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## **HISTORICAL CONSPECTUS OF THE DOCTRINE OF MARY'S CO-REDEMPTION**

The scope of this essay is indicated quite adequately in the title. It is intended to provide an historical sketch of the gradual development, throughout the centuries, of the teaching that Mary is the Co-redemptrix. As such, therefore, it is not concerned with any attempt to establish the thesis of Mary's Co-redemption of mankind. There is no discussion of the scriptural basis for the doctrine, no extended commentary on the theological value of the statements made by the Fathers and theologians, and by the Sovereign Pontiffs. In short, this paper aims at an objective exposé of the history of the doctrine.

Attention is called to the word "conspectus." A complete history of all that has been written on Mary's Co-redemption during the past eighteen centuries would fill volumes. In the short space allotted for this paper, one can hope to do no more than to present an historical sketch or outline. Indeed there would be no point in endeavoring to study all the theologians who have concerned themselves with Mary's part in the restoration of the human race. For it is of less importance to cite a large number of relatively unknown authors than to treat of the testimony of the more notable theologians—especially those who exerted considerable influence on subsequent ages.

Furthermore, in order to avoid undue length, a discussion of the writers of the Eastern Church has been deliberately avoided—save in reference to some of the earliest Christian Fathers. Likewise it has been considered best to eliminate any consideration of the history of the Co-redemption, in so far as it has been manifested in the liturgy or in Christian art.

The essay is divided into four parts. Part I deals with the history of the doctrine from the beginning to the eighth cen-



ture; Part II, from the ninth century to the sixteenth century; Part III, from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century; Part IV, the twentieth century.

It is unnecessary to explain at length before this audience the meanings of various terms employed by theologians in reference to the doctrine of Mary's Co-redemption. Suffice it to mention them here.

"In Catholic theology the term 'Redemption' designates the sum total of meritorious and satisfactory acts performed by Christ while on earth, offered to the Eternal Father *per modum unius* with His sacrifice on the Cross, in virtue of which the Eternal Father was moved (humanly speaking) to re-instate the human race, lost by sin, into His former friendship. . . . When explaining Mary's share in Christ's Redemption, theologians generally distinguish a two-fold co-operation, namely, remote (or indirect) and proximate (or direct). She co-operated *remotely*, for example, by meriting some of the circumstances of the Incarnation, and particularly by giving birth to the world's Redeemer. (This co-operation was not merely physical and material . . . but also moral and formal; Mary knowingly and willingly consented to become the Mother of the Redeemer. This fact has led some to call this co-operation *proximate* and *direct*.) She co-operated *proximately* [or immediately] by suffering with Him, by offering Him on Calvary for our salvation. According to [some writers in] Catholic theology, Mary's compassion and oblation had a meritorious and satisfactory value in the sight of God, and they were joined with the merits and satisfactions of Christ to produce or bring about the selfsame effect, namely, the Redemption of mankind. The difference between the two lies in this, that while Christ's merits and satisfactions had an infinite value in themselves and moved God *de condigno* and *ex rigore justitiae*, our Blessed Lady's merits and satisfactions drew all their value from those of Christ, were totally sub-



ordinate to those of the latter, and moved God *de congruo, ex divina benevolentia*.”<sup>1</sup>

Following Father Lennerz, many theologians today, instead of distinguishing between “the acquisition of graces” and “the application of graces,” use the terms “objective Redemption” and “subjective Redemption.”

“The former was accomplished when God, accepting the merits and satisfactions of Christ, *per modum unius* with His sacrificial death on the Cross, ceased to be angry with the human race and showed Himself ready to reinstate fallen man into His former friendship. . . . The latter, i.e., the subjective Redemption, takes place when Christ’s merits and satisfactions are actually applied to individual souls through the normal means established by God (sacraments, prayer, etc.).”<sup>2</sup>

In connection with the use of modern terminology, one must be very careful not to endeavor artificially to accommodate to it statements written years ago or even centuries ago, and then ascribe to older theologians, for example, the teaching of modern writers with its precise definitions, distinctions, etc.

### PART I: *From the Beginning to the Eighth Century*

Perhaps the earliest indications of belief that the Blessed Virgin co-operated in the Redemption are found in the works of St. Justin, St. Irenaeus and Tertullian. These indications

<sup>1</sup> J. Carol, O.F.M., *The Problem of Our Lady’s Co-redemption*, in *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. 123, 1950, pp. 40-41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42. Father Carol is very much opposed to the terminology of Father Lennerz, charging that it creates confusion, and objecting to its being set up as the only criterion for the interpretation of texts, particularly those written before this terminology became common. On this point, cf. also C. Dillenschneider, *Marie au service de notre Rédemption*, Haguenau, 1947, pp. 5 et seq.; B. Merkelbach, *Mariologia*, Parisiis, 1939, n. 170. Actually this terminology now seems to be generally accepted. Cf. H. Lennerz, *De Redemptione et cooperatione in opere Redemptionis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 22, 1941, p. 305.



lie in the very clear and very forceful antithesis, developed by these writers, between Mary and Eve. In fact, in reference to this antithesis, Father Roschini<sup>3</sup> expresses the opinion that it was the first idea that the primitive Church had of the Blessed Virgin. Its sources are not difficult to find. First there is the Proto-evangelium<sup>4</sup> with its promise that in place of the woman conquered by the devil, God will substitute the woman-conqueror of the devil. And secondly, there is the parallel found in the Epistles of St. Paul,<sup>5</sup> between the old Adam through whom sin and death were brought into the world, and the new Adam by Whom mankind was re-vivified with sanctifying grace. Now, just as Adam was not alone in bringing about the downfall of the human race, for Eve was associated in his sin, so too Christ was not alone in His work of restoration, for Mary was associated in the Redemption.<sup>6</sup>

*St. Justin* (+ c. 165). Cayré in his well-known manual makes the following observation: "Of Mary, St. Ignatius had already loudly affirmed the virginity and divine maternity, but it would seem that Justin is the first to explain her part in the Redemption."<sup>7</sup>

In St. Justin's *Dialogue with Tryphon* there occurs the following significant passage:

<sup>3</sup> G. Roschini, *Mariologia*, vol. 3, Romae, 1947, p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> *Gen.* 3, 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Rom.* 5, 12 et sqq.; *1 Cor.* 15, 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> For a further discussion of the origin of the Mary-Eve antithesis, cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, pp. 280 et sqq.; E. Druwé, *La Médiation Universelle de Marie*, in *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge* (ed. H. du Manoir), vol. 1, Paris 1949, pp. 468 et sqq.; J. Terrien, *La Mère de Dieu et la Mère des hommes*, ed. 7, Paris, n. d., partie 2, tome 2, pp. 13 et sqq.; J. Lebon, *L'apostolicité de la doctrine de la Médiation mariale*, in *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale*, vol. 2, 1930, pp. 129 et sqq.

<sup>7</sup> F. Cayré, *Manual of Patrology* (H. Howitt, trans.), Paris-Tournai-Rome, 1936-1940, vol. 1, p. 128.



We know that He, before all creatures, proceeded from the Father by His power and will, . . . and by means of the Virgin became man, in order that the disobedience which began from the serpent might have its undoing in the same way in which it arose. For Eve, being a virgin and undefiled, conceiving the word from the serpent, gave birth to disobedience and to death. The Virgin Mary, however, . . . replied to the Angel Gabriel who announced the joyous news that the Spirit of the Lord would come upon her and that the power of the Most High would overshadow her, and that therefore the Holy One to be born of her would be the Son of God: "Be it done unto me according to thy word." Of her He was born . . . through Whom God overthrows the serpent and angels and men like to the serpent.<sup>8</sup>

This parallel between Mary and Eve is further developed by *St. Irenaeus* (+ c. 202).<sup>9</sup> Special attention should be paid to the following three passages found in his works:

. . . the Virgin Mary was found obedient, saying: "Behold Thy handmaid, O Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word."

<sup>8</sup> *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, c. 100; P.G., 6, 709-712.

<sup>9</sup> Father Roschini points out (*op. cit.*, p. 301) that St. Irenaeus is a witness of the Oriental Church from which he came, of the Roman Church in which he abode, and of the Gallican Church of which he was the Apostle. Comparing the teaching of St. Irenaeus on Mariology with that of St. Justin, Cayré remarks (*op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 151): "The doctrine of Mary's share in the work of the Redemption, first developed by St. Justin, was continued and completed by St. Irenaeus." On this point Father Druwé observes (*op. cit.*, p. 463): "Tandis que saint Justin, après avoir dit d'Eve que, en prêtant l'oreille au serpent, elle engendra désobéissance et mort, avait laissé incomplet le second membre de son parallèle et n'avait attribué qu'implicitement à Marie l'obéissance et la vie, saint Irénée n'hésite pas à souligner cette partie du parallélisme. Par l'accueil que la Vierge fait au messenger de l'ange, par son obéissance, elle devient cause universelle de salut, elle triomphe de l'astuce du serpent par sa simplicité de colombe; elle défait, par sa foi, le lien par lequel l'incrédulité d'Eve nous liait en la servitude du diable; elle détruit par son obéissance la transgression de la première femme, elle devient l' 'avocate' d'Eve, c'est-à-dire, suivant la portée de ce mot en d'autres passages, qu'elle porte à notre commune mère infortunée un secours efficace."



Eve, however, was disobedient; for, while yet a virgin, she did not obey. Just as she . . . became disobedient and became the cause of death to herself and to the whole human race, so Mary . . . being obedient became for herself and the whole human race the cause of salvation . . . Thus the knot of Eve's disobedience obtained its unloosing through Mary's obedience. For what the virgin Eve bound by unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosed by belief.<sup>10</sup>

Just as the former [i.e., Eve] was seduced through the word of an angel to shun God, transgressing His word, so the latter [i.e., Mary] received through the word of an angel the glad tidings that she would bear God, obeying His word. And if the former had disobeyed God, yet the latter was minded to obey God, that the Virgin Mary might become the advocate of the virgin Eve. And as by a virgin the human race was bound to death, so by a virgin it is saved.<sup>11</sup>

It was because of a virgin who was disobedient that man fell, and after his downfall became subject to death. In the same way it is because of a Virgin who was obedient to the word of God that man has been regenerated . . . It was proper and necessary that Adam be restored in Christ, in order that what is mortal be absorbed and swallowed up by immortality; and that Eve be restored in Mary, in order that a Virgin become the advocate of a virgin, and the disobedience of one be obliterated and destroyed by the obedience of the other.<sup>12</sup>

Turning to *Tertullian* (+ c. 240-250),<sup>13</sup> we find the following words in his work *De Carne Christi*:

<sup>10</sup> *Adversus Haereses*, 1. 3, c. 22, n. 4; P.G., 7, 958-959.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 1. 5, c. 19, n. 1; P.G., 7, 1175.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. J. Barthoulot, *Saint Irénée: Démonstration de la Prédication Apostolique, traduite de l'Arménien et annotée*, in R. Graffin and F. Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 12, Paris 1919, pp. 772 et seq.

<sup>13</sup> In regard to Tertullian, St. Justin and St. Irenaeus, Cardinal Newman states: "Tertullian represents Africa and Rome; St. Justin represents Palestine;



It was by a rival operation that God recovered His image and likeness which had been snatched away by the devil. For into Eve, yet a virgin, had crept the word that was the framer of death. In like manner, into a Virgin was to be introduced the Word of God, the builder-up of life; that by that same sex whence had come our ruin might also be recovered the way to salvation. Eve had believed the serpent; Mary believed Gabriel. The fault which the former committed by believing, the latter blotted out by believing.<sup>14</sup>

It is unnecessary to quote in detail any further evidences of the teaching of the Fathers that Mary is the new Eve, associated in the restoration of mankind as the first Eve was associated in mankind's downfall.<sup>15</sup> Father Roschini<sup>16</sup> observes that the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers who, after St. Justin, St. Irenaeus and Tertullian, saw in the Blessed Virgin the new Eve, are numberless. Of the Mary-Eve parallel Father Druwé<sup>17</sup> says that it was never lost sight of from the end of the second century. Indeed Cardinal Newman does not hesitate to state that "by the time of St. Jerome (331-420) the contrast between Eve and Mary had almost passed into a proverb."<sup>18</sup> Mention may be made of the following writers of the early Church who, among others, treat this theme: *St.*

and St. Irenaeus Asia Minor and Gaul—or rather, he represents St. John the Evangelist, for he had been taught by the martyr St. Polycarp who was the intimate associate of St. John, as also of other Apostles."—*Difficulties of Anglicans*, London, 1898, vol. 2, p. 33.

<sup>14</sup> *De Carne Christi*, c. 17; P.L., 2, 827-828.

<sup>15</sup> There has grown up a most extensive literature on the subject of the Mary-Eve antithesis. For a bibliography, cf. J. Bittremieux, *De Mediatione universalī B. M. Virginis quoad gratias*, Brugis, 1926, p. 107.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 302.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 479.

<sup>18</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 41.



Gregory Thaumaturgus (+ c. 270),<sup>19</sup> St. Ephraem (+ 373),<sup>20</sup> St. Cyril of Jerusalem (+ 386),<sup>21</sup> St. Epiphanius (+ 403),<sup>22</sup> St. John Chrysostom (+ 407),<sup>23</sup> St. Jerome (+ 419),<sup>24</sup> St. Augustine (+ 430),<sup>25</sup> St. Peter Chrysologus (+ c. 450),<sup>26</sup> St. Proclus (+ 485),<sup>27</sup> St. Sophronius (+ 638),<sup>28</sup> and St. John Damascene (+ 749).<sup>29</sup>

Some theologians maintain that the belief of the Fathers and other early ecclesiastical writers in Mary as the Co-redemptrix of the human race is evidenced, not only in their descriptions of Mary as the new Eve, but also in the fact that they attribute to Mary the Redemption itself and its effects—for example, reconciliation of men with God, liberation of mankind from the servitude of the devil, opening of the gates of Paradise, etc.

That these effects of the Redemption are in point of fact ascribed to Mary even during the first eight centuries of the

<sup>19</sup> *Homilia I in Annuntiatione Sanctae Virginis Mariae*; P.G., 10, 1147.

<sup>20</sup> *S. Ephraem Syri Hymni et Sermones*, ed. Lamy, vol. 2, Mechliniae, p. 550. Father Druwé believes (*op. cit.*, p. 467) that the expression "new Eve" is found for the first time in the works of St. Ephraem.

<sup>21</sup> *Catechesis*, 12, n. 15; P.G., 33, 741.

<sup>22</sup> *Adversus Haereses*, 1. 3, n. 18; P.G., 42, 728.

<sup>23</sup> *In Psalmos*, 44, n. 7; P.G., 55, 193.

<sup>24</sup> *Epistola* 22, n. 21; P.L., 22, 408.

<sup>25</sup> *Sermo* 51, c. 2; P.L., 38, 335. *Sermo* 119; P.L., 39, 1983. *De Agone Christiano*, c. 22; P.L., 40, 303. Cayré observes (*op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 678): "St. Augustine more than any other Father has stressed the *incomparable part* played by Mary in the Redemption." On the other hand, in one passage St. Augustine seems to indicate that it was by giving birth to Christ that Mary co-operated in the restoration of the human race: "Decipiendo homini propinatum est venenum per feminam; reparando homini propinetur salus per feminam. Compenset femina decepti per se hominis peccatum generando Christum."—*Sermo* 51, c. 2; P.L., 38, 335.

<sup>26</sup> *Sermo* 64; P.L., 52, 380. *Sermo* 99; P.L., 52, 479. *Sermo* 140; P.L., 52, 576.

<sup>27</sup> *Oratio I de laudibus Sanctae Mariae*, n. 2; P.G., 65, 682.

<sup>28</sup> *Oratio II in SS. Deiparae Annuntiationem*, n. 22; P.G., 87c, 3241.

<sup>29</sup> *Homilia I in Nativitatem B. V. Mariae*, n. 7; P.G., 96, 672.



Church there can be no doubt. Let the following examples suffice in this regard.

*St. Ephraem* states that we are reconciled to God through Mary: "My most holy Mistress, Mother of God and full of grace, . . . Spouse of God through whom we are reconciled to Him." <sup>30</sup> Again, he says that God chose the Blessed Virgin "to be the instrument of our salvation," <sup>31</sup> and he calls her "the price of the redemption of captives." <sup>32</sup>

*St. Ambrose* (+ 397) writes that the Blessed Virgin "brought forth redemption for the human race." <sup>33</sup> Furthermore, "she bore in her womb the remission of sins." <sup>34</sup>

*St. Epiphanius* expresses himself thus: "Since Eve brought the cause of death to the human race, through which death entered the world, Mary furnished the Cause of life, through Whom life was produced for us." <sup>35</sup>

Among several passages from the works of *St. John Chrysostom* which touch on the point, the following may be noted: "A virgin expelled us from Paradise; through a Virgin we found eternal life. Through a virgin we were condemned; and through a Virgin we were crowned." <sup>36</sup>

*St. Peter Chrysologus* explains how "the angel marveled that a woman only or all men merited life through a woman." <sup>37</sup>

*St. Fortunatus* (+ 600) hails the Blessed Virgin "through whom all the ends of the earth have merited salvation." <sup>38</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Opera Omnia*, (ed. Assemani), vol. 3, Rome, 1832, p. 528.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 607.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 546. For a more detailed discussion of the teaching of St. Ephraem on this point, cf. Druwé, *op. cit.*, pp. 479 et sqq.

<sup>33</sup> *De Mysteriis*, c. 3, n. 13; P.L., 16, 410.

<sup>34</sup> *De institutione virginum*, c. 13, n. 81; P.L., 16, 339. Father Dillenschneider believes (*op. cit.*, pp. 272 et seq.), however, that St. Ambrose positively excludes the immediate intervention of Mary in the restoration of mankind.

<sup>35</sup> *Adversus Haereses*, 1. 3, t. 2; P.G., 42, 729.

<sup>36</sup> *In Psalmos*, 44; P.G., 55, 193.

<sup>37</sup> *Sermo 142*; P.L., 52, 580.

<sup>38</sup> *In laudem S. Mariae Virginis et Matris Domini*; P.L., 88, 284.



