretur," *MC, 2*; "beata Maria Virgo Filio arcto nexu sociatur," *MC, 7*; "Christo . . . cui Virgo intime con-sociata est," *MC, 7*; "specimen et documentum praestantissimum fidei, caritatis et absolutissimae coniunctionis cum Christo habetur," *MC, 16*. "Numquam certissime vera omisit christiana pietas extollere vinculum indissolubile necessariamque rationem coniunctionis Virginis cum Divino Salvatore," *MC, 25*.

²⁰"ut modo aptius disposito et arctiore conexione," *MC, 2*.

the awaiting of the Messiah—provides a natural commemoration of Christ's mother, and the Christmas season is a "prolonged commemoration of the divine virginal and salvific Mother" (MC, 5). December 17 to 24 and the Fourth Sunday of Advent are concerned with the prophecies about the Messiah and the Virgin Mother.²¹

Marialis cultus points out the Christological and ecclesial dimensions of the Marian solemnities. December 8 is a joint celebration of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, of preparation for the Savior and the beginning of the Church (MC, 3). The Annunciation of the Lord is a "joint feast of Christ and the Blessed Virgin," as is also February 2, the Presentation of the Lord. The restored Solemnity of the Mother of God "is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in the mystery of salvation" (MC, 5). The Solemnity of the Assumption celebrates Mary's "perfect configuration to the risen Christ" (MC, 6).²²

In addition, the feasts of Mary have a Christological significance: they are "events in which the Blessed Virgin was closely associated with her son." The Nativity of Mary marks the "dawn of salvation" (MC, 7), the Visitation proclaims the "mercy of the Lord," and the Commemoration of Our Lady of Sorrows is a fitting day for reliving "the decisive moment in the history of salvation" (MC, 7).

The bond uniting Mary to Christ is illustrated in the Eucharistic prayers of the Roman Missal (MC, 10). The Lection-

²¹The survey of Mary's presence in the liturgical year in *Marialis cultus* stops immediately after the Advent and Christmas seasons (MC, 5). *CMBVM* (approved in 1986) underscores the presence of Mary through every season of the liturgical year.

²²The Christological dimension of the Marian feasts and the Marian dimension of Christ's feasts were underscored by the Polish bishops in their commentary on *Marialis cultus* (8 December 1974): "In the liturgical life of the Church, the Blessed Virgin occupies a special and outstanding place, such that, without fear of exaggeration, one can say that every feast of the Lord may be considered a Marian feast. Every feast which celebrates Christ, for example—his Nativity, bears within it Marian elements, and every feast of the Mother of God celebrates Christ and his salvific work" (Text in *Mariamum* 37 [1975]: 507-511).

ary, with its rich and varied collection of Old and New Testament biblical texts concerning the Virgin Mary, sets forth "more completely the mystery of Christ." Scriptural readings with reference to Mary are not limited to the Marian feasts but are also part of the Sunday liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments. In this way, a Marian dimension can be part of the Sunday liturgies and the celebration of the sacraments (*MC*, 12,14).

The celebration of the Marian Year (1987-88) provided an illustration of the Marian dimension of the liturgical year and the mysteries of the liturgy. The Marian Year's purpose was Christological and ecclesial: to prepare the Church and the world for the bimillennium of the birth of Christ.²³ In announcing the Marian Year, John Paul II indicated that the liturgical year was to be the context in which all programs of the Marian Year were to be inserted (rather than a separate program of Marian celebrations). All the programs of the Marian year were to be in harmony with the themes and characteristics of the liturgical season.²⁴ This liturgical context for the Marian Year was based on the conviction that almost any liturgical season or feast can reveal a Marian note or dimension.

In addition to associating the Virgin Mary with Christ in the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year, the Marian Year document on the liturgy suggested ways of referring to Mary's presence within the celebration of the sacramental mysteries.

The ritual action in the celebration of the sacraments must stress the merciful plan of the Father, the salvific presence of Christ, and the peculiar grace of the Holy Spirit at work in each

²³Consilium Primarium Anno Mariali Celebrando, "Prima Lettera Circolare ai Vescovi, 27 marzo 1987," *Marianum* 48 (1986) 475.

