

1-30-1954

The Immaculate Conception and the Preternatural Gifts

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Recommended Citation

Kippes, Albert (1954) "The Immaculate Conception and the Preternatural Gifts," *Marian Studies*: Vol. 5, Article 8, Pages 186-199.
Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/marian_studies/vol5/iss1/8

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THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND THE PRETERNATURAL GIFTS

Our Lady was conceived immaculately, preserved from all stain of original sin in virtue of a preventive redemption. Essentially her Immaculate Conception connotes the absence of all taint of sin. But this is the negative aspect of her wonderful prerogative. Positively, through a singular privilege of God, the Holy Virgin was created in the fullness of grace and from the first moment of her existence she was the object of the complaisant will of God.

One of the interesting problems in Theology is the connection between the Immaculate Conception and the Preternatural Gifts. Since the Immaculate Conception means that Our Lady's soul was never in the state of death and estrangement from God but rather in the state of grace and divine friendship, it is natural to attempt to determine the exact signification of the grace of the Immaculate Conception, its extent and connection with the secondary effects of the Redemption in the Blessed Virgin. The rest of the children of Adam, who are subject to an inexorable law and are born with the stain of original sin, regain the grace and friendship of God through the regenerative effects of the Sacrament of Baptism¹ This grace procures for them certain supernatural effects given to our first parents without giving them possession of all the gifts proper to that original state. The Council of Trent affirms there are certain tragic consequences of sin, which are not sin, but are the consequences of sin and lead to sin.² These are the

¹ St Thomas, III, q 69, a 1; a 2, a 4

² Denz *Ench Sym* ed 18-20, Friburgi Brisgoviae, 1932 792 " . sancta Synodus declarat, Ecclesiam catholicam nunquam intellexisse, peccatum appellari, quod vere et proprie in renatis peccatum sit, sed quia ex peccato est et ad peccatum inclinat "

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"tristes sequelae naturae."³ In contrast to this our first parents had been endowed with the whole supernatural organism and as a complement, to facilitate their adherence to their Maker, had been endowed with the preternatural gifts.⁴ However, original justice and the gifts of integrity, as later events abundantly testified, were conferred on our first parents transitorily. Not that Almighty God wanted this, for, of His goodness, He had conferred these gifts of the supernatural and the preternatural order on human nature as such and they were to be the heritage of the human race, but they were conditioned by the fidelity or infidelity of our first parents. It is noteworthy that based on the will of God, not on the very

³Original sin is a fault and also has certain penalties attached to it. This is true of the unregenerated. But once the saving waters of Baptism are applied to the soul, all guilt is eradicated from the soul; it becomes pleasing to God, for through the Sacrament, it becomes conformed to His only Son. All trace of guilt and penalties are washed away, but we are not restored to the state of original justice nor does God confer on us the gifts of integrity, though He could do so, did He so desire. The point is that the passion and death of Christ were so pleasing and powerful in the sight of God, that all guilt and penalties too were eradicated. Ignorance, rebellion of the lower faculties against the higher, passibility and mortality of human nature in the regenerated are not penalties, since the passion of Christ removed them, but they are the consequences of original sin and penalties in this sense that, if we did not possess a vitiated human nature, vitiated at its source, we would be enjoying besides sanctifying grace its natural concomitant, the gifts of integrity. Only in this sense can their privation be denominated a consequence and penalty of original sin in the *regenerated*. For those who die without the grace of Christ and the great Sacrament instituted by Him to take away the effects of original sin they are really sin and the effects of sin. In the regenerated, then, these penalties, these consequences of sin, which are to be restored according to the good will of God only on the day of judgment to the faithful, are the natural consequences of human nature, what are called by the theologians the "passiones indetrectibiles." In the state of pure nature, men would have been subject to ignorance, concupiscence, passibility and death. These are the natural effects of the unitary human compound, given the human nature which we possess. As such they are not privations, but the natural limitations consequent upon our human nature. Cf. E. Doronzo, O.M.I., *De Baptismo et Confirmatione*, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1947, p. 90.

⁴C. Boyer, S.J., *Tractatus de Deo Creante et Elevante*, ed. 3, Romae, 1940 pp. 238-334.