*St. Modestus of Jerusalem* (+ 634) writes: "O God-bearer, through whom we have received the remission of our sins and have been redeemed from the tyranny of the devil . . . through whom we were mystically recreated and made the temple of the Holy Spirit."<sup>39</sup>

*St. Andrew of Crete* (+ 740) writes of Mary: "All of us have obtained salvation through her."<sup>40</sup>

*St. John Damascene* teaches that the Blessed Virgin is she "through whom we were redeemed from the curse,"<sup>41</sup> "through whom the whole race of mortals is restored."<sup>42</sup> "Mary . . . brought immortality to the world."<sup>43</sup>

The foregoing list of writers does not pretend to be complete. Many others in this period likewise attribute to Mary the effects of the Redemption. The quotations here adduced will serve, however, to indicate how common this doctrine is.<sup>44</sup>

There can be no doubt that many of the Fathers and early ecclesiastical writers referred to the Mary-Eve parallelism, and that they attributed to the Blessed Virg'n many of the effects of the Redemption. But on the basis of these facts, may one conclude that the Fathers believed that Mary directly and immediately co-operated in the objective Redemption?

<sup>39</sup> *Encomium in B. Virginem*, n. 7; P.G., 86b, 3293.

<sup>40</sup> *Canon in B. Annae conceptionem*; P.G., 97, 1307.

<sup>41</sup> *Homilia in Annuntiationem B. V. Mariae*; P.G., 96, 657.

<sup>42</sup> *Homilia I in Nativitatem B. V. Mariae*; P.G., 96, 661.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, P.G., 96, 672.

<sup>44</sup> For a rather complete list of early ecclesiastical writers on this point, cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, pp. 304 et sqq. In this connection, however, Father Dillenschneider gives the following warning (*op. cit.*, p. 283): ". . . dans le choix des citations, la plus grande prudence s'impose. On sait que le dépouillement critique du dossier patristique, notamment de l'Eglise orientale, laisse encore beaucoup à désirer. Et cela surtout quand il s'agit d'homélies ou de sermons. C'est ainsi que nous laisserons tomber, comme d'authenticité douteuse tels témoignages de saint Jean Chrysostome, de saint Proclus, de saint Sophrone de Jérusalem, de saint Pierre Chrysologue et d'autres encore, que certains mariologues croient pouvoir mettre en oeuvre (Roschini), pour nous en tenir à un lot plus modeste d'attestations dûment garanties."



First of all, in reference to the teaching that Mary is the second Eve. It seems clear that the early Christian writers conceived of mankind's redemption as consisting in a sort of "recirculation" against Satan, and in a sort of "rival operation" on the part of God. The role of Mary in the restoration of the human race was similar to that of Eve in the downfall of the human race. Now, from this principle that Mary is the second Eve, Father Roschini draws a three-fold conclusion: (1) Just as Eve had an active part in mankind's downfall, so Mary had an active part in mankind's Redemption; (2) Just as the active part which Eve had in mankind's downfall was secondary and subordinate to the role of Adam (in such wise that Eve's part alone would not have resulted in mankind's ruin), so too the active part which Mary had in mankind's redemption was secondary and subordinate to the role of Christ (in such wise that Mary's part alone would not have resulted in mankind's Redemption); (3) Just as the active part taken by Eve was not only physical and material, but was also moral and formal in that she freely gave consent to the suggestion of the serpent, so too the active part taken by Mary was not only physical and material, but was also moral and formal in that she freely gave consent to the angel who proposed the Redemption of the whole human race—and thus Mary foresaw and willed our salvation.<sup>45</sup>

It is the opinion of Father Roschini that in regard to this three-fold corollary there does not, and cannot, exist any disagreement among theologians. However, unanimity of sentiment is lacking when this question is raised: Can Mary's active part in the Redemption (secondary and subordinate, moral and formal) be called immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption?

<sup>45</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 302 et seq.



There are some theologians <sup>46</sup> who interpret the words of the Fathers and other early Christian writers to mean precisely that. Father Roschini <sup>47</sup> maintains that just as Adam and Eve constituted the one (morally) total principle of mankind's downfall (so that that downfall proceeded immediately from each, although in different ways), so too, *a pari*, Christ and Mary constituted the one (morally) total principle of mankind's restoration (so that that restoration proceeded immediately from each, although in different ways).

Moreover, Father Roschini <sup>48</sup> contends that the fact that the active co-operation of Eve in mankind's downfall and of Mary in mankind's Redemption was direct and immediate, flows from a consideration of the conditions required in order that a moral action, such as consent, can be said to influence directly and immediately on some foreseen and intended effect even though the effect be far distant in time. Now, Eve foresaw and willed mankind's downfall; Mary foresaw and willed mankind's Redemption.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> E. Campana, e.g., maintains that this doctrine goes back to the Apostles. He writes: "Il fatto, che tutte le chiese primitive, senza distinzione di rito, di indole e di gusti particolari, convengono nell' ammettere in Maria la cooperatrice di Gesù nel compiere l'opera del nostro riscatto, in quella guisa che Eva aveva cooperato con Adamo alla nostra rovina, ci induce necessariamente a concludere che questa dottrina fu introdotta nella Chiesa da quelli che su di lei, fin da principio, esercitarono incontrastabilmente autorità universale, ed erano da tutti riconosciuti per comuni maestri, dagli apostoli."—E. Campana, *Maria nel Dogma Cattolico*, ed. 3, Torino-Roma, 1928, p. 167.

<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 303.

<sup>48</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>49</sup> Lebreton writes: "And then, beyond that immediate future, what further perspectives opened before the mind of Mary as the *fiat* fell from her lips? Although we have not her authority for it, we may assert without rashness that Almighty God was not leading her unknowingly in the path that ended only with the Cross. And when, a year later, Simeon in prophecy warned her that a sword would transfix her own soul, his words could not fail to recall the most intimate revelations to her mind."—J. Lebreton, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ Our Lord*, Eng. ed., Milwaukee, 1935, vol. 1, p. 8. Smith states: "For her [i.e., Mary's] acquiescence was not only an undertaking to become a



Father Roschini is not alone in interpreting the words of the Fathers and other writers of the early Church to mean that the Blessed Virgin co-operated directly and immediately in the objective Redemption of the human race. Father Bover,<sup>50</sup> for example, believes that the Fathers at the time of the Council of Ephesus referred to a direct, efficacious, and immediate co-operation on the part of Mary.

Writing of St. Irenaeus, Father Druwé explains: "St. Irenaeus does not limit the salvific co-operation of Mary to the bringing forth of the Redeemer . . . He associates her in a direct and immediate way with the bringing about of the total effect. If he insists particularly on Mary's consent to the message of the angel, it is because the unforgettable account of St. Luke, contrasted with the scene of the temptation in Genesis, renders almost palpable the parallel with Eve. Just as he was not unaware of the temptation of Adam by Eve (as a result of which she became, properly speaking, the cause of our downfall), so also he did not intend to exclude in the handmaid of the Lord a further co-operation in the work of salvation . . ." <sup>51</sup>

Professor Bittremieux <sup>52</sup> believes that it is extremely clear that the parallel between Mary and Eve points to the co-operation of Mary in the Redemption. This co-operation cannot be said to consist solely in the fact that Mary physically was

mother in the marvellous manner preordained by God; she knew almost most certainly who her Son would be. She knew that He would be God. . . . She knew that it was of her own Son that . . . Isaias wrote that He was 'despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity,' . . . that by His bruises we might be healed. . . . Mary knew enough of the implications of her obedient consent to make her already the conscious and willing partner of her Son in the task of reparation."—G. Smith, *Mary's Part in Our Redemption*, New York, 1938, pp. 61, 63, 64.

<sup>50</sup> J. Bover, *Concepto integral de la Maternidad Divina según los Padres de Efeso*, in *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia*, vol. 7, 1931, p. 19.

<sup>51</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 464.

<sup>52</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 108 et sqq.



the Mother of the Redeemer. Such would be a mere occasion, and would not take into account the truth that Mary concurred in the very restoration of mankind by her free acts.

Finally, Professor Lebon very definitively expresses his opinion on the point: "In the same way in which St. Irenaeus attaches redemptive efficacy and merit to the obedience of Christ, that is, direct and immediate, he attaches them also to the obedience of the Virgin."<sup>53</sup>

This interpretation of the Patristic texts, according to which they insinuate that a direct and immediate role was played by Mary in the objective Redemption, has met with much opposition. In general, those who deny that the Fathers taught such a doctrine, maintain that from the context of the Patristic statements, only this conclusion can be drawn—that Mary's co-operation in the work of the Redemption consisted in the fact that she gave the Redeemer to mankind. Professor Rivière,<sup>54</sup> for example, stoutly contends that the obedience of Mary which is contrasted with the disobedience of Eve, has reference, not to the Redemption itself, but rather to the free acceptance of the message of the Archangel Gabriel. Father Lennerz<sup>55</sup> and Professor Goossens<sup>56</sup> agree that the words of the early Christian writers do not refer to a direct and immediate co-operation of Mary in the objective Redemption. In short, our Blessed Lord alone redeemed mankind without any immediate dependence on the co-operation of His Mother in the objective Redemption itself.

Taking up the argument advanced by Professor Rivière,

<sup>53</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Rech. de Théol. Anc. et Med.*, vol. 2, 1930, p. 144.

<sup>54</sup> J. Rivière, *Questions mariales d'actualité*, in *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, vol. 12, 1932, p. 99.

<sup>55</sup> H. Lennerz, *De Beata Virgine*, ed. 2, Romae, 1935, n. 220.

<sup>56</sup> W. Goossens, *De Cooperatione immediata Matris Redemptoris ad Redemptionem objectivam*, Parisiis, 1939, pp. 108 et sqq.



some theologians<sup>57</sup> point out that the Archangel's message concerned the Incarnation in so far as it was redemptive—that is, it concerned the Word Who was made flesh in order to take up the cross.<sup>58</sup> And precisely under that formality, namely, in the free taking up of the cross, Jesus and Mary were intimately united. Father Druwé offers his opinion on the point as follows: "One would perhaps be tempted, with certain authors, to read into all these texts a co-operation in the Redemption which, though moral and meritorious without doubt, is only indirect and remote. The action of Mary, exalted therein, is her consent to the Incarnation. But let us not forget that the Fathers did not make his distinction between the Incarnation on the one hand, as a *conditio sine qua non* of the salvific activity of Christ, and, on the other, the Redemption itself, accomplished in His passion and death. For them, the Incarnation itself is redemptive—or rather, it is the Redemption commenced and, so to speak, anticipated."<sup>59</sup>

Father Dillenschneider's opinion<sup>60</sup> is somewhat more cautious. First of all, he calls attention to the fact that the purpose of St. Justin, St. Irenaeus and Tertullian in developing the contrast between Mary and Eve was to justify, against the Gnostics, the virginal conception and birth of Christ—although secondarily they affirmed the moral co-operation of the two Eves in the fall and restoration of mankind respectively. Then he points out that in giving the Redeemer to the human race at the Incarnation, Mary was the *initium salutis*, because at that moment she entered by her faith and her obedience into

<sup>57</sup> Cf., e.g., J. Lebon, *Comment je conçois, j'établis et je défends la doctrine de la Médiation mariale*, in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, vol. 16, 1939, p. 690; B. Przybylski, *De Mariologia Sancti Irenaei Lugdunensis*, Romae, 1937, pp. 55 et sqq.

<sup>58</sup> The *Incarnatio redemptiva* may well be considered to be the *redemptio inchoativa*.

<sup>59</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 481.

<sup>60</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 276, 277, 283.



the redemptive plan of God, and thus repaired the harm caused by the first Eve. Consequently, her co-operation in the Incarnation was co-operation in a work of salvation and life.

Amid this welter of conflicting opinions as to the interpretation to be placed on the Patristic texts, what is to be said? <sup>61</sup> This much seems to be obvious—neither position is thus far certain. Perhaps we can agree with Father García Garcés who states that through the Mary-Eve parallelism “the concursus of Eve in the downfall of mankind and the co-operation of Mary in its restoration are less directly and positively declared.” <sup>62</sup> Or we may say with Father Dillenschneider <sup>63</sup> that there are numerous texts in the writings of the Fathers which place Mary’s action at the moment of the Incarnation on the plane of a moral co-operation in the Incarnation as a redemptive work. The mere fact that in writing of this parallelism the Fathers mention only the obedience of Mary to the message of Gabriel, does not necessarily and exclusively limit her salutary function to the Incarnation. But on the other hand, one is not justified in contending that in the parallelism is contained, for the early writers, the close association of Jesus and Mary in the whole redemptive work. “The interpretation of the title of the new Eve as a conscious co-operation of Mary in the redemptive mystery, appears to us to be constant in Patristic literature. However, it does not seem to us that the texts of the Fathers, read as they must be read from their point of view, go beyond the co-operation given by Mary in the Incarnation of the Savior.” <sup>64</sup> “The idea that the Mother of Christ is the associate of Christ in the entire economy of

<sup>61</sup> For a brief summary of the arguments advanced by both sides, cf. J. Keuppens, *Mariologiae Compendium*, Mechliniae, 1938, pp. 121 et sqq.

<sup>62</sup> N. García Garcés, *Mater Corredemptrix*, Romae, 1940, p. 88.

<sup>63</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 279.

<sup>64</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 287.



salvation . . . is a doctrinal acquisition posterior to the Patristic age."<sup>65</sup>

Secondly, in reference to the interpretation to be placed upon the words of the early Fathers and other writers, who attribute to Mary some of the effects of the Redemption. . . .

Father Roschini<sup>66</sup> says unhesitatingly that these texts indicate clearly that the writers believed Mary's co-operation in the objective Redemption to have been direct and immediate. His argument may be summarized as follows. It is absurd to ascribe to someone immediately and directly what befits them only mediately and indirectly. Thus, for example, it would be absurd to attribute directly and immediately to the mother of Columbus the discovery of America, when this befits her only indirectly and mediately—and only materially at that. For, of the discovery of America, Columbus' mother was the cause of the cause in so far as he existed, but not in so far as he acted (that is, discovered America). The Blessed Virgin, on the contrary, was the cause of the Cause of Redemption, not only in so far as He existed, but also in so far as He acted (that is, accomplished the Redemption)—and this, because God willed the Redemption of the world to depend, in the order of execution, on her free consent. Furthermore, the divine motherhood of the Blessed Virgin and her spiritual motherhood of men are so intimately connected that one is included in the other.

In a very recent article Father Boyer, while admitting that the Fathers do not convey the doctrine of Mary's Co-redemption with the precision of modern theologians, contends that it is difficult to state that they limit Mary's work to the sole fact of her maternity, or to her dispensing of graces.<sup>67</sup>

There is much opposition to the interpretation of Father

<sup>65</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 288.

<sup>66</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 309.

<sup>67</sup> C. Boyer, *Thoughts on Mary's Co-redemption*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 122, 1950, p. 407.



Roschini, however. Father Lennerz,<sup>68</sup> Professor Goossens<sup>69</sup> and Professor Rivière,<sup>70</sup> for example, explicitly deny that the words of the Fathers point to anything beyond the fact that Mary gave birth to the Redeemer of the human race.

Moreover, not even all the theologians who themselves hold to the doctrine of Mary's direct and immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption, agree that such a teaching flows from the Patristic texts which ascribe to our Blessed Mother some of the effects of the Redemption. Father Dillenschneider,<sup>71</sup> for example, cautions against over-enthusiasm on this point. In the first place, he says, some of the texts frequently cited, are of doubtful authenticity. This is especially true of some passages often attributed to St. Ephraem.

Secondly, Father Dillenschneider believes that some of the Patristic texts quoted in support of Mary's direct and immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption—texts which are undoubtedly authentic—concern only Mary's power of intercession and her universal mediation in obtaining redemptive graces for men. The words of St. Germanus of Constantinople, for example, which Father Roschini<sup>72</sup> cites in support of his opinion, can refer, if the context is carefully studied, only to our subjective Redemption.

Thirdly, certain texts from the Fathers which undoubtedly are possessed of a soteriological note, refer nonetheless to the Incarnation. One of the passages of St. Andrew of Crete, for example, adduced by Father Roschini<sup>73</sup> in support of his position, has reference, according to Father Dillenschneider, to Mary's co-operation in the Incarnation only, and hence solely

<sup>68</sup> *Op. cit.*, n. 220.

<sup>69</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 108 et sqq.

<sup>70</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Rev. des Sc. Relig.*, vol. 12, 1932, p. 99.

<sup>71</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 268 et sqq. Father García Garcés (*op. cit.*, pp. 84 et sqq.) utters a similar warning.

<sup>72</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 308.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309.



to a remote co-operation in our objective Redemption. The same is true of certain texts frequently cited from the works of St. John Damascene.

In short, Father Dillenschneider believes that in the writings of the Fathers, emphasis is placed on Mary's salvific work in the mystery of the Incarnation. Indeed he does not hesitate to say that the Patristic literature scarcely goes beyond that point.

Father Dillenschneider<sup>74</sup> also comments on the argument that the Fathers must have believed in the immediate and direct co-operation of Mary in the objective Redemption, because in their minds the divine maternity of Mary and her spiritual maternity in regard to us are intimately linked together.<sup>75</sup> He freely admits that in the mystery of the divine maternity there is included radically her spiritual maternity of mankind. Such is the teaching of Pope Pius XI,<sup>76</sup> and undoubtedly many of the early Fathers, especially St. Irenaeus, emphasized the same point. But, he maintains, the immediate spiritual maternity of Mary as Co-redemptrix does not follow from her radical spiritual maternity with necessity, but only with a very high degree of appropriateness. This is a concept which has evolved; it is foreign to the Patristic age.

Consequently, concludes Father Dillenschneider,<sup>77</sup> the teaching of the direct and immediate co-operation, on the part of our Blessed Mother, in all the salvific work of Christ, cannot be drawn from the expressions of the Fathers who treat, properly, of Mary's co-operation in the redemptive Incarnation. On the other hand, one is not justified in stating that the Fathers exclude, at least positively, the more immediate inter-

<sup>74</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 271.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 309; L. Leloir, *La Médiation mariale dans la théologie contemporaine*, Bruges, 1933, p. 104.

<sup>76</sup> *Lux veritatis*, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 23, 1931, p. 514.