²⁴*L'Osservatore Romano*, 2-3 January 1987. The announcement is at the beginning of the document for the liturgical celebration of the Marian Year, *Orientamenti e Proposte per la Celebrazione dell'Anno Mariano* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987), published also in *Marianum* 48 (1986) 483-536.

sacrament. Therefore, nothing must distract the participants from the essential and constitutive elements of each sacrament. Nevertheless, this does not exclude that during the celebration there could be pointed out some Marian resonance coming from the very center of the sacrament either directly or by way of analogy.²⁵

Suggestions were given for the celebration of the Eucharist, the sacraments, and the Liturgy of the Hours during the Marian Year. In the sacrament of Baptism, for example, as the Church confers the new life of grace, Mary is present as mother to her children. In the ordination to the diaconate, Mary is the model for those called to service. In the Liturgy of the Hours, the psalms could be viewed in a Marian or ecclesial perspective.

The Bonds Uniting the Virgin Mary to the Trinity and Christ's Redemption

The suggestion that a Marian reference be allowed to emerge from the sacramental mystery indicates that the Virgin Mary's relation with Christ is not limited to the events of his life commemorated in the liturgical year. She is related to the total mystery of Christ—to the Christ who is one with the Triune God, and to the Christ who is head of the members of his body, the Church. The purpose of the Church's liturgy is to make available "the riches of her Lord's powers and merits" (SC, 102); through her relation with Christ, Mary is present in every part of his redemptive activity.

Marialis cultus sets forth various aspects of Marian devotion (Trinitarian, Christological, and ecclesial) and proposes guidelines (biblical, liturgical, ecumenical, and anthropological). These orientations, which give new directions for Marian studies, make explicit the "inseparable bond" which unites Mary to the person and work of Christ.

Marian devotion's trinitarian dimension is based on Mary's relation to the Trinity (MC, 25), and, in a special

²⁵*Orientamenti*, 22.

way, to the Holy Spirit (*MC*, 26); its ecclesial dimension is founded on Mary's relation to the Communion of Saints, of which she is the preeminent member, and to the Church (*MC*, 28); its ecumenical dimension is based on Mary's relation to Christ, the source of the Church's unity; its anthropological dimension is based not on sociology, but on soteriology and Mary's relationship to the Holy Spirit, who has made her "a mirror of the expectations" of the men and women of our age (*MC*, 37).

The language of bonding is used again here to describe Mary's relation to the whole mystery of Christ celebrated in the liturgy. Mary's relation to the Holy Spirit is similar to a matrimonial bond.²⁶ Mary's mission to the Church—bringing and fostering life—enables the members of the Church "to experience more intensely the fraternal bond (*fraternum vinculum*) which unites them" (*MC*, 28).²⁷ Within the Communion of Saints, as we are all related to Christ, so all are related to Christ's Mother who becomes our Mother.²⁸ These relations of Mary to the fullness of the mystery of Christ, described in *Marialis cultus*, are an expression of what Paul VI believed to be Vatican II's teaching. In a 1968 homily, he stated:

We must say that the Virgin Mary presented by the Council is not a solitary figure, enclosed in an empty heaven, but a creature singularly beautiful and holy because of the divine and mystic relations which surround her, and which define her very extraordinary being, and which fill her with light, such as is not found elsewhere, in a simple creature, in a sister of our humanity.²⁹

²⁶"in arcana illa necessitudine inter Spiritum Sanctum et Mariam quidam sponsale," *MC*, 26; "singulariter arcanæ necessitudinis ratio inter Spiritum Dei et Virginem Nazarethanam eorumque actio communis," *MC*, 27.

²⁷"ut acrius percipiant fraternum vinculum, quod cunctos christifideles devincit," *MC*, 28.

²⁸"quo altius acutiusque percipiatur vinculum, quod nos coniungit cum Matre Christi et nostra Matre in communione Sanctorum," *MC*, 29.

²⁹*L'Osservatore Romano*, 30 May 1968; *Marianum* 32 (1970): 259-260.

The documents of the Marian Year note that the liturgy is the place for making apparent the relations between Mary and the fullness of the mystery of Christ.

The liturgy manifests and celebrates the relations that unite the Virgin Mary to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit; to the Church in its beginning and on our way towards the eschatological fulfillment; to each of the faithful every day in the most significant moments of their spiritual growth. It illuminates the relations in the community of the Communion of Saints that exist between the Blessed Virgin and the Saints in heaven, and between the Blessed Virgin and the faithful on pilgrimage towards their heavenly home.³⁰

Celebrating in liturgy the bonds which unite the Virgin Mary to the dimensions of Christ's redemption is a characteristic of the liturgies of the Eastern Churches. The Congregation of the Eastern Churches' letter for the Marian Year notes that the East has always viewed Mary and all of revelation in a larger context than the West.

