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THE MARY-CHURCH ANALOGY IN ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE OF MARIOLOGY

ALL the parts of theology cohere in close union. They form a single whole in which one member supports the others and is at the same time supported by the others. Nothing in all revelation and theology may be neglected. There is indeed a difference in rank among revealed truths and their theological elaboration, for God is the origin, subject, and end of theology; Jesus Christ is the way to God, and everything else is grouped around the Savior in subordination to Him. But that does not mean that anything may be slighted; all the truths of theology, even those which to a superficial view may seem to be of minor moment, are significant and important.

Among theological disciplines Mariology occupies a distinguished position. What Mary is and what she means are defined by her relationship to Jesus Christ. She was called to her task and shaped for it by God Himself. The Incarnate Word took a definite form of life through this woman, and set the course of her own life as in the case of no other creature. Because of her maternal association with the Redeemer, she pertains essentially to the history of salvation.

Hence Mariology is a sort of corollary or complement of Christology. The doctrine about Mary adds something to the doctrine about Christ, not indeed as co-ordinate with the latter, but as subordinate to it. Like ecclesiology or the theology of grace or the treatise on the sacraments, Mariology contributes clarification to Christology and soteriology.

Christ continues to live and work in the Church. He is the Lord, the Church is His people; He is the head, the Church is His body. Since the body is conformed to the head, the

Church, present on earth in time between the Ascension and the Second Coming, is a perpetual manifestation of Christ.

Consequently, as there is a vital union between Christ and Mary, so there is a vital union between Christ's body, the Church, and Mary. In her the Church is reflected as in a mirror; the teaching of the Fathers leaves no doubt that Mary is the perfect type and representative of the Church. We can observe the Church in Mary, as we can observe Mary in the Church. Therefore Mariology, which has a Christological dimension, also has an ecclesiological dimension.

That is why the surge of interest which contemporary theologians have in the Church is intimately connected with the development of Mariology. Our time, which has been called the century of the Church, is also called, and without contradiction, the century of Mary. The immense literature on the Church, so vast that no scholar can assimilate it, is matched by the immense literature on Mary. Deepening understanding of the Church is linked with a deepening understanding of Mary, and both contribute to a deepening understanding of Christ.

As Mary is the prototype of the Church founded by Christ, so she is the ideal of mankind redeemed by Christ. When we behold her we perceive, in its supreme realization, the change which has taken place in men who have been saved by the Son of God and who live in the Church. She is the new supernatural person formed by Christ, the new creature in the highest sense. In clearest light she manifests the greatness of redeemed man, both in the initial stage that belongs to history and in the definitive stage that follows history. She is the human figure in whom the men of our day, no longer sure of themselves, can observe the working out of faith in Christ and can know the ultimate meaning of the life inaugurated by Christ.

Reflections such as these help to explain why Mariology

today stands in the foreground of theological interest. Interest fosters progress, and fortunately progress has been possible owing to the biblical renewal that has been intense in Catholic circles, as also to the renewal of patristic researches and to the discoveries that have rewarded investigation of the Marian writings of the Middle Ages. Especially the solemn definitions of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption have guided the attention of theologians to the importance and effectiveness of ecclesiological elements for the doctrinal development of Mariology.

Among the problems challenging contemporary Mariologists, as an examination of recent publications about Our Lady shows, one that is still dominant involves the primary principle of an organic Marian theology. The reason for this concern is the awareness that Mariology, which stems from scattered reports in Sacred Scripture and has advanced during long centuries in uneven and sometimes disconnected spurts of progress, must possess a unity of its own. The task is to isolate the basic truth which is the fundamental principle for the unification and intelligence of all the other Mariological truths that have been acquired, as well as of those that are still on the way toward clarification.

After many efforts at solution, Mariologists are far from unanimity on the determination of this primary principle. The proposals which have been advocated may be classified in two general categories, according as they seek the organic unity of Mariology in a Christological or an ecclesiological setting. Most Mariologists have organized Marian theology in function of Christ, our Redeemer, and in this Christological perspective have sought the basic principle of their science. In the majority opinion of theologians who share this point of view, the primary principle of Mariology is the Blessed Virgin's divine maternity, entailing by way of connatural consequence her association in the redemptive career of her Son.

