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OUR LADY'S ALLEGED IMMORTALITY

"*de jure*" AND "*de facto*"

It should be made clear from the beginning that in what concerns the problem of Mary's death, we are not following abstract lines of thought or possible orders of salvation. No one will deny that God could have willed to preserve Mary from death as He preserved her, through a singular privilege, from all stain of original sin. He could have endowed her with the preternatural gifts proper to the state of our first parents. The fullness of grace which sanctified her could have been identical to the grace bestowed upon Adam, rather than the redemptive grace of Christ the Savior. Her coredemption could have been consummated in God's sight by her sufferings on Calvary, that is, through a death that was moral, mystical, virtual, rather than real and physical and subsequent to the death on the Cross. But we intend to defend what we believe to be the Church's position on this problem, in the present factual order of things. We shall attempt to show that there is no solid basis either in Scripture or Tradition for the thesis that Mary had a right to immortality, much less that *de facto* she never died. We shall point out the fallacious character of the argument drawn from the Immaculate Conception and then develop certain theological reasons which not only oblige us to admit the non-penal death of the Mother of God, but seem cogent enough to harmonize her fullness of grace with death, if not positively to establish an exigency for a co-redemptive death.

Viewing Mary's death from a philosophical standpoint, it seems impossible to arrive at any definite conclusion one way or another. Theoretically, her Assumption could have taken place without a previous death and resurrection. The privilege of immortality is within God's power to bestow, and in the abstract can be harmonized with the divine Maternity. It is

all important, then, to study what the sources of revelation have to say about death in its theological aspects.

DEATH AS A DOGMATIC FACT

Though Mary's death has never been the object of a dogmatic definition, Tradition has made of it a fundamental point in what we may call Assumptionist theology. If Mary was immortal, the theological argument will have to be limited to the question of her bodily glorification. If natural death preceded her Assumption, we must prove her resurrection to be an element essential to the concept of the Assumption. Mary's death, then, may be studied under a double aspect. If it is a *historical* fact, it must stand up under the test of scientific analysis as any other fact of history: there should be documentary evidence in favor of its existence. If it is a *theological* fact, we should be able to show its relationship to revealed truths, such as original sin, the state of original justice, or the Marian privileges.

In the abstract, there is no binding connection between the Assumption on the one hand, and the death and the resurrection on the other. But revelation may give a wider extension, a fuller content to the idea of Mary's Assumption, positing an integral whole made up of death, incorruptibility, anticipated resurrection, and final bodily glorification. In that case, the fact of Mary's death enters into more or less strict relation with the order of revealed truth¹

There are some who have denied this, and consider Mary's death a particular historical fact, unrelated to revealed truth, incapable, therefore, of being either the direct or indirect object of the Church's magisterium, it cannot be defined and must be removed from the concept of the Assumption. What

¹ On the nature of the relationship that is required and sufficient to constitute a dogmatic fact, cf. C. Bahé, O.F.M., *De definitiuitate Assumptionis Beatæ Virginis in coelum*, in *Ant* 21 (1946) 44-59, E. Sauras, O.P., *El misterio de la Asunción y la certeza teológica que ha alcanzado*, in *CT* 74 (1948) 74-78

is more, T. Gallus, S.J. and G. M. Roschini, O.S.M., while admitting that the death of Our Lady has been explicitly taught in the Church through a multi-secular tradition of thirteen or fourteen centuries, stigmatize the tradition as false, as a product of the apocryphal *Transitus Beatae Virginis*, as delinquent in its ignorance of the Immaculate Conception, and in the erroneous application of the universal law of death to Mary.² This mass of implicit heresy, error and ignorance has been transmitted from century to century within Christ's indefectible Church as a matter of mere human, non-dogmatic faith.

The majority of theologians, however, in line with traditional teaching, regard Mary's death as both a historical and a theological fact. It is technically what goes under the name of dogmatic fact, one that is required for the proper explanation, preservation, or defense of revealed truth. Thus Mary's death is in the closest relationship with the nature of original sin and its consequences, the Immaculate Conception and its extension, the Redemption and the Coredemption, and the Assumption. This dogmatic correlation of Mary's death and the independence of the tradition on it from apocryphal literature will be more fully developed by other speakers at this Convention. But for our purpose, we should like to remark the following:

(1) The defenders of the immortality thesis center their main argument on the Pauline doctrine of the relation between original sin and death, and Mary's immunity from that sin. Some hold that her grace is that of original justice, in union, therefore, with the preternatural gifts. This is already proof that Mary's death is a dogmatic fact.

(2) To prove his point, Gallus adduces the case of an erroneous reading, "ipsa" of the Latin Vulgate (*Gen* 3:15),

² T. Gallus, *Catechismo dell'immortalità di Maria*, in *PC* 31 (1952) 436-437, G. Roschini, *L'infondatezza della morte di Maria Santissima*, in *PC* 30 (1951) 995.

which became common in the Western Church.³ But the parallelism is wanting. In the Genesis passage Tradition has always recognized a definite truth, viz., Mary's full triumph over the infernal serpent in association with her Son, whether one reads "ipse," (the Savior), "ipsum" (her seed), or "ipsa" (Mary). But concerning Mary's death, Gallus admits a positive error as to the traditional fact itself.

(3) There is no parity between the development of the truth of the Immaculate Conception and the immortality theory. Our opponents cannot prove that there ever has been in the Church a common belief contrary to Mary's Immaculate Conception. The same cannot be said with regard to her immortality.

(4) The Scotistic School of the fourteenth century, in opposing the theologians who held that Mary had contracted original sin, assigned merit as a reason for Mary's death. In explaining the relations between sin and death, it insisted on the fact that not all punishment spoken of in Scripture was meted out for sin personally contracted, and that prior to death inflicted as punishment, the body was naturally corruptible. Mary died for at least one reason: she was a descendant of Adam and received her nature in a mortal condition. The same position was taken up by the Franciscan School of the fifteenth century: her death was no obstacle to admitting her Immaculate Conception.⁴

(5) Let two great early theologians bear witness to the theological character of Mary's death. St. John Damascene (+749), who has been called the "Doctor of Mary's death," bases both the Assumption and the death of Our Lady, not on the apocrypha (which he is careful to discard from his line

³ Gallus, *Quaestio mortis Beatae Virginis Mariae post Bullam "Munificentissimus Deus,"* in *DTPI* 55 (1952) 3-15.

⁴ Cf. C. Piana, O.F.M., *La morte e l'Assunzione della B. Vergine nella letteratura medioevale*, in *SM* 1, 293, idem, *L'Assomption de la Vierge et l'Ecole Franciscaine du XVe siècle*, in *SM* 6, 72-73.

of argument), but on an ancient tradition, handed down from father to son "ab antiquo."⁵ Mary's death, he says, must be attributed first to the intrinsic mortal condition of her body which is such because she is the offspring of Adam. Secondly, Mary's victory over death, manifested in her incorrupt body in the tomb and in a glorious resurrection, is due to her divine Maternity, inviolate sanctity, and virginal integrity.⁶ Thus death, incorruptibility and resurrection are for St. John Damascene theological facts in the strict sense of the term.