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nature of the grace except hypothetically, in the state of primitive innocence there was a necessary connection between sanctifying grace and the preternatural gifts.⁵ In other words, as long as our first parents remained faithful to God then sanctifying grace produced its marvelous effects. With the fall both sanctifying grace and the accompanying gifts were lost, the latter not to be restored except as the reward of the Beatific Vision

But Mary, too, came from the hands of God without stain or blemish. The grace which God lavished upon her soul procured certain effects, just as it did for our first parents and as it does for us. However, did Divine Providence desire to restore the Holy Virgin simply to the state of primitive innocence in virtue of her Immaculate Conception? Did it decree that all the effects possible for grace, even those of which the human race had been deprived on account of the sin of Adam, should adorn her privileged soul? Exemption from the stain and pain of sin, does this imply the necessary absence of all its consequences? Does the Immaculate Conception confer on Mary a title, a right to be exempt from even the natural defects of our human nature? Or does she primarily belong to the state of fallen and redeemed nature and so through the merciful designs of Providence was preserved from the stain of original sin, but not restored to the state of original justice, yet obtained certain of its privileges and not others?

There are some Theologians who, basing themselves on the adage that to Mary must be conceded whatever was conferred by God on a purely human creature, hold that Mary's Immaculate Conception placed her at least in the same condition of our first parents, i.e., in the state of primitive innocence.⁶

⁵ Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *De Gratia*, Torino, 1945, pp 20-22

⁶ Alexis Maria Lepicier, O.S.M., *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae Tractatus de Beatissima Virgine Maria Matre Dei*, ed 5a, notabiliter aucta, Romae, 1926, pp 352-361

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However, the majority of theologians have with reason doubted this or simply rejected it.⁷ It must be remembered that, here, there is no question of the possibility, which is incontrovertible, but the question is: did He do so?

Is Mary's grace connected with the economy of the Redemption which is the foundation of the state of restored nature; or does it flow from the divine liberality restoring in her the state of primitive innocence? In order to answer this question, Mary's predestination, conception and redemption must be briefly considered.⁸ If her grace depends immediately on the grace merited by Christ, then she pertains to the state of restored nature although in an eminent manner.

The very text of the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* furnishes us with an important text concerning the problem of the Saviour and His Mother Mary was predestined to the divine maternity

L. Janssens, *Summa Theologica*, vol 5, *De Deo-Homine*, Appendix de morte B M Virginis, p 860 ff

G. Alastruey, *Mariologia sive Tractatus de Beatissima Virgine Maria Matre Dei*, I, Pars II, Cap VI, Art III, p 498 ff

Armandus Plessis, *Manuale Mariologiae Dogmaticae*, Pontchateau, 1942, p 288 ff

The following authors differ from the former in that they do not admit that Mary was placed in the state of original justice in virtue of Her Immaculate Conception, nevertheless, they do maintain that she had a strict right and, in fact, enjoyed the preternatural gifts, especially the gift of immortality

Martin Jugie, A A, *La mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge, Étude historico-doctrinale* Città del Vaticano, 1944, p 526 ff

Gabriel M Roschini, *Compendium Mariologiae*, Romae, 1946, *Mariologia*, vol 3, Milano, 1942, p 288 ff

⁷ The adversaries

G. Mattiussi, S J, *Utrum corporea Virginis Assumptio ad fides catholicae depositum spectet, Disputatio*, Aqupendu, 1922, p 32 ff *L'Assunzione corporea della Vergine Madre di Dio nel dogma cattolico*, 1924, p 251 ff

A. Janssens, *De glorificatione corporali B Mariae Virginis*, in *Eph Theol. Lov*, vol 8, 1931, pp 437-445

Ben Hen Merkelbach, O P, *Mariologia*, Paris, 1939, p 246 ff

E. Campana, *Maria nel Dogma Cattolico*, ed 6a, Torino, 1946, p 341 et passim

⁸ St Thomas, III, q 27, a. 5, ad 1

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by the same eternal decree by which Christ, as man, was predestined to the divine natural Filiation.⁹ It is on this same decree that the fullness of grace, which is proper to the Mother of God, is based as its foundation and its explicative reason.

The reason for Mary's being is the divine maternity, just as the *raison d'être* of the Incarnate Word is the redemption. In the actual divine plan, the Incarnation is ordained to the redemption of mankind and this design of God's loving mercy dominates the terrestrial existence of the Son of God. But the Saviour cannot be conceived without His Mother and she exists but for Him.¹⁰

Mary, then, in the designs of God is indissolubly associated to the divine plan of mercy, on which the Redemption of the human race depends; and her eminent dignity, her gifts and privileges must always be envisaged from that perspective.¹¹

⁹ Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*; *Bullarium Marianum*, ed Bourassé, *Summa aurea*, vol 7, col 629 Garrigou-Lagrange, O P, *De Christo Salvatore*, Torino, 1943, p 503. "Ad hanc maternitatem divinam . . . eodem igitur aeterno decreto Christus ut homo praedestinatatus est ad Filiationem divinam naturalem, et B Maria Virgo ad maternitatem divinam"

¹⁰ J. B Terrien, S J, *La Mère de Dieu et la Mère des hommes d'après les Pères et la théologie*, ed 6e, Paris, 1933, vol I, pp 117-118 "Afin de le mieux entendre, supposons un instant . . . cette première pensée n'ira pas sans l'élection d'une Mère"

G Demaret, O S B, *Marie de qui est né Jésus*, Paris, ed Spes, 1937, p 186. "Cependant sa prédestination gratuite à la maternité divine place Marie si haut dans la pensée et dans le plan de Dieu, elle l'engage si profondément dans le mystère de l'Incarnation rédemptrice; elle l'unit si étroitement à la personne et à l'oeuvre de son Fils, que c'est un seul et même décret divin et éternel qui prédestine Jésus et Marie, le Fils et la Mère"

R Garrigou-Lagrange, O P, *Motivum Incarnationis fuit motivum misericordiae*, in *Angelicum*, vol 7, 1930, pp 289-302

¹¹ M J Nicolas, O P, *Le concept integral de maternité divine*, in *Rev Thom*, vol 12, 1937, p 269. "Le terme de la prédestination de la Mère de Dieu ne peut au contraire se définir que par son rapport essentiel à celui de la Prédestination du Christ Si la plénitude de grâce de l'âme de Marie, et si sa beatitude elle même sont ordonnées à la Maternité Divine, c'est pour répondre aux exigences de la Prédestination du Christ et pour concourir à la perfection de l'Incarnation."

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For the Incarnation in the present order is wholly and entirely orientated towards the Redemption and, since the Incarnation is not accomplished save through Mary, she obtains a role of the first order in the salvation of mankind. Likewise, all the riches with which God wished to ornament her soul, stem from that first predestination. In order to proceed securely in the analysis of those gifts, a double principle must be kept in mind: "Mary, as the mother of God, had to possess all the privileges which are possible in creatures and which on the other hand are compatible with her role as Mother of God and as the Universal Mediatrix, such as it pleased God to realize it."¹² "Mary's predestination is entirely correlative to the redemptive Incarnation, and that fact dominates the economy of our salvation."¹³

In the execution of the divine plan, it is necessary to posit a profound difference between the miraculous conception of Christ by a Virgin, and the natural conception of Mary in the womb of her mother according to the laws of generation.¹⁴ It follows immediately that the one as well as the other are in a very different situation with regard to original sin and its consequences, such as are transmitted in the descendants of Adam. St Thomas explains the three characteristic privileges with which the virginal conception of the Saviour was stamped.¹⁵ That virginal conception, "of the Holy Spirit," exempted and eliminated Christ from the universal law of the transmission of original sin: by right, the Saviour is exempt from all stain of sin and from all the consequences of the primitive fall.¹⁶

On the other hand, Mary's conception by her parents ac-

¹² E Dublanchy, art *Marie*, in *DTC*, vol 9, col 2359

¹³ Terrien, *op. cit* p 131 Demaret, *op. cit* p 188

¹⁴ Merkelbach, *op cit*, p 226

¹⁵ St Thomas, III, q 32, a 4 ad 1

¹⁶ St Thomas, II-II, q 164, a 2 ad 3 X Le Bachelet, S J, art *Marie-L'Immaculée Conception*, in *DAFC*, vol 3, col 266

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According to the ordinary laws of generation cannot be a virginal conception; as all the descendants of Adam, she should have contracted the stain of original sin, if there had not been a special intervention by Almighty God¹⁷ It is on the part of the parents or the active conception that it is necessary to posit a necessity to contract the stain; the exemption intervened on the part of the complete passive generation, at the very moment when the person of the Holy Virgin came into existence, when the soul was infused into the matter which had been prepared for it. Mary's exemption from original sin is an immunity of fact and not an immunity by right, though there are many becoming reasons why God should have granted her this privilege¹⁸

It must be remembered that Mary's immunity with regard to original sin is an immunity of fact, and, by right, she should have, like the rest of men, been infected with the stain of original sin. On the part of the term of the active generation, there was a necessity to be redeemed; and only the Redemption applied in a special manner, at the very moment of the conception of the person, delivered the Mother of God from the obligation of contracting the fault. That obligation which is termed the *debitum* is justly the foundation of the necessity of the redemption of Mary by her divine Son.¹⁹

Keeping in mind the distinction between immunity of fact and immunity by right, one can understand in what sense some of the Fathers have written that Mary is the daughter of Adam according to the flesh, before being the daughter of God according to grace.²⁰ It is an expression which must be understood of a priority of nature and not of time. In the same

¹⁷ St Thomas, III, q 27, a 2 ad 4. Cf Cajetan's commentary in I-II, q 81, a 3

¹⁸ Le Bachelet, S J, art *Immaculée Conception*, in *DTC*, vol 7, col 890

¹⁹ N Del Prado, O P, *Divus Thomas et bulla dogmatica "Ineffabilis Deus,"* Friburgi, 1919, p 123

²⁰ Le Bachelet, in *DAFC*, vol 3, col 266

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sense, other Fathers could call Mary, "Flesh of sin," signifying by it her submission by right to the laws of sin²¹

The exemption which Mary enjoyed as a privilege was given *de facto* in view of her divine maternity, and not corresponding to any exigency on her part. It is essentially distinguished from that of Christ Who enjoyed the exemption by right in virtue of His virginal conception²² There is, therefore, in Mary a necessity to be redeemed, for God wished to give her grace and glory; but a necessity of an altogether particular mode, since God deigned to make her the worthy Mother of the Redeemer by the sublime privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

Before everything else, St. Thomas was preoccupied with the universality of the Redemption by Christ.²³ He could not conceive that Mary, the first born of the race of the new Adam, the "primogenita," could, in any manner, escape the redemption accomplished by our divine Saviour, something that would be contrary to the very design of the Incarnation. If one seeks for the precise sense of the formula "indigeret Christi redemptione" or "indigere salvati a peccato," he can find it in the precise information furnished us by Cajetan.²⁴ It is the teaching of the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* that Mary was redeemed according to an altogether particular mode, "sublimiori modo redempta," that is, by the preventive application of the merits of Christ, Who tended to render her the worthy Mother of God.²⁵ Her immunity, as a point of fact, differs then from that of the justification through Baptism, thanks to the application to her of the fruits of the Redemption by way of preser-

²¹ P. Bonnetain, *Immaculée Conception*, in *Dict. de la Bible, Suppl.*, fasc. 19, col. 287

²² Le Bachelet, *art. cit.* in *DTC*, vol. 7, col. 847

²³ St. Thomas, III Sent., d. 3, a. 1, a. 1, sol. 2. Del Prado, *op. cit.*, p. 104

²⁴ In III, q. 27, a. 2, n. V et n. VII. Roschini, OSM, *Compendium Mariologiae*, 1946, p. 334

²⁵ *Acta et decr.*, Col. Lac., vol. 6, 1882, col. 839.

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vation and sanctification.²⁶ It should be remarked that this exceptional mode of Redemption is operated directly on the person of Mary, for according to the principle of St. Thomas, only the person is capable of receiving grace.²⁷ Moreover, the history of the redaction of the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* makes us understand the exact signification of the term employed to indicate the subject of Mary's grace. "Beatissimam Virginem Mariam . . . preservatam immunem."²⁸

It is, then, the person of Mary which is redeemed and not the nature first of all, according to the oft-repeated Thomistic principle: in the economy of the Redemption the nature is not restored but by means of the person, without implying that to it are restored all the privileges of the primitive state.²⁹ The nature is not wholly and entirely restored but with the final coming of Christ. Speaking of the Redemption wrought by Christ, the Fathers often speak of the fact that the Saviour died for His Mother just as He died for the rest of men; by this they indicate that the merits of the Passion of Christ are applied first of all to His Mother, to exempt her from the universal law of original sin.³⁰ Cajetan follows this line of thinking in speaking of the redemption as applied to Mary³¹

The union, begun by the predestination of the Saviour and His Mother, is integrally prolonged even to the very term of their respective existence on earth. From the initial grace of the Divine Maternity there flows for Mary immunity of fact accomplished through the anticipated merits of the Redemption; from the same grace depend likewise all the prerogatives with which she was endowed. But the Maternity itself is linked to the plan of the Redemption and all the graces and gifts of

²⁶ Le Bachelet, in *DTC*, vol 7, col 847, in *DAFC*, vol 4, col 265.

