

1951

Evaluation of the Arguments in Favor of Mary's Coredemption

Eugene B. Gallagher

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gallagher, Eugene B. (1951) "Evaluation of the Arguments in Favor of Mary's Coredemption," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 2, Article 9.

Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol2/iss1/9

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marian Library Publications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marian Studies by an authorized editor of eCommons. For more information, please contact mschlangen1@udayton.edu, ecommons@udayton.edu.

EVALUATION OF THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF MARY'S CO-REDEMPTION

In this study, when we speak of Mary's Co-redemption, we mean the doctrine which teaches that Our Blessed Lady, by her moral acts, formally co-operated immediately, proximately, and directly in the work of the objective Redemption. Together with Christ, but dependently on Him and only *de congruo*, according to this doctrine, she paid the ransom-price by which satisfaction was made to God for all men, and the possibility of salvation was restored to all men, consequently to the fall of the race in Adam. Our reacquired possibility of salvation is thus declared to be due both to the condign "*meritum semel acquisitum*" of Christ, and to an accompanying congruous "*meritum semel acquisitum*" of Mary in the very work of objective Redemption. This "*semel acquisitum*" merit of Mary did not, of course, add intrinsically to the internal value of the price Christ paid for our salvation, nor was it absolutely necessary, except consequently to a decree by which God wanted it added to the work of Christ in order to redeem us by the joint work of a man and a woman, as we had been lost to the slavery of the devil by the combined operation of the first man and the first woman. This human nature, by the design of God, was to participate in its own redemption not solely through the actions of the human nature of Christ, which as united to the Word, completed the payment of the price in its essentials; it was to participate in its own Redemption also through the human nature and personality of Mary, whose co-operation was to perfect the work in its integral perfection, by adding to its beauty, and enriching it with humanity.

Mary's immediate co-operation, in this sense, consisted

principally in her enduring consent to the Incarnation precisely as involving the Redemption; in her compassion with Christ on the Cross, and her offering of Christ to God in expiation for the sins of the race. Together with Christ, she offered the blood and life of Christ, and, secondly, her own sorrows and compassion joined to the oblation He made of Himself, to make up the redemptive price. She thus merited *de congruo*, all that Christ merited *de condigno*.

The arguments in favor of Mary's Co-redemption, understood in this sense, are generally based

1. On Sacred Scripture, principally Genesis 3:15 and St. Luke 1, 26-39.

2. The parallel, seen by the Fathers and the early writers of the Church in the Association between Eve and Adam, on the one hand, and Mary and Christ on the other.

3. The alleged evolution of this association of Christ and Mary, by theological reasoning, to the point where it is seen to involve immediate formal co-operation by Mary in the redemptive work of Christ. (This evolution is said to have "taken its flight" above all from the considerations of Albertus Magnus on this theme,¹ and to have continued to this day.)

4. This doctrine finds support in the alleged widespread endorsement of it by Catholic Bishops throughout the world, and

5. Certain statements by recent Popes, beginning with Leo XIII, which seem to espouse the doctrine.

The Arguments from Sacred Scripture

Pointing to Genesis 3:15, the defenders of Mary's Co-redemption maintain that "the woman" alluded to in the text ("I will put enmities between thee and the woman . . .") sig-

¹ C. Dillenschneider, C.S.S.R., *Pour une Corédemption mariale bien comprise*, in *Marianum*, vol. 11, 1949, p. 159.

nifies Our Lady in a literal or at least in a typical sense.² This contention they support by showing that the woman must be the mother of Him who will crush the serpent's head, therefore, mother of Christ; that she will be immaculately conceived, since she will exercise the same unlimited enmities toward Satan as her Son. Moreover, they appeal to the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* wherein Pope Pius IX said that the Fathers and writers of the Church taught that the woman *designatam* in this text is Mary.

Mary, the "woman" in the text, will exercise the same enmities toward Satan that Christ did. But Christ's enmity toward Satan involved crushing the serpent's head, in the work of objective Redemption. Therefore Mary also crushed the serpent's head, since she exercised the same enmity. (This conclusion would seem to be reinforced by the wording of the Vulgate which reads: "*She* will crush thy head." Now the Church assures us that the Vulgate contains no doctrinal error).

The next passage of Sacred Scripture appealed to by the defenders of Mary's direct co-operation in objective Redemption is St. Luke, 1, 26-39, dealing with Mary's consent to the Incarnation: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to Thy Word."