In three homilies on the feast of the Dormition, St. Andrew of Crete (+740) sets himself the task of instructing his people as to what was precisely the object of the feast. It was Mary's death explained by the physical laws of nature and the need for perfect conformity with her divine Son. She was not held by the bonds of death, her body remained incorrupt and was transferred from the tomb to heaven. He cites the empty tomb at Jerusalem as proof of the transferral.⁷

⁵ *Homilia 2 in dormitionem BV Mariae*, PG 96, 729

⁶ *Ibid*, PG 96, 760

⁷ *Homilia 1 in dormitionem S. Mariae*, PG 97, 1054, 1081-84. There is not one text in the writings of the Eastern Fathers favoring Mary's immortality. The early Church had a strong faith in Mary's death because of the incorruptibility of her body, a privilege that presupposed a true death. Cf. L. Krupa, O.F.M., *Theologia Assumptionistica et quaestio de morte Mariae*, in *ASC* 10 (1953) 70. Fr. M. Jugie's defense of an "immortality tradition," originating in Jerusalem and disappearing at the end of the sixth century, when under the pressure of apocryphal literature the belief in Mary's death begins to make headway, (cf. *La mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge* [Rome, 1944], 85-95), has been disproved by D. Baldi, O.F.M., *La tradizione monumentale della dormizione a Gerusalemme*, in *SM* 1, 129-159. The following important studies prove definitely that the tomb of Mary was known and venerated at Jerusalem from the middle of the fifth century: H. Vincent, O.P., and F. Abel, O.P., *Jérusalem. Recherches de topographie, d'archéologie et d'histoire*, 2 (Paris, 1914) 35ff.; M. Gordillo, S.J., *La muerte de María en la Iglesia de Jerusalén*, in *EM* 9 (1950) 43-62.

Not one of the apocrypha on the *Transitus* originated in Jerusalem. All the apocryphal literature from Syria, Persia, Armenia, Egypt, Ethiopia and the Latin West is unanimous, not only in holding Mary's death and burial as certain historical facts, but in positively excluding the idea of her immortality.

When strict theological speculation appears with Pseudo-Agustine, the Assumption is explained on the basis of an anticipated resurrection

THEOLOGICAL OPINION

The following authors are outstanding defenders of Mary's immortality both *de iure*, that is, with a right to it in the present economy, and *de facto*, that is, the actual possession of it. There is the anonymous writer of the seventeenth century who set down some twenty speculative reasons for his belief, reasons which can be reduced to three: God's omnipotence, Mary's eminent dignity in general, and her Immaculate Conception in particular. A masterful, though somewhat vehement, refutation soon appeared, the work of Bartholomew Beverini, O.M.D. (+1686).⁸ In the eighteenth century, an anonymous professor of the University of Salamanca, identified by Roschini as Ignatius de Camargo, S.J., but by M. Ramírez, S.J., as more probably Cardinal Alvarez de Cienfuegos,⁹ linked Mary's immortality with her supposed virginal conception in the womb of her mother Anne by the work of the Holy Spirit. An additional reason given is that she possessed the state of original justice as to all its effects.¹⁰ On its appearance this volume was condemned by the Inquisition. Between 1844 and 1879, Dominic Arnaldi published several treatises in defense of the immortality thesis, claiming that all of Mary's privileges sufficiently justified her exemption from death. In the hypothetical state of "pure nature," he argued, death would have been a

⁸ B. Beverini, *De corporali morte Desparae*, edited from manuscript sources by C. Bahé, O.F.M. (Rome, 1950)

⁹ Roschini, *La Madonna secondo la fede e la teologia*, 3 (Rome, 1953) 273, M. Ramírez, in *ATG* 13 (1950) 326

¹⁰ Anonymous, *Tractatus de immortalitate B. V. Mariae*, edited by C. Bahé, O.F.M., (Rome, 1948). On this whole question cf. C. Bahé, *La controversia acerca de la muerte de María Santísima desde la Edad Media hasta nuestros días*, in *EM* 9 (1950) 101-123

mere natural thing. But in the actual state of fallen nature, it can only be a punishment for sin. Christ died freely, renouncing His immortality. Mary could not die because she was perfectly sinless.¹¹

During this period, Joseph Virdia, O F M Conv, Bishop of Cariati, became sympathetic to the same thesis, expressing this in a petition for the definition of the Assumption, addressed to the Holy See in 1880.¹²

Among present-day full *de iure* and *de facto* "immortalists," Fathers Gallus and Roschini hold an important place, though there was a time when the latter was somewhat hesitant, impressed no doubt by the judgment of Cardinal Lépicié who classified Mary's *de facto* death as "theologicæ certissima."¹³ But it was the monumental work of M. Jugie, A.A., which more than anything else prepared the way for the immortality thesis.¹⁴ He defended Mary's strict right to physical immortality based on the principle that in the present order of divine Providence,

¹¹ D. Arnaldi, *Super definitibilitate dogmatica Assumptionis corporeae B. V. Mariae Deiparae immaculatae* (Turin, 1844). Cf. G. Ameri, O.F.M., *La dottrina di Domenico Arnaldi sull'Assunzione della Beata Vergine Maria*, in *Mm* 12 (1950) 56-87.

¹² J. Virdia, *Pro dogmatica definitione integrae ad coelos Assumptionis Deiparae Virginis* (Catanzaro, 1880).

¹³ Gallus, *La Vergine immortale* (Rome, 1949), idem, *Ad immortalitatem B. M. Virginis*, in *Mm* 12 (1950) 26-55, idem, *Catechismo dell'immortalità di Maria*, in *PC* 31 (1952) 436; idem, *La Madonna Assunta* (Rome, 1951), Roschini, *L'Assunzione e l'Immacolata Concezione* (Rome, 1950); idem, *Il problema della morte di Maria Santissima*, in *EphM* 3 (1953) 25-54, under same title in *Mm* 13 (1951) 148-163, idem, *L'infondatezza della morte di Maria*, in *PC* 30 (1951) 995. Cf. also M. Rossi, O. de M., *Assumptio Beatae Virginis Mariae corpore et anima in coelum quae implicite continetur in privilegio immaculatae suae conceptionis*, in *ASC* 7 (1952) 291-305, E. Castonguay, O.M.I., *La fin terrestre de la Mère de Dieu* (Montréal, 1956), B. Farrell, C.P., *The Immortality of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, in *TS* 16 (1955) 591-606, the purpose of whose article "was simply to present the case for the immortality of the Blessed Virgin," both *de iure* and *de facto*.

¹⁴ M. Jugie, *La mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge* (Rome, 1944). Cf. also his article *Assomption de la Sainte Vierge*, in *MESV* 1 (1946) 619-659.

anyone exempt from original sin, has a right to Adam's condition prior to his transgression with all the gifts he enjoyed in that state¹⁵ For Father Jugie the essence of original sin consists of two elements: the privation of sanctifying grace and of the preternatural gifts Hence the conclusion that Mary had a *right* to immunity from death, suffering, concupiscence, and ignorance Jugie doubts Mary's *de facto* death, but leans to a denial of it And only her role as Coredeemer accounts for Mary's suffering This leads him to propose tentatively her martyrdom of suffering as the equivalent of a physical death.¹⁶ In any case, he believes that if Mary died, it could not have been because of original sin

J. M. Bover, S J, and G Alastruey argue for Mary's *de iure* immortality because she was endowed with the grace of original justice, but they admit her *de facto* death because of the Coredemption¹⁷ For B Kloppenburg, O F M, both tradition and the Coredemption favor Mary's death, but she submitted to it freely, giving up her right to immortality.¹⁸

MARY'S ALLEGED "*de iure*" IMMORTALITY

In a heavy volume, totaling some 216 pages, Father Kloppenburg has made a deep study of the relations governing sin and death as expressed in Scripture and Tradition He believes that St Paul teaches a strict relation, one that is causal and essential, exists between sin and death, the latter being the penal wages of sin Since Mary was immune from original sin, she was under no necessity to die¹⁹ Even if Tradition

¹⁵ *Op cit*, 539, 624

¹⁶ *Op cit*, 559, 561

¹⁷ J Bover, *La Asunción de Maria* (Madrid, 1951) 255-258, G Alastruey, *Tratado de la Santísima Virgen* (Madrid, 1945) 399-405.