The East places the person and the mission of the Mother of God within the mystery and the history of salvation. The merits and privileges of the Blessed Virgin Mary are not enclosed in a place apart; rather Mary is seen in a perspective which is Christological (Mary—the first of the redeemed), anthropological (Mary—the first of the new creation), ecclesial (Mary—the new Eve, mother of the living), and pneumatological (Mary—representative of the earth made fruitful by the Holy Spirit).³¹

Mary's Exemplarity: Model for the Church at Worship

Mary is the first member of the Communion of the Saints and eminent member of the Church; she is also the model or pattern of the Church. Comparisons between Mary and

³⁰*Orientamenti*, 7.

³¹Congregazione per le Chiese Orientali, *L'Enciclica 'Redemptoris Mater' e le Chiese Orientali nell'Anno Mariano*, (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987), 6 (7 June 1987).

the Church were frequent in the patristic era, but until the time of the Council this relation remained relatively unexplored.³²

Vatican II proposed different images to explore the relation between Mary and the Church. Mary is "the type of the Church . . . exemplar of both virgin and mother" (*LG*, 63). From an eschatological perspective, Mary is "the faultless image of the church, that which she herself desires and hopes to be" (*SC*, 103). Mary "shines forth to the whole community as model of virtues" (*LG*, 65). Mary as exemplar and model for the Church is the distinctive trait of Paul VI's Marian teaching; its presence in *Marialis cultus* has led to new ways of describing Mary's relation to Christ and the Church.

Several elements are presented in *Marialis cultus* as part of Mary's exemplarity:

1) Mary can be said to be "model of the Church in divine worship," because she represents what the Church at worship is at its deepest level. In her person, she manifests for the whole Church "the absolute union with Christ" which is the heart of worship, and, for that reason, she is the exemplar or "model of the spiritual attitude with which the Church celebrates and lives the divine mysteries" (*MC*, 16). In the same address in which he declared Mary "Mother of the Church," Paul VI said that "the reality of the Church is not limited to its hierarchical structure, its liturgy, its sacraments. Its profound essence, the source of its sanctifying efficacy is to be sought in its mystical union with Christ, a union which we cannot conceive if we omit the Mother of the Incarnate Word, with whom Jesus wished to be intimately associated for our salvation."³³

³²The Mary-Church comparison "arose in contemporary theology in a manner as unexpected as it is dazzling" (Gerard Philips, cited in Henri de Lubac, *The Church: Paradox and Mystery* (Staten Is., NY: Alba House, 1969), 56).

³³Paul VI, "Address at the end of the third session of the Council, 21 November 1964," *La Documentation Catholique* 61 (1964): 1543.

The Church in worship identifies with Mary. As Mary is listening, praying, giving birth and nourishing, offering,³⁴ so the Church at worship adopts the same sentiments. As there is a *virgo audiens*, so also an *ecclesia audiens*.³⁵ *Virgo orans* is both an image and icon of the Church. *Virgo pariens* is an image of the Church giving and nourishing birth through the Word and the sacraments. The Church identifies with Mary as *virgo offerens* in the "fiat" of Nazareth and the "fiat" of the Cross.

2) Mary is model for the Church both for celebrating and for living the mysteries (*MC*, 16). Proposing Mary as the one model both for worship and conduct dispels the notion that Marian devotion is in some way separate or exempt from the ordinary demands of Christian living. Christians have imitated Mary "in making their lives an act of worship . . . and making their worship a commitment of their lives. . . . Mary is above all the example of that worship that consists in making one's life an offering to God" (*MC*, 21).

3) The notion of Mary's exemplarity consists in more than the imitation of specific virtues or a particular way of life. She is exemplar "for the way in which, in her own particular life, she fully and responsibly accepted the will of God, because she heard the word of God and acted on it and because charity and a spirit of service were the driving force of her actions" (*MC*, 35). She is "teacher of the spiri-

³⁴The Mass "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church II" makes reference to these sentiments in the Eucharistic preface: "Virgo audiens . . . orans . . . pariens . . . offerens . . . vigilans" (*Collectio Missarum Beatae Mariae Virginis* [Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987], no. 26). The list is expanded in the Marian Year document on the liturgy: Mary is the model for the Church in worship as she "listens and keeps the word . . . praises and thanks God. . . . manifests Christ . . . prays and intercedes for all . . . generates and nourishes the life of grace . . . offers Christ to the Father and offers herself . . . waits and watches for the coming of the Lord" (*Orientamenti*, 9).

³⁵"In the hearing of God's word the Church is built up and grows. . . ." ("Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass" [1981], 7, in *New Introductions to the Sacramentary and Lectionary* [Ottawa: Publications Service, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983]).

tual life" (MC, 21), because she is "the first and most perfect disciple of Christ" (MC, 35).