Other theologians desire to situate Mariology more directly

in the economy of salvation, which proceeds from Christ to His Church, and in this ecclesiological perspective endeavor to formulate the basic principle which, according to various proposals made by them, is found in Mary regarded as prototype or personification or representative of the Church. Authors who try to discover the primary principle of Mariology in such relations between the Blessed Virgin and the Church have been motivated partly by the current which they think is carrying theology in the direction of ecclesiology, partly by the reaction which extremist theories about Mary's redemptive association with the Savior have stirred up among them. They are by no means hostile to the idea of Mary's co-operation in redemption, but they are convinced that some Mariologists have gone perilously astray by drawing Mary so close to Christ as to make her a co-cause of our salvation, whereas revelation explicitly refers Christ's salvific power to the hypostatic union, that is, to the fact that He is the God-man.¹

In any case, the essays attempting during these latter years to discern the fundamental principle of Mariology in the perspective of ecclesiology deserve to be examined, compared, and evaluated.

I. THE MARY-CHURCH ANALOGY AS PRIMARY PRINCIPLE OF MARIOLOGY

A. *Mary as Prototype of the Church*

Exposition. In the judgment of Otto Semmelroth, Mariology, even in modern times, lacks the unity and harmony that ought to characterize it. Although the profound meaning of some aspects of the mystery of Mary has been plumbed, a compact and unified Marian treatise has not yet been con-

¹ For an account and criticism of some extremist views, see H. M. Köster, *Die Magd des Herrn* (2nd ed., Limburg an der Lahn, 1954) esp. 134-136, 137, 140-144.

structed, because the fundamental principle of Mariology has not been correctly assigned. Until we transcend the limits of Mariology itself and penetrate to the center of the history of salvation we shall not apprehend the basic principle regulating Marian theology. Accordingly, Semmelroth devotes the first part of his book, *Urbild der Kirche*, to this problem in an endeavor to establish the supreme Mariological principle, which he expresses in the proposition: Mary is the prototype of the Church.

The solution Semmelroth proposes is not, he says, the product of arbitrary speculation, but derives from a constant tradition that seems to go back to divine revelation.² It is indicated in Genesis 3:15, John 19:26 f., and the Apocalypse, chapter 12. Patristic teaching, as represented mainly by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Methodius of Olympus, Epiphanius, Ambrose, and Augustine, explains and completes the Scriptural witness. The Fathers passed the truth on to the medieval Scholastics, who kept it alive in their interpretation of the Canticle of Canticles as referring to the union of Mary and the Church with Jesus Christ.³

Tradition does not, of course, explicitly identify the primary principle of Mariology with the idea that Mary is the prototype of the Church. Yet reason perceives that the primary principle must be a mystery which cannot be reduced to any other in the field of Mariology, and which is the logical and theological source of all other Marian mysteries.⁴ Accordingly, if we examine the great mysteries in which the Blessed Virgin figures and compare them with her mission as archetype of the Church, we see that none of them is as fundamental as this one. And if we go on to inquire which mystery of Mary or which of her prerogatives most closely links her with the

² O. Semmelroth, S.J., *Urbild der Kirche* (2nd ed., Würzburg, 1954) 36 f.

³ *Ibid.*, 44-54.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

central mystery of the redemptive economy, we again come to the same conclusion: Mary is the prototype of the Church.⁵ Even the divine maternity has its ultimate basis in this truth; in the order of the divine intentions, Mary was called to be the Mother of God that she might be the prototype of the Church.⁶

Semmelroth has no desire to depreciate the divine maternity; any attack seeking to dislodge this dignity from its rightful eminence would be a grave error. Nor does he contest Mary's mission as associate of her Son, the Redeemer. But the important thing is to know what is truly first in the finality of divine predestination. What, in God's wisdom, is the dominant notion relative to the Blessed Virgin? In the order of execution of the divine purpose, we correctly assert that Mary is prototype of the Church because she is the Mother associated with her Son. But if we rise, as we ought, to the plane of God's intentional finality, we must admit that Mary became the Mother associated with the Redeemer in consequence of her destiny to be the prototype of the Church. This finality is primary and prevails over all other considerations. In God's design, the center of the economy of salvation is not the physical, historical Christ, but the whole Christ, that is, Christ with His Church, which as His bride receives from Him the fruits of His redemptive work to distribute them to all the members. Therefore, the supreme principle of Mariology is the mystery which brings Mary into closest contact with the Church; and that is the mystery of Mary as archetype of the Church, for it locates her in the very center of the economy of salvation, the Church in its essential function as intermediary of salvation. As prototype of the Church, Mary is the epitome of the Church, the Church in germ; hence she possesses the fullness of the grace of the Church, and this grace she imparts to the Church as it expands throughout space and time.⁷

⁵ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 58, 137.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 59 f.