<sup>77</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 272.



vention of Mary in mankind's restoration. They pass over the point in silence.<sup>78</sup>

This is substantially the opinion of Father Carol, although he goes a step beyond: "The testimony of the Fathers thus far adduced by authors, is not sufficient for the solid demonstration of the doctrine of the *immediate* co-operation of the most Blessed Virgin in the *objective* work of our Redemption. However, once this doctrine is established from other sources, the Fathers can lawfully be adduced, I think; for in their writings, certain indications and elements not to be minimized have handed down what from later generations have received a further and more perfect development and explanation."<sup>79</sup>

In another place the same author writes: "... I am firmly convinced that the Fathers and early writers not only did not teach the doctrine of Co-redemption in our modern sense, but were simply ignorant of it *in se*. . . . What becomes then, you may ask, of the doctrine's definability? I answer that it may sufficiently stand on what theology designates as *implicit* revelation, to which corresponds an *implicit* belief on the part of the Fathers."<sup>80</sup>

To conclude this section of the essay, it may be stated that a study of the texts of the Fathers themselves and of the various interpretations placed upon them by subsequent theologians, must lead to the sober and conservative conclusion that, although there are many important insinuations in the writings of the early Church, nevertheless thus far it has not

<sup>78</sup> Practically the same conclusion is reached by Father García Garcés. He believes (*op. cit.*, p. 226) that the words of the Fathers, even when they develop the Mary-Eve antithesis, with difficulty allow one to conclude beyond the co-operation of Mary in the Incarnation. Any further applications which theologians may make are, in the opinion of Father García Garcés, only accommodations or subjective interpretations.

<sup>79</sup> J. Carol, *De Sanctorum Patrum doctrina circa B. Virginis Corredemptionem*, in *Marianum*, vol. 2, 1940, p. 226.

<sup>80</sup> Idem, *An Open Letter to the Very Rev. Dr. Smith concerning Mary's Co-redemption*, in *The Clergy Review*, vol. 18, 1940, p. 372.



been demonstrated with certainty that in Patristic literature is to be found the explicit teaching that Mary directly and immediately co-operated in the objective Redemption of mankind.

PART II: *From the Ninth Century to the Sixteenth Century*

In regard to the teaching of Mary's co-operation in the Redemption, this period marks a transition. While it is true that some of the authors, particularly in the early part of this era, continue to treat of Mary's free co-operation in the Incarnation looked at from the point of view of its redemptive character, nevertheless a more profound consideration of the soteriological nature and salvific purpose of Mary's association with her divine Son, the Redeemer, on Calvary, very gradually begins to be made.

Of the Blessed Virgin, the Anglo-Saxon *Alcuin* (+ 804) writes: "The whole world rejoices that it was redeemed through her."<sup>81</sup>

*St. Peter Damian* (+ 1072), reformer, moralist, theologian and ascetic, teaches:

Through a woman a curse was spread over the earth; through a woman a blessing was returned to it. Through a woman the bitter drink of death was offered; and through a woman also the sweet drink of life was given. Flowing profusely, the new benediction killed the contagion of the ancient curse.<sup>82</sup>

Immediately that heavenly assembly is called forth, and, according to the prophet, God begins His counsel, speaks with the angels of their restoration, and of the redemption of men . . . and they are amazed and marvel beyond joy at the manner of the redemption. And immediately out of the treasury of divinity the name of Mary is taken, and it is decreed that all this is to be

<sup>81</sup> *Sermo de Nativitate perpetuae Virginis Mariae*; P.L., 101, 1300.

<sup>82</sup> *Sermo 46, Homilia in Nativitate Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*; P.L., 144, 758.



done through her and in her and with her; just as without Him nothing was made, so without her nothing was remade.<sup>83</sup>

... we are debtors to the most blessed Mother of God, and ... after God we should thank her for our redemption.<sup>84</sup>

*St. Anselm* (+ 1109), the Archbishop of Canterbury, hails our Blessed Lord and His Mother: "Thou art the salvation of sinners, O Son, and thou, O Mother."<sup>85</sup> And again, to Mary he prays: "Through thee we have access to the Son Who redeemed the world through thee."<sup>86</sup> Moreover, "He who could make all things from nothing, was unwilling to remake, without Mary, what had been violated. God is therefore the Father of created things, and Mary is the Mother of re-created things."<sup>87</sup>

*Eadmer* (+ 1124), the disciple of St. Anselm, is probably the first to speak in explicit terms of the reparative merits of the Blessed Virgin. He states that "she merited to become in a most worthy manner the Reparatrix of the lost world."<sup>88</sup> "Just as God in making everything by His power is the Father and Lord of all things, so the Blessed Mary in repairing everything by her merits is the Mother and Lady of all things."<sup>89</sup>

*St. Bernard* (+ 1153), "the last of the Fathers and the equal of the greatest" (as Mabillon calls him), seems to be the first theologian to refer explicitly to the redemptive satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin.

Run, Eve, to Mary; run, mother, to daughter. The daughter answers for the mother; she takes away the opprobrium of the

<sup>83</sup> *Sermo 11 de Annuntiatione Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*; P.L., 144, 558. Father Druwé observes (*op. cit.*, p. 504), however, that the author of this sermon was Nicholas of Clairvaux.

<sup>84</sup> *Sermo 45 in Nativitate Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*; P.L., 144, 743.

<sup>85</sup> *Oratio 51*; P.L., 158, 951.

<sup>86</sup> *Oratio 54*; P.L., 158, 961.

<sup>87</sup> *Oratio 52*; P.L., 158, 956.

<sup>88</sup> *Liber de Excellentia Virginis Mariae*, c. 9; P.L., 159, 573.

<sup>89</sup> *Op. cit.*, c. 11; P.L., 159, 578.



mother; she makes satisfaction to Thee, Father, for the mother . . . O woman singularly to be venerated . . . Reparatrix of parents.<sup>90</sup>

O hallowed Virgin, offer thy Son; and present anew to the Lord this Fruit of thy womb. Offer for our reconciliation this Victim, holy and pleasing to God. With joy God the Father will receive this oblation, this Victim of infinite value.<sup>91</sup>

In thee and through thee and from thee the kind hand of the Almighty re-created what He had created.<sup>92</sup>

Speaking of *Arnold of Chartres* (+ 1160), Father Boyer says that "he left us a text which comes very close to some of the most precise statements made by recent Popes."<sup>93</sup> And Father Druwé likewise points to the remarkable accuracy of this author in expressing Mary's participation in the objective Redemption as active yet subordinate—"a marvelous anticipation of the celebrated text of Benedict XV."<sup>94</sup> Arnold of Chartres writes:

[On Calvary] the Mother's love co-operated exceedingly, in its own way, to render God propitious to us.<sup>95</sup>

They [i.e., Christ and Mary] accomplished the task of human redemption and fashioned between themselves the inviolable sacrament of our reconciliation . . . both side by side offered a holocaust to God: she in the blood of the heart, He in the blood of the flesh, . . . so that with Christ she obtained a common effect in the salvation of the world.<sup>96</sup>

The importance of *Richard of St. Lawrence* (+ 1230) lies not in his competence as a scholar—for he was no profound

<sup>90</sup> *Homilia II super Missus est*; P.L., 183, 62.

<sup>91</sup> *Sermo III de Purificatione Beatae Mariae*; P.L., 183, 370.

<sup>92</sup> *Sermo II in Festo Pentecostes*; P.L., 183, 328.

<sup>93</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 122, 1950, p. 406.

<sup>94</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 508.

<sup>95</sup> *Tractatus de septem verbis Domini in cruce*: Tract. 3; P.L., 189, 1694.

<sup>96</sup> *De laudibus Beatae Mariae Virginis*; P.L., 189, 1726-1727.



theologian—but rather in the fact that his objective in writing was to compile what his predecessors and contemporaries said and thought of the Blessed Virgin. He thus explains Mary's part in mankind's salvation:

What the Son bestowed upon the world by His passion, the Mother bestowed upon the world by her communion with it, reconciling the guilty and the sinners by her co-passion, after having obtained the Redemption of the whole world through her giving birth to the Redeemer.<sup>97</sup>

Her tears were mingled with [His] perspiration and tears, with the water and the blood that trickled from the wounds of her Son, in order to blot out the stains of souls.<sup>98</sup>

*St. Bonaventure* (+ 1274), theologian, philosopher and mystic, writes at length in regard to our Blessed Mother. The following passages from his works are typical of his teaching on her co-operation in the Redemption.

Just as they [i.e., Adam and Eve] were the destroyers of the human race, so these [i.e., Jesus and Mary] were its repairers (*reparatores*).<sup>99</sup>

She [i.e., Mary] also merited reconciliation for the entire human race . . .<sup>100</sup>

<sup>97</sup> *De laudibus Beatae Mariae Virginis*, 1. 3, c. 12; inter *Opera Sancti Alberti Magni*, (ed. Vivès), vol. 36, p. 158. In connection with this passage, Father Carol points out that the co-operation of Mary in mankind's Redemption cannot be explained by the allusion to her divine maternity, since the author explicitly mentions her co-passion—and this, in order to show the manner in which the Son and Mother brought reconciliation to the world. Cf. J. Carol, *Doctrina de Beatae Virginis Co-redemptione ab ortu usque ad prolapsum aetatis Scholasticorum*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 252.

<sup>98</sup> Ex Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

<sup>99</sup> *Sermo 3 de Assumptione*; *Opera Omnia*, ed. ad Aquas Claras, vol. 9, p. 695.

<sup>100</sup> In *III Sent.*, dist. 4, art. 3, quaest. 3, concl.; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3, p. 115.



One woman, namely Eve, expelled us from Paradise and sold us; the other [i.e., Mary] led us back and bought us.<sup>101</sup>

Through her it [i.e., the price] has been paid for the redemption of the human race.<sup>102</sup>

She paid that price [i.e., of Redemption] as a woman brave and loving—namely, when Christ suffered on the cross to pay that price in order to purge and wash and redeem us, the Blessed Virgin was present, accepting and agreeing with the divine will.<sup>103</sup>

Few theologians of this period treat more clearly of Mary's part in mankind's restoration than does the illustrious Doctor of the Church, *St. Albert the Great* (+ 1280). For him,

the Blessed Virgin was not assumed by the Lord into a ministry, but into a consortship and aid. . . . The Blessed Virgin is not a vicar, but a co-adjutrix and associate, a sharer in the kingdom, having participated in the Passion for the human race.<sup>104</sup>

To her alone [i.e., the Blessed Virgin] was given this privilege, namely, a communication in the Passion; to her the Son willed to communicate the merit of the Passion, in order that He could give her the reward; and in order to make her a sharer in the benefit of the Redemption, He willed that she be a sharer in the penalty of the Passion, in so far as she might become the Mother of all through re-creation even as she was the adjutrix of the Redemption by her co-passion. And just as the whole world is bound to God by His supreme Passion, so also it is bound to the Lady of all by her co-passion.<sup>105</sup>

She [i.e., the Blessed Virgin] by her spontaneous consent in His Passion, offered Him up for us all: through this most adequate and most pleasing Victim once offered up, she reconciled the whole human race to God.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>101</sup> *Collatio VI de donis Spiritus Sancti*, n. 14; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5, p. 486.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 5; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5, p. 484.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 16; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5, p. 486.

<sup>104</sup> *Mariale*, quaest. 42; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 37, p. 81.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, quaest. 150; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 37, p. 219.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, quaest. 51; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 37, p. 97.



She [i.e., the Blessed Virgin] gave birth to the whole race in the Passion of the Son, where she was made a helpmeet like unto Himself, and where she, the Mother of mercy, helped the Father of mercies in the greatest work of mercy, and together with Him regenerated all men.<sup>107</sup>

It is in the fourteenth century that the word "Co-redemptrix" first appears. It is found "in an anonymous *Tractatus de praeservatione gloriosissimae Virginis Mariae*, written by a Franciscan theologian before the year 1323." It is also used "in the sermons of Alanus Varenus who lived around the year 1300. It is interesting to note that, even at that early date, the author speaks of this title not as something invented by himself, but rather as something that was already used by others; for immediately after the word Co-redemptrix he adds: 'as they say.' In fact in a liturgical book preserved with other manuscripts at St. Peter's in Salzburg and dating from the same period (14th century) the reader will come across the following:

'Pia, dulcis et benigna  
Nullo prorsus luctu digna  
Si fletum hinc eligeres  
Ut compassa Redemptori,  
Captivato transgressori  
Tu *Coredemptrix* fieres.' " <sup>108</sup>

*Blessed John Tauler* (+ 1361), the celebrated director of souls, while not actually using the word "Co-redemptrix," teaches the doctrine of the Co-redemption. For he states that the Blessed Virgin offered herself, together with Christ, as a living victim for the salvation of all.

God accepted her oblation [on Calvary] as a pleasing sacrifice for the utility and salvation of the whole human race . . .

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, quaest. 148; *Opera Omnia*, vol. 37, p. 214.

<sup>108</sup> Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, pp. 33-34.



by which, through the merits of her afflictions, she transformed God's anger to mercy . . . and here acquired an almost infinite treasury of merits in order to assist all wretched people before God.<sup>109</sup>

He foretold to thee [i.e., Mary] all thy passion whereby He would make thee a sharer of all His merits and afflictions, and thou would co-operate with Him in the restoration of men to salvation. . . .<sup>110</sup>

Just as Eve, boldly plucking from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, destroyed men in Adam, so thou hast taken sorrow upon thyself from the tree of the cross, and with thy suffering sated, thou hast redeemed men together with thy Son.<sup>111</sup>

Gerson (+ 1429) salutes the Blessed Virgin as "Restorer of the lost, and Leader-back of the exiles."<sup>112</sup> "Hear . . . how His Mother was a sharer in the death of Jesus Christ her Son, by reason of the Redemption of the human race. . . . Hear how she offered an oblation for us."<sup>113</sup>

Of our Blessed Mother, the illustrious Bishop of Florence, St. Antoninus (+ 1459) teaches:

It was Mary alone to whom was given the privilege of communication in the Passion. That He might be able to bestow upon her a reward, the Son willed to communicate to her the merit of the Passion; and also that He might make her a sharer of the benefit of the Redemption, to the extent that, as she was

<sup>109</sup> *Sermo pro festo Purificationis Beatae Mariae Virginis; Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 6, Paris, 1911, (éd. E. P. Noel), pp. 253-255.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 259.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 256. Treating of this passage, Father Carol admits that Tauler adds certain remarks which in themselves refer only to mediate co-operation on the part of our Blessed Mother. But he insists that in the other passages immediate co-operation is signified—to explain the texts otherwise would be to twist them in violence to the laws of interpretation. Cf. Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 259.

<sup>112</sup> *Opera Omnia*, Antverpiae, 1706, vol. 3, col. 712A.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 3, col. 1197B.



adjutrix of the Redemption by her co-passion, so also she might become the Mother of all through re-creation.<sup>114</sup>

. . . the Blessed Virgin begot us and gave birth to us, in her co-suffering the bitterest sorrows with her Son.<sup>115</sup>

. . . the Mother of mercy assisted (*adjuvit*) the Father of mercies in the work of the highest mercy, and she bore with Him the suffering of the Passion.<sup>116</sup>

*Denis the Carthusian* (+ 1473), the "Ecstatic Doctor," in answering the question as to why our Blessed Lord willed that His Mother be present at His Passion, replies:

First, because He willed His most excellent Mother to be the principal Co-operatrix in our salvation. Therefore, He willed that by her most faithful co-passion . . . she merit fully to be heard for many, and to obtain for them the fruit of the Lord's Passion. . . . Hence St. Albert writes: "So that Christ might give His Mother the reward, He willed to communicate to her the merit of His Passion . . . as she was the adjutrix of the Redeemer through her co-passion, so she might become the Mother of all through re-creation. . . ." <sup>117</sup>

The difference between the remote and the immediate co-operation of Mary in the Redemption appears very clearly to be implied in the words of *Paul de Heredia* (fl. 1484). He writes that Mary was "the Redemptrix of sin in the Incarnation and in the Passion of her Son." <sup>118</sup>

*Thomas Illyricus* (+ c. 1529) asserts: "The Blessed Vir-

<sup>114</sup> *Summa Theologica*, pars 4, tit. 15, cap. 20, paragr. 14, Veronae, 1740, col. 1064.

<sup>115</sup> Ex F. Godts, *De Definibilitate Mediationis Universalis Deiparae*, Bruxellis, 1904, p. 212.

<sup>116</sup> *Summa Theologica*, pars 4, tit. 15, cap. 14, paragr. 2, col. 1002.

<sup>117</sup> *De dignitate et laudibus Beatae Mariae Virginis*, lib. 3, art. 26; *Opera Minora*, vol. 4, Coloniae, 1908, p. 142.

<sup>118</sup> *Tractatus de Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, in Maracci, *Poly-anthea Mariana*, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1727, p. 575.



gin . . . was the adjutrix of our Redemption, and she is the auxiliatrix of our justification . . . She was the auxiliatrix of our Redemption in regard to the four types of causes.”<sup>119</sup> “She is our Restorer (Restauratrix) and Repairer (Reparatrix) and Reconciler (Reconciliatrix), because she repaired (reparavit) the human race.”<sup>120</sup>

*Clichtove* (+ 1543) likewise teaches that Mary, after Christ, can in her way be called Redemptrix and Reparatrix of the human race because through her sorrows which she voluntarily accepted, she co-operated in our Redemption.<sup>121</sup>

Even more explicit is the testimony of *Ambrose Catharinus* (+ 1553).

This generation [i.e., the restoration of the human race] is from both—that is, from a Man and a woman, from Christ and Mary; because both, although they were completely innocent, (Mary was such through Christ), nevertheless . . . merited salvation for us by their sufferings—first indeed and principally Christ as Man, and then the Virgin herself as woman.<sup>122</sup>

The glorious work of the Redemption for which she was chosen proves clearly that it was fitting that in some way she be an associate of Christ—not that Christ Himself did not suffice, but because it was good and fitting that He have a helpmeet like Himself. For just as from a woman came the beginning of death . . . so also from a woman had to come the beginning of life. For this is the most common opinion of the ancients.<sup>123</sup>

*Alphonsus Salmerón* (+ 1585), papal theologian at the Council of Trent, where “he wielded tremendous influence,”<sup>124</sup>

<sup>119</sup> *Sermo 27 De Nomine Mariae*, in *Sermones*, Toulouse, 1521, fol. 136.

<sup>120</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>121</sup> *De dolore Beatae Mariae Virginis in passione Filii Sui*, XI, Parisiis, 1517, pp. 70 et sqq., in E. Dublanchy, art. *Marie* in *D.T.C.*, vol. 9 (2), 2393.