Paul VI has been called the "doctor of Mary's exemplarity."³⁶ His emphasis on the sentiments with which the Virgin Mary worshiped and served God in her life has provided a way in which every person can be identified with the sentiments of Mary. His own writings and liturgical compositions, influenced by *Marialis cultus*, have produced a new set of Marian titles.³⁷ These titles (some from the patristic era) are well represented in the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, for example, "disciple of her Son" (Mass 8), "disciple of the Divine Word" (Mass 10), "truly the new woman . . . the first disciple of the new law, the woman happy in your service" (Mass 20).

Marian Devotion and Liturgy

All Marian devotion is part of the one Christian worship centered in Christ. Whether expressed within or outside of formal liturgy, and whatever form it may take, Marian devotion, to be authentic, must be permeated by the spirit of the liturgy.

Viewing Marian devotion within liturgy is not an innovation. In the first millennium of Christianity in the West, and until the present in eastern Christianity, liturgy and Marian devotion were eminently compatible and mutually enriching.³⁸ Only in the West, since the middle ages, did Marian devotion develop apart from the liturgy. In the preconciliar period, some in the "Marian movement" perceived the liturgical movement, with its Christocentric and biblical empha-

³⁶Ignazio M. Calabuig, "In Memoriam Pauli PP. VI eiusque erga deiparam pietatis," *Marianum* 40 (1978): 11.

³⁷A litany of titles of the Virgin Mary drawn from *Marialis cultus* can be found in G. Basadonna, *La preghiera del rosario* (Milan: Ancora, 1986), 66-68.

³⁸*L'Enciclica 'Redemptoris Mater' e le Chiese Orientali*, 12-17. Excerpts from this letter can be found in *The Marian Library Newsletter* 17 (Summer, 1988).

sis, as not favorable to Marian devotion.³⁹ The postconciliar task is to reunite liturgy and Marian devotion.

The advantages of this union are many. Marian devotion, placed within a liturgical perspective, provides some assurance that devotion will not be separated from its Christological orientation. For example, Marian devotion during Advent is directed ultimately toward Christ. The Marian character of the Advent season provides both an illustration of the Christological orientation of Marian devotion and a "norm for preventing any tendency (as has happened at times in certain forms of popular piety) to separate devotion to the Blessed Virgin from its necessary point of reference—Christ" (MC, 4).

Second, Marian devotion in a liturgical context can be nourished by the same sources as the liturgy. It is from the Bible that all devotion draws inspiration and gains new vigor and sure help (MC, 30). "Both in the East and in the West the highest and purest expressions of devotion to the Blessed Virgin have sprung from the liturgy or have been incorporated into it" (MC, 15).

Marian devotion is expanded in a liturgical perspective. The traditional "typology of devotion" to Mary, which includes sentiments of "loving service . . . zealous imitation . . . profound wonder . . . attentive study" (MC, 22), within liturgy expands to include praise and worship of God in union with Mary. As we shall see, the liturgy, celebrated in the spirit of Mary, is a fitting Marian devotion.⁴⁰

Perhaps the most compelling reason for viewing Marian devotion within a liturgical perspective is that it will be clear that true Marian devotion must influence daily life and conduct. Liturgy, *Marialis cultus* reminds us, is "worship which requires a consistent way of living" (MC, 11). Placed within worship, Marian devotion is safeguarded from aberrations, such as "vain credulity which substitutes reliance on merely

³⁹Cf. R. Laurentin, *La question mariale* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1963), chap. 1, pp. 15-37.

⁴⁰CMBVM: *Lectionary*, Intro., 10.

external practices for serious commitment . . . and sterile and ephemeral sentimentality, so alien to the spirit of the Gospel that demands persevering and practical action" (MC, 38).

A document from the Marian Year repeats this warning against a Marian devotion which is not related to the demands of true worship and proposes the Virgin Mary as the model of and the inspiration for countless works of charity, reconciliation and peace.

Genuine devotion to the Mother of the Redeemer cannot limit itself to a series of sporadic devotional exercises; it must be reflected within daily life. . . . The observance of charity is the sign of true devotion. It is Mary herself who rose in haste to go and be of service to Elizabeth that gives us an example of the harmony that must exist between the worship of God and the service of the needy.⁴¹

III. THE COLLECTION OF MASSES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Origins and Reasons

The *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, published by the Congregation of Divine Worship in 1986, is a set of forty-six Masses, originally published in two volumes: a Missal (Sacramentary) and Lectionary.⁴² It is an official liturgical book, with the *editio typica* approved by John Paul II. It may be considered as an appendix to the missal.⁴³ The *Collection* does not modify or change the directives of the General Roman Calendar (1969), the Roman Missal (1975), or the Lectionary (1981), nor is its use obligatory. These Votive Masses were intended for Marian shrines and those

⁴¹"Consilium Primarium Anno Mariali Celebrando, "Terza Lettera Circolare ai Vescovi, 21 novembre 1987," *Marianum* 49 (1987): 24-31. Excerpts from this letter can be found in *The Marian Library Newsletter* 17 (Summer, 1988).