¹⁸ Kloppenburg, *O nexo entre pecado e morte*, in *REB* 8 (1948) 262-3 Also *Questões teológicas em torno da morte da Mãe de Deus*, *ibid* 9 (1949) 325-6

¹⁹ B Kloppenburg, *De relatione inter peccatum et mortem* (Rome, 1951)

¹⁹⁰ C Koser, O F M, *A definibilidade de Asunção de Nossa Senhora*, in *REB* 7 (1947) 273

obliges us to admit her death because of the Coredemption, the relation between sin and death still holds, for it was not her death *in actu* that was the principal act of Coredemption, but her *voluntary* entering into a state of passibility, her free acceptance of the necessity of suffering and dying.²⁰ Death is a necessity and a punishment, he argues, only for those who have contracted original sin. Now since according to St Paul, original sin stains the soul of every man entering the world, there can be no such thing as a death that is due to an exclusively natural condition. If Mary Immaculate died, then, she could only have done so of her own free choice.

We take issue with this position remarking, in the first place, that one cannot prove on *a priori* grounds that there is mutual opposition between Mary's fullness of grace and death. Grace is a supernatural reality, whereas death is the physical defect of corruptible entities, pertaining to the natural order. It may even be that in the present economy of man's supernatural justification, grace and death, for Mary as for her Son, are in some mysterious way intimately correlated. Insistence, therefore, upon the idea of death only as the effect and punishment of original sin, is to work one angle of the overall problem of possible relations between redemptive grace and death.

Secondly, all that we can legitimately infer from the dogma of the Immaculate Conception is that Mary's death, if it took place, was not due to original sin. We cannot infer that she had a right to exemption from death. The Immaculate Conception is a purely gratuitous gift, bestowed upon her in view of the merits of her Son; it is "a singular privilege and grace," in the words of the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*. The extent and content of this privilege cannot be arbitrarily determined, but must be evaluated in terms of the Church's magisterium.²¹

²⁰ *Op cit*, 185-7

²¹ Cf C Boyer, S J, *Raisons de la mort de la Tres Sainte Vierge*, in *SM* 6, 126

Now Mary's immunity from original sin as we know it through revelation, is perfectly integrated into the plan of Redemption and links her essentially to that order of things. She was given the fullness of grace for her personal sanctification and preparation to be the worthy Mother of the Redeemer, and for her mission as the New Eve and spiritual Mother of all men. That her grace belongs to the order of Redemption is today a closed issue, as is clear from the teaching of Pius IX in the Bull of definition: she was sanctified from the first instant of her conception with the grace of the Redeemer, "*intuitu meritum Christi*." ²² And Pius XI, on the occasion of the canonization of Joan Antida Thouret, declared explicitly that Mary also died since her grace was not that of creation "but the grace of redemption, which did not confer on her a true and proper immortality." ²³

Father Kloppenburg admits that Mary was preserved free from all stain of original sin by the merits of the Redeemer, but he is not so sure that this is equivalent to saying that she was redeemed. ²⁴ He quotes *Ineffabilis Deus* on the preservation; we wonder why he failed to mention this important phrase from the same Encyclical: ". . . and hence she was redeemed in a manner more sublime." Elsewhere he confesses he is unable to understand the *debitum contrahendi*, this might explain why he is uncertain about Mary's redemption. He goes on to make the distinction between the liberative redemption of all who have contracted original sin, and the preservative redemption of Mary. While the former, he argues, does not confer the gift of immortality, it has not been proved that the latter does not *de facto* do so, since we would have to presuppose what we are trying to prove, viz, that Mary did not die of her own free will.

²² Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, in *ADSC* 6, 842

²³ Cf *OR*, Aug 16-17, 1933

²⁴ *Op cit* 197.

We presuppose nothing about Mary's condition. Our argument is that, as a matter of fact, established by Pius IX and Pius XI, Mary's grace is owed to Christ the Redeemer, a grace that was not joined to immortality either in Him or in the redeemed. The burden of proof rests on our opponents to show that her grace was that of original justice and linked to immortality. We are not, therefore, presupposing that she did not die freely (not in the sense of non-acceptation of death), but inferring it from the truth of redemptive grace (Pius IX). Mary's grace is identical to that of the baptized inasmuch as both are derived from Christ's redeeming grace and unconnected with the preternatural gifts, but there is a difference in the mode of action of grace. Mary's redemption preserved her from sin, the grace of the baptized liberates from sin.

The viewpoint of the immortalists would carry some weight, if it could be proved that God willed, in preserving Mary from original sin, to restore her to the state of original justice. There is not one good reason given for such a view. Father Bover defends Mary's right to immortality on the grounds that she had original grace, arguing that if the grace of original justice, as a participation in the divine life, was a principle of immortality, why not the grace of Redemption? All grace is essentially the same and ordained to life in the enjoyment of the beatific vision. Is redemptive grace less vital, less perfect? Then, too, Mary's grace is greater than that of Adam. The Redeemer died not that we may die, but that we may live.²⁵

True, all sanctifying grace, whether it be elevating and divinizing, or redemptive and healing, pertains to the same ontological species as one and the same reality. Grace is a participation in the divine nature which is one and simple. The Deity as such, as it is in itself, cannot be multiplied or admit of specific differentiation. It is as impossible to have

²⁵ *Op cit* p 75-6 This is the opinion also of M-J Nicolas, O.P., *L'Assomption vérité de foi*, in *VS* 80 (1951) 5-16

a specific distinction of graces as it is to predicate genus and species of the divinity. Yet grace is susceptible of a diversity of moral species based on a diversity of ends. While essentially one and the same, it can be directed to different ends. Thus in Christ we have two species of created grace, capital and habitual, both one reality with distinct formal effects. Capital grace is ordered to our sanctification; habitual, to Christ's individual holiness. Similarly, in Adam there was a grace that sanctified him in a double manner, as head of the human race and as an individual. In Christ, again, there was a grace that was *sanans* or healing, since it destroyed the evil which is sin and triumphed over the physical defects of suffering and death.²⁶ This redemptive grace was supernaturalizing as was the grace of original justice, but that was not its exclusive function. In Christ and His Mother there was no sin to be destroyed, but in Mary the grace of Christ preserved her from sin. This answers at least one objection; other reasons will be given later against the idea of Mary's original grace.

Mary's grace is indeed exceedingly great, but neither suffering nor death is a moral disgrace, as Christ has shown. Even the *necessity* to die because of man's mortal nature is not incompatible with the highest sanctity. It may even be a means for merit and glory. That grace was Mary's in its fullness does not eliminate its fundamental orientation to the redemption.