The value of this principle appears, Semmelroth thinks, when it is applied to the difficult question of Mary's co-operation in the redemption. Christ alone, by His acts of oblation and satisfaction culminating in the sacrifice of Calvary, is the productive cause of our salvation. From Him the Church receives grace and a share in His life. Each believer must accept God's offer of redemption, appropriating it to himself by faith and love.⁸ Mary, as representative of mankind and prototype of the Church, gave consent to Christ's work in the name of the whole human race, and by this acceptance appropriated the fruits of redemption not for herself only, but for the universal Church. Thus she may be called Coredemptrix, in the sense that she contributed, not to Christ's work, but to the application of its effect in the Church.⁹ Her co-operation extended beyond subjective redemption, understood as the application of the fruits of redemption to individuals, for her co-operation in her own subjective redemption was, at the same time, the acceptance of redemption for the entire Church, and therefore, with regard to us, is objective redemption.¹⁰

Criticism. Mary's title as prototype of the Church is justified and is in line with patristic tradition; there is no call to quarrel with Semmelroth on this point. However, his hypothesis that it is the primary principle of Mariology issues in frustration. The first principle of a theological discipline must be formally revealed, because the basic principles of theology are articles of faith. But the proposition that Mary is the prototype of the Church is not formally revealed, although Scripture contains some indications favorable to the idea, which some of the Fathers later brought out explicitly. Even the Apocalypse, which brings Mary and the Church together in a

⁸ *Ibid.*, 70-72. See also Semmelroth's article, *Heilsgeschichtliche Sinndeutung des Mariengeheimnisses und der Marienverehrung*, in *GL* 23 (1950) 115 f.

⁹ *Urbild der Kirche*, 73 f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 95 f.

single image, provides no more than a basis for deducing that the Blessed Virgin is the ideal of the Church and its most perfect realization.¹¹ And none of the Fathers has pushed the typology to the point of making Mary the representative of the Church in our supernatural restoration.¹²

Even prescindendo from the fact that the typology extolled by Semmelroth is not a dogma of revelation, his thesis is marred by the enormous disadvantage that it does not furnish a principle logically inducing an understanding of the divine maternity which, of all the great prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin, is the one most deeply rooted in the Christian consciousness. According to his reconstruction, in God's plan the divine maternity was subsequent to Mary's function as prototype of the Church; the truth is rather that she became so eminent a type because of her divine maternity. In other words, Mary is not the Mother of God because she was destined to be the archetype of the Church; the reverse is true: because she is the Mother of God, associated with the Redeemer in His saving work, she is endowed in her person and her mission with the qualities that make her the prototype of the Church.

In judging Semmelroth's proposal, we must also bear in mind that many Fathers are aware of other types of the Church in addition to Mary, for example, the entire Old Testament, the holy city of Jerusalem, the ark of Noe, the burning bush, the woman of Canaan, Mary Magdalen, and so on. Hence the Blessed Virgin is a type of the Church along with many other types. Therefore, in ecclesiastical tradition, there are various ways and degrees of typifying the Church. Mary is unquestionably a type of the Church in an outstanding way that is unique. But to account for the special manner

¹¹ D. Fernández, C.M.F., *Maria y la Iglesia en la moderna bibliografía alemana*, in *EM* 18 (1957) 89.

¹² C. Dillenschneider, C.S.S.R., *Le principe premier d'une théologie mariale organique* (Paris, 1955) 58.

in which she is type of the Church, we have to have recourse to her divine maternity.¹³ Thus again we come to the conclusion that she is the prototype of the Church because she is the Mother of God.

Furthermore, a type, even a prototype, indicates a relation, an analogy, which must be studied in the light of other, more fundamental principles. Mary's relations with the Church cannot be comprehended except in the light of her relations with Jesus Christ, head of the Church; and the most basic of these relations is the fact that she is His Mother.¹⁴

Lastly, Semmelroth's theory of Mary's part in our redemption, which he sets squarely upon his principle that she is the prototype of the Church, is hardly in line with doctrinal development in this problem of Mariology. He attributes to Mary a true causality, but one that is purely receptive. However, the tradition of many centuries and in particular the teachings of recent Popes favor an activity for her that is far more than a simple acceptance of salvation that was wrought exclusively by Christ. Mary on Calvary truly typifies and represents the Church; but precisely by her active co-operation, subordinate to that of her Son, in the very work of our redemption.

B. *Mary as Representative of the Church*

Exposition. In 1947 Heinrich Maria Köster published his book, *Die Magd des Herrn*, which was criticized widely, and for the most part unfavorably, in Mariological circles. Three years later, in his *Unus Mediator*, he undertook to answer his critics as well as to defend and consolidate his first position. Then, in 1954, he again issued *Die Magd des Herrn* in a second, greatly improved edition. The master idea remains un-

¹³ M. Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik*, 5. *Mariologie* (Munich, 1955) 261.

¹⁴ Basilio de San Pablo, C.P., *Momentos de la maternidad de María sobre la Iglesia*, in *EM* 18 (1957) 323.

changed, but is more accurately expressed and more carefully worked out.

Köster stresses the importance of Mary in the history of salvation, in which Christian consciousness attributes to her a real co-operation in objective redemption. What is the nature of this collaboration? Is there a place for Our Lady which is not already occupied and which in no way encroaches on Christ's redemptive work that is marred by no defect or lacuna? Such a place does indeed exist. To discover it we need only have recourse to the great Covenant or Alliance which characterizes the history of our redemption from its earliest origins. This saving Alliance cannot be a strictly bilateral contract between God who saves and man whom He wishes to save. It is gratuitously offered to us by God; yet it implies some reciprocity between the two parties. God invites man to a sacred partnership; man must respond to this call and set forth to meet God.¹⁵

The New Testament presents God the Father who offers the Alliance, sinful humanity to which it is offered, and Jesus Christ, the one Mediator, who alone carries out the Covenant in the mystery of redemption. But the representation of sinful mankind by the incarnate Son of God seems to require from mankind an acceptance of the substitution; on our part, some declaration of solidarity with our Mediator seems necessary.¹⁶

Who is qualified to make this acceptance if not the Virgin Mary, in whom the meeting of the Son of God with mankind is accomplished at the moment of the Incarnation? In the name of mankind she pronounced her *fiat* and received the Savior by a true maternal conception; through her lifelong prolongation of this same consent she entered, still in the name of mankind, into the whole redemptive mystery of her Son,

¹⁵ H. M. Köster, *Die Magd des Herrn* (2nd ed., Limburg an der Lahn, 1954), 59-62, 76-81, 97 f.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 151.

and received from it the fruits of salvation for all of us. Thus everything is accounted for: the unique office of Christ the Mediator in His redemptive work, and Mary's ecumenical office in the redemptive work of her Son.

After devoting more than half of his book to the development of this thesis, Köster raises the question whether this idea of Mary's role in the economy of salvation possesses all the properties that ought to be found in the fundamental principle of Mariology. He is inclined to answer in the affirmative, provided that the proposition is carefully worded. He puts it thus: "Mary, as a member, is the representative and personal summit of mankind which is to be saved and actually is saved; that is, confronting the one Mediator, the incarnate Son of God, she represents the Church in its salvific alliance with God."¹⁷ Or, more simply and briefly, with Köster's meticulous nuances in mind, we may say that the fundamental principle is Mary's function of representing the Church for the reception of salvation.

This principle enables us to perceive that Mary is one of us, since she belongs to mankind which is in need of redemption and has been redeemed. At the same time, she is set apart from us by her rank and her mission, for she is the personal summit and the representative of all the redeemed. She is likewise distinguished from Christ in rank and mission; for she is not, like Him, head of mankind, but is the representative of mankind for the purpose of receiving the fruits of redemption from Him. At the moment of the Incarnation, when the Son of God first laid hold of humanity, the representative of mankind could be no other than His Mother, for only she could furnish Him with His human nature for the hypostatic union. And when Christ again laid hold of mankind on Calvary, the representative of mankind became Coredeemress. Finally, this same representative of mankind became the Medi-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 296.

atress of all graces by making the salvific alliance effective for redeemed individuals.¹⁸ In like manner, starting with this basic principle, all the other privileges of Mary become intelligible.

Appraisal. Köster's valiant attempt to establish his fundamental principle does not turn out to be very successful. He himself seems to harbor a suspicion that absence of the divine maternity from his formulation of the principle is a defect.¹⁹ We rightly expect the primary principle of Mariology to promote an understanding of everything else in the treatise. But the idea that Mary is the representative of mankind in need of redemption can scarcely be regarded as the principle which facilitates our grasp of the divine maternity. On the contrary, Mary's divine maternity is the principle permitting us to grasp her role as representative of mankind that is to be saved. The very fact that our humanity, in the person of the Blessed Virgin, generates Christ our head, explains why this same