⁴²*I. Collectio Missarum de Beata Maria Virgine, II. Lectionarium pro Missis de Beata Maria Virgine* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987).

⁴³J. Calabuig, "Votivas" ("Colección de Misas de la B.V. Maria"), *Nuevo Diccionario de Mariología* (Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1988), 2047.

communities who wish to celebrate the memorial of the Blessed Virgin on Saturday.

The *Collection* was developed by a group within the Congregation of Divine Worship from 1984 to 1986. It includes texts from a number of sources: early sacramentaries, the *Missale Romanum*, and mass formularies recently composed by religious congregations and dioceses and submitted to the Congregation. (Since 1970 the Congregation for Divine Worship approved over 200 mass formularies of the Blessed Virgin in the various "propers" for dioceses and religious orders.)⁴⁴ The origin of about half of the mass formularies is mentioned in the introduction.⁴⁵

The *Collection* was published in response to directors of Marian shrines and others who requested a greater selection of texts for Masses to commemorate the Virgin Mary. At Marian shrines, the Votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin may be celebrated for those on pilgrimage almost every day of the year (with the exception of Sundays, solemnities, and feasts of the Lord).⁴⁶ To avoid excessive repetition of the

⁴⁴Rosella Barbieri, "Collectio Missarum Beatae Mariae Virginis," *Notitiae* 224 (1985): 151-152.

⁴⁵Four masses from the Common of the Blessed Virgin on Saturday, (Missal of Paul VI) have been included, with a preface added: 2. "The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Annunciation of the Lord"; 5. "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Savior"; 15. "The Blessed Virgin Mary at the Resurrection of the Lord"; 19. "Holy Mary, Mother of the Lord." The Servites have provided three masses: 11. and 12.—"The Blessed Virgin Mary at the Cross of the Lord (I and II)" and 30. "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Mediatrix of Grace." The Congregation of the Passion provided two: 22. "Holy Mary, Helpmaid of the Lord" and 37. "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Holy Hope." There are three masses for "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church" (25-27); the first was approved during the Holy Year of Reconciliation (1975) and included in the 1975 edition of the Roman Missal. In addition, twelve congregations and two dioceses were acknowledged in the introductions to the masses. Several masses in section 3 (39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44) are similar to the *Missae pro aliquibus locis* of the Roman Missal of 1962. (Matías Augé, "Algunas impresiones sobre las nuevas 'Misas Marianas,'" *Ephemerides Mariologicae* 38 [1988] 382.)

⁴⁶DOL, 442.

same Mass and to present a larger view of the role of the Virgin Mary within the Church, the request for additional Votive Masses was made.

This request from Marian shrines for texts to illustrate more fully the person and role of the Virgin Mary within the liturgy is a good example of the rapprochement between Marian devotion and the liturgy which has occurred since Vatican II. Paul VI encouraged rectors of Marian shrines to study the liturgical and ecclesial significance of these traditional sites of Marian devotion. His encouragement was in part responsible for Canon 1234 of the Code of 1983, which spoke for the first time of shrines and their liturgical role: "At shrines more abundant means of salvation are to be provided the faithful; the word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered, especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and penance . . ."⁴⁷ The "General Introduction" (GI) of the *Collection* states that "celebration of the eucharist is the high point and center of all pastoral activity at a shrine" (*CMBVM*, GI, 30).

The *Collection* can also be considered an enlargement of the Marian texts in the Missal of Paul VI. Although the Missal provided more Marian texts and of a higher quality than were previously available in the Roman liturgy, the most frequently used Masses—the Common of the Blessed Virgin throughout the year—have been characterized as suffering from a "theological poverty and thematic monotony."⁴⁸ The desire was expressed that there might be a way of sharing

⁴⁷*Code of Canon Law*, can. 1234. Cf. the letter on Marian Shrines (7 October 1987): Consilium Primarium Anno Mariale Celebrando, "Seconda Lettera Circolare ai Vescovi, 7 ottobre 1987," *Marianum* 49 (1987): 13-23.