Moreover, if Mary's grace was the same as that of our first parents, she should have all that was proper to the state of original justice. Her passibility is an argument against it. It is up to the "immortalists" to explain why exemption from original sin means exemption from death, when we know that it does not include exemption from suffering, which is also a consequence of original sin. To limit the likeness between

²⁶ Cf. E. Sauras, O.P., *La muerte de la Santísima Virgen postulada por su gracia santificante*, in CT 77 (1950) 24.

original grace and Mary's grace only to the "praecipua dona," as does M. Rossi, O. de M., is simply to evade the difficulty.²⁷ The natural and necessary term of a state of passibility is death. Mary was subject to suffering, not only because she was to be the Coredeemer, but also because suffering is due to the intrinsic condition of human nature, which, as we shall show, she received from Adam deprived of the preternatural gifts.

We are not to exaggerate the gifts bestowed upon Mary. All theologians agree that she was preserved from the *fomes peccati* or concupiscence. But the reason for that immunity is that concupiscence can never be harmonized with the Immaculate Conception, for, according to St. Paul, concupiscence is sin virtually or causally inasmuch as it is a direct effect of original sin and inclines to sin.²⁸ Also, as Mother of God, Our Lady enjoyed a certain amount of freedom from ignorance. In fact, theologians hold that her knowledge was deep in all that referred to her mission, though the extent of it is an open question. But suffering and death are not opposed to her moral perfection and dignity.²⁹

A brief study of the nature of original justice should serve to dissipate the notion of Mary's right to immortality. In the teaching of Aquinas, the state of original innocence comprised two distinct elements: one formal or essential, consisting in sanctifying grace which raised the soul to a supernatural level of friendship with God; the other, which we may call the material element, consisting in the preternatural gifts of integrity, by which man's inferior nature was brought under total subjection to the superior. Those gifts were immortality, impassibility, knowledge and subservience of the sensitive appetite. The first element was essentially supernatural; the second, only as

²⁷ *La Bula Dogmática "Munificentissimus Deus" y la muerte de la Santísima Virgen María*, in *Est* 7 (1951) 380-85

²⁸ *Rom* 6, 12

²⁹ *Summa Theologica*, 3, q 14, a. 4

to mode.³⁰ In God's plan this state of innocence was to be transmitted to Adam's posterity, but only on condition that he fulfill the precept God had imposed upon him. In failing to carry out God's command, he lost both for himself and his descendants, sanctifying grace and the preternatural gifts, among which was that of physical immortality. As God planned it for the new order of things, grace was to be won for the human race through the death of Christ, but the gift of integrity was not to accompany it, a clear sign that the two elements were distinct and separable and that they had been united only by the positive will of God. Once Adam had sinned, God was, so to speak, freed from the promise He had made. The gifts He had promised to mankind in Adam were not merely *suspended* (as held by C. Koser, O.F.M.,³¹ to facilitate acceptance of the idea that the Immaculate Conception automatically carries along with it immortality), but positively *withdrawn*, as is clear from Genesis. After the transgression, for one thing men had to die. If God should will, in the future, to favor some individual with the privilege of freedom from original sin and endow him with grace, He certainly would be under no obligation to confer upon him the gifts freely bestowed upon Adam before the fall. We know that Mary was so favored, but to hold that in addition she was exempt from death is arbitrarily to go beyond the limits of the privilege and to establish another for which no proof is forthcoming.

DEATH AS A NATURAL NECESSITY

From the foregoing it should be clear that death is primarily a necessity of nature. Immortality or the possibility of not dying was an extrinsic and gratuitous benefit limited to

³⁰ *In 2 Sent.*, dist. 32, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1.

³¹ *Art. cit.*, 270.

the state of innocence.³² Once that state was lost by sin, nature returned to its intrinsic and primitive condition of mortality. Mary is a descendant of Adam, a member of the human species: she received her nature from him as it was in him, in a mortal condition. Her grace is no title to an immortality which was connected with grace when it was conferred upon Adam as a quasi-property of nature. After sin, Adam could not transmit to her the state of original justice, and so Mary receives her grace not because of her descendency from him, but in spite of it. It is true that death was inflicted as a punishment for sin, but given the case of "a singular privilege" of freedom from original sin with no right to immortality, does it follow that the ensuing death must be stigmatized as punishment? It seems to us that for this privileged case there could be other reasons in God's Providence for allowing death, in addition to a natural condition.

Against this, Father Kloppenburg cites the authority of St. Augustine, according to whom the relationship between death and sin is such that God could not without injustice allow a person to die by the necessity of nature if he were completely sinless. To say that Mary died because of the mortality inherent in human nature, is equivalent, according to Father Kloppenburg, to holding that death which is the result of involuntary necessity is not necessarily related to sin individually contracted.³³ If Mary died, he concludes, it was because she freely chose to do so. There are countless texts in which St. Augustine states that death in man is directly to be attributed

³² In the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, the direct effect of sin is the privation of sanctifying grace. "The punishment appointed for the first sin . . . was the withdrawal of the divine favor whereby the rectitude and integrity of human nature was maintained. But the defects resulting from this withdrawal are death and other penalties of the present life." *Summa Theol.*, 2a-2ae, q. 164, a. 1, ad 4, 1a-2ae, q. 85, a. 5. Original sin is the "*removens prohibens*" of the body's corruptibility, the *per accidens* cause of death. The direct cause are the principles of nature itself.

³³ *Op. cit.*, 173.

to sin. Death without sin would be an injustice on God's part: Infants die, "but when you say that no sin is to be imputed to infants, you make God unjust" ³⁴

It should be recalled that St Augustine was engaged in controversy with the Pelagians, in particular with Julian of Eclanum, who taught that in the present order all men are born as sinless as Adam before the fall. Julian argued that if all men are involved in what Augustine calls "the body of sin," then so is Christ, since according to St Paul, He was sent "in the likeness of the body of sin" (*Rom* 8 3). We must conclude, therefore, that no one has the body of sin. In his answer St Augustine sets Christ apart from all other men, stressing the term "likeness" in the Pauline text. He explains that all men are born with original sin because they come into the world as products of concupiscence. Christ, having been virginally conceived, did not contract it, but he received as other men do, a mortal body, a body subject to suffering, and this is what is meant by the likeness of the body of sin. Thus he says that "the body of Christ took its mortality from the mortality of the maternal body, because it found her body mortal." ³⁵ So Christ was an exception to the general law of contracting original sin, but not an exception in having a mortal body subject to suffering. Elsewhere St. Augustine says that if Christ had not been put to death, he would have grown old and have died a natural death ³⁶

What follows from this is that immortality and immunity from suffering were lost in Adam for his entire posterity. No one doubts that Christ as God had a full right to come into the world immortal and impassible, but once the divine will planned the Redemption of the world by a state of suffering and death, the human will of Christ accepted it as a condition to which

³⁴ *Contra secundam Juliani responsionem*, lb 2, n 119, *PL* 45, 1192

³⁵ *Contra Julianum haer pelag defensorem*, lb 5, cap 15, n 54; *PL* 44,

814.