The Co-redemptionists maintain that Mary's consent to the Incarnation was necessary, because God respected her free will, especially since the conception of Christ was to be no ordinary one, but one that would, in time, involve great suffering and sorrow. (By the abundance of grace He gave her,

² " . . . sensus spiritualis Sacrae Scripturae dummodo solide probetur, eundem valorem habet ac sensus litteralis in aliqua doctrina stabilienda." J. B. Carol, O.F.M., *Utrum B. Virginis Co-Redemptio sit in S. Scriptura formaliter revelata*, in *Marianum*, vol. 1, (1939) p. 326. Father Carol himself holds the literal sense. Cf. also G. M. Roschini, O.S.M., *Mariologia*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, Romae, 1947, p. 283-299.

however, God assured Himself of this consent, but her consent still remained free).

Moreover, this consent of Mary's involved much more than a mere consent to the Incarnation as such. Given her special supernatural illumination, her knowledge of the Prophecies, and the angel Gabriel's revelation of the nature of the child to be born of her, she was aware that she was giving consent to the Incarnation precisely as leading to the objective Redemption. She was consenting to be not only the Mother of God, but of the Redeemer, with all the suffering and sorrow that this motherhood would entail.

This consent constituted a proximate, direct, formal, enduring act of co-operation to the Redemptive work of her Son, an habitual intention to co-operate, which she never revoked, and which from then on, she expressed virtually, by actions that reached their climax in her vigil at the Cross. Corresponding to the enduring will to sacrifice Himself for man's objective Redemption that Christ maintained from the moment of His Incarnation, was Mary's *fiat*—her will to help in that work of objective Redemption.

She who was sinless, and had no sins to expiate, agreed to undertake, with Christ, the sufferings of the objective Redemption, sufferings which like Christ's, were to be undergone to expiate the sins of all men. Hence her consent had a social and universal significance: it was the consent of the new Eve, co-operating with the new Adam, that men might regain the power to become again the sons of God. But whereas Eve willed our ruin only indirectly and implicitly, Mary directly and explicitly willed our salvation by her *fiat*.

And as all the human acts of Christ contributed to our Redemption, but reached their perfective climax only in His death on the cross, so all Mary's acts, from the Incarnation on, contributed to our salvation, and reached their perfective climax in her standing by the Cross.

In this way, by her *fiat*, Mary became our Mother in a real (supernatural) sense because she agreed to co-operate in regenerating us. When Christ said to John, "Son, behold thy Mother," He was using John as a symbol of all men, and referring to Mary as universal mother in a real sense.

The Parallels Between Mary and Eve

The conclusion from Sacred Scripture that Mary co-operated formally and directly in the work of the objective Redemption finds strong support in the parallels seen by the Fathers and early writers of the Church between Eve and Adam, on the one hand, and Mary and Christ on the other.

The earliest examples of the statement of this parallel between Eve and Mary, and of Mary's association with Christ in the work of Redemption, are found in the writings of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian,³ and after them in the writings of innumerable others.

From them we have the principle of retroversion, recirculation, or "rival operation" by which God is seen to use the same means in our Redemption as were used in our fall.

In developing this parallel, these Fathers and writers were guided by the explicit revelation of the parallel between Adam and Christ: From St. Paul, no doubt, they learned that Adam "is a figure of him who was to come," and that "as by the obedience of the one the many were constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many will be constituted just." (*Romans* 5, 14, 19.)

Christ's obedience, completed on the Cross, was not the only contrast of Christ with Adam. Since the obedience of

³ Justin, *Dial. cum Tryphone Iudaeo*, n. 100, P.G. 6, 110. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, lib. III, c. XXII 4, P.G. 7, 958; lib. 5. c. XIX, P.G. 7, 1175; lib. V, c. XXI, n. 3, P.G. 7, 1182. Tertullian, *De Carne Christi*, c. XVII; P.L. II, 782, as quoted by J. B. Carol, O.F.M., *De fundamento proximo Co-Redemptionis Marianae*, in *Marianum*, vol. 1, 1939, 173-187.

Christ was only the climax of a whole life devoted to our Redemption, the contrast extended to the other things in the life of Christ, particularly to Mary's consortium in His obedience, as Eve had been associated with Adam in disobedience. There were other parallels: Gabriel, the angel of the Annunciation, who elicited Mary's consent to the Redemptive Incarnation, corresponded to Satan, the evil angel who solicited Eve's consent to sin. Corresponding to the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—the occasion of our ruin in the sin of our first parents—was the tree of the Cross on which we were redeemed. Corresponding to the delight of Adam and Eve in sin, that led to our ruin, was the suffering of Christ and Mary that led to our regeneration. Corresponding to Eve's motherhood of all the living in natural life, and in sin, was Mary's motherhood of all the living in the supernatural life of grace.

Thus the early Fathers and writers saw a contrast not only between Christ and Adam, but between Adam and Eve on the one hand, and Christ and Mary on the other; and in their respective roles as partners in contrasting contexts.