⁴⁸"Non tutto [. . .] soddisfa l'attento lettore e celebrante della liturgia in riferimento a Maria. Le preghiere del commune della Vergine risentono di una certa povertà teologica e di una monotonia tematica" (J. Castellano, "La Vergine nella Liturgia," in *Maria mistero di grazia* [Rome: Teresianum, 1974]). The Missal of Paul VI took these texts from the Missal of Pius V. Cf. Ignazio M. Calabuig, "La Vergine nella Liturgia dal Vaticano II alla *Marialis Cultus*," in *Maria nel mistero del Christo et della Chiesa* (Rome: Ecumenica Editrice, 1980), 171.

some of the fine texts recently developed for dioceses and religious orders and approved for their use.

The *Collection* is a completion of the Missal of Paul VI in yet another way. In the Missal of Paul VI, there were many commemorations of the Virgin Mary in the Advent and Christmas seasons, but, since the suppression of the feast of the Seven Sorrows of Mary on Friday of Passion Week (in the reform of John XXIII), there was no commemoration of Mary in Lent and the Easter season. This omission of the one "who was associated to the sacrifice of her Son with a maternal heart" was unfortunate, and requests were made that such a commemoration be possible within the liturgy.⁴⁹

Finally, the *Collection* was developed in response to requests that the Virgin Mary be presented in liturgy in a way comprehensible to contemporary society and in a manner reflecting current ecclesial references to the Virgin Mary. Some of the themes and titles in *Marialis cultus* seemed appropriate: Mary's relation to the Holy Spirit, the Church, humanity; Mary as disciple of Christ, exemplar of the Church at worship, model of faith, the new woman.⁵⁰

The formularies for the individual Masses present a degree of thematic unity which in the present liturgical books is achieved only on major feasts. All the euchological and Scripture texts—entrance antiphon, prayers, first and second readings (if desired in more solemn celebrations), the Alleluia verse, Gospel, Eucharistic preface, and communion antiphon—are directed to the title or the mystery being celebrated. Each Mass also includes notes on pastoral, historical,

⁴⁹Dom Bernard Billet, "La place de la bienheureuse Marie dans le Missel Romain de Paul VI," *Études Mariales* 39 (1982): 23-56. "Il reste pourtant un déséquilibre certain entre l'attestation luxuriante de la présence de la Vierge au Temps de l'Avent et de Noël et sa quasi-absence aux jours de la Passion pendant lesquels elle fut "associée d'un coeur maternel au sacrifice de son Fils, donnant à l'immolation de la victime née de sa chair, le consentement de son amour . . ." *LG*, 58. Cf. Capitolo Generale dell'Ordine dei Servi di Maria, *Fate quello che vi dira* (Torino: Editrice Elle di Ci, 1985), 56-57.

⁵⁰Calabuig, "La Vergine nella Liturgia," 174.

and liturgical matters which could be used as an introduction or in the homily.

Arrangement of the Collection

The *Collection* provides a way—to be used judiciously⁵¹—of commemorating the Virgin Mary throughout the liturgical year and in harmony with the liturgical season; its purpose is not to create a separate cycle of Marian feasts or commemorations.

The *Collection* is arranged to correspond to the divisions of the liturgical year: Advent (three formularies), Christmas season (six formularies), Lent (five formularies), Easter season (four formularies), and Ordinary Time (twenty-eight formularies divided into three sections).⁵² Ordinarily, the Mass-

⁵¹Cf. *CMBVM*, GI, 37.

⁵²ADVENT SEASON:

1. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Chosen Daughter of Israel
2. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Annunciation of the Lord
3. The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

CHRISTMAS SEASON:

4. Holy Mary, Mother of God
5. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Savior
6. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Epiphany of the Lord
7. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Presentation of the Lord
8. Our Lady of Nazareth
9. Our Lady of Cana

LENTEN SEASON:

10. Holy Mary, Disciple of the Lord
11. The Blessed Virgin Mary at the Foot of the Cross, I
12. The Blessed Virgin Mary at the Foot of the Cross, II
13. The Commending of the Blessed Virgin Mary
14. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Reconciliation

EASTER SEASON:

15. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Resurrection of the Lord
16. Holy Mary, Fountain of Light and Life
17. Our Lady of the Cenacle
18. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles

ORDINARY TIME:

Section 1. Celebration of the Mother of God under titles chiefly from Scripture or that express Mary's bond with the Church:

19. Holy Mary, Mother of the Lord
20. Holy Mary, the New Eve
21. The Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary

es are to be used in the assigned season of the liturgical year.