<sup>122</sup> *De Immaculata Conceptione Virginis Mariae opusculum*, disp. lib. 3, 14 persuasio, in Alva y Astorga, *Biblioth. Virginis Mariae*, Matriti, 1648, vol. 2, p. 56.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 persuasio, p. 47.

<sup>124</sup> W. Drum, art. *Salmerón*, in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 13, p. 403.



writes, in regard to the part played by Mary in mankind's restoration:

The Mother stood by the cross in order that the reparation of the human race might offset the ruin of the world. For, as ruin followed from the fact that a woman approached and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and thereby died and passed it on to man to eat in death, so here, on the contrary, . . . the Man first tasted of the bitter wood of the Cross and then gave to the woman to taste. And as in the first case disaster befell the world from the work of the two (but especially of the man), so also salvation and Redemption came from two (but particularly from Christ). For whatever virtue Mary has, she received from Christ—not merely by reason of a sort of fitting aptness, but also by reason of the excellent virtue of Christ in redeeming. This virtue He willed to communicate to His Mother (whose work He did not need) as Co-redemptrix, not only without detracting from Himself, but with great glory to Himself.<sup>125</sup>

The idea of spiritual regeneration is clearly taught by *Peter Morales* (+ 1603). "The Blessed Virgin is our Mother, not only by adoption and by many other titles . . . but principally and peculiarly because in the Passion of her Son she gave birth to us in incomparable sorrows and was made Mother of us all."<sup>126</sup> In still another passage, he refers to Mary as making satisfaction to the Father, for "as man fell by woman, he is not raised up except through woman."<sup>127</sup>

*St. Peter Canisius* (+ 1597) insists on the fact that Christ alone is the Mediator between God and man. But the intimate co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the restoration of

<sup>125</sup> *Commentarii in Evangelicam Historiam et in Acta Apostolorum*, tract. 41, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1604, vol. 10, p. 339.

<sup>126</sup> *In Cap. I Matthaei libri quinque*, Parisiis, 1869, 1. 3, tract. 9, vol. 1, p. 309.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 1. 1, tract. 9, vol. 1, p. 61.



the human race is not thereby excluded. For, "standing under the cross of her Son, she remained intrepid in her faith, and offered Christ, a true and living Victim, for the expiation of the sins of the world." <sup>127a</sup>

*Suarez* (+ 1617) discusses the manner in which Mary co-operated in the Redemption of the human race:

Although the Blessed Virgin did not redeem us nor merit anything for us *de condigno*, nevertheless by entreating, by meriting *de congruo*, and by co-operating in her way in the Incarnation of Christ, she co-operated in some way in our salvation. . . .

The Blessed Virgin co-operated in our salvation in three ways: first, by meriting the Incarnation *de congruo*; secondly, by praying and entreating, and meriting salvation for us *de congruo* while she was on earth; thirdly, by conceiving Christ, the Author of our salvation.<sup>128</sup>

Many writers of this period (and mention may be made of others also, subsequent to this period) refer to Mary's part in the restoration of mankind as proof of the fact that she was immaculately conceived. Thus, for example, *John of Carthage* (+ 1617) cites many Fathers on the point of Mary's co-operation in the Redemption, and then concludes: "Since therefore the Virgin Mother of God was our Redemptrix in her way . . . it follows that she was entirely free from original sin." <sup>129</sup> ". . . it was necessary that the Virgin, Co-adjutrix and associate of Christ in the reparation of the human race, be purer than heaven." <sup>130</sup> For the theologian *Frangipane* (+ 1638) the Immaculate Conception is a necessary corollary of Mary's prerogative as Co-redemptrix: ". . . everything

<sup>127a</sup> S. Petrus Canisius, *De Maria Incomparabili Virgine*, l. 4, c. 26; in Bourassé, *Summa Aurea*, vol. 8, col. 1425.

<sup>128</sup> *De Mysteriis Vitae Christi*, disp. 23, sect. 1; *Opera Omnia*, ed. Vivès, vol. 19, Parisiis, 1877, p. 331.

<sup>129</sup> *Homiliae Catholicae*, Neapoli, 1859, l. 1, hom. 3.

<sup>130</sup> *Loc. cit.*



which Christ merited for us *de condigno* was merited for us *de congruo* by Mary. . . . This title Co-redemptrix requires innocence on her part; for how could she cleanse the world from sin, if she herself were subject to sin?" <sup>131</sup> *John Baptist Lezana* (+ 1659) writes: "The most holy Virgin in some way, at least indirectly and remotely, co-operated in the Redemption of the human race and in freeing it from the bondage of sin. Hence it was fitting that she be without any stain of original sin." <sup>132</sup> And elsewhere he states that "Christ and Mary redeemed the world as if with one heart." <sup>133</sup>

What evaluation is to be placed upon the foregoing texts of theologians from the ninth century to the sixteenth century, in reference to Mary's part in the Redemption of mankind?

As has already been pointed out, the early part of the period (approximately to the thirteenth century) marked a transition, in that many of the authors treated not only of Mary's part in the Incarnation looked at from the point of view of its redemptive character, but also began to concern themselves with her positive co-operation with Christ in mankind's restoration by reason of her co-passion.

One must be careful, however, not to read into the words of the writers a meaning which neither the text nor the context justifies. It seems more probable, for example, that the expressions of Alcuin and of St. Anselm must be interpreted as designating a mediate co-operation by Mary in mankind's Redemption—or perhaps sometimes even Mary's part in the subjective Redemption.

Although Father Jones <sup>134</sup> in his scholarly dissertation on

<sup>131</sup> *Blasones de la Virgen Madre de Dios y Señora nuestra*, Zaragoza, 1635, pp. 65-66.

<sup>132</sup> *Liber Apologeticus pro Immaculata Deiparae Virginis Mariae Conceptione*, Matriti, 1616, fol. 112r.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 44v.

<sup>134</sup> R. Jones, *Sancti Anselmi Mariologia*, Mundelein, Illinois, 1937, p. 74. Prof. Goossens (*op. cit.*, p. 125) is strongly opposed to the conclusion of Father Jones.



the Mariology of St. Anselm, states definitively that there can be no doubt that St. Anselm refers to Mary's immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption, nevertheless the weight of authority seems to be on the other side. Thus, Father García Garcés<sup>135</sup> thinks that the words of St. Anselm can be sufficiently explained as indicating her part in the Incarnation; Father Carol<sup>136</sup> is of the same opinion; and Father Dillenschneider<sup>137</sup> does not hesitate to say that St. Anselm is "rather unfavorable" to the thesis that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption.

As for Eadmer, Father Dillenschneider<sup>138</sup> believes that in regard to our restoration in Christ through Mary, this theologian professes the same ideas and speaks the same language as St. Anselm. Father Carol,<sup>139</sup> however, is of the opinion that his words most probably concern an immediate part played by Mary in mankind's Redemption.

Similarly, it seems that the texts often attributed to St. Peter Damian cannot be proved conclusively to refer only to the immediate co-operation of Mary in the objective restoration,<sup>140</sup> nor is it certain that the words of Richard of St. Lawrence concern her immediate part in mankind's Redemption.<sup>141</sup> On the other hand, Arnold of Chartres<sup>142</sup> and Frangipane<sup>143</sup> appear quite certainly to teach the doctrine of the immediate

<sup>135</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 171.

<sup>136</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, pp. 250, 255.

<sup>137</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 267.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259.

<sup>139</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 256.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Carol, *ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>141</sup> Father Carol believes (*ibid.*, p. 256) that Richard of St. Lawrence most probably refers to the immediate part played by Mary in the restoration of mankind.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Carol, *loc. cit.*; Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. J. Carol, *Our Lady's Part in the Redemption according to Seventeenth Century Writers*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series, vol. 3), 1943, p. 5.



co-operation of our Blessed Mother in the objective Redemption.

What is to be said of the teaching of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure and St. Albert the Great?

In regard to St. Bernard, Professor Goossens<sup>144</sup> holds that the suffering of Mary in union with Christ is, in the opinion of the *Doctor Melifluus*, similar to the suffering of the martyrs in union with Christ. Father Roschini<sup>145</sup> is strongly opposed to this interpretation, however. He points out that St. Bernard did not wish to institute a parity between Mary and the martyrs, for in his mind the Blessed Virgin completely excelled the martyrs precisely because she was the new Eve and hence possessed an altogether singular title that belonged in no sense to others.

Father García Garcés<sup>146</sup> is of the opinion that St. Bernard seems to favor the doctrine of Mary's formal Co-redemption. Likewise, Father Carol<sup>147</sup> believes that, although it is in a context dealing with the Incarnation that the *Doctor Melifluus* speaks of the satisfaction made by the Blessed Virgin, nevertheless, one cannot exclude entirely the possibility of satisfaction in the proper sense—because without doubt the consortium of Mary with Christ in the work of the Redemption began at the time of the Incarnation.

This same idea is developed at length by Father Aubron who concludes: "Mary is the co-operator with the Savior from the Annunciation where all depended on her *fiat*, up to the consummation of Calvary."<sup>148</sup> Father Dillenschneider<sup>149</sup>

<sup>144</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 125-126.

<sup>145</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 313.

<sup>146</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 226-227.

<sup>147</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 256.

<sup>148</sup> P. Aubron, *Mariologie de Saint Bernard*, in *Rev. des. Sc. Relig.*, vol. 14, 1934, p. 570.

<sup>149</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 248. For further discussion of the teaching of St. Bernard, cf. A. Raugel, *La doctrine mariale de Saint Bernard*, Paris 1935; D. Nogues, *Mariologie de Saint Bernard*, Paris 1935.



suggests that the texts in St. Bernard regarding this continued collaboration are rare and scarcely explicit—but he does admit that at least one passage seems to point to this conclusion with sufficient clarity.

St. Bonaventure appears to be more clearly in favor of the teaching that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption. Although some writers<sup>150</sup> deny that such is true, nevertheless a study of the works of the *Doctor Seraphicus* on this point seems to indicate that in some passages at least (for example, where he treats of the payment of the price of mankind's Redemption), reference is made to Mary's immediate part in mankind's restoration. Indeed Father Di Fonzo<sup>151</sup> in his erudite monograph goes so far as to say that in this period, only St. Albert the Great surpasses St. Bonaventure in lucidly teaching this doctrine. Father Dillenschneider<sup>152</sup> concludes that the *Doctor Seraphicus* must be listed among those who teach Mary's co-operation in our Redemption *in actu primo*.

In regard to the doctrine of St. Albert the Great, one finds grave difficulty in agreeing with Father Lennerz,<sup>153</sup> Professor Goossens<sup>154</sup> and Professor Rivière<sup>155</sup> that the immediate co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the restoration of the human race is not taught. When he writes of Mary's co-operation in the merits of the Passion, when he speaks of the spiritual regeneration of mankind through her on Calvary, and when he terms her the *adjutrix redemptionis*, it seems clear that St. Albert refers to the immediate part which she played in the Redemp-

<sup>150</sup> Cf., e.g., Goossens, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>151</sup> L. Di Fonzo, *Doctrina Sancti Bonaventurae de universali Mediatione Beatae Virginis Mariae*, Romae, 1938, p. 165.

<sup>152</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. J. Carol, *Pater H. Lennerz et problema de Co-redemptione Mariana*, in *Marianum*, vol. 2, 1940, p. 197.

<sup>154</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>155</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Rev. des Sc. Relig.*, vol. 15, 1935, pp. 615-616.



tion of the human race. Although Father Carol<sup>156</sup> states that at the present time he dare not go beyond a probable affirmation that St. Albert taught this doctrine, Father Roschini,<sup>157</sup> Father Dillenschneider<sup>158</sup> and Father Druwé<sup>159</sup> are very much more definitive. Father Druwé believes that in St. Albert we have an exceptionally privileged witness to tradition on this point—not only because he has been solemnly proclaimed a Doctor of the Church, not only because he has expressed the traditional teaching of the Church in theologically profound and lucid formulae, but also because his authority, universally recognized as it is, has made a powerful contribution toward the confirming and diffusing of this truth.

In the latter part of this second period, the development of the theology of the Co-redemption continued. It was at this time that the word "Co-redemption" first appeared. Moreover, although Mary's co-operation was still referred to in merely general terms by some authors, nevertheless in many instances the specific acts in which this co-operation consisted were expressly mentioned by others. Thus, for example, reference was made to the merits of her sufferings by which the wrath of God was transformed into mercy, to her function as adjutrix of the Redemption by her co-passion, and by her voluntary acceptance of the most bitter sorrows.

In regard to individual authors, Father Carol<sup>160</sup> offers the following critique. Paul de Heredia and Thomas Illyricus clearly distinguish the objective Redemption from the subjective Redemption. Suarez goes even further, by differentiat-

<sup>156</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 256.

<sup>157</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 315.

<sup>158</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 244.

<sup>159</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 509. For further discussion of the teaching of St. Albert the Great, cf. J. Bittremieux, *S. Albertus Magnus, Ecclesiae Doctor, praestantissimus mariologus*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 10, 1933, pp. 217-231; J. Bover, *La Mediación universal de la Santísima Virgen las obras del B. Alberto Magno*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 7, 1926, pp. 511-548.

<sup>160</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, pp. 264-266.



ing Mary's merit as regards the Incarnation from her merit as regards salvation, "although in these words greater clarity is to be desired." St. Peter Canisius is opposed to the teaching of the immediate co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the restoration of mankind,<sup>160a</sup> while nothing in the writings of John of Carthagenia or John Baptist Lezana can be found which certainly favors it or certainly denies it. Denis the Carthusian speaks of the subjective Redemption. Blessed John Tauler, Salmerón and Ambrose Catharinus, however, certainly (and St. Antoninus, Clichtove and Peter Morales probably) teach the doctrine of the Blessed Virgin's immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption of the human race.

This evaluation in its entirety is not accepted by all—even among those who teach that Mary co-operated immediately in mankind's reconciliation with God. Gerson (whose works, in the opinion of Father Carol, do not clearly show him to believe in Mary's immediate co-operation in the Redemption) must be numbered among those who teach that the Blessed Virgin is the Co-redemptrix, according to Father Roschini.<sup>161</sup> The same author<sup>162</sup> holds that St. Antoninus explicitly refers to the soteriological purpose of her co-passion. As to the precise meaning of Denis the Carthusian, there is much dispute. Father Dillenschneider<sup>163</sup> believes that Denis cannot be cited in favor of a direct co-operation by Mary in the objective restoration of the human race, for he refers rather to her function as dispenser of graces. But Father Roschini<sup>164</sup> is of the opinion that from a study of the words of Denis there emerges the soteriological character of the co-passion of the Blessed Virgin.

<sup>160a</sup> Father Dillenschneider believes (*op. cit.*, p. 206), however, that St. Peter Canisius is an ardent champion of the teaching that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption.

<sup>161</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 318-319.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>163</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 267.

<sup>164</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 320.



Mary is the dispenser of all the graces of the Redemption by reason of her intercession, precisely because, according to Father Roschini, she was a sharer in the merit of all these graces, due to her immediate participation in the redemptive suffering of Christ, through her co-redemptive co-suffering.

A word may be said here in regard to *St. Thomas Aquinas* (+ 1274). It seems to be more probable that the Angelic Doctor refrained from any discussion of this point. This is the view of Father Carol<sup>165</sup> and Father Dillenschneider,<sup>166</sup> although Father Merkelbach<sup>167</sup> and Father Roschini<sup>168</sup> are not in agreement.

To bring to a close this section of the paper, it may be said that in this second period there appears a gradual transition from generic to specific texts in reference to the role played by the Blessed Virgin in our Redemption—that is, to the soteriological nature of Mary's co-operation.

### PART III:

#### *From the Seventeenth Century to the Nineteenth Century*

In the third period of this study one finds a tremendous development in the theology pertaining to Mary's role in mankind's salvation. The early part of this period, is, of course, the era of the Counter-Reformation, which is characterized by a widespread reaction against Protestantism's minimizing of Mary's part in the divine economy.

Concentrating for the moment on the seventeenth century, we may note that it has been said that “. . . the seventeenth century stands out more prominently than any other in his-

<sup>165</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, pp. 254-255.

<sup>166</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 267.

<sup>167</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 89. Cf. also B. Merkelbach, *Quid senserit Sanctus Thomas de Mediatione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, in *Xenia Thomist.*, vol. 2, Romae, 1925, pp. 520 et sqq.

<sup>168</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 315.



tory, not only because of the inexhaustible literary productions having our Blessed Lady as their theme, but likewise on account of the innumerable diatribes concerning her prerogatives, and the detestable abuses which abounded almost everywhere in matters Mariological."<sup>169</sup>

*St. Lawrence of Brindisi* (+ 1619) describes the co-operation of Mary in our restoration as a secondary participation in the priesthood of Christ.

Did not Mary put her life in danger for us, when she stood by the cross of Christ truly sacrificing Him to God in spirit, as full and abundantly full of the spirit of Abraham, and offering Him in true charity for the salvation of the world? . . . The spirit of Mary was a spiritual priest, as the cross was the altar and Christ the sacrifice; although the spirit of Christ was the principal priest, the spirit of Mary was there together with the spirit of Christ; indeed it was one spirit with Him as one soul in two bodies. Hence the spirit of Mary together with the spirit of Christ performed the priestly office at the altar of the cross and offered the sacrifice of the cross for the salvation of the world to the Eternal God. . . . For of her, as of God to Whom she was most similar in spirit, we can truly say that she so loved the world as to give her only-begotten Son so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but will have life eternal.<sup>170</sup>

*St. Robert Bellarmine* (+ 1621) writes as follows, on the subject of the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in mankind's Redemption.

Even if Mary was not present at the creation of the material heavens, nevertheless she was present at the creation of the spiritual heavens—the Apostles; and although she was not present at the founding of the material earth, nevertheless she was present at the founding of the spiritual earth—the Church. For

<sup>169</sup> Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series, vol. 3), 1943, p. 3.

<sup>170</sup> *Mariale; Opera omnia*, Patavii, 1928, vol. I, pp. 183-184.



she alone co-operated in the mystery of the Incarnation; she alone co-operated in the mystery of the Passion, standing before the cross, and offering her Son for the salvation of the world.<sup>171</sup>

The French school of the seventeenth century is headed by the famous *Cardinal de Bérulle* (+ 1629). While he himself stresses the unanimity of sentiment between Jesus and Mary, on the subject of her co-operation in the redemptive work he is silent. Yet, he does call Mary "the happy companion of Jesus in His mysteries, in His labors, in His cross, in His life, in His death."<sup>172</sup>

Among the many followers of Cardinal de Bérulle are Olier, Chardon, St. John Eudes and St. Louis Mary Grignon de Montfort. *Olier* (+ 1657)<sup>173</sup> describes Mary as the spouse of the Eternal Father in the economy of salvation at the moment of the Incarnation. Moreover, she is a figure of the Church, associated in the sacrifice of Calvary as the spouse of the new Adam. *Louis Chardon*,<sup>174</sup> on the other hand, seems to deny any direct co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in our objective Redemption.

*St. John Eudes* (+ 1680) asserts that the reason for which God created the Blessed Virgin was to fulfill the office of Co-redemptrix.

As the end of the predestination of Jesus is to give Him to us to be our Savior, our Mediator between His Father and us . . .

<sup>171</sup> This text was discovered by Rev. Sebastian Tromp, S.J., in the Vatican Library (Cod. Vat. lat. Ottob. 2424, f. 193). It is taken from a sermon delivered by St. Robert Bellarmine in 1599 on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, commenting on the text from the Book of Proverbs: "Quando praeparabat coelos aderam." Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>172</sup> P. de Bérulle, *Notre Dame dans l'Enfance de Jésus*, Juvisy, 1935, p. 63.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. *Vie Intérieure de la Sainte Vierge, ouvrage recueilli des écrits de M. Olier*, Rome, 1866, vol. 2, p. 119; vol. 1, p. 429.

<sup>174</sup> L. Chardon, *La Croix de Jésus*, Paris, 1937, pp. 208-210.



so the end of the predestination of Mary is to give her to us to co-operate with her Son in our Redemption, to be our Mediatrix between Him and us, to be our Mother . . .<sup>175</sup>

In every stage of her life, she co-operated with her Son in the work of our salvation, and when He immolated Himself on the cross she sacrificed Him also for the same end.<sup>176</sup>

It was not, said St. Bernard, that the Savior alone was not more than sufficient to accomplish the work of our salvation, but it was more fitting that each sex be present in our reparation since neither was absent in our corruption. Man and woman had been the cause of our ruin, and it was fitting that man and woman co-operate in our reparation. But this was done in a different way: the God-Man wrought our Redemption as the first and sovereign Cause and by His own merits, and His most holy Mother co-operated with Him as the second cause dependent on the first and through the merits of her Son. . . .<sup>177</sup>

*Cornelius a Lapide* (+ 1637) writes that our Blessed Mother is called by the Fathers the Mediatrix and Auctrix of our salvation—not because she paid the price of our Redemption (since this was the function of Christ alone), but because:

First, from her spotless flesh she conceived and bore Christ Who is the price of our salvation; secondly, the Blessed Virgin standing at the foot of the cross, offered to God with the most ardent charity, the life, sorrows and death of Christ her Son, as a holocaust and Victim for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, just as Christ immolating Himself on the cross, paid to the Father a just price for us, so the Blessed Virgin offering Him and herself with Him to the Father, in so far as she could, co-operated with Christ in the sacrifice, and consequently in our Redemption.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>175</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, Paris, 1905, vol. 5, p. 76.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 65.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 158.

<sup>178</sup> *Cornelius a Lapide, Comment. in Prov.* 8, 19; *Commentarii in Sacram Scripturam*, Lugduni-Parisiis, 1874, vol. 3, p. 188.



The theologian *Caspar Tausch* (+ 1645) writes clearly in favor of the doctrine of Mary's Co-redemption strictly understood.

The Virgin Mother of God was with Christ her Son at the cross . . . co-operating in our salvation . . . in a special way, not as the other saints are said to co-operate in the salvation of other men, either by praying for them and beseeching life and grace for them, or by aiding in their salvation through their apostolic works. . . . That way consisted in this: that, since she knew the will of the Eternal Father that the Son should suffer and die for the salvation of the human race, she most completely conformed herself to this will and joined herself to it, and prompted by her most ardent love toward men, for their life she offered her Son Jesus to death and sufferings—and this, during the whole course of her life, but especially at the time of the Passion.<sup>179</sup>

*Salazar* (+ 1646), a theologian of great authority among his contemporaries and famous for his defense of the Immaculate Conception, writes thus of Mary's part in the restoration of mankind: "Christ Himself willed to perfect our Redemption by uniting His Mother to it as an auxiliatrix."<sup>180</sup> And again: "Our Redemption which was born, as it were, through Jesus and Mary, attained from Christ sufficiency, strength and constancy; and from Mary form and beauty."<sup>181</sup>

*Vulpes* (+ 1647) has been termed "one of the keenest theologians of the seventeenth century."<sup>182</sup> He is probably the first to use the terms "subjective" and "objective" in regard to Mary's co-redeeming function. Of the many passages in

<sup>179</sup> C. Tausch, *De SS. Matre dolorosa libri tres*, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1645, p. 170.

<sup>180</sup> F. Salazar, *Pro Immaculata Deiparae Virginis Conceptione defensio*, Compluti, 1618, p. 202.

<sup>181</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>182</sup> Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series, vol. 3), 1943, p. 10.



his *Summa* which refer to the question at hand, the following should be noted.

God decreed to redeem all men from the servitude of sin . . . through their merits [i.e., the merits of Christ and Mary] . . . He decreed the passibility of the future Christ, and likewise that of His Mother, so that she too might become the Co-redemptrix of the entire human race.<sup>183</sup>

Mary died in imitation of her Son in order that she, in her capacity as Co-redemptrix, might with full merit pay the death-debt of others.<sup>184</sup>

The work of the Redemption was to be accomplished subjectively and objectively: principally by Christ, and co-operatively by His Mother through her intense sorrow and grief on account of the bloody death of her Son.<sup>185</sup>

*Novati* (+ 1648) asks the explicit question: "Did the Blessed Virgin, by co-suffering with Christ and offering Him to God the Father, co-operate in the Redemption of the human race?" His answer is as follows:

I say first that the Virgin, by co-suffering with Christ, did co-operate in the human Redemption. I say secondly that she most greatly co-operated in the Redemption of the human race by offering the life and blood of her Son to the Eternal Father for men's salvation.<sup>186</sup>

The will of Christ and Mary was one, and there was one holocaust.<sup>187</sup>

Just as Christ *de condigno* merited sufficiently for all men the remission of sins, sanctifying grace and all the other goods that

<sup>183</sup> A. Vulpes, *Sacrae Theologiae Summa Joannis D. Scoti, Doctoris Subtilissimi, et Commentaria*, Neapoli, 1646, vol. 3, pars 4, pp. 290-291.

<sup>184</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 498-499.

<sup>185</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 422.

<sup>186</sup> J. Novati, *De Eminentia Deiparae*, Bononiae, 1639, vol. 1, c. 18, q. 14, p. 379.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 380.



follow from it . . . so it must be said that the Blessed Virgin *de congruo* merited the same things for all men.<sup>188</sup>

The renowned and brilliant *Luke Wadding* (+ 1657), famous both for personal sanctity and for profound learning, in several passages refers to the part played by our Blessed Mother in the restoration of the human race. Concerning her prayers for mankind's Redemption on Calvary, he writes:

She presented them to her Son Who would not reject them, but Who rather offered them up to the Eternal Father together with His own; and the Eternal Father was moved principally by the holocaust of His beloved Son, and secondarily by the prayers of His beloved spouse. That the Blessed Virgin thereby merited our remedy in no small degree is attested by Arnold of Chartres.<sup>189</sup>

If therefore the Blessed Virgin has co-operated in our Redemption in so many different ways, I do not think that it is a novelty or an exaggeration to term her Redemptrix of the human race in a full but prudent sense of the word (*pleno ore sed prudenti sensu.*)<sup>190</sup>

*George de Rhodes* (+ 1661) discusses the question: "Whether and how the Mother of God was the Redemptrix of men."

We must state first of all that Mary can be called Redemptrix of mankind in a certain true and proper sense, although not as primary and proper as Christ.<sup>191</sup>

Mary merited *de congruo* through her co-passion and prayers

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 236.

<sup>189</sup> L. Waddingus, *De Redemptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Romae, 1646, pars 3, c. 2, p. 327.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.

<sup>191</sup> G. de Rhodes, *Disputationes Theologicae Scholasticae*, Lugduni, 1676, vol. 2, tract. 8: *De Deipara Virgine Maria*, disp. unica, quaest. 5, sect. 3, p. 265.



everything which Christ merited for us *de condigno* through His death. . . . She merited, first of all, that we should be liberated from all sin, both original and personal, that is, all graces which precede and cause our justification. . . .<sup>192</sup>

It would be outside the scope of this paper to discuss at length the unfortunate appearance in 1673 of the work entitled *Monita Salutaria Beatae Virginis Mariae ad Cultores Suos Indiscretos*,<sup>193</sup> and written by Adam Widenfeld (+ 1678), an eminent lawyer of Cologne. Although the writer's purpose may have been sincere, the fact remains that the work does exaggerate abuses, and its excessive rigorism renders its author suspicious of being tainted with Jansenism. In regard to his teaching on Mary's part in the redemption of mankind, it is more probable that Widenfeld rejects the doctrine of the Co-redemption entirely. Nevertheless, there are some<sup>194</sup> who believe that he opposes only the ridiculous views exaggeratedly propounded by some of his contemporaries—for example, that Mary was Co-redemptrix because a particle of our Lady's flesh and a few drops of her blood had been preserved in Christ's body up to the time of His Passion, and then that particle of flesh was sacrificed and those drops of blood were shed for mankind's salvation.

Concerning the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the restoration of the human race, Widenfeld presents our Blessed Mother as warning: "It was Christ Who by His own merits appeased the wrath of God; He alone reconciles men with God; He alone has trodden the winepress, and no one else with Him. Let no one, therefore, attribute these things to me; for

<sup>192</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>193</sup> In 1674 this work was placed on the *Index*, "donec corrigatur." Two years later the Holy Office condemned it without any restrictions.

<sup>194</sup> Cf. e.g., P. Hoffer, *La dévotion à Marie au déclin du XVIIe siècle, autour du Jansénisme et des "Avis Salutaires de la B. V. Marie à ses dévots indiscrets,"* Paris, 1938.



if I was pleasing to God, it was only in and through Jesus Christ my Redeemer and Savior. Or was I perhaps crucified for you, or were you perhaps baptized in my name? . . . Beware of attributing to me in your exaggeration or immoderate zeal anything which belongs to God alone. Therefore, you shall not call me Salvatrix or Co-redemptrix."<sup>195</sup>

Among the first authors to assail Widenfeld's pamphlet are *Maximilian Reichenberger* (+ 1673) of the University of Prague, and *Nicholas Dubois* of the University of Louvain. The former writes:

We most freely admit that Christ did not need the help of His Mother in redeeming the human race; but we deny that the merits and prayers of His Mother were not joined, *per modum meriti de congruo*, with the merits *de condigno* of her Son. It is evident that the Fathers could term the Blessed Virgin Co-redemptrix of the human race with much more reason than they could term Eve . . . the cause of our ruin. . . . For Eve co-operated in our ruin only remotely and accidentally . . . while Mary co-operated in the Redemption of the human race *proximately and immediately*, not only communicating to Christ the price of our Redemption from her own blood, but also aiding Him and assisting Him, and suffering with Him up to the consummation of the redemptive work on the cross.<sup>196</sup>

In defending the prerogatives of our Blessed Mother, *Dubois* issues this challenge to Widenfeld:

When you forbid others to say that Mary appeased the wrath of God by her own merits, do you deny that she had merits of

<sup>195</sup> A. Widenfeld, *Wholesome Advices from the Blessed Virgin to Her Indiscrete Worshippers*, (J. Taylor, trans.), London, 1687, pp. 8 et sqq.

<sup>196</sup> M. Reichenberger, *Mariani cultus vindiciae, sive nonnullae animadversiones in libellum cui titulus: Monita Salutaria B. V. Mariae ad cultores suos indiscretos, pro vindicanda contra auctorem anonymum Deiparae gloria, secundum orthodoxae fidei dogmata, Sanctorum Patrum testimonia, rectae rationis dictamina et theologorum principia*, Pragae, 1677, p. 120.



her own? I admit that her merits were dependent upon those of Christ; but I will not say that she had no merits of her own; And do you deny that she appeased the wrath of God by those merits? No one will believe you, except those who, like yourself, are annoyed by the word Mediatrix.<sup>197</sup>

While admittedly there are some writers in this period who either acknowledge the orthodoxy of Widenfeld's teaching on the Co-redemption, or profess a belief that Mary co-operates only in our subjective Redemption, nevertheless many other illustrious theologians are to be found taking up the cudgels against Widenfeld. Thus, for example, *Bishop Van Neercassel* (+ 1686) writes that the Blessed Virgin stood on Calvary "offering the Victim of our salvation together with her Son, and paying together with Him, the price of our Redemption."<sup>198</sup>

*John Crasset* (+ 1692) enthusiastically defends the prerogatives of Mary against the strictures of Widenfeld.

The Blessed Virgin alone shared this glory of her Son, because she obtains nothing for us which she had not already merited for us while still on earth by a merit *de congruo*. . . . She offered up all her actions and sufferings, together with the actions and sufferings of Christ, for the salvation of all; and God accepted such an oblation, according to the teaching of St. Bonaventure and other theologians.<sup>199</sup>

That Mary co-operated intimately in the objective Redemption of mankind is clearly taught by the theologian

<sup>197</sup> Lodviscio Bona [pseud.], *Defensio Beatissimae Virginis Mariae et piorum cultorum illius, contra libellum intitulum: Monita Salutaria* . . . , Wurtzburgi, 1685; in Bourassé, *Summa Aurea de Laudibus B. M. Virginis*, vol. 5, col. 171.

<sup>198</sup> J. Van Neercassel, *Tractatus de Sanctorum ac praecipue Beatae Mariae Virginis cultu*, Embricae, 1675, p. 220.

<sup>199</sup> J. Crasset, *La véritable dévotion envers la Sainte Vierge établie et défendue*, Paris, 1679, p. 14.



Segneri (+ 1694), in a work widely read by his contemporaries.

By her acquiescence to the ignominious death of her Son . . . at the foot of the cross she took part in the Divine Sacrifice offered to God the Father . . .<sup>200</sup>

I can state without any scruple that she merited for us the Redemption of the world at least *de congruo* . . . [Her Son] obtained the same Redemption by a condign merit of strict justice.<sup>201</sup>

We may conclude our consideration of the authors of the seventeenth century by pointing out that the doctrine of the Co-redemption is taught not only by the theologians in their scholarly tomes, but also by the eloquent preachers and devotional writers of the period, from the pulpit and in popular manuals of piety. Mention may be made, for example, of Poiré,<sup>202</sup> de Riez,<sup>203</sup> and de Priézac<sup>204</sup>—the last being an eminent layman of Paris.

Turning to the eighteenth century, we find that it brings forth a divergence of views on the problem of Mary's part in the Redemption of the human race. The writers mentioned here may be considered as among the most important from the standpoint of their contribution to the development of this doctrine.

*St. Louis Mary Grignion de Montfort* (+ 1716) is well-

<sup>200</sup> P. Segneri, *Il divoto di Maria Vergine*, Bologna, 1677. Ex Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, Ex Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series, vol. 3), 1943, p. 151.

<sup>202</sup> F. Poiré, *La triple couronne de la Bienheureuse Vierge Mère de Dieu, tissée de ses principales grandeurs d'excellence, de pouvoir et de bonté, et enrichie de diverses inventions pour L'aimer, L'honorer et La servir*, Paris, 1656.

<sup>203</sup> B. de Riez, *Les justes louanges de la Très-Auguste Mère de Dieu*, Aix, 1669.

<sup>204</sup> D. de Priézac, *Les privilèges de la Vierge, Mère de Dieu*, Paris, 1648-1651.



known throughout the world for his saintly love of the Mother of God. In his famous work *Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, he teaches that our Blessed Lord

glorified His independence and His majesty in depending on that sweet Virgin, in His conception, in His birth, in His presentation in the temple, in His hidden life of thirty years, and even in His death where she was to be present in order that He might make with her but one same sacrifice, and be immolated to the Eternal Father by her consent; just as Isaac of old was offered by Abraham's consent to the will of God. It is she who nourished Him, supported Him, brought Him up, and then sacrificed Him for us.<sup>205</sup>

*Van Ketwigh* (+ 1720) very clearly distinguishes Mary's role in the Incarnation, in the Passion, and in the dispensing of graces.

In an orthodox spirit the most Blessed Virgin Mary is called the Co-redemptrix or the Co-operatrix of the salvation of the human race—namely, by begetting the Redeemer, by offering Him to the Father for the Redemption of mankind as He was hanging on the cross, and by obtaining through her prayers and merits that the Passion of Christ the Redeemer be applied to men.<sup>206</sup>

*Salvator Montalbanus* strenuously defends the teaching that Mary is the Co-redemptrix. Moreover, her function of Co-redemptrix did not consist in the fact that she gave birth to Christ, but "with sacerdotal piety she offered Him a Victim for the world."<sup>207</sup> Again, Montalbanus states that the Son

<sup>205</sup> Bl. Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, *Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, (F. Faber, trans.), New York, 1941, p. 17.

<sup>206</sup> J. Van Ketwigh, *Panoplia Mariana*, Antverpiae, 1720, p. 101.

<sup>207</sup> S. Montalbanus, *Opus theologicum tribus distinctum tomis in quibus efficacissime ostenditur Immaculatam Dei Genitricem utpote ex Christi meritis*



offered a condign price as the prime and principal Cause of our Redemption; the Virgin, however, obtained that same Redemption by a certain congruity. Thus Mary was the adjutrix and the auxiliatrix of Christ the Lord at the Redemption—not because He needed her aid and assistance . . . but because her authority and dignity as Mother demanded this: that her merits, prayers and petitions be joined with the petitions and merits of Christ, that the salvation of men be granted (*donaretur*) to each.<sup>208</sup>

*Charles del Moral* (+ 1731) vigorously espouses the teaching that Mary is the Co-redemptrix. Not only does he maintain that she co-operated in mankind's restoration, but he is probably the first theologian to elaborate the view that her merit and satisfaction were condign dependent, however, on the merits of her divine Son. He clearly teaches that

the Mother of God co-operated with her Son in the salvation of men, the grace and glory of the angels, by acts meritorious *de condigno*, but dependent on the merits of her Son. . . . Therefore, in that sense we say that it now seems consistent with theological principles that whatever Christ the Lord merited for us falls also under the condign—and not merely the congruous—merits of the Mother of God, dependent . . . on the superabundant merits of her Son.<sup>209</sup>

The Mother of God at the foot of the cross, co-suffering and offering her Son to the Eternal Father, with her Son and by her merits satisfied in a sense (*secundum quid*), but *de condigno* and only secondarily, as the Co-redemptrix, for the sins of the whole human race.<sup>210</sup>

*praeservative redemptam, fuisse prorsus immunem ab omni debito tum contrahendi originale peccatum, tum ipsius fomitem incurrendi*, Panormi, 1723, vol. 2, p. 368, n. 521.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393, n. 603.

<sup>209</sup> C. del Moral, *Fons illimis theologiae scoticae marianae e paradiso latices suos ubertim effundens*, Matriti, 1730, vol. 2, p. 385, n. 20.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 420, n. 43.



The Spanish theologian *Lossada* (+1748) upholds the thesis of del Moral, insisting that any difficulty which adversaries raise against it by quoting from Scripture and the Fathers, is capable of solution.<sup>211</sup>

On the other hand, *Didacus González Matheo* (+1741) maintains that it is certain that Christ alone satisfied *de condigno* for the sins of the human race. Nevertheless he clearly and forcibly defends Mary's role as Co-redemptrix.

The opinion of theologians which states that the most holy Mother of God merited *de congruo* whatever Christ merited for us *de condigno*, is quite common. But it is indisputable that Christ merited for us *de condigno* all graces and benefits both of the natural order and of the supernatural order, together with remission of sins and liberation from evils. Therefore, the most holy Mother of God merited all these for us *de congruo*.<sup>212</sup>

The *Scholastica Mariana* of *Sedlmayr* (+1772) appeared eight years after the first edition of St. Alphonsus' *Glories of Mary*. In it the Bavarian theologian states:

The Blessed Virgin truly co-operated in the redemption of the human race, so that rightly she merits the title Co-redemptrix of the human race. This assertion seems to be in accordance with the common opinion of the Fathers and doctors. . . ."<sup>213</sup>

However, in another section of the same work the following passage is found.

The concurrence of Mary is reduced solely to the application of the merits of Christ. She entreats God to render efficacious

<sup>211</sup> D. Lossada, *Tractatus de Incarnatione*, (MS), fol. 333r-339r.

<sup>212</sup> D. González Matheo, *Mystica Civitas Dei vindicata*, Matriti, 1747, p. 124, n. 409.

<sup>213</sup> V. Sedlmayr, *Scholastica Mariana*, pars 2, quaest. 6, art. 10; in Boursassé, *Summa Aurea*, vol. 7, col. 1275-1276.



in the order of execution the merits of her Son which are fully sufficient in themselves.<sup>214</sup>

Brief reference may be made to *Trombelli* (+1784) who treats the question of Mary's co-operation in the Redemption, by way of endeavoring to correct certain misunderstandings found in the prayers of the faithful. In so doing he states that the title Redemptrix belongs to our Blessed Mother *minus proprie*.<sup>215</sup>

Much controversy has been evoked as to the exact teaching of *St. Alphonsus* (+1787) on our Lady's role in the Redemption. Reference may here be made to several passages in his works.

. . . she offered to the Eternal Father with so much grief in her own heart, the life of her beloved Son for our salvation. Hence *St. Augustine* testifies that, having co-operated by her love in order that the faithful be born to the life of grace, by that she became spiritual Mother of all who are members of our head *Jesus Christ*.<sup>216</sup>

*Jesus Christ* alone is our Mediator, *ex justitia* and through merit *de condigno*, as the theologians say. He offered His merits to the Eternal Father Who accepted them for our salvation. Mary, on the other hand, is the Mediatrix of grace through simple intercession and through merit *de congruo*, since, on the testimony of the theologians including *St. Bonaventure*, she offered her merits to God for the salvation of men; which merits God accepted *ex gratia* together with the merits of *Christ*.<sup>217</sup>

*Christ* provided that the Blessed Virgin, through the sacrifice and oblation of His life, co-operate in our salvation and thus

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 8, col. 62-63.

<sup>215</sup> *J. Trombelli, De culto publico ab Ecclesia Beatae Mariae exhibito*, dissert. 8; in *Bourassé, Summa Aurea*, vol. 4, col. 286.

<sup>216</sup> *S. Alfonso Maria de' Liguori, Le Glorie di Maria, discorso sulla Salve Regina*, cap. 1; *Opere Ascetiche*, Roma, 1937.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, *Discorso della Nascita*, punto 2.



become the Mother of our souls. And our Savior wished to signify this when, before He died, looking down from the cross at His Mother and disciple standing there, He first said to Mary: "Behold thy Son"—as if to say: "Behold now man is born to the life of grace on account of the oblation of My life made by you for his salvation."<sup>218</sup>

. . . just as Mary co-operated by her charity in the spiritual birth of the faithful, so also God willed that she co-operate by her intercession in obtaining for them the life of grace in this world, and the life of glory in the other world.<sup>219</sup>

We receive grace . . . from Jesus as the Savior, from Mary as the advocate; from Jesus as the font, from Mary as the channel.<sup>220</sup>

In the death of Jesus, Mary united her will to that of her Son, in such a way that both offered one and the same Sacrifice; and therefore the holy Abbot [i. e., Arnold of Chartres] says that thus the Son and the Mother accomplished the Redemption of the human race, obtaining salvation for men—Jesus by satisfying for our sins, and Mary by obtaining for us that this satisfaction be applied to us.<sup>221</sup>

It is but natural that in a century in which the truth of the Immaculate Conception was solemnly defined by the Sovereign Pontiff, and in which our Blessed Mother made several miraculous and widely-discussed appearances on earth, much would be written about the Virgin Mary and her prerogatives. And so, we find a wealth of literature in the nineteenth century on her role as Co-redemptrix.

*De Clorivière* (+1820) was a Jesuit theologian and mystic who exercised a profound spiritual influence toward the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. Deeply grieved at the dissolution by the governmental au-

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, *Discorso sulla Salve Regina*, cap. 1.

<sup>219</sup> *Opere*, Torino, 1887, vol. 8, p. 998.

<sup>220</sup> *Le Glorie di Maria*; *Opere Ascetiche*, vol. 7, p. 61.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139.



thorities in Paris, of the many pious societies devoted to the cult of Mary, he endeavored to keep strong the knowledge and love of the Virgin Mother. For him Mary is the "co-adjutrix of Jesus in the work of the redemption," "Mother and co-operatrix of the Savior," "always united with her Son in the divine decrees, His co-operatrix in the work of the Redemption of men, His inseparable companion in all the mysteries, all the works, all the pains, all the labors that He endured." She is "the cause of our joy because of the free consent that she gave to the mystery of the Incarnation and to that of the Redemption. . . ." Repeatedly he refers to Mary's sacrifice, her offering of Christ on the cross, her suffering of everything which her Son suffered and for the same reasons for which He suffered—and all this, by reason of her vocation as the second Eve. Indeed he does not hesitate to state that "Mary was not only necessary as the companion of her Son, but also as His co-operatrix and co-adjutrix in the great work of the Redemption of the human race." In summary, the merits of the Passion of Christ, according to De Clorivière, are applied to men, only if they consent and co-operate freely. Now, what is verified on the individual plane was realized in the beginning by divine decree on the general plane of humanity. In order that the salvation merited by Christ be applied to the human race, God willed that Mary in the name of us all be united to the Redeemer by her dolorous co-operation as Mother and associate of Christ.<sup>222</sup>

In many places in his treatise on devotion to the Blessed Virgin, *Peraldi* (+1830) refers to her co-operation in the Redemption. Thus, for example, he writes of Mary's sacrifice with her divine Son on Calvary for the Redemption of man-

<sup>222</sup> P. De Clorivière, *Voilà votre Mère* (extraits), Paris, 1935; *Les incomparables excellences de la Vierge Marie, grand instrument des miséricordes divines pour l'Eglise à travers les âges* (extraits du *Commentaire de l'Apocalypse*, cc. 21, 22, copiés sur l'autographe de Jersey). Cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-138.



kind, adding in regard to her title of Co-redemptrix: "From this two-fold sacrifice of Jesus Christ and of His Mother . . . is derived that title so glorious for her and so consoling for us." <sup>223</sup>

The French theologian *Jeanjacquot* (+1891) discusses in very exact terms the part played by the Blessed Virgin in the reconciliation of mankind with God. He clearly points out that our Redemption was accomplished by Christ entirely, perfectly and uniquely, that His Mother did not co-operate with Him in the sense that the Redemption was wrought by each equally as co-redeemers. Nevertheless, Mary did co-operate, even though the sacrifice of Christ would have attained its objective without her. This co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the Redemption consists primarily in her consent. "The principal element in the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in this great work of the Redemption was the final act of her consent, or rather the immolation of the divine Victim by the union of her will with that of the divine Victim immolating Himself." <sup>224</sup>

Hence, *Jeanjacquot* considers it appropriate to address our Blessed Mother in these terms: "Since your consent was necessary, your consent had to be joined to the charity of Christ in order that the work of our Redemption be accomplished; and hence it is true that you saved us in union with Him, and that He saved us in union with you." <sup>225</sup>

It has already been mentioned that some theologians in past centuries deduced the fact of the Immaculate Conception from the part taken by Mary in the restoration of mankind. The same is true of several writers in the nineteenth century—for

<sup>223</sup> M. Peraldi, *Dei fondamenti della divozione a Maria*, Roma, 1830, p. 128.

<sup>224</sup> P. Jeanjacquot, *Simplex réflexions sur la coopération de la Très-Sainte Vierge à l'œuvre de la Redemption et sa qualité de Mère des chrétiens*, Paris, 1868, p. 127.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.



example, *Tonini*, *Biancheri*, *Pianori da Brisighella*, *Mansella*, *Matone* and *Folgori*.<sup>225a</sup> Nor are there lacking authors who hold that one of the most cogent arguments in support of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother into heaven is precisely her role as Co-redemptrix. In this connection, mention may be made of *Jannucci*, who states:

... in order fully to accomplish the work of the Redemption, Christ restored life by rising from the dead. But the Blessed Virgin is called and is the Co-redemptrix. Hence she, too, in order to accomplish the work of the co-redemption had to restore life by rising from the dead [i. e., by her Assumption]. She was the Co-redemptrix when she conceived the Eternal Word in her womb. She was the Co-redemptrix when she offered her unbloody death on the heights of Calvary.<sup>226</sup>

At this point the works of several well-known English Catholic writers engage our attention. First is the Oratorian, *Frederick Faber* (+1863), who writes at length on the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the restoration of the human race.

Are we to suppose that Our Lady's compassion was part of the redemption of the world, that the salvation of souls was merited by it, and that sin was expiated by it? Many writers have used language which seems to imply as much as this.

<sup>225a</sup> Cf. J. Tonini, *Lettera e Voto sull'Immacolata Concezione*; in Sardi, *La solenne definizione del dogma dell'Immacolato Concepimento di Maria Santissima: Atti e Documenti*, Roma, 1905, vol. 1; P. Biancheri, *Voto in forma di dissertazione sulla definizione dogmatica dell' Immacolato Concepimento della B. V. Maria*, Tivoli, 1848; A. Pianori da Brisighella, *Fondamenti ortodossi per la definibilità dell'Immacolato Concepimento di Maria Santissima*, Cesa, 1854; G. Mansella, *Il dogma dell'Immacolata Concezione di Maria*, Roma, 1867; N. Matone, *Il dogma dell'Immacolata ed il secolo XIX*, Napoli, 1888; F. Folgori, *Dignità, santità, e gloria di Maria Vergine*, Napoli, 1867.

<sup>226</sup> A. Jannucci, *De psychosomatica Deiparae Assumptione*, Taurini, 1884, p. 233.



Saints and Doctors have united in calling Our Blessed Lady co-redemptress of the world. There is no question of the lawfulness of using such language, because there is such overwhelming authority for it. The question is as to its meaning. Is it merely the hyperbole of panegyric, the affectionate exaggeration of devotion, the inevitable language of a true understanding of Mary, which finds common language inadequate to convey the whole truth? Or is it literally true with an acknowledged and recognized theological accuracy attached to it? . . . On the one hand, it seems rash to assert of language used both by saints and doctors that it is only exaggeration and hyperbole. . . . On the other hand, who can doubt that our Blessed Lord is the sole Redeemer of the world, His Precious Blood the sole ransom from sin . . . ? We have no doubt that our Blessed Lady is not the co-redemptress of the world in the strict sense of being redemptress, in the unshared sense in which Our Lord is Redeemer of the world, but she is co-redemptress in the accurate sense of that compound word. . . . She co-operated with Our Lord in the redemption of the world in quite a different sense, a sense which can never be more than figuratively true of the saints. Her free consent was necessary to the Incarnation. . . . She consented to His Passion . . . and so He went to Calvary as her free-will offering to the Father. . . . Mary has three distinct rights to the title of co-redemptress. She has a right to it, first of all, because of her co-operation with Our Lord in the same sense as the saints, but in a singular and superlative degree. She has a second right to it, which is peculiar to herself, because of the indispensable co-operation of her Maternity. She has a third right to it, because of her dolours. . . . These last two rights are unshared by any other creature, or by all creatures collectively. They belong to the incomparable magnificence of the Mother of God.<sup>227</sup>

On the role played by the Blessed Virgin in the Redemption of the human race, *Cardinal Wiseman* (+1865) has this

<sup>227</sup> F. Faber, *The Foot of the Cross*, 20th Amer. ed., Baltimore, n.d., pp. 408-414.



to say: "Therefore does she stand at the foot of the cross, that for lost man she may make a public and willing sacrifice of all that is dear to her on earth. . . . Thus it is she becomes a co-operator, as far as possible, with God, in His great work." <sup>228</sup>

On the other hand, *Cardinal Newman* (+1890) seems to be averse to admitting the title "Co-redemptrix." Speaking of certain statements "not English but foreign" which appeared in works honoring the Blessed Virgin, he writes: "I will frankly say that . . . they affected me with grief and almost anger. . . . How is there anything of incommunicable greatness in His death and passion, if He Who was alone in the garden, alone upon the cross, alone in the resurrection, after all is not alone but shared His solitary work with His Blessed Mother . . . ?" <sup>229</sup>

We may call attention here to the preface which *Cardinal Manning* (+1892) contributed to the second (English) edition of Jeanjacquot's book referred to above. The Cardinal writes:

There is nothing easier than to have a profound and a superficial mind at one and the same time; to be saturated with an undigested erudition and incapable of understanding the first principles of the faith. Such is, to a very large extent, the state of some individuals who, while professing belief in the Incarnation of the Divine Word, refuse to style Mary Mother of God, and who raise their voices against the titles of co-redemptrix, co-operatrix, reparatrix, and mediatrix, after having misconstrued their meaning. The presumptuous audacity with which

<sup>228</sup> N. Wiseman, *Sermons on Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother*, New York, 1866, p. 364.

<sup>229</sup> *Difficulties of Anglicans*, vol. 2, p. 103. On the other hand, in the light of the following statement it seems probable that Cardinal Newman was opposed to the term "Co-redemptrix" and not to the teaching of the co-redemption. "St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, and others, had distinctly laid it down, that she not only had an office, but bore a part, and was a voluntary agent in the actual process of redemption, as Eve had been instrumental and responsible in Adam's fall."—*An Essay in the Development of Christian Doctrine*, London, 1845, p. 384.



the language and the devotions, not only of ordinary Catholics, but also of the saints, have been censured by such authors, may have caused momentary alarm in some humble and timid souls. It is, therefore, very opportune to place in their hands this excellent translation of a work which proves in a truly solid, clear and irrefutable manner, that, owing to the Word's Incarnation, Our Blessed Mother has received from her Divine Son a true right to all these titles. Hence, these titles which we give her are not metaphors but truths; they are not the expression of purely oratorical or poetical ideas, but the expression of true and living relations existing between her and her Divine Son, between her and us.<sup>230</sup>

It would be an inappropriate digression to discuss here the events connected with the action taken by the Holy Office in regard to the cult of the Blessed Virgin as Priestess.<sup>231</sup> Suffice it to say that in the condemnation issued by the Holy See, Van den Berghe's work *Marie et la Sacerdoce* was never censured. In point of fact, when it was first published in 1873 it was honored by words of praise from Pope Pius IX, and subsequent editions appeared under the patronage of Cardinals Dechamps, Pie and Mermillod.

The teaching of *Van den Berghe* on Mary's role in the Redemption can thus be summarized. Her part in mankind's restoration was analogous to the sacerdotal action of a priest. In God's Providence she was placed beside the God-Man on Calvary, her mission being to aid the Savior in the accomplishment of His work—which was the blotting out of sin, the meriting of grace, and the conferring of glory. Her priest-

<sup>230</sup> Cf. Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, p. 38.

<sup>231</sup> In 1906 Pope Pius X approved the diffusion of a prayer to the "Virgin-Priestess," and enriched it with indulgences. However, due to abuses which insinuated themselves in the portrayal of our Blessed Mother, the Holy Office intervened in 1913 and forbade representations of Mary in priestly vestments. This regulation was published in 1916. In 1927 the Holy Office forbade devotions to the "Virgin-Priestess."



hood, intimately associated with that of Jesus Christ, was a mystical priesthood, having its principal function on Calvary when she offered her sacrifice to God the Father.<sup>232</sup>

In regard to Mary's co-operation in the restoration of the human race, the illustrious theologian *Scheeben* (+1888) writes:

The collaboration of Mary with the Redeemer in the redemptive sacrifice of Christ . . . is manifestly different from all other human collaboration both by its intimacy and by its efficacy. And that is why it is necessary to look on the effects of the sacrifice of Christ as co-acquired by Mary in this sacrifice and by this sacrifice. It can be said that Mary, in union with Christ (that is to say, by her collaboration with Him), made satisfaction to God for the sins of the world, merited grace, and consequently redeemed the world, in that she offered with Him the price of our Redemption. But it is permitted to say that, only by specifying expressly that it is in Christ and by Christ—that is to say, in the sacrifice of Christ and by the sacrifice of Christ, in so far as she co-offered this sacrifice. It is in this sense and in this way that correctly and without danger the Mother of the Redeemer can be called Co-redemptrix.<sup>233</sup>

*Francis Risi* has been termed one of the most erudite Italian theologians of the nineteenth century.<sup>234</sup> His teaching on the Co-redemption is remarkably lucid. He states unhesitatingly that Mary co-operated in the entire sacrifice of her Son, and that this co-operation was expiatory for our sins. Furthermore, he writes that "the Church applies to individual souls the regenerating grace which Jesus and Mary merited for all." <sup>235</sup>

<sup>232</sup> O. Van den Berghe, *Marie et le Sacerdoce*, Paris, 1879.