Familiar, no doubt, with God's homeopathic procedure in the case of the bronze serpent raised on a cross to free the Jews from the plague of serpents, they saw in God's association of Christ and Mary in the Redemptive Incarnation a homeopathic effecting of our salvation: as we were ruined by the first Adam and Eve, we would be saved by the new Adam and the new Eve.

Along the lines of this parallel detected by the early Fathers and writers, the defenders of Mary's co-operation in the work of objective Redemption point out that there is a close correspondence between the co-operation of Eve with Adam, and the co-operation of Mary with Christ. Eve tempted by the devil, became in turn the cause of Adam's fall. Her causality was direct, proximate, and immediate. It is true that only Adam's sin was the cause of Original Sin: if Adam had

not sinned other men would not inherit Original Sin. His sin was the determining moral factor in the fate of the race. But who will deny that Eve had a tremendous influence in moving him to become the moral factor? Moreover, Eve's sin entered into the existence of original sin in another way. Being in sin herself, she became a fitting instrument for the propagation of original sin, co-operating with Adam in the generation of the race, and thus in the handing down of the hereditary deprivation of grace.

Likewise, Mary's *fiat* to the proposal of the angel Gabriel, had a direct bearing on the undoing of Adam's sin through the redemptive work of Christ. Destined to become the new mother of all the living, she directly and immediately, as a representative of the race, acceded to the mystical marriage of God and mankind in the Incarnation, a marriage that was intended specifically for our Redemption. The obedience of Christ on the Cross was to become the determining moral factor of our Redemption, as Adam's disobedience was the determining moral factor of our ruin. And, according to the defenders of Marian co-operation, Mary's consent to the redemptive Incarnation—a consent habitually and virtually maintained at the cost of great suffering all her life—contributed to our salvation in Christ, as Eve's influence contributed to our fall in Adam. Thus, as co-operator in, and co-meriter of, our objective Redemption, she became the mediatrix of all grace—co-operator in the subjective spiritual regeneration of men—as Eve, co-operator in, and co-meriter of, our fall, became the co-propagator of original sin.

The Doctrine in the Writings of Theologians

After developing the arguments from Sacred Scripture and from the Fathers and early writers of the Church, the defenders of Mary's immediate co-operation in objective Redemption point to an extensive list of authors, attaining great

clarity at the latest, in Albertus Magnus, who, they maintain, understood Mary's co-operation in this way.

The adversaries of Mary's co-operation in objective Redemption, while admitting that a few of these authors can be interpreted as favorable to the doctrine, maintain that the great majority of them intend merely to say that Mary co-operated only in our subjective Redemption. The adversaries interpret these authors as saying that Mary *acquired* grace subjectively, by which she merited *de congruo* the salvation of men. This acquisition of grace by Mary was like that of any just person, with this difference, that whereas Mary, by a privilege becoming her dignity as Mother of God, merits superabundantly for *all* men, other just persons can merit only for individual men.

At other times, according to the adversaries, the authors cited by the defenders of Marian Co-redemption merely mean to say that Mary merits *de congruo* whatever Christ merited *de condigno* only in this sense, that by her intercession with Christ in Heaven she is the mediatrix of all grace given in subjective Redemption: she applies to souls the merits of Christ, her own merits, and those of all the saints. She is, therefore, a Co-redeemer in the larger sense of Redemption. In objective Redemption, she formally co-operated only in a remote way, viz., by becoming the mother of the Savior. Her immediate and proximate co-operation, they maintain, remains strictly in the order of subjective Redemption.

In a paper such as this, it is obviously impossible to quote and exegete all the testimonies adduced by the defenders of Marian co-operation, and controverted by the adversaries of the doctrine.

But we shall take some of these testimonies, and some of the conflicting interpretations put upon them by the controversialists, as illustrations. The texts we select are by no means the strongest and clearest. We choose them primarily

because, on these particular texts, both sides to the controversy have freely expressed themselves, and thus provided us with a basis for judgment.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS: Father Juniper Carol, O.F.M., sums up the testimony of Albertus Magnus allegedly in favor of Mary's Co-redemption:

For the holy Doctor, "The Blessed Virgin was not taken by the Lord into his service, but into his partnership and help, according to the saying, 'Let us make him a helper like unto himself.' For the chief rank in the Church is the Pope, who is the vicar of Jesus Christ. The Blessed Virgin, however, is not a vicaress but a coadjutrix and companion, a sharer in the kingdom, having been a sharer of the sufferings for the human race. . . ." ⁴ This partnership must be denied to any other creature; for "(the Blessed Virgin) was the only one to whom this privilege was given; namely, a sharing of the passion, to whom her Son—in order to give her a reward—wished to communicate the merit of the Passion, and whom he wished to make a sharer of the pain of the Passion, that He might make her a sharer of the gift of the Redemption; so that as she was *the helper of the Redemption through compassion*, so she might become the mother of all through re-creation; and as the whole world is in debt to God by reason of his supreme passion, so they might be in debt to the mistress of all by reason of her compassion." ⁵ "(The Blessed Virgin) begot the whole human race at the same time, in the Passion of her Son, where she was made a helper like unto himself, where the very mother of mercy helped the Father of Mercies (Christ) in his supreme work of mercy and together with him regenerated all men." ⁶ "(The Blessed Virgin) by her spontaneous consent to his (Christ's) passion, offered him for us

⁴ *Mariale*, quaest. 42; *opera omnia*, ed. Borgnet, vol. 37, p. 81.

⁵ *Mariale*, quaest. 150; *op. omnia*, vol. 37, p. 219.

⁶ *Mariale*, quaest. 148; *op.* vol. 37, p. 214.

all: through which most sufficient and most pleasing sacrifice once offered, she reconciled God to the whole human race.”⁷ This partnership cannot, it seems, be restricted to the Incarnation of the Lord, “for she would not be called a helper like to himself, unless she shared *the same acts in all things*.”⁸

Another passage, a decisive one, referred to by Father Carol and recently emphasized by Doctor Dillenschneider, is the one dealing with Mary’s satisfaction.

“In question 42 of his *Mariale*,” writes Father Dillenschneider, “he asks why women cannot be promoted to Sacred Orders. He replies: ‘If it is said, that this is due to the origin of the sin transmitted by Eve, this does not seem to stand, because for that sin (original) the Blessed Virgin *satisfied*.’”⁹

Yet Goossens remarks: “We think there is scarcely one text of St. Albert which can be said certainly to affirm that the compassion of Mary with Christ directly contributed to the effect of objective redemption.”¹⁰

Without entering into a detailed discussion of the texts, Father Lennerz denies that this testimony is in favor of a direct Marian co-operation. He writes: “We are dealing here with a question that touches upon the very nature of the Redemption. Therefore, that I may be able to judge the mind of an author, I ought to know how he conceives the work of the Redemption. If he so conceives it that he is seen to exclude the co-operation of any creature, it is no longer probable that he teaches the contrary when speaking of the Blessed Virgin. If, therefore, texts of this author are found, which seem to

⁷ *Mariale*, quaest. 51; op. vol. 37, p. 97.

⁸ In *Matthaeum*, I, 18; op. *omnia*, vol. 20, p. 36. This and the four preceding passages are cited by Father Carol, in *Doctrina de B. V. Co-Redemptione ab ortu usque ad prolapsus aetatis scholasticorum* in *Miscellanea Francescana*, vol. 41, 1941, p. 253-254.

⁹ *Op. Omnia*, vol. 37, p. 80. C. Dillenschneider, *Pour une Corédemption Mariale bien comprise*, in *Marianum*, vol. 11, 1949, p. 180.

¹⁰ W. Goossens, *De Cooperatione immediata Matris Redemptoris ad Redemptionem objectivam*, Paris, 1939, p. 128.

affirm this co-operation, we must accurately investigate whether the author really contradicts himself, or perhaps whether the texts, which seem contrary, do not have another sense when understood in the sense of the author."

Thereupon, Father Lennerz quotes the following passage from St. Albert: "Justification is considered in two ways, namely in general, as it refers to the whole nature damned in Adam; and, in particular, namely, as it obtains in the case of this or that one in particular. . . . The justification of nature in reference to its meritorious cause, which is meritorious *de condigno*, pertains to the passion of Christ; because he merited for us liberation from sin, after which follows justification. In reference to a meritorious cause *de congruo*, the justification of a particular individual belongs to the merit of the saints, but not general justification which pertains to the debt of nature coming from Adam, which Christ alone could pay."¹¹

Father Lennerz concludes: "By these words he clearly excludes merit *de congruo* of any saint with reference to general justification, as it pertains to the whole nature damned in Adam. This, however, is precisely the object of objective Redemption. . . .

"Therefore, St. Albert, who, according to Father Dillenschneider, 'in a manner very explicit' favors the doctrine of formal and immediate co-operation in objective Redemption, clearly teaches, in this place, where he properly and directly deals with the nature of Redemption, that no saint can have congruous merit in this work; and he who teaches such an impossibility, without doubt excludes such co-operation."¹²

How do the defenders of direct Marian co-operation answer? Says Father Dillenschneider: "The very clarity of the quotations dealing with Mary's immediate concursus to our

¹¹ In 3 dist. 19 a. 1. *Opera Omnia* vol. 28, p. 337.

¹² H. Lennerz, S.J., *De Cooperatione B. Virginis in ipso opere redemptionis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 28, 1947, p. 584.

objective Redemption shows sufficiently that the general principle, by which St. Albert excludes from our general justification the congruously-meriting co-operation of any saint, does not hold in the case of the Virgin. There is her special privilege. 'She alone was the only one to whom this privilege was given.' Besides, the author of the *Mariale* himself comes to this conclusion in formal terms. If no saint is qualified to merit *de congruo* the justification of men in *actu primo*, it is because that justification 'pertains to the whole nature damned in Adam.' No saint could satisfy *de congruo* for original sin. But from that incapacity Saint Albert excepts the Blessed Virgin and very expressly . . . 'for that sin (Original) the Blessed Virgin satisfied.'¹³ In short, he admits then, a limitation of his general principle. Accordingly, against the exegesis which Father Lennerz gives, where Albert speaks of 'the debt of nature which Christ alone could pay,' one should understand, 'could pay *de condigno*.'"

SALAZAR: As another example of an author whose testimony in favor of direct Marian co-operation is attacked by the adversaries, let us take the seventeenth century theologian Father Ferdinand de Salazar, S.J. (+ 1646). Of him Father Juniper Carol, O.F.M., writes:

"Among the illustrious defenders of Mary's role as Co-redemptrix should be mentioned Father Ferdinand de Salazar, S.J. In his well-known work *Pro Immaculata*, he insists that one of the doctrines which require absolute sinlessness in Mary is precisely this: 'The Virgin Mother of God is the mediatrix of the whole world or (it may be said) the Redemptrix.'¹⁴ In his *Expositio in Prov. Salomonis*, he explains just what he means by Co-redemption. There he tells us that even as

¹³ *Mariale*, Q. 42, vol. 37, p. 80A, here quoted by Dillenschneider in his reply to Lennerz, *Pour une Corédemption mariale bien comprise*, in *Marianum*, vol. 11, 1949, p. 180.

¹⁴ *Pro Immaculata Deiparae Virginis Conceptione defensio*, Compluti, 1618, cap. XXI, p. 132-133.

Christ's life, Passion, and death merited our Redemption *de condigno*, so it was fitting that Mary's oblation on Calvary should also merit for us the selfsame Redemption *de congruo*.¹⁵ He even speaks of "the congruous satisfaction offered by Mary for our sins."¹⁶ And to those who object that Mary being herself redeemed, could not be a Co-redemptrix, Salazar would simply reply: "There is nothing against her receiving the fruits of the Redemption before others and afterwards joining her own merits with those of Christ to obtain the Redemption of the rest of men even from original sin." ¹⁷

Now let us hear Father Lennerz. From the ensemble of Salazar quotations he takes up one which he thinks favorable to a restrictive interpretation, passing over the others in silence.

The text of Salazar he quotes is as follows:

"This especially is taken for granted among Catholics, that the Virgin was not in the least the principal cause of our salvation (for only Christ fulfilled the whole work, wholly paying in full for the debt of sin), but that, only by impetration, she somehow promoted and helped our salvation. To the Virgin, however, some peculiar manner of impetration should be attributed, which is not common to others, since clearly those names by which she is called, are not able to be communicated to anyone."¹⁸

"And," adds Father Lennerz, "in the same place he ex-

¹⁵ *Expositio in Prov. Salomonis*, Coloniae Agrippinae, 1621, C. VII, col. 624; from Dillenschneider, *Le Concours soteriologique de Marie à notre Rédemption chez les théologiens du XVII^e siècle, étrangers à l'école bérullienne*, in *Ephem. Theol. Lovan.*, vol. 16, 1939, p. 785.

¹⁶ *Pro Immaculata* . . . according to C. del Moral, O.F.M., *Fons Illimis Theologiae Scoticae Mariana*, Matriti, 1730, vol. 2, p. 520, n. 54.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.* p. 20. J. Carol, *Our Lady's Part in the Redemption, according to 17th Century Writers*, in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 24 (new series vol. 3), 1943, p. 10.

¹⁸ F. Salazar, *Expos. in Prov. Salomonis*, Parisiis, 1619, ad Prov. 8, 19, n. 206.

plains, why only the Blessed Virgin is called mediatrix, reparatrix, author of salvation: 'First, because it belongs only to the Virgin to offer Christ to us and for us, and not to anyone else. For though others may propose Christ and His merits to the Father, and may even offer them, they may not, however, do so in the same way in which the Virgin offered them, namely, as something that was her own, as I said above. Secondly, because the life, passion and death of Christ were the price of our Redemption in so far as they were voluntarily undertaken by Christ; therefore the will of the Virgin, by which she of her own accord offered her Son, was concerned with the same life and passion. Accordingly, it was becoming that, as the life and passion voluntarily willed by the Son merited the salvation of all *de condigno*, thus the same life and passion as voluntarily willed by the mother, merited the salvation of all *de congruo*, may I say, more clearly, that as the Son, voluntarily dying satisfied for all, thus the Virgin voluntarily offering her Son to the same death, impetrated the salvation of all.' ¹⁹

"Therefore," concludes Father Lennerz, "the reason why the Blessed Virgin alone, not however the other saints, is called mediatrix, etc. is that she alone offered her own Son, and because her will was intimately united to the will of her Son: this, therefore, is that manner of impetration which is exclusively proper to the Blessed Virgin, and which cannot be found in the other saints, and on account of which she alone is called mediatrix, reparatrix, author of salvation. If, however, his mind had been to say that the other saints could co-operate solely in the application of the merits of Christ, but that the Blessed Virgin co-operated in the very work of objective Redemption, why did he not indicate this very fundamental reason? Perhaps one is allowed to suspect that he did not know this difference, or that he did not think of it at all.

¹⁹ *Op. cit.* n. 215.

And, if this is so, it is clear also that neither Novatus nor Salazar, in their doctrine concerning the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin, found any difficulty from this, that the Blessed Virgin herself was redeemed."²⁰

In answer to Father Lennerz, Father Dillenschneider writes: "Lennerz has simply failed to follow through the thought of our author who says expressly, further on, that that very act which he has described above and by which the Virgin offered her own Son for us to the eternal Father was so sublime and efficacious that it merits to be counted alongside the very passion of her Son:

'The act by which the Virgin gave us her Son and offered him to the Father was outstanding and extremely meritorious and so was worthy to be counted with the passion of Christ.'²¹

"Again he says: 'On account of so great, and so signal a work, and of so great value and merit, the Virgin mother of God was worthy to have the salvation and redemption of the whole human race in some way attributed to her.'²² . . . That "fundamental reason" which differentiates Mary from the other saints, Salazar was not only not ignorant of, but he indicates it quite expressly. It is that the mediation of the Virgin, compared to that of the other saints, operates precisely on the plane of objective Redemption; it is worthy to be counted alongside the passion of Christ, *dignus qui cum passione Christi computaretur*."²³

It was my original intention to cite other testimonies brought forward by the proponents of direct Marian co-operation, and to give the arguments pro and con concerning these texts. But it is already obvious that this would lead to too long

²⁰ Lennerz, *De cooperatione B. Virginis in ipso opere redemptionis* (pars 2nda), *Gregorianum*, vol. 29, 1948, p. 120.

²¹ Salazar, *Op. cit.* edit. Coloniae, 1621, col. 627.

²² Salazar, *ibid.*

²³ Dillenschneider, *Pour une Corédemption mariale bien comprise*, in *Marianum*, vol. 11, 1949, p. 184.

a paper. It should be pretty clear by now that in this debate over the testimonies of the theologians, I think the proponents of direct Marian co-operation have the better side. If I had time, I could illustrate this by reviewing e. g., the testimony from Rupert of Deutz (+1129), or that of Jean-Jacques Olier (+1657), or that of Pierre Jeanjacquot, S.J. (who wrote in 1868).²⁴ And I would take up the testimony of these men, not because it is the clearest and most outstanding, but because, as in the case of Albertus Magnus, and that of Salazar, we have the animadversions of both parties to the controversy on the very same texts, whereas on many others we have no comment from the adversaries at all.

Father Lennerz remarks in the second of his articles reviewing Father Dillenschneider's book *Marie au service de notre rédemption*: "It is impossible here to enter into a discussion of the doctrine of all sixteen [17th century] authors whom Father Dillenschneider adduces in favor of the thesis concerning the co-operation of the Blessed Virgin. But after experience only in the case of the first two (Novatus and Salazar), I do not dare to consent to those things which are said about the rest."²⁵

At this point, I regret that I feel obliged to remark that after my experience with Father Lennerz' evaluation of the testimony of Rupert of Deutz, Albertus Magnus, Salazar, and Olier;²⁶ and the way in which he treats the testimony of Jeanjacquot²⁷ (who is certainly in favor of direct Marian co-operation, though in his own peculiar way), I would not dare to consent to those things which he says about many others.

²⁴ Cf. Dillenschneider, *art. cit.*, pp. 166, 185, 197 respectively.

²⁵ Lennerz, *art. cit.*, p. 121.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 127, 120, 199 respectively.

²⁷ *Gregorianum*, 28 (1947), p. 588.

Testimony From the Bishops

Father Juniper Carol, O.F.M., has gathered together many testimonies of Bishops throughout the world in favor of Mary's Co-redemption.