An "organizing principle" for each liturgical season is provided in the introduction to the season. During Advent, the liturgy celebrates "the two comings of the Lord: the First Coming in lowliness when . . . the Lord took flesh of the Blessed Virgin Mary and came into the world to save the human race; the Second Coming in glory, when . . . the Lord will come to judge the living and dead and to lead the just into the house of his Father where Mary has preceded them in glory." During Lent, Mary is the "model of the disciple who faithfully listens to the word of God and follows

22. Holy Mary, Handmaid of the Lord
23. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Temple of the Lord
24. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Seat of Wisdom
25. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church, I
26. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church, II
27. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church, III
28. The Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary
29. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of All Creation

Section 2. Memorials of the Blessed Virgin Mary under titles that refer to her cooperation in fostering the spiritual life of the faithful:

30. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Mediatrix of Grace
31. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Fountain of Salvation
32. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Teacher in the Spirit
33. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Good Counsel
34. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Cause of Our Joy
35. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Pillar of Faith
36. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Fairest Love
37. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Hope
38. Holy Mary, Mother of Unity

Section 3. Memorials of the Blessed Virgin under titles that suggest her compassionate intercession on behalf of the faithful:

39. Holy Mary, Queen and Mother of Mercy
40. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Divine Providence
41. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Consolation
42. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Help of Christians
43. Our Lady of Ransom
44. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Health of the Sick
45. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace
46. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Gate of Heaven.

the footsteps of Christ to Calvary . . ." In the Easter triduum, she is the " 'new woman,' who stands by the tree of life . . . as the companion of Christ the 'new man,' and as the spiritual mother into whose maternal care the Lord entrusts all his followers." In the Easter Season, she is "filled with joy because of the resurrection of her Son" and "devoted to prayer with the apostles in trusting expectation of the gift of the Holy Spirit." The many formularies provided for the Ordinary Time have "one and the same object—the work God has accomplished in Mary in relationship to Christ and the Church—but which celebrate it under many different aspects."

GENERAL INTRODUCTION (Praenotanda)

The "General Introduction" of the *Collection* follows the tradition of recent liturgical books by presenting liturgical and theological principles for understanding the sacramental mystery and for interpreting the texts, in addition to providing instructions on the correct way of using them. Not only does the General Introduction provide considerations on the role and presence of the Virgin Mary in liturgy, it also advances our understanding of what is celebrated in liturgy. The General Introduction places liturgy within a large context—that of salvation history and of the full dimensions of Christ's redemption. By enlarging the dimensions of the liturgy, the presence and role of the Virgin Mary become apparent. The process is not one of inserting the Virgin Mary in liturgy, but of broadening our concept and enabling us to see her in the fullness of the mysteries.

The Presence of Mary in the History of Salvation

The Lectionary of the *Collection* contains twenty readings from the Old Testament and twenty-nine psalms as responsorials, as well as readings from the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation. Although the message of these books may vary greatly, they are read in liturgy with the conviction that the entire Scripture forms a "single corpus that is permeated by the mystery

of Christ.”⁵³ Through the mystery of Christ present in Scripture, the Virgin Mary is reflected.

The history of salvation celebrated in liturgy is a work “that God the Father has carried on through the ages.” This history is divided into principal moments or times: “the salvation *announced* through the patriarchs and prophets . . . fully *revealed* in Christ . . . and *celebrated* in the age of the Church . . . which will reach its consummation in Christ’s glorious Second Coming” (*CMBVM*, GI, 4).

In the first age—salvation *announced* through the “patriarchs and prophets”—the Virgin Mary is presented in the prophecy and the virtues of many holy people. “Certain events, figures, or symbols of the Old Testament foretell or suggest in a wonderful manner the life and mission of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the glorious daughter of Zion and the Mother of Christ.”⁵⁴ Mary is prefigured in many individuals and figures: the woman of Genesis, Abraham, Moses, Ruth, Anna, Judith, Esther, the mother of the seven Maccabees, the spouse in the Canticle of Canticles, daughter of Sion, the burning bush, the ark of the covenant, the city of God, the temple of Jerusalem.

In the second age—“salvation fully *revealed* in Christ”—Mary is the “one intimately involved in all of those saving deeds of God.” Many of the titles from the Mass formularies describe this association. The Virgin Mary was present in all the mysteries of Christ, as “mother of Christ, our God” (Mass 26); as “first fruits of the new creation” (Mass 20); as “mother and companion of the Redeemer” (Mass 30); as “servant of the mystery of Redemption” (Mass 22); “partner in his passion” (Mass 12). Because “all the virtues extolled in the Gospel—faith, charity, hope, humility, mercy, purity of heart—flourished in Mary, the first and most perfect of Christ’s disciples” (*CMBVM: Lect.*, Intro., 3a), she may illustrate the meaning of many New Testament texts, even though they contain no explicit reference to her.