<sup>233</sup> M. Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Freiburg, 1882, vol. 3, p. 608.

<sup>234</sup> Cf. J. Carol, *Mary's Co-redemption according to Nineteenth Century Italian Writers*, in *Marianum*, vol. 10, 1949, p. 420.

<sup>235</sup> F. iRsi, *Sul motivo primario dell'Incarnazione del Verbo*, Brescia, 1898, p. 118.



Attention may here be called to the dogmatic votum which was presented by Bishop Laurent to the Vatican Council for definition:

The most Blessed Virgin Mary who co-suffered and afterwards co-died with Christ suffering and dying for the salvation of mankind, made to divine justice most acceptable satisfaction . . . and became our Co-redemptrix with Christ—not because it was necessary (for the infinite merit of Christ abundantly sufficed), but by spontaneous and truly meritorious association.<sup>236</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss at length the teaching of the Sovereign Pontiffs in regard to Mary's part in the Redemption. Mention may be made, however, of reference to it by *Pope Pius IX* (+1878) and *Pope Leo XIII* (+1903).

The former refers to the Blessed Virgin's function as Co-redemptrix in the famous Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, as well as in his letter written on the occasion of the publication of Van den Berghe's *Marie et la Sacerdoce*.

They [i. e., the Fathers and writers of the Church] declared the most glorious Virgin was the reparatrix of her parents, the vivifier of posterity, chosen from the ages, prepared for Himself by the Most High, predicted by God when He said to the serpent: "I will place enmity between thee and the woman," who undoubtedly has crushed the poisonous head of the same serpent. . . .<sup>237</sup>

From the time of the virginal conception of Christ up to His bitter death, she [i. e., the Blessed Virgin] so intimately joined

<sup>236</sup> J. Laurent, *Vota Dogmatica Concilio Vaticano proponenda*; in K. Moeller, *Leben und Briefe von Johannes Theodor Laurent*, Trier, 1889, vol. 3, p. 29: ex *Collectanea Francescana*, vol. 14, 1944, p. 280.

<sup>237</sup> Cf. *Ineffabilis Deus*, in *Acta et Decreta Sacrorum Conciliorum Recentiorum*, *Collectio Lacensis*, vol. 6, 842 et sqq.



herself to the divine sacrifice of her Son that she was called Virgin-Priestess by the Fathers of the Church.<sup>238</sup>

*Pope Leo XIII* writes of our Blessed Mother in his Encyclical *Jucunda semper* that "she was a sharer with Him [i. e., with Christ] in the laborious expiation for the human race. . . . Moreover, she offered her Son to divine justice, dying in heart in union with Him—her heart being transfixed with a sword of grief."<sup>239</sup> Again, in his Encyclical *Adjutricem populi* the Holy Father states that Mary was the helper or associate of Christ in accomplishing the redemption of the human race.<sup>240</sup>

Similar sentiments are evident in his earlier writings as Bishop of Perugia:

Just as God, according to the counsel of His wisdom, willed that the glorious and ever Virgin Mary be associated with Jesus Christ in the work of the Redemption, so it happens by divine disposition that the merits of Christ are applied to men through the intercession of the same Virgin.<sup>241</sup>

. . . her devoted children should consecrate themselves to her, because of her two-fold capacity as Mother and as Co-redemptrix of the human race. . . . Truly the Blessed Virgin cooperated to pay the price of the redemption of the human race, consenting to the Passion and death of her only-begotten Son; and thus men were snatched from captivity and placed in liberty.<sup>242</sup>

If one reviews the writings of a representative number of theologians of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it will become clear that during this period the doctrine

<sup>238</sup> From the letter of Pope Pius IX written on Aug. 25, 1873, and found in the 1875 edition of Msgr. Van den Berghe's *Marie et la Sacerdoce*.

<sup>239</sup> *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 27, 1894-1895, p. 178.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 28, 1895-1896, pp. 130-131.

<sup>241</sup> J. Pecci, *Lettera Pastorale*, Perugia, 1873; in Pesquidoux, *L'Immaculée Conception: histoire d'un dogme*, Paris, 1898, vol. 2, p. 378.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 380-381.



of the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the objective Redemption was taught by many authors. Practically all aspects of the doctrine were mentioned—co-operation by Mary in the Redemption *per modum compassionis*, *per modum meriti*, *per modum satisfactionis*, *per modum sacrificii*, and *per modum solutionis pretii redemptivi*. Indeed the very fact that Widenfeld was prompted to protest against the title "Co-redemptrix" indicates how widespread an acceptance this title must have enjoyed in the seventeenth century.

In regard to that century it cannot be denied that some authors did not indicate clearly whether they had in mind the objective Redemption or the subjective Redemption, remote co-operation or immediate co-operation. This fact should not surprise us, however, since present-day terminology was not then commonly in use. Moreover, there are some isolated instances which seem to limit Mary's co-operation to her part in the application of Christ's merits to the individual soul. Thus, for example, Louis Chardon. Some others seem either to deny outright the co-operation of the Mother of God in the objective Redemption of mankind, or at least to speak of it in a vague and uncertain way. Thus, for example, Saavedra, Lenglez, Petrello a Sigillo, Priuli, Baillet, Bourzéis, Coutinho.<sup>243</sup>

On the other hand, the words of many of the theologians cannot be interpreted save as referring to the participation of our Blessed Mother in the objective Redemption. Thus, for example, while it is only probable that Cornelius a Lapide<sup>244</sup> and St. Lawrence of Brindisi taught that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption, there seems to be no

<sup>243</sup> Cf. Roschini, *op. cit.*, p. 346; Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series, vol. 3), 1943, pp. 157-158. Baillet, a Jansenist, was termed "the king of hypercritics" by Pope Benedict XIV. His treatise on devotion to the Blessed Virgin was twice condemned by the Holy See. Bourzéis likewise was a Jansenist.

<sup>244</sup> Father García Garcés believes (*op. cit.*, p. 230), however, that Cornelius a Lapide refers to Co-redemption which is mediate or entatively material.



doubt about the doctrine of Novati—despite the hesitancy shown by Father García Garcés in his regard:<sup>245</sup> and De Rhodes may certainly be listed among those who held to the fact of Mary's role as Co-redemptrix. The same is true of Vulpes and Reichenberger.

In that century the title "Co-redemptrix" was frequently employed. This fact, of course, does not in itself necessarily signify that the writers intended to use the term with all its complete implications. But the truth is that in very many instances the authors did wish to designate the immediate co-operation of Mary in the objective Redemption—as is clear from the statements that Mary merited the restoration of the human race *de congruo*, that she appeased the wrath of God, that she offered satisfaction for mankind's sins, that she spiritually immolated herself on Calvary in union with her Son for our salvation, that the Eternal Father accepted her meritorious co-passion and blotted out the debt of sin.

It is not correct to charge, as does Prof. Rivière,<sup>246</sup> that the authors in the seventeenth century who attributed to Mary an immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption were only popular spiritual writers, and not trained theologians. In the first place, the spiritual writers merely gave expression to ideas already solidly founded on theological fact; and in the second place, actually many of the authors who wrote of Mary's role in the Redemption were outstanding scholars—for example, Novati, Salazar, and De Rhodes.

Even a cursory reading of the theological literature of the eighteenth century will point to the fact that the doctrine of Mary's co-operation in the objective Redemption of the human race was accepted as the common teaching. The doctrine is found quite clearly in the writings of Montalbanus, Del Moral,

<sup>245</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>246</sup> J. Rivière, *Marie "Corédemptrice"?*, in *Rev. de Sc. Relig.*, vol. 20, 1940, p. 131.



Lossada, Gonzalez and Van Ketwigh, for example. Of course there were some theologians who denied that Mary participated immediately in the objective restoration of mankind. Thus, for example, Trombelli and Sedlmayr—although in regard to the latter there is some controversy. Father Dillenschneider<sup>247</sup> believes that he teaches that Mary co-operates in the subjective Redemption only, while Father Carol<sup>248</sup> is of the opinion that his statements on the point are not clear enough to warrant a definitive answer. However, at least in regard to one of the passages quoted in these pages, it does not seem rash to state that Sedlmayr probably inclined toward the teaching that Mary co-operated in the objective Redemption.

The passages from the pen of St. Alphonsus which deal with this question are the source of much dispute. Father García Garcés<sup>249</sup> believes that it is very difficult to consider St. Alphonsus as an indisputable champion of formal Co-redemption. Prof. Goossens<sup>250</sup> states without reservation that St. Alphonsus many times denied the teaching that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective restoration of mankind. This assertion is strenuously opposed by Father Roschini.<sup>251</sup> The fact seems to be that St. Alphonsus in some passages treats solely of Mary's function in dispensing graces. But it does not therefrom follow that he did not accept Mary's role as Co-redemptrix in the objective Redemption. Actually, in other passages he specifically treats of the part played by our Blessed Mother in the objective Redemption. And finally, in a third series of texts, he joins intimately the co-operation of Mary in the acquisition of graces with her co-operation in

<sup>247</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 106-112, 410.

<sup>248</sup> J. Carol, *Testimonia saeculi XVIII de Beata Virgine Co-redemptrice*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, p. 49.

<sup>249</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>250</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 132.

<sup>251</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 333 et sqq.



the dispensing of graces, stressing especially the causal nexus between them.

There can be no doubt that the doctrine of the immediate co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the objective Redemption continued to become more widely diffused during the nineteenth century. There were, however, some adversaries. Thus, for example, Cardinal Newman, although insisting on the truth that Mary was the new Eve, was unwilling to accord to her the title "Co-redemptrix." But the overwhelming majority of theologians who wrote on the subject must be listed as advocates of the doctrine that our Blessed Mother participated in the Redemption *in actu primo*. One may mention, for example, Jeanjacquot, Van den Berghe, Faber, Wiseman, Manning, Scheeben,<sup>252</sup> Pope Pius IX, and Pope Leo XIII.<sup>253</sup>

#### PART IV: *The Twentieth Century*

In discussing the treatment by present-day writers of the doctrine of the Co-redemption, one naturally turns first to the pronouncements of the Sovereign Pontiffs.<sup>254</sup> It should be stated clearly, of course, that no definitive decision has yet been issued by the Holy See in reference to this question, al-

<sup>252</sup> Although some writers, e.g., Prof. Goossens, deny that Scheeben taught that our Blessed Mother co-operated in the objective Redemption, his own words seem to indicate that he espoused the doctrine of Mary's immediate role in the objective restoration of the human race. For a summary of his teaching on this point, cf. Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, pp. 87 et sqq.

<sup>253</sup> For a discussion of the teaching of the Sovereign Pontiffs on this point, cf. J. Carol, *Romanorum Pontificum doctrina de Beata Virgine Co-redemptrice*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, p. 161-183; idem, *The Holy See and the Title of Co-redemptrix*, in *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, vol. 37, 1937, pp. 747 et sqq.

<sup>254</sup> In addition to the passages from the writings of the Popes quoted here and in Part III, cf. various documents issued by the Holy See in which the term "Co-redemptrix" is used—e.g., *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 41, 1908, p. 409; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 5, 1913, p. 364; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 6, 1914, p. 108.



though several declarations of capital importance have been made by the Popes. But it is not accurate to say, as Prof. Goossens does,<sup>255</sup> that these papal statements are intended to foster piety and not to expound a theological doctrine. For while the primary purpose may have been devotional, one cannot deduce that the other purpose must necessarily be excluded. Nor should one easily make the assertion that in exhortations to the faithful the Popes resort to the expression of beliefs not founded on fact.

*Pope Pius X* is frequently quoted in favor of the opinion that the Blessed Virgin co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption. In his Encyclical *Ad diem illum*, issued on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception, the Holy Father states:

By this community of pain and will between Christ and Mary, "she merited to become in a most worthy manner the Reparatrix of the lost world" [Eadmer], and consequently the Dispenser of all the gifts that Jesus acquired for us by His death and blood. . . . Because she far excels all others in sanctity and in union with Christ, and because Christ associated her with Himself in the work of man's Redemption, she merits (*promeret*) for us *de congruo*, as they say, that which Christ merited for us *de condigno*.<sup>256</sup>

In his Apostolic Letter *Inter sodalicia*, issued on March 22, 1918, *Pope Benedict XV* writes as follows: "She so suffered and almost died together with her suffering and dying Son, she so renounced her maternal rights in her Son for the salvation of men, and, as far as lay in her power, immolated her Son for the sake of placating the justice of God, that one can

<sup>255</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>256</sup> *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 36, 1903-1904, pp. 453-454.



truly say that together with Christ she redeemed the human race."<sup>257</sup>

*Pope Pius XI* repeatedly affirms that the Blessed Virgin was the Co-redemptrix. For example, in bringing to a solemn conclusion the Jubilee Year which commemorated the Redemption of mankind, the Holy Father uttered this prayer in a radio message:

O Mother of piety and mercy who, when your most beloved Son was accomplishing the Redemption of the human race on the altar of the cross, did stand there both compassionating Him and as Co-redemptrix, preserve in us, we beseech you, and increase day by day the precious fruit of His Redemption and of your compassion.<sup>258</sup>

The words of Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical on reparation to the Sacred Heart are equally clear.

May the most gracious Mother of God be propitious to these our wishes and these our undertakings; she who by giving us Christ the Redeemer, and by rearing Him, and by offering Him at the foot of the cross as Victim for our sins, by such intimate association with Christ, and by her own most singular grace, became and is piously known as the Mother of Reparation.<sup>259</sup>

The teaching of *the present Holy Father* coincides with that of his predecessors. In his Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (the epilogue of which, according to one theologian,<sup>260</sup> constitutes a complete treatise of Mariology in miniature, as it were), he states: "... always most intimately united with her Son, as the new Eve, she [i. e., Mary] offered Him on Gol-

<sup>257</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 10, 1918, pp. 181-182.

<sup>258</sup> *L'Osservatore Romano*, 29-30 Aprile, 1935.

<sup>259</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 20, 1928, p. 178.

<sup>260</sup> J. Carol, *Mary's Co-redemption in the Teaching of Pope Pius XII*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 121, 1949, p. 355.



gotha, together with the holocaust of her maternal rights and love, to the Eternal Father for all the children of Adam stained by his disastrous fall.”<sup>261</sup>

In a subsequent passage, Pope Pius XII refers to Mary’s role in the application of the merits of the Redemption; but, as Father Tromp clearly points out,<sup>262</sup> he does not confuse the two roles.

In his radio broadcast to the pilgrims gathered at Fatima on May 13, 1946, the Holy Father thus expressed himself:

He, the Son of God, reflects on His heavenly Mother the glory, the majesty and the dominion of His kingship; for, having been associated with the King of martyrs in the ineffable work of human Redemption as Mother and co-operatrix, she remains forever associated with Him, with an almost unlimited power in the distribution of the graces which flow from the Redemption. Jesus is King throughout all eternity by nature and by right of conquest; through Him, with Him, and subordinate to Him, Mary is Queen by grace, by divine relationship, by right of conquest, and by singular election. And her kingdom is as vast as that of her Son and God, since nothing is excluded from her dominion.<sup>263</sup>

Nor are there lacking equally lucid statements, though obviously of less cogency, on Mary’s role as Co-redemptrix, made by the present Holy Father before his accession to the throne of Peter. Attention may be called, for example, to his

<sup>261</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 35, 1943, p. 247.

<sup>262</sup> S. Tromp, *Annotationes*, in *Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica*, vol. 32, 1943, p. 401.

<sup>263</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 38, 1946, p. 266. Commenting on this passage, Father Carol points out (*art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 121, 1949, p. 358) the two truths openly stated by the Pope: (1) the Blessed Virgin is the co-operatrix of Christ in the work of the Redemption; (2) the Blessed Virgin is Queen of the universe *by right of conquest*.



address to the Sodality of Our Lady, given on December 7, 1937.<sup>264</sup>

By way of brief comment on the teaching of the recent Popes concerning Mary's participation in the Redemption of mankind, it may be suggested that the words themselves of Pope Benedict XV, Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII are so clear as to leave no doubt in regard to their meaning. Such is the opinion of the majority of present-day theologians. Father Boyer does not hesitate to state that in the case of Pope Benedict XV, his words "seem to defy any interpretation other than that of an immediate co-operation on the part of Mary in the objective Redemption itself."<sup>265</sup>

A few theologians, on the other hand, including Father Lennerz, Prof. Goossens and Canon Smith, deny that the recent Popes teach that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective restoration of the human race. Thus, for example, Prof. Goossens<sup>266</sup> believes that the words of Pope Benedict XV, although undoubtedly referring to Mary's part in the objective Redemption, indicate a remote, rather than a proximate co-operation. And Father Lennerz<sup>267</sup> insinuates that Pope Benedict XV did not speak of a real appeasement of divine justice on the part of Mary.

In regard to the teaching of Pope Pius X there is some controversy.<sup>268</sup> Even some theologians who strongly favor

<sup>264</sup> Cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 8 dicembre, 1937.

<sup>265</sup> Boyer, *art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 122, 1950, p. 408.