³⁶ *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, lb 2, *PL* 44, 180

human nature was subject after the fall. As Father M. Quera, S J, explains in his answer to Father Kloppenburg, Christ, in submitting Himself *voluntarily* to the defects that are common to human nature and compatible with the ends of the Incarnation, also submitted Himself to the *necessity* of dying and to death itself ³⁷

It is difficult to see, then, how one can infer from Augustinian principles, that an immaculate conception entitles one to immortality. All we can logically hold is that Mary could not endure death as a punishment. If according to St. Augustine, God was not unjust in ordering the human will of Christ to come into the world in the "likeness of the body of sin," to redeem man, much less would He be unjust were He to impose death on a sinless creature, not as a punishment, but for reasons of His own, particularly for association in the very same work for which Christ was to die. Mary could not be more privileged than Christ Himself. It is a matter of controversy whether St. Augustine believed Mary was conceived immaculate, but surely if he did, he would not have given her a right to immortality; he would simply have applied to her case what he had said concerning Christ

Another strong argument adduced in favor of Mary's immortality is the decree of the Second Council of Orange, held in 529, presided over by Caesarius of Arles and confirmed by Pope Boniface II: "Si quis soli Adae praevaricationem suam, non et eius propagini asserit nocuisse, aut certe mortem tantum corporis, quae poena peccati est, non autem et peccatum, quod mors est animae, per unum hominem in omne genus humanum transiisse testatur, iniustitiam Deo dabit, contradicens Apostolo dicenti: per unum hominem peccatum intravit in mundum, et

³⁷ M. Quera, *¿El privilegio de la Inmaculada Concepción de María "exige" su inmortalidad?*, in *EE* 28 (1954) 598-599. Id., *Una palabra más sobre el derecho de María a la inmortalidad*, *ibid.* 29 (1955) 389.

per peccatum mors, et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt " 39

This second Canon as to its first part reproduces the doctrine of St. Paul and St. Augustine on the relation between sin and death. The second half, beginning with the words "aut certe mortem tantum corporis . . .," is taken from Augustine's *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*.³⁹ The argument is, therefore, that God would be unjust were He to subject to the law of death a descendant of Adam who had not contracted original sin. Hence Mary, immaculately conceived, was under no obligation to die.⁴⁰

Against this interpretation, we remark in the first place, that both St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (5:12) and the Council are setting down a general law without any attention being paid to possible or actual exceptions, for if the case were otherwise, the conclusion would have to be that Mary, like the rest of mankind, incurred the guilt of original sin. The Council states that "sin . . . by one man passed upon the whole human race," and St. Paul says: "In quo omnes peccaverunt." The Council of Trent transmits essentially the same teaching of Orange but declares that "it is not its intention to include in this decree, which deals with original sin, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary. . . " ⁴¹ It substitutes the technical term "anathema sit" for the "iniustitiam Deo dabit" of Orange. In addition, "the words of the Council," writes Father J. B. Carol, O.F.M., "may be understood to mean that we would attribute an injustice to God if we supposed that He inflicted death *as a punishment* on an individual who had never contracted sin. It does not mean that God would be unjust if He allowed an innocent person to die *for some other*

³⁹ DB 175

³⁹ PL 44, 613.

⁴⁰ B Kloppenburg, *op cit*, 67sq

⁴¹ DB 792.

reason extrinsic to sin."⁴² All that we can rightly infer from the Council is that if Mary was conceived without original sin, her death could not have a penal character. To prove that God would be unjust if He subjected her to death, one would have to prove, as Father Balić has pointed out, that the Fathers of the Council intended to teach that intrinsic opposition exists between the terms "innocent person" and "mortal person," so that God could not justly create a "mortal man."⁴³

Another possible solution to the difficulty would be the translation of "*iniustitiam Deo dabit*" as "will do an injury to God" or "will offend God," and this seems to be a preferable reading, since the verb "*dare*" has the meaning of "to attribute" or "to impute" when it is used with two datives, not with an accusative and a dative as in the Canon. Father Kloppenburg has been able to find two examples in the classics where "*dare*" is used with an accusative in the sense of "to attribute or impute," but he has to prove that it is used here with that meaning.⁴⁴ If the meaning of the phrase is "to offend God," the reference is to the refusal to accept the revelation made known by the Apostle that by one man sin entered into the world, not to any injustice on God's part, were He to allow an innocent person to die for reasons known to Himself.

Is all death in the present economy a punishment, or always a punishment? An important consideration is the condition of the baptized, who have been freed of original sin, yet have its penalties. We know that the grace of Christ does not confer upon the baptized the preternatural gifts. Christ as man and Head of the redeemed, had the fullness of grace, the highest sanctity, but He was not immune from suffering and death. In this connection, the Council of Trent gives us a very

⁴² *Fundamentals of Mariology* (New York, 1956) 169, idem, *The Immaculate Conception and Mary's Death*, in *OLD* 9 (1955) 308.

⁴³ Balić, *A propósito de la reciente controversia sobre la defimibilidad de la Asunción de la Bienaventurada Virgen María*, in *SM* 5, 373.

⁴⁴ *Op cit*, 78-79.

explicit teaching on the effects of Baptism with regard to death and other penalties of original sin. Those who have been baptized, have been taken up into the death of Christ, "and the living power of our guilt annihilated, so that we are the slaves of guilt no longer" (*Rom.* 6:6). Baptism effects the pardon of all sin, original and personal. After its reception, no punishment remains to be wiped away.⁴⁵ Now, the baptized suffer, feel the sting of concupiscence, and die. These effects, therefore, are not always and necessarily, in the present order, to be looked upon as chastisement. The fifth Canon of the Council is a definition, but it is debatable whether the definition bears only on the removal of the "reatus culpae," the guilt of sin, or also on the "reatus poenae," the punishment. Studying the mind of the Fathers of the Council from the discussions that preceded the definition, Father Koser comes to the conclusion that there was no intention to define the remission of the punishment.⁴⁶ The direct object of the definition was the removal by Baptism of the "ratio peccati." But what makes to our point is that the Council teaches that the consequences of original sin are not only non-penal after baptism, but may even be occasions of merit.⁴⁷ An even clearer formulation of this doctrine had been given by the Council of Florence in its decree to the Armenians.⁴⁸

According to St. Thomas, regeneration through Baptism, the newness of life which it gives, and incorporation into Christ which it effects, free the baptized person from the punishment of original sin and confer a right to freedom from all its penalties: "... by baptism a man is incorporated in the passion and death of Christ, according to Romans 6:8. If we be dead

⁴⁵ DB 792. "In renatis nihil odit Deus, quia nihil est damnationis us, qui vere consepulti sunt cum Christo per baptismum in mortem . . ."

⁴⁶ Koser, *O argumento da Asunção fundado sobre o II Canon do II Sínodo de Orange*, in *REB* 10 (1950) 231

⁴⁷ DB 792.

⁴⁸ DB 696.

with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ. Hence it is clear that the passion of Christ is communicated to every baptized person, so that he is healed just as if he himself had suffered and died. Now Christ's passion . . . is a sufficient satisfaction for all the sins of all men. Consequently he who is baptized, is freed from the debt of all punishment due to him for his sins, just as if he himself had offered sufficient satisfaction for all his sins."⁴⁹ Elsewhere he says: ". . . and in this way Christ by His death brought us back to life, when by His death He destroyed our death; just as he who bears another's punishment takes such punishment away."⁵⁰ The penalties of original sin will be removed perfectly in the next life by virtue of the seed of immortality posited in the soul by Baptismal grace; then there will be a complete manifestation of the perfect triumph which the passion and the resurrection of Christ gained over sin and death.⁵¹ In this life, however, there is only a *secundum quid* removal of these penalties of original sin, inasmuch as: (1) in the baptized they are no longer considered punishment for sin but only conditions and consequences of nature itself. Hence the kingdom of heaven is immediately opened for one who dies immediately after baptism;⁵² (2) the regenerated soul is no longer subject to their sway, but masters them in the use of them as instruments for salvation. Yet *simpliciter* these penalties remain in the baptized until the final restoration of human nature through the glorious resurrection: "But the penalties of the present life, such as death, hunger, thirst and the like, pertain to the nature, from the principles of which they arise, inasmuch as it is deprived of original justice."⁵³

⁴⁹ *S. Theol.*, 3, q. 69, a. 2

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 50, a. 1

⁵¹ *I Cor.* 15, 54.