²⁷ IV Sent, d. 43, q 1, a 4, q 3, sol 1 ad 3

²⁸ Cf Le Bachelet, in *DTC*, vol 7, col 1203. Del Prado, *op cit*, p 366.

²⁹ II Sent, D 31, q 1, a 2, sol

³⁰ Salmanticenses, *Cursus Theol*, VIII, disp 15, dub 2, n 60

³¹ Cajetan, *De Concept B Vrg*, cited by Del Prado, *op cit*, p 305

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Mary must coincide with the economy of Salvation to be accomplished.³²

Mary was predestined to be the Mother of the Redeemer; the privilege of the Immaculate Conception was given her for this end because of the foreseen merits of Christ; all the graces with which she was endowed flow from that vocation, a vocation which is her very own, the Divine Maternity, and ultimately it constitutes its preparation and crown. Mary then pertains wholly and entirely to the economy of the Redemption, the foundations of the state of fallen and restored nature.

Considering the causes³³ which diversify the two states of original justice and restored nature, we can summarize the preceding considerations: theologically, the Divine Maternity and all the grace and the gifts of Mary which are attached to it are a part of the designs of the divine mercy, which decreed the economy of salvation for humanity; as far as the efficient cause is concerned, the grace and the gifts of Mary are the first fruits of the Redemption and depend as such on the "gratia Christi"; on the part of the subject, as a daughter of Adam naturally subject to the universal law of sin, Mary must first of all be redeemed in her person before her nature could be restored to its original integrity.

Her grace, it is true, compares advantageously to the primitive justice, but it could not be first of all the "gratia Dei" which instituted nature, then elevated it to a supernatural end, because her grace is derived entirely from the merits of the

³² A. Janssens, *De glorificatione corporali B.M.V.*, in *Eph. Th. Lov* vol 8, 1931, p 442 From this point of view, it is difficult to understand Father Balic's interpretation of the Bull "Ineffabilis Deus" in the text, it isn't mentioned at all that Mary owes her immunity from the fault of original sin to Christ the Redeemer as such Cf C. Balic, O.F.M., *De debito peccati originalis in B. Virgine Maria Investigationes de doctrina quam tenuit Joannes Duns Scotus*, Romae, 1941, p 104 Cf E. Mersch, S.J., *Sainte Marie, Mère de Dieu*, in *Nou. Rev. Theol.*, vol 67, 1940, pp. 138-139

³³ Cf Garrigou Lagrange, *De Gratia*, Torino, 1945, pp 23-24.

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Passion of Jesus Christ.³⁴ We have a right, therefore, to conclude: in virtue of her Immaculate Conception Mary was not placed IN THE STATE OF ORIGINAL JUSTICE, for she pertains strictly to the economy of the Redemption. (There is no question here of the grace of the Divine Maternity which elevated Mary intrinsically to the hypostatic order and which is in the order of physical relations, but of the moral or supernatural order³⁵

Must it be affirmed absolutely that Mary pertains to the state of fallen and restored nature, the present condition of mankind? She enjoyed special gifts and privileges, much superior to the other children of Adam, privileges which are related to her incomparable dignity of Mother of God. However, it should be noted that the state of fallen and restored nature does not constitute a true state of nature in the strict sense of the term. Sanctifying grace does not first of all restore nature itself, but rather the person, and the nature, through the intermediary of the person is but partially and progressively restored.³⁶ Nevertheless, the term still could be legitimized from the fact that the Redemption is destined to repair gradually each of the members of the human race, through the sanctification of Baptism, in a progressive manner, until the total and definitive restoration in the glory of heaven. Because of this fact, the present condition of humanity is, as it were, in a state of "in fieri," entirely orientated to the Beatific Vision, as the original justice itself.

Pertaining to the economy of the Redemption, the Blessed Virgin is likewise linked to the state of restored nature, a

³⁴ Le Bachelet, in *DTC*, vol 7, col 847

³⁵ Cf E. Dublanchy, art *Marie—Maternité divine*, in *DTC*, vol 9, col 2365

M.-J. Nicholas, *L'appartenance de la Mère de Dieu à l'ordre hypostatique*, in *Bull de la Soc Franç d'Etudes Mariales*, 1938, pp 145-182

Roschini, *Mariologia*, vol 2, pp 187-188

³⁶ II Sent, d 31, q 1, a 2, sol Y. E. Masson, art *Nature*, in *DTC*, vol 77, col 42

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nature of which she is the exemplar and the finished product due to priority obtained in the divine predestination and the sublimity of her gifts. All these remain necessarily connected to her role of Co-redemptress and her terrestrial condition "in statu viae", in virtue of that principle we must judge of the *raison d'être* of each one of them in Mary.

Basing themselves on the principle that Mary was totally preserved from sin, some theologians wish to conclude that nothing of sin (i.e., effects and consequences) can be found in her. Let us recall, however, that the gifts of the primitive integrity were but linked to the original grace by a particular design of God; it does not exist in the present state, for the grace of Baptism is given us without all the gifts³⁷ As St. Thomas appositely remarks: "Ea quae ex sola Dei voluntate proveniunt, supra omne debitum creaturae, nobis innotescere non possunt nisi quatenus in Sacra Scriptura traduntur, per quam divina voluntas innotescit"³⁸

Mary was not placed in the state of original justice in virtue of her Immaculate Conception nor did she possess an absolute right to the preternatural gifts such as were conferred by original justice. Therefore, we have to examine each one of the preternatural gifts separately in order to determine their necessity or *raison d'être* in Mary, for the privileges spring from particular causes and are no longer connected with sanctifying grace by the will of God as in the state of innocence. St. Thomas explains very well that original justice and the grace of the restoration or justification do not have exactly the same extension, when he demonstrates that sanctifying grace and original sin do not oppose each other adequately.³⁹ From the fact, therefore, that Mary was preserved from original sin through grace, it does not follow that she was preserved also

³⁷ II Sent, d 31, q 1, a 2 ad 1

³⁸ St Thomas, III, q 1, a 3

³⁹ III Sent, d 3, q 1, a 1, q 3, sol 1

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from its effects. For God does not necessarily have to connect the gifts with sanctifying grace⁴⁰

That Mary received the principal gifts of original justice, particularly those of the soul, namely, immunity from ignorance and immunity from concupiscence, is an incontrovertible truth admitted by all theologians⁴¹. The foundation for these gifts is not the Immaculate Conception because, consequent upon the fall of Adam who lost it irrevocably for his descendants, that right or title does not exist anymore. Rather is it the Divine Maternity that accounts for the presence of these two privileges in her immaculate soul. More particularly, we cannot endow her with the gifts of impassibility and immortality, for these gifts are indifferent in themselves, "irreprehensibiles," and are not necessarily connected with grace. The fact that she could suffer and die contributed admirably to the work of Redemption. Specifically, Mary cannot be considered immortal by right or by the privilege of grace, because that title or right does not exist any more. Mary's grace is a personal gift of sanctity and does not attain to the restitution of the corporal qualities which the terrestrial merits of life precisely are to restore. There is, therefore, no foundation to attribute, on that score, immortality. Moreover, it should always be recalled that the connection between grace and immortality, as it existed in the state of original justice and as it exists in the state of glory, is not a connatural relation, but an effect of the divine will. The Holy Virgin did not, as a wayfarer, enjoy original justice nor celestial glory, but was simply passible and mortal, essential conditions requisite to merit the

⁴⁰ Merkelbach, *Mariologia*, p. 140, likewise p. 269

⁴¹ L. Billot, S.J. *Disquisitio de natura et ratione peccati personalis*, 1897, p. 116

Suarez, *Comm. in III*, q. 127, a. 16, disp. 4, sect. 6, (ed. Vives, vol. 19, p. 69)

Pegues, *Comm. de la Somme*, vol. 16, p. 31

Cf. J. Coppens, *La définitivité de l'Assomption*, in *Eph. Theol. Lov.* vol. 23, 1947, p. 26

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celestial good according to the plan of the Redemption. Mary did not contract the defects of our nature, because their moral causes never existed in her; her condition of passibility and mortality was only an exigency of corruptible human nature, wherefore the simple physical necessity of suffering and death.⁴² The best solution for the problem is the application of the principle of St. Thomas with regard to the human infirmities of Christ.

Mary, then, was not placed in the state of original justice in virtue of her Immaculate Conception, for of that state she possessed but the two gifts of the soul: immunity from ignorance and from concupiscence, and not the others. Her providential mission of Co-redemptress in the whole work of the Redemption required this. Mary was capable of suffering and of dying as her Son, and the Immaculate Conception cannot be the foundation for the partisans of the right to impassibility and immortality.

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⁴² Merkelbach, *op cit*, p. 269