<sup>266</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>267</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>268</sup> Much has been written on the interpretation which is to be placed on the passage quoted above. The controversy seems to center about the tense of the verb "promeretur." Cf., e.g., Lebon, *art. cit.*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 16, 1939, pp. 675 et sqq.; Boyer, *art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 122, 1950, pp. 407 et seq.; Carol, *art. cit.*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, pp. 168 et sqq.; J. Bittremieux, *Adnotationes circa doctrinam B. Mariae Virginis Co-redemptricis in documentis Romanorum Pontificum*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 16, 1939, pp. 745 et sqq.; Dillenschneider, *op. cit.*, pp. 60 et sqq.; Druwé, *op. cit.*, pp. 438 et sqq.



the doctrine of the Co-redemption, admit that the words of this Pope are not indisputably clear. Of course, some authors state unhesitatingly that Mary's role as Co-redemptrix is taught by this Pontiff. Thus, for example, Father Boyer, Prof. Bittremieux, Father Roschini, Father Dillenschneider, Father Druwé, and to some extent, Father Di Fonzo who holds that the doctrine of a formally co-redemptive merit on the part of Mary is taught by Pope Pius X—but only implicitly.<sup>269</sup> On the other hand, the negative view is favored by a few writers. It is the opinion of Father Carol that it is very probable, but not absolutely certain, that Pope Pius X taught that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective restoration of mankind.<sup>270</sup>

The twentieth century has witnessed an abundance of books and articles on the subject of the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin in the Redemption of mankind. There can be no doubt that the great majority of the authors subscribes to the teaching that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective restoration of the human race. Father Roschini<sup>271</sup> states that this teaching is the *doctrina communis*, and perhaps can be called morally unanimous among present-day theologians. Father Carol<sup>272</sup> terms this teaching *communissima*.

In classifying to some extent the various modern writers on this point, we may follow in a general way Father Dillenschneider<sup>273</sup> who himself is one of the most articulate defenders of Mary's role as Co-redemptrix. First of all, in regard to the proponents of this teaching, Father Dillenschneider points out that this doctrine is used as a theological premise by

<sup>269</sup> Cf. L. Di Fonzo, *B. Virgo "de congruo, ut aiunt, promeret nobis quae Christus de condigno promeruit,"* in *Marianum*, vol. 1, 1939, pp. 418 et sqq.

<sup>270</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, p. 175.

<sup>271</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 348, 350.

<sup>272</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, p. 41.

<sup>273</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 84 et sqq.



many modern theologians to establish that it is through Mary that all grace is dispensed to men by God. Such is the procedure of *Father Le Rohellec*,<sup>274</sup> *Father de la Broise* and *Father Bainvel*,<sup>275</sup> for example. Other theologians, such as *Prof. Bittremieux*,<sup>276</sup> *Father Friethoff*,<sup>277</sup> and *Father Bover*,<sup>278</sup> treat *ex professo* of the universal salvific association of Christ and Mary. In a scholarly thesis which appeared in 1940 *Father García Garcés* discusses the spiritual maternity of Mary in relation to the formal Co-redemption, and from his study makes the finding: "From the spiritual maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary it is probably licit to conclude to the formal Co-redemption."<sup>279</sup> *Father Borzi*<sup>280</sup> and *Father Seiler*,<sup>281</sup> among others, have written as to the manner in which the categories elaborated by the Scholastics for the Redemption of Christ may be applied to Mary. How merit on the part of Mary entered into the Co-redemption is the subject of study by many theologians—*Professor Bittremieux*,<sup>282</sup> *Father Friethoff*,<sup>283</sup> *Father Philipon*,<sup>284</sup> and *Father Deneffe*,<sup>285</sup> for example. Most of them maintain that she merited *de congruo*, although there are some (*Professor Lebon* of Louvain,<sup>286</sup> for instance)

<sup>274</sup> Cf. J. Le Rohellec, *Marie dispensatrice des grâces divines*, Paris, 1925.

<sup>275</sup> Cf. R. de la Broise-J. Bainvel, *Marie, Mère de grâce*, Paris, 1921.

<sup>276</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 94-134.

<sup>277</sup> Cf. C. Friethoff, *De Alma Socia Christi Mediatoris*, Romae, 1936.

<sup>278</sup> Cf. J. Bover, *Maria hominum Corredemptrix*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 6, 1925, pp. 537 et sqq.

<sup>279</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 252.

<sup>280</sup> Cf. H. Borzi, *Maria hominum Co-redemptrix*, Brugis, 1931.

<sup>281</sup> Cf. H. Seiler, *Co-redemptrix; theologische Studie zur Lehre der letzten Päpste über die Miterlöserschaft Mariens*, Rom, 1939.

<sup>282</sup> Cf. J. Bittremieux, *De congruo promeruit nobis B. Virgo quae Christus de condigno promeruit*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 8, 1931, pp. 422 et sqq.

<sup>283</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 53 et sqq.

<sup>284</sup> Cf. M. Philipon, *Le mérite de congruo de notre Mère dans le Christ*, in *Bulletin de la Soc. Franç. d'Études Mariales*, vol. 2, 1936, pp. 205 et sqq.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. A. Deneffe, *De Mariae in opere Redemptionis cooperatione*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 8, 1927, pp. 3 et sqq.

<sup>286</sup> Cf. *art. cit.*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 16, 1939, pp. 674 et sqq.



who go so far as to ascribe to her a condign merit, subordinate and inferior, of course, to the merit of Christ. Father Carol believes that this view is based on solid grounds and seems to be gaining more favor at the present time.<sup>287</sup> *Father Carol* himself has concentrated on the historical development of the doctrine of the Co-redemption, although he by no means limits himself to this aspect.<sup>288</sup> Many writers, among whom may be enumerated *Father Hugon*,<sup>289</sup> *Father Anger*,<sup>290</sup> *Father Mura*,<sup>291</sup> *Father Rondet*,<sup>292</sup> and *Father García Garcés*<sup>293</sup> concern themselves with Mary's place in the Mystical Body of Christ. Mary's role as Co-redemptrix is discussed by many authors in their general theological works on Mariology—thus, for example, *Cardinal Lépicier*,<sup>294</sup> *Father Terrien*,<sup>295</sup> *Father Keuppens*,<sup>296</sup> *Father Merkelbach*,<sup>297</sup> *Father Boyer*<sup>298</sup> and *Father Roschini*.<sup>299</sup> *Father Garrigou-Lagrange* defends the doctrine of the Co-redemption in his *La Mère du Sauveur et Notre Vie*

<sup>287</sup> *Art. cit.*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, p. 41, footnote.

<sup>288</sup> Cf. e.g., J. Carol, *The Nature of Mary's Ontological Mediation*, in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 39, 1939, pp. 5-26; *The Theological Concept of Mediation and Co-redemption*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 14, 1937, pp. 642 et sqq.; *De fundamento proximo Co-redemptionis marianae*, in *Marianum*, vol. 1, 1939, pp. 173-187.

<sup>289</sup> Cf. E. Hugon, *La Mère de grâce*, Paris, 1904.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. J. Anger, *La doctrine du Corps Mystique de Jésus Christ*, Paris, 1929, pp. 326 et sqq.

<sup>291</sup> Cf. E. Mura, *Le Corps Mystique du Christ*, Paris, 1937, vol. 2, pp. 131 et sqq.

<sup>292</sup> Cf. H. Rondet, *De la place de la Très Sainte Vierge dans l'Église*, *Corps Mystique du Christ*, in *Bulletin de la Soc. Franç. d'Études Mariales*, vol. 3, 1937, pp. 197 et sqq.

<sup>293</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 281 et seq.

<sup>294</sup> Cf. A. Lépicier, *Tractatus de Beatissima Virgine Maria*, Parisiis, 1901.

<sup>295</sup> Cf. J. Terrien, *La Mère de Dieu et la Mère des hommes*, ed. 6-7, Paris, n.d.

<sup>296</sup> Cf. J. Keuppens, *Mariologiae Compendium, Deipara, Mediatrix, Florilegium Mariale*, Louvain, 1947.

<sup>297</sup> Cf. B. Merkelbach, *Mariologia*, Paris, 1939.

<sup>298</sup> Cf. C. Boyer, *Synopsis Praelectionum de B. M. Virgine*, Romae, 1946.

<sup>299</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*



*Intérieure*,<sup>300</sup> and also in his *De Christo Salvatore*.<sup>301</sup> Finally, perhaps the latest extended work to appear on this subject is the brilliant essay of Father Druwé entitled *La Médiation Universelle de Marie*.<sup>302</sup>

Among the theologians of the twentieth century who are outspoken in their opposition to the teaching that the Blessed Virgin co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption of the human race, the following are usually enumerated: Cardinal Billot, Father De la Taille, Professor Rivière, Canon Smith, Father Lennerz, and Professor Goossens. It should be noted, however, that of this group, Cardinal Billot and Father De la Taille treat the question only in a rather incidental way.

In 1921 in a Preface contributed to the work of Father De la Broise and Father Bainvel entitled *Marie mère de Grâce*, Cardinal Billot expresses the opinion<sup>303</sup> that since Mary herself was under the necessity of being redeemed, she could not have co-operated in the restoration of mankind. However, in virtue of a letter subsequently written by Cardinal Billot, it now seems clear that he cannot, on the basis of the above-mentioned Preface, be cited as an opponent of the teaching that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption. Here are Cardinal Billot's own words: "In the Preface to the book *Marie mère de grâce* there is nothing in regard to merit *de congruo*, either for or against."<sup>304</sup> It is true, of course, that he cannot be termed an advocate of the thesis of Mary's Co-redemption; but it is equally true that he cannot be styled an adversary—at least in so far as the words of the Preface are concerned.

<sup>300</sup> Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *La Mère du Sauveur et notre vie intérieure*, Lyon, 1941.

<sup>301</sup> Cf. idem, *De Christo Salvatore*, Torino-Paris, 1945, pp. 503 et sqq.

<sup>302</sup> *Op. cit.*, in *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge* (éd. H. du Manoir), vol. 1, Paris, 1949.

<sup>303</sup> Cf. De la Broise-Bainvel, *op. cit.*, pp. vi, viii.

<sup>304</sup> Cf. *L'Ami du Clergé*, a. 56, ser. 6, 1939, p. 376.



It is difficult, however, to determine the precise teaching of Cardinal Billot on this point. In his well-known work *De Verbo Incarnato* he distinguishes between the *esse simpliciter Redemptionis* and the *melius esse Redemptionis*. In so doing, he seems to minimize Mary's role in the Redemption. Father Carol <sup>305</sup> is of the opinion that the *melius esse Redemptionis* of Cardinal Billot is nothing more than the *Redemptio subjectiva* of Father Lennerz. And Professor Michel <sup>306</sup> in his very recent criticism of Father Druwé's work, quotes Cardinal Billot approvingly, apparently in the belief that Cardinal Billot's distinction is a strong argument against the teaching that Mary is the Co-redemptrix in the full meaning of that term. The words of Cardinal Billot are these:

The *Redemptio simpliciter* is the payment of condign satisfaction for the sins of men and of a condign price for the gifts of grace to be granted to mankind—which payment Christ alone, to the exclusion of anyone else whomsoever, made in offering Himself. The *melius esse Redemptionis* is a certain accidental perfection by which men are more aptly recalled to the end of eternal life: while, namely, between them and Christ the King of glory, there is a Mother or Mediatrix, in whom there is nothing austere or terrifying, but who is filled with kindness and mercy. And as a result, her intervention in dispensing the merits of the cross confers on our reparation the greatest sweetness. I say that this perfection of the Redemption was the fruit of the sorrows of the Virgin co-suffering with her son.<sup>307</sup>

Father De la Taille has nowhere written at length on this subject; but he is opposed to the doctrine of Mary's immediate role in the restoration of the human race, because he believes that otherwise the fact of the unity and the indivisibility of

<sup>305</sup> Art. cit., in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, p. 49.

<sup>306</sup> A. Michel, *Mary's Co-redemption*, in *Amer. Ecc. Rev.*, vol. 122, 1950, p. 191.

<sup>307</sup> L. Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato*, Romae, 1927, p. 402.



the Redemption cannot be safeguarded. "Mary did not merit her own Redemption, either *de condigno* or *de congruo*. . . . there was only one Redemption, accomplished all at once for the whole human race. . . ." 308

It is the same objection among others, which is raised by *Professor Rivière*. In an article written in 1939 in which he praises highly the work of Professor Goossens which had been published a short time before, Professor Rivière gives expression to the difficulty which is commonly raised in regard to the doctrine of Mary as Co-redemptrix: If she herself had to be redeemed, as must all members of the human race, how could she have merited the Redemption? 309

Our Blessed Lady is herself redeemed. Her preservation from original sin, her fullness of grace, and consequently all her merits, were bought with the same price—the Precious Blood—with which Christ purchased our reconciliation with God and opened up the sources of graces for humanity. How, therefore, can Mary's merit, however subordinate, have contributed in any way to that price itself? Can her merit be at once the effect and the cause, however partial, of the same? . . . Some theologians have replied by distinguishing between the Redemption of our Lady herself and the Redemption of the rest of the human race. In her own Redemption, they say, Mary did not co-operate redemptively, but in ours she did. Not that there are two Redemptions, one in which Mary is redeemed by Christ without her co-operation, and another in which the rest of humanity is redeemed with her subordinate assistance. No, there is but one Redemption; but that one Redemption so far as Mary's sanctification is concerned, is independent of her co-operation considered formally as

308 M. de la Taille, *La Médiatrice de toutes les grâces d'après une publication récente*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 4, 1923, pp. 393-394.

309 *Art. cit.*, in *Rev. de Sc. Relig.*, vol. 19, 1939, pp. 332 et sqq. and vol. 20, 1940, pp. 123 et sqq.; cf. also idem, *Sur la notion de Marie Médiatrice*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 2, 1925, pp. 223 et sqq.; *art. cit.*, in *Rev. de Sc. Relig.*, vol. 12, 1932, pp. 89 et sqq.



meritorious. God could not accept her co-operation as redemptive in respect of herself; but He could, and did, accept it as redemptive in respect of us.

At first sight the reply seems satisfactory, until one reflects that, so long as we are considering the Redemption objectively, that is, as meaning the payment of the price in consideration of which grace was made available for mankind—our blessed Lady included—there is no room for any but a purely logical distinction between the Redemption of our Lady and the Redemption of the rest of humanity. One and the same price was paid for us all. When we distinguish between Mary's Redemption and ours, we are really distinguishing between the application of the fruits of Christ's redemptive sacrifice to our Lady and their application to us; and we are thus at a stage of redemptive activity where the price of Redemption is considered as having already been paid."<sup>310</sup>

There are few modern theologians who are so unalterably opposed to the thesis that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption, as is *Father Lennerz* of the Gregorian University.<sup>311</sup> Mary, he maintains, could co-operate in the objective Redemption, only if she herself were first redeemed by Christ. And if she had been redeemed, the fruits of the Redemption necessarily must have been applied to her. Now, this application must presuppose that the objective Redemption was already definitively accomplished. Moreover, the quotations usually adduced from the Fathers and early writers, and even from recent Popes, in an effort to substantiate this doctrine—such quotations are of little or no cogency,

<sup>310</sup> G. Smith, *Mary's Part in Our Redemption*, New York, 1938, pp. 93-94.

<sup>311</sup> Cf., e.g., H. Lennerz, *De Beata Virgine*, Romae, 1935; *Considerationes de doctrina B. Virginis Mediatricis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 19, 1938, pp. 420 et sqq.; *De Redemptione et cooperatione in opere Redemptionis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 22, 1941, pp. 306 et sqq.; *De cooperatione B. Virginis in ipso opere Redemptionis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 28, 1947, pp. 574 et sqq. and vol. 29, 1948, pp. 118 et sqq.



for they do not establish that Mary co-operated *immediately* in the *objective* Redemption.

In the present controversy Father Lennerz is important for another reason also. In the early 1930's he suggested that the issue of Mary's share in the work of the Redemption might be clarified by a different terminology. Abandoning the terms "acquisition of graces" and "application of graces" as being inadequate, he expressed the belief that the words "objective Redemption" and "subjective Redemption" might better be employed. (These terms have been explained in the beginning of this essay.) The importance of the change in terminology is this: Father Lennerz insists that what theologians used to designate as co-operation in the "acquisition of graces" does not necessarily imply a co-operation in the objective Redemption; for such an acquisition of graces may also be had in the order of subjective Redemption.

In 1939 *Werner Goossens*, professor at the Seminary of Ghent, published a work entitled *De Cooperatione Immediata Matris Redemptoris ad Redemptionem Objectivam*.<sup>312</sup> Since that time Mariologists writing on the question of the Co-redemption have constantly quoted the book, whether favoring its views or opposing them. It is the aim of the author to establish that the thesis which maintains that Mary co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption must be rejected—although he admits her part in the subjective Redemption and in the remote objective Redemption. Against the doctrine of the Co-redemption strictly understood, he raises the objections that there is but one Mediator and Redeemer, that Mary was herself redeemed through Christ, that "*principium meriti non cadit sub merito*." In the final section of the book the author subjects to a critical review the main arguments offered by

<sup>312</sup> W. Goossens, *De Cooperatione immediata Matris Redemptoris ad Redemptionem objectivam*, Paris, 1939.



advocates of the doctrine of the Co-redemption—the statements of recent Popes, certain Scriptural texts, quotations from the Fathers and theologians, and proofs based on theological reasoning. The conclusion of the entire work is that the Blessed Virgin did not play any immediate role in the objective restoration of the human race.

Thus, at the present time the exact role played by our Blessed Mother in the Redemption of the human race is a question much discussed among theologians. From scholarly research and charitable controversy one may look forward to an ever increasing clarification of this point.

By way of summary the following may be said. That our Blessed Mother co-operated immediately in the objective Redemption of the human race can never be proved, it seems to the writer, solely by accumulating passages from ecclesiastical authors, in which Mary is called Co-redemptrix or Reparatrix or Auxiliatrix, etc. For it always remains to be established that these terms were used in the precise sense in which they are understood today. What then is the justification for an historical study of this doctrine? The justification, we suggest, lies in the fact that such an investigation seems to indicate belief in this doctrine on the part of some of the early ecclesiastical writers. It reveals a subsequent theological development extending over many centuries, and resulting in a gradual evolution and clarification of ideas on this point, and finally in an explicit belief in Mary's Co-redemption strictly understood — a belief which is *the common teaching* among theologians today. In the words of a recent author: "The evolution of the doctrine of the Co-redemption, if it be compared with the evolution of other Marian doctrines, exhibits such a character and is marked by such properties, that this much at least can be asserted without any temerity: if perchance it has not yet attained complete clarity and certainty, nevertheless in the



future it will do so.”<sup>313</sup> Living as we are in an era that has been aptly termed the Age of Mary, we may be permitted to add that such is our fervent hope and sincere prayer.

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<sup>313</sup> P. Straeter, *Sententia de immediata cooperatione B. Mariae V. ad Redemptionem cum aliis doctrinis marianis comparatur*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 25, 1944, p. 37.