⁵² *S. Theol.*, q. 69, a. 7, ad 3

⁵³ *Ibid.*, a. 3, ad 2

The last phrase points to the penal character of these phenomena, but evidently only prior to Baptism.

The reasons why these penalties must remain are supplied by the Angelic Doctor himself. The first basic reason, which gives to death in particular a truly theological value, is incorporation with and assimilation to the suffering and dying Christ: "It is fitting that what takes place in the Head should take place also in the member incorporated. Now from the very beginning of His conception Christ was full of grace and truth, yet He had a passible body, which through His passion and death was raised up to a life of glory. Wherefore a Christian receives grace in Baptism, as to his soul, but he retains a passible body so that he may suffer for Christ therein: yet at length he will be raised up to a life of impassibility."⁵⁴

In its symbolism and mystic efficacy, then, the effect of Baptism is incorporation into Christ, so that the baptized no longer dies in punishment for sin but as a condition of his nature with a right to the resurrection. St Thomas holds that Christ Himself was under the *necessity* to die, not only to redeem the human race, but because he possesses a true human nature. That necessity was *absolute*, so that if He had not been put to death He would have died naturally.⁵⁵ Kloppenburg objects that Christ died because He willed to die: He *assumed* human defects to satisfy for the sin of human nature. But St. Thomas has two paragraphs dedicated to explaining the term "quia" in the text "Christus mortuus est quia voluit," in the sense of *cause*, inasmuch as Christ as God chose death as a means for the redemption, and through His human will gave Himself over to His persecutors, and in the sense of *concomitance* inasmuch as His human will accepted death as decreed by the Father. And he concludes "This does not exclude the necessity of dying, for this same thing happened to St

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, a 3

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 3, q 14, a 4.

Peter and the other saints." Shortly before he had said: "But since death was in Christ because of human nature, therefore, as we simply (*simpliciter*) admit that Christ died, so similarly we may admit simply (*simpliciter*) that Christ had the necessity of dying. . . ." ⁵⁶ Our Lord, therefore, voluntarily submitted Himself to the necessity of dying. There is this difference, however, between Christ and His Mother Christ became a descendant of Adam by *free will*; Mary, by *necessity* Christ voluntarily took up natural defects of human nature compatible with the Incarnation; Mary, while accepting them willingly, to cooperate toward the purpose of the Incarnation, had to take them because of the condition of her nature. If, according to Aquinas, Christ, being perfectly innocent, had to die, because human nature in the present order is mortal, are we correct in concluding that because Mary was sinless, she had a right to exemption from death? If she died, can we hold, in view of what Trent and St. Thomas teach on the effects of Baptism, that her death was a *punishment* for sin?

St. Paul has much to say that is enlightening in this regard. Death entered the world as a punishment, but it did not remain in that capacity, for it was given a new direction, a re-orientation in the actual state of things, due to the power of the passion and death of Christ, infused into the soul of the baptized. Punishment is deleted; death is now the condition of a nature in which grace is present as a pledge of immortality. St. Thomas, on this text of St. Paul: "We are heirs too; heirs of God, sharing the inheritance of Christ; only we must share His sufferings, if we are to share His glory" (*Rom* 8.17), comments as follows: "Christ . . . through the passion attained to the glory of immortality, so we likewise, who are His members, are freed by His passion from all debt of punishment, yet so that we first receive in our souls the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby our names are written down for the

⁵⁶ *In 3 Sent*, dis 16, q 1, a 2

inheritance of immortal glory, while we yet have a passible and mortal body: but afterwards, being made conformable to the sufferings and death of Christ, we are brought into immortal glory. . . ." ⁵⁷ This is basically St. Paul's doctrine on that transcendental reality we call the Mystical Body. There is a vital and intrinsic union between the Head—Christ—and His members, which makes it possible for the members in their suffering and death to complete what is lacking in His passion and death (*Col.* 1:24). Death has a real salvific efficacy; it is the way to perfection and life

MARY'S "*de facto*" DEATH

Most theologians who have written on this problem have been satisfied with showing that Mary had no strict right to immortality; her grace was redemptive and as a matter of fact we know she enjoyed no immunity from the pains and sufferings of this life. No one will hold that she renounced from the first moment of her existence the right to immunity from suffering. An analysis of her Immaculate Conception reveals a privilege limited to immunity from sin and concupiscence. We conclude she had to die because of the inherently mortal condition of her body. But the closing paragraph of the preceding section gives a clue to something more. A study of pertinent Scripture texts brings to light the fact that death has some important theological implications. In Genesis it is inflicted as a punishment for sin committed, it is linked with the privation of the other preternatural gifts, it presupposes the abuse of free will and is thus related to the moral order. But in the order of grace and Redemption it has taken on another aspect: it is reparation for sin. There is the mystery hidden in God from all eternity, which, according to St. Paul, brought about the salvation of the human race by the very thing that

⁵⁷ *S. Theol.* 3, q. 49, a. 3, ad 3, 1a-2ae, q. 85, a. 5, ad 2

was sin's punishment: Christ's death is redemptive in the plan of God.

Some authors have seen immortality in Mary's fullness of grace, in her total victory with Christ over sin and death. But looked at through revelation, this triumph appears limited and conditioned concretely by the way in which it was achieved, that is, through Christ's death. Thus Father Bernardo de la Inmaculada, C P., defends the view that, because of her personal and unique position in the supernatural economy of Redemption, the exigencies of Mary's grace must be harmonized with the fact of death and suffering; death as a purely natural phenomenon simply does not exist.⁵⁸ The redemptive grace actualized in Our Lady and received in its fullness, transformed her into the perfect likeness of her Son, who is the source of the grace received. The grace of Christ leads to immortality through the resurrection from the dead. God thus used for supernatural ends a natural defect to which Mary was subject because of the privation of original justice in Adam.

For Basilio de San Pablo, C P., there is an instrumental efficient causality, a finality in the grace of Christ infused into the soul of Mary that was not present in the grace of original justice, and it was a power that impelled Mary to realize in herself the sufferings and death that would so intimately associate her in the work of the Redemption.⁵⁹ Grace, of course, as to its nature neither excludes nor demands death, but it is definitely a force which moved the soul and all its faculties to the fulfillment of its providential mission. The grace of adoptive filiation leads to configuration with Christ through suffering and death. If Mary did not incur the stain of sin, she had more reason than all the baptized to exemplify this conformity, for she was the Mother of the Redeemer and the

⁵⁸ Bernardo de la Inmaculada, *La muerte de María exigencia de su gracia*, in *EM* 9 (1950) 145

⁵⁹ Basilio de S. Pablo, *Si la gracia de María excluye o reclama su muerte*, in *EM* 5 (1946) 333

spiritual Mother of all men. According to Aquinas, the Father gave His beloved Son over to death "*inspirando charitatem*." This same love inspired Mary to sacrifice in union with the passion of Christ.

The position taken by Bernardo de la Inmaculada differs somewhat from the preceding inasmuch as the solution to the problem is sought not in the direct relation of the terms themselves: grace-death, but in a synthesis of the two on a higher plane, which is the social aspect of the grace of Christ and Mary as Redeemer and Coredeematrix. Ultimately, the reason is the full participation of Mary in the Mystery of Christ.

THE PROTOEVANGELIUM AND MARY'S DEATH

An analysis of the prophecy contained in Genesis 3:15 reveals that Christ and Our Lady were destined to overthrow the power of Satan in the selfsame manner, to achieve a common victory in the roles of New Adam and New Eve. Now, the victory of Christ, as we know from the subsequent revelation of St. Paul, was threefold: over sin, death, and concupiscence. The Apostle tells us that the Redeemer blotted out "the handwriting of the decree that was against us . . . fastening it to the Cross" (*Col* 2:15-15). He was victorious over death: ". . . that through death He might destroy him who had the empire over death, that is to say, the devil" (*Heb* 2:14). The Redeemer's victory comes through an anticipated resurrection that presupposes the fact of His death: "Christ rising again from the dead, dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him" (*Rom.* 6:9). Now, since Mary was also to secure a complete triumph over the infernal serpent, she must conquer sin, death, and concupiscence. Moreover, since this triumph is achieved in perfect unity with her Son, if Christ conquered death by dying, it is logical to conclude that Mary also shared in the redemptive work by dying.

Gallus makes an effort to prove Mary's *de facto* immortality

from this prophecy, inasmuch as the serpent shall pierce the heel of the Woman's seed, by bringing about His passion and death, whereas nothing is said about an attack on the heel of the Woman⁶⁰ She is, therefore, free from death, and will be victorious over Satan by her immortality, unlike her Son Who destroyed Satan's empire by His death on the Cross.

This possible interpretation of the Protoevangelium, which limits Mary's part to a perfect and complete victory, preceded by a struggle essentially different from that by which her Son achieved the same victory, does not seem to square with the traditional interpretation in the Church. The documents which immediately follow, speak of identity not only as to triumph and glorification, but also in the manner of securing that triumph, which positively excludes any idea of immortality. Thus the Fathers of the Vatican Council refer to Christ's threefold victory as integral parts of a total triumph, and then proceed to show how Mary also shared in it: by her Immaculate Conception she conquered sin, by her virginal Motherhood she triumphed over concupiscence; by an anticipated resurrection she triumphed over death.⁶¹

The Bull *Munificentissimus Deus*, which defined Mary's Assumption, points out how early Patristic writings, particularly those of Justin and Irenaeus, formulated the Eve-Mary parallelism, and emphasized not only an identical victory but also the absolutely self-same struggle.⁶² This tradition designates "Mary as the New Eve, who, although subject to the New Adam, is most intimately associated with Him in that

⁶⁰ Gallus, *Ad argumentum de conceptione ex Gen 3 15 erutum*, in *Mm* 17 (1955) 257; idem, *Ad "immortalitatem" B M Virginis*, in *Mm* 12 (1950) 39, idem, *Assumptio B M Virginis ex protoevangelio definitibus*, in *DTP* 52 (1949) 137.

⁶¹ Cf. *ADSC* 7, 869 f.

⁶² St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryphone*; PG 6, 709-712. St. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses*; PG 7, 958-9. Cf. J. Bover, S.J., *La mediación universal de la segunda Eva en la tradición patristica*, in *EE* 2 (1923) 321-350.

struggle against the infernal foe which, as foretold in the Protoevangelium, finally resulted in that most complete victory over sin and death which are always mentioned together in the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles (*Rom.* 5 6; *1 Cor.* 15:21-26, 54-57) Consequently, just as the glorious resurrection of Christ was an *essential* part and final sign of this victory, so that *struggle* which was *common* to the Blessed Virgin and her divine Son should be brought to a close by the glorification of her virginal body, for the same Apostle says. 'When this mortal thing hath put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: death is swallowed up in victory.'⁶³

We know that death was the means established by God to crush the serpent's head in the very act of his attack on the heel of Christ; this is the essence of the redemptive work. Mary's association here is complete in battle and victory. To eliminate her death is to destroy that perfect association which Tradition has seen in the Genesis passage.

THE COREDEMPTION AND MARY'S DEATH

Though theologians are not agreed as to the nature of Mary's Coredemption, we believe that, taken in its strict and formal sense, as an immediate, formal cooperation in the objective work of Christ's Redemption, it postulates Mary's death. The proof drawn from the Protoevangelium has an independent value, but it carries over into the field of Marian Coredemption. The latter is not a dogmatic truth but it has a solid theological basis. Coredemption in the wide sense of a mediate cooperation in the formal act of Redemption, would not require Mary's death, since any of the actions by which

⁶³ AAS 42 (1950) 768-769. On this point cf. J. B. Carol, OFM, *The Apostolic Constitution "Munificentissimus Deus" and Our Lady's Coredemption*, in *Mm* 13 (1951) 237-256. This same article appeared also in *AER* 125 (October, 1951) 255-273.

she united herself to the work of her Son would have sufficed for the fulfillment of her mission. But strict Coredemption, which gives to Mary's role a deeper significance, a greater penetration, so to speak, in the very act of purchasing the merits of salvation, seems to require her association in the positive realization of what was specifically redemptive, that is, the death of Christ.

The argument is strengthened when the Coredemption is viewed as an exigency of Mary's spiritual Motherhood, considering that we cannot be sons without being redeemed. It is her spiritual Motherhood that wins for us the life she communicates to us, so that in a true sense that Motherhood, in its own order and on a subordinate plane, is what we may call—capital grace, though the phrase may sound novel when applied to Mary.⁶⁴ It is her spiritual Motherhood which entitles her to the role of Coredemption, the latter completing it inasmuch as it makes possible our perfect regeneration as adoptive sons. As Christ's capital grace fitted Him for the Redemption, and became our grace through the Redemption itself, so Mary's fullness of grace prepared her for the work of Coredemption, rendering her spiritual Motherhood effective in relation to the redeemed. Now, both grace and sin in the present state of redeemed humanity have social as well as personal significance and implications. Original sin stains the soul of every man entering the world and is therefore something essentially solidary. Redemption, too, in its beginning and term, is universal in its intensity and extension, saving the whole man and every man. Though in Christ we see the fullness of grace, we see also His passion and death. He took upon Himself the penalties of fallen nature and entered into a physical and moral communion of solidarity with mankind to

⁶⁴ The theological basis for the expression, its use in the past, and the limitations to which it is subject are succinctly treated in E. Sauras, O.P., *El Cuerpo Místico de Cristo* (Madrid, 1952) 521sq.

set it right with reference to its supernatural destiny. In line with God's plan, Christ's moral communion with the human race required punishment for the sins which He bore for us. Physical communion with our human nature postulated the presence of the penalties of suffering and death which merited for Him bodily glorification. Mary, too, united to Christ by an indissoluble bond, enters into the redemptive work under both these titles. She enters the Hypostatic Order as the Mother of the Redeemer, and she enjoys the role of spiritual Motherhood over all the adopted sons of God. Hers is also a physical and moral solidarity with mankind⁶⁵. Her role in this drama of salvation will be, as it was in the case of Christ, to destroy sin and death and, in a subordinate manner, to win grace for all of mankind. Evidently, her Coredemption, as a partial function of her spiritual Motherhood, while presupposing her fullness of grace, reveals the highly realistic position she occupies in the mystery of Christ and the concrete conditions in which that mystery is realized, leading her to an acceptance of all that is essential in the present economy for the complete Redemption, namely, redemptive suffering and death.

We admit that a "mystic," virtual death, such as her sufferings at the foot of the Cross, or for that matter, any least merit or suffering, could be sufficient for a real Coredemption. The Redemption is something whose measure depends on the free will of God. He could have forgiven sin and bestowed grace without any redemption. Actually, however, He willed a Redemption unto death, "*morte intercedente*." The Coredemption is not as explicit in Sacred Scripture as the Redemption itself and the way it is to be effected. But in the light of the Protoevangelium and of Mary's unique supernatural position as the *real* spiritual Mother of the redeemed, possessing in the *proper* sense of the terms a physical and moral

⁶⁵ Cf. Bernardo de la Inmaculada, *art. cit.*, 158.

solidarity with the human race, it seems unwarranted to limit the Coredemption to the passion

Father Gallus opposes the argument from the Coredemption on the score that it would have been necessary for Mary to die when the objective Redemption took place.⁶⁶ Otherwise, prior to her death, the objective Redemption of Christ was either not consummated, or her death does not pertain to the objective Redemption. We answer that Mary could have made the sacrifice of her life long before she actually died, intentionally uniting the meritorious value of her death to that of Christ on the Cross. After all, we are dealing here with the moral order, where everything depends on the intention and the will, as Mariologists stress in connection with the immediate and formal Coredemption. Thus, for example, previous to Christ's coming into the world, His grace was conferred on the just of the Old Testament and it was conferred on Mary before the Redemption was accomplished. A thing may have had moral existence before physical existence, and so exert a moral efficiency prior to any physical efficiency.⁶⁷ Thus the resurrection of Christ preexisted morally or intentionally in His death: He died to rise again. Besides, as Father Engler, C.M.F., points out, if Mary's death could not enter into the redemptive work, we would have to hold the same of all her sufferings.⁶⁸ Did the anguish of her heart cease to have any value after the death of Jesus? Tradition has made much of her coredemptive sufferings, such as, witnessing the lance thrust into the Savior's side and embracing the dead body. If these sufferings could be integrated into the redemptive work, why not her death?

Father Gallus charges that there is absolutely no basis in

⁶⁶ Gallus, *art. cit.*, in *Mm* 12 (1950) 38-39

⁶⁷ Cf. E. Sauras, *La muerte de María y la corredención*, in *EM* 9 (1950) 210

⁶⁸ J. de Castro Engler, *O problema Morte ou imortalidade de Maria*, in *EphM* 3 (1953) 13.

revelation for the view that Mary's death was by anticipation incorporated into the death of Jesus on the Cross. But the reasons we have given for Mary's death up to now make this view much more plausible than any reasons which may be advanced for her immortality.

The objection based on the distance in time between the two deaths may be solved by the theory of St Francis de Sales. With deep theological penetration, he writes that if the first Christians had but one heart and one soul because of their intense mutual love; if St. Paul could in truth exclaim that he no longer lived, but Christ lived in him through divine love, certainly between Christ and His Mother there must have been but one soul, one life. Now Mary's love for her Son surpassed that of all other men. Naturally, then, the sword of sorrow pierced her soul much deeper. She received the death blows with Christ on Calvary, they were wounds of love so powerful that they could have severed the bonds uniting her soul and body. Of these wounds she was to die later.⁶⁹ The tremendous power of divine love in its effects through the soul on the body is evidenced in the lives of many of the Saints. In the case of Mary, it is a common doctrine of the Fathers and theologians in the Church that she suffered in her heart all that Jesus suffered in His body, and that if His sufferings were more than sufficient to cause His death, they ought also to have caused her death. It should be remarked here that this is not an argument establishing the absolute necessity of Mary's death, her sufferings could have been counteracted, for example, by the joy of the resurrection. But once we admit the validity of other arguments, this serves to clear up difficulties and offers a perfect explanation of how two deaths chronolog-

⁶⁹ St Francis de Sales, *Sermon pour la fête de l'Assomption; Oeuvres*, 7 (Annecy, 1896) 443-451. Ref taken from J M Bover, SJ, *Origen y desenvolvimiento de la devoción al Corazón de María en los Santos Padres y escritores eclesiásticos*, in *EM* 4 (1945) 104-107.

ically separated, maintained, nevertheless, an internal unity through the dynamics of love and intention.

Still another objection comes from the teaching of St. Paul on the condition of the just at the time of the second coming of Christ. We know that the full triumph of Christ over death in the just is normally to be brought about by their resurrection from the dead (*1 Cor.* 15:22-23). Yet that victory will be just as complete when, at the *parousia*, Christ transforms the mortal bodies of living men into glorified bodies (*1 Cor.* 15:51; *2 Cor.* 5:2-4; *1 Thes.* 4:15-17). But there is an important difference between the condition of the elect on the one hand, and that of Christ and His Mother on the other. The victory of the elect on the last day will be an effect or result of Christ's victory through the passion, the death, and the resurrection. Now since Mary's victory is identically the same as Christ's, it follows that she, too, overcame death by rising again with a glorified body. Even if the exemption of the elect from the universal law of death be considered a real privilege, it does not stand as an objection against Mary's anticipated resurrection, for the transcendent nature of her triumph is measured by its proximity to that of Christ who was glorified by a resurrection from the dead.

Besides, the fact that the faithful living at the end of time will not endure death (according to the more probable opinion of exegetes), does not argue a privileged condition and, therefore, does not favor Mary's immortality. Their condition is due to occasion and circumstance, not to an abundance of grace or perfect sinlessness. At the root of the supernatural transformations that have been wrought by the Incarnation, we find sanctifying grace. It is the divine element that consecrates and transfigures all that is human into something divine. Grace did this in the first place by the death of the Redeemer; then it sanctifies and incorporates into His saving death through Baptism the sufferings and death of all the re-

deemed. If in the particular circumstances at the end of time, the elect escape the universal law of death, it will not be because of the exigency of the grace they have received. Rather a direct divine intervention will effect the transformation of their bodies from mortality into immortality.

Another point to be considered is that immunity from death is what theologians would call a *gratia gratis data*, which does not interiorly sanctify the soul. The argument for admitting these graces in Mary can never be simply the fact that others have had them. God bestows them as He wills, for reasons known to Himself and often unknown to us. The Apostles and Saints have been granted the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles, but we do not conclude from that that Our Lady had to have them.

In bringing this study to a close, we would like to stress the point that, even after the strong light of theological argumentation has been brought to bear upon the present problem, it is the morally unanimous tradition of the Church that remains the most powerful argument in favor of Mary's actual death. We believe that it is a tradition that is dogmatic in the strict sense of the term. But the difficulty has been to find an adequate theological reason or reasons explaining the fact of her death, and it is this speculative or *quaestio juris* aspect that today is such a live issue among Mariologists. Our procedure has been to examine and develop the theological reasons under the guidance of the Church's magisterium. Of the reasons advanced, that of the Coredemption seems to be the most effective, but the cumulative value of the arguments from the Protoevangelium, the relationship between grace and the gift of integrity, Adamic descendency, baptismal incorporation, the exigencies of redemptive grace and spiritual Maternity, is overwhelming in postulating Mary's death.

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