The quotations bear some illustrious names, among them theologians of the first class such as Kerkhofs, Lamiroy, Lépiciér, Zubizarreta, all of whom, however, testify more often in their episcopal pronouncements as shepherds of souls than as theologians.

Particularly remarkable among the testimonies is the collective document of the Bishops of Holland in their pastoral letter of August 15, 1943:

"Holy Church, which is the pillar and the ground of truth, and which by divine mission and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, teaches the truths of revelation, proposes to us with insistence and an ever-increasing clarity . . . that (Mary) was able to co-operate with Jesus Christ, as well in the obtaining of the grace of the Redemption as in its application. In short, God had the design that Mary who was Co-redemptrix for the obtaining of the grace of the Redemption should be equally the associate and aid of Christ in the distribution of grace." ²⁸

Also notable among the testimonies of the Bishops is that of the present Holy Father, writing when Secretary of State under Pius XI, on the occasion of the seventh centenary of the founding of the Order of Servites: "If in the Annunciation, the handmaid of the Lord became the mother of the Son of God, by the cross she was made Co-redemptrix, and our mother."

Father Carol remarks: "That he may, however, show more clearly that the title Co-redemptrix is not only a mere metaphor, but that it corresponds in truth to the reality it design-

²⁸ Cf. J. B. Carol, *Episcoporum doctrina de Beata Virgine Coredemptrice*, in *Marianum*, vol. 10, 1948, p. 248.

nates, or, in other words, that the sufferings of the mother of God have had some redemptive value, and, as such, were accepted by the Eternal Father for our salvation along with the sufferings of Christ, the eminent Prince expressly says that 'our souls were redeemed by the blood and sufferings of the Redeemer and *his Virgin Mother*.' ²⁹

"Cardinal Pacelli leaves no doubt about his personal conception of Marian Co-redemption. He returned to the subject in a discourse, delivered in French, to the members of the Sodality of Our Lady of a Happy Death, December 7, 1937, and expressed himself in terms that permit of no equivocation: 'For the rest, the application of the merits of Jesus Christ and their acquisition pertain to one and the same work, the work of salvation. It is fitting that Mary should co-operate in the same manner to the *two* parts of that one work; this the unity of the divine plan demands.' " ³⁰

Some of the episcopal witnesses regard the doctrine of immediate Marian co-operation as certain and traditional Catholic doctrine. ³¹ Father Carol calls attention to the fact that 30 of the Bishops, in their postulata in favor of the Assumption declare the doctrine *revealed*, while 86 others consider it as at least theologically certain. ³²

Testimony of the Popes

While there is no definite pronouncement on this question by the Supreme Magisterium, certain papal documents, coming from Popes in their capacity as shepherds of souls and teachers of Christianity, deal with this debated question.

²⁹ Carol, *art. cit.* p. 236, quoting Card. Pacelli, *Discorso per il VII centenario della Fondazione dell'Ordine dei Servi di Maria (Discorsi e panegirici 1931-35)*, Milano, 1936, pp. 383 and 370 respectively.

³⁰ *L'Osservatore Romano*, Dec. 8, 1937, p. 3 Carol, *art. cit.*, p. 249.

³¹ Carol, *art. cit.* pp. 250-251.

³² J. Carol, *De Coredemptione B. V. Mariae in quibusdam postulatis ad S. Sedem delatis*, in *Misc. Franc.*, vol. 48, 1948, pp. 85-90.

Testimonies usually cited are taken from Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI. Father Carol, among others, has gathered these together and discussed them.³³

The highly controverted testimony of Pope Pius X, I shall leave to Father Moynihan to discuss, in the special study he will read later, under the title, "Our Lady's Merit *de congruo* according to Pope Pius X."

Co-redemptionists regard the testimony of Benedict XV and of Pius XI as particularly strong.

Writes Benedict XV in his Encyclical letter *Inter sodalicia*:

"The fact, however, that the sorrowful Virgin is chosen and invoked as the patron of the happy death corresponds marvellously with Catholic doctrine and the pious sense of the Church. . . . For the Doctors of the Church commonly teach that the Blessed Virgin who seemed, as it were, absent from the public life of Christ, was present with Him, when, affixed to the Cross, he wished to die, and this not without the Divine plan. Namely, thus she suffered and almost died with her suffering and dying Son, thus she surrendered her maternal rights to save men and to placate the justice of God, and, so far as it belonged to her, she immolated her Son, so that it may deservedly be said of her, that she redeemed the human race with Christ."³⁴

As for Pope Pius XI, there is his radio broadcast of April 28, 1935, with which he solemnly closed the Jubilee of the Redemption. In this discourse, he thus addressed the Blessed Virgin: "O Mother of piety and mercy, who as co-sufferer and co-redemptrix stood alongside your most sweet Son while He consummated the Redemption of the human race on the altar of the cross . . . preserve in us, we beseech thee, and increase

³³ J. B. Carol, O.F.M., *Romanorum Pontificum Doctrina de Beata Virgine Co-redemptrice*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, pp. 161-183.

³⁴ Benedict XV, *Inter sodalicia*, in *Acta Ap. Sedis*, vol. 10, 1918, p. 182. Cf. Carol's explanation of this text in *The Am. Eccl. Rev.*, vol. 123, 1950, p. 48.

day by day the precious fruits of the Redemption and of your compassion.”³⁵

Of these and other numerous citations from the Sovereign Pontiffs, Father Lennerz writes: “It does not suffice to show that a text agrees with this or that doctrine, or that it can be understood in the sense of this or that opinion, but, to have a certain argument, it is required, that the text must be understood in this sense.”³⁶

Personally, after studying the divergent interpretations read into these texts by the Co-redemptionists and their adversaries, I am inclined to agree with the Co-redemptionists. The texts I have quoted are quite explicit, and, considering the theological development of the doctrine of immediate co-operation from the time of Albertus Magnus (the existence of which, I think, has been much better substantiated than its non-existence), the texts *should be understood*, in the sense of an immediate co-operation to objective Redemption.

At this point, it should be clear, to what conclusion I have come in evaluating the arguments in favor of Mary’s Co-redemption. I myself accept the doctrine as “the most common,” though of course, given the opposition it has encountered from distinguished theologians, not all will be ready to describe it with the unqualified note of “common and certain” Catholic teaching.

As for the argument from Genesis 3, 15, it seems to me that Mary’s immediate Co-redemption emerges even more clearly from that text than even the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption: Mary immediately co-operated with Christ because she exercised the same enmities against Satan, and thus, together with Him, crushed the serpent’s head.

³⁵ *L'Osservatore Romano*, April 29-30, 1935. Carol, *Romanorum Pontificum Doctrina de Beata Virgine Co-redemptrice*, in *Marianum*, vol. 9, 1947, p. 178-179.

³⁶ Lennerz, *Gregorianum*, vol. 28, 1947, p. 585.

The parallel of Mary with Eve, and her alleged direct participation through her *Fiat* to the Incarnation as redemptive, seem, at first sight, weaker arguments, since, contrasted with the *positive* seduction of Adam by Eve, there is only Mary's creatural consent, and Father Lennerz says that such consent is not sufficient for proximate moral co-operation.³⁷

But I regard it as *demonstrated* that Mary's consent was a consent to the Incarnation *precisely as Redemptive*, and habitually and virtually sustained throughout her life till Christ's death on the cross. Moreover, despite Father Lennerz' restrictions, I quite agree with Father Jeanjacquot who says that . . . "in their daily speech, men attribute effects not only to persons who produce them, and are their efficient causes, but also to those who incite, counsel, or prevail upon the others to produce the effects, or who consent to their production even when they could take place without their consent."³⁸ If we blame Eve for original sin, even though her seduction was not its determining factor, then why not glorify Mary, even though her consent was only a directly contributory factor, and not the essential determining factor, of objective Redemption?

As for the argument from the theologians, I am not convinced by the critiques of Lennerz and Goossens which attempt to show the non-existence of a positive tradition in favor of immediate Marian co-operation. If I may be permitted to make a general judgment, after surveying the evidence for both sides of the question, their critiques acquire an appearance of plausibility only by explaining away the obvious sense of most of the passages cited in defense of Marian Co-redemption.

³⁷ H. Lennerz, *De Beata Virgine*, 2nd ed., Romae, 1935, nn. 225, 226, and *De Redemptione et cooperatione in opere Redemptionis*, in *Gregorianum*, vol. 22, 1941, pp. 313-315.

³⁸ Pierre Jeanjacquot, S.J., *Simple Explanations Concerning the Co-operation of the Most Holy Virgin in the Work of the Redemption* (trans. from the French) London, 1868.

Finally, as I remarked earlier, the testimonies from the Popes seem rather explicit, and in the context of the theological tradition that preceded these writings of the Sovereign Pontiffs, it seems mandatory to understand them as favoring Mary's immediate co-operation in the objective Redemption.

As for the celebrated theological difficulties Goossens and Lennerz have urged against this doctrine, I am satisfied that suitable answers have been, or can be, provided by those who favor Mary's Co-redemption. However, it is not within the scope of this already too lengthy paper to take up these difficulties.

REV. EUGENE B. GALLAGHER, S.J.,
Georgetown University,
Washington, D. C.