⁵³*CMBVM: Lectionary*, Intro., 3b.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

In the third age of history, the "time of the Church," salvation is *celebrated* above all in the liturgy. Here Mary is the spiritual mother who continues her maternal intercession for her children; she is "model of the Church" (Masses 16, 17); "perfect pattern of the Church at prayer" (Mass 25); the one "who cares for the pilgrim Church with a mother's love" (Mass 25); the "shining model of true worship" (Mass 16).

Liturgy celebrates the events and ages of salvation. All references to the Virgin Mary take their "meaning and purpose" from her "close participation in the history of salvation." The commemoration of the Mother of the Lord is above all "celebrating the events of salvation in which, by God's salvific plan, the Blessed Virgin was involved in view of the mystery of Christ" (*CMBVM*, GI, 6).

The General Introduction makes significant advances in developing the "time of the Church" when salvation is celebrated through the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of the Sacraments. The Church's liturgy, which celebrates the work of God "preparing the Mother of the Redeemer . . . God's intervention in human history . . . the public life of [Christ] . . . and above all God's wonderful deeds in Christ's paschal mystery," presents the "entire, integral work of salvation" (*CMBVM*, GI, 7-10). All is brought together in the "mystical today" of the Church, and the celebration itself is a "new event" where the proclaimed word is "enriched with new meaning and power."⁵

The Virgin Mary's Presence and Exemplarity in Liturgy

The General Introduction makes a comparison between the presence of Christ and the Virgin Mary in the Church's liturgy. After the Ascension, Christ is present to his Church in many ways: "as *Head* of the Mystical Body . . . as *teacher* who continues to proclaim the message of the Gospel . . . as *priest* . . . as *Mediator* . . . and as *firstborn brother*" (*CMBVM*, GI, 11). Similarly, after her Assumption, the

⁵Liturgy as a "new event" in the "mystical today" of the Church appeared in the "Introduction to the Lectionary for the Mass (1981)," 3.

Blessed Virgin continues her *maternal intercession*, and she is "present to the Church as *mother and advocate*" (CMBVM, GI, 12).

Marialis cultus spoke of the Church's desire to "live the mystery of Christ with Mary" and of Mary's "active presence" (*praesens et operans*) to the Church (MC, 11). The General Introduction develops the phrase: not only does the Church wish to live the mystery of Christ with Mary, it wishes to do it as she did: "to live the mystery of Christ with her and like her" (CMBVM, GI, 12).

The Church identifies itself with Mary, as it celebrates liturgy in union with and in imitation of her. Together both listen to God's word, praise God with the Magnificat, share in the paschal mystery, and implore the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Union with the Virgin Mary in liturgy has one purpose: a deeper identification with the Church and an interior transformation to Christ. The presence and the exemplar value of Mary in liturgy have the same purpose: by imitating the Mother, we might be more fully conformed to her Son (CMBVM, GI, 17).⁵⁶ Participation in liturgy with and like Mary can be "the most excellent homage of devotion"⁵⁷ offered to her.

The forty-six Mass formularies of the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* come from different periods and sources. Some represent a particular moment in the history of Marian devotion or a mystery or title of the Virgin Mary of particular significance to a diocese or religious order. By making these texts available to all who wish to use them, the *Collection* presents many new possibilities for devotion to Mary within the liturgy. One hopes that the many new images, titles, and contexts in which the Virgin Mary appears will influence popular devotions, poetry, musical texts, and art.

⁵⁶"Vis exemplaris beatae Virginis in ipsa actione liturgica elucens fideles impellit Matri se conformari quo Filio plenius se conforment" (*Praenotanda*, 17).

⁵⁷CMBVM: *Lectionary*, Intro., 10.

In addition to the abundant resources of the forty-six individual Masses, the *Collection* itself, its Lectionary, its arrangement, and the principles in its General Introduction present a fuller description of the role and presence of the Virgin Mary than ever previously available. The "inseparable bond" uniting the Virgin Mary to the entire work of redemption is represented in all the seasons of the liturgical year, in every epoch of salvation history, and within the celebration of the sacred mysteries. The *Collection* is founded on the conviction that there is a fundamental harmony between liturgy and Marian devotion and that the Virgin Mary within liturgy provides a powerful and attractive example of Christian worship. *Marialis cultus*, with its concern for the "right ordering and development of Marian devotion" and the "role of the Virgin Mary in the worship of the Church," played no small part in bringing us to this point.

THOMAS A. THOMPSON, S.M.
The Marian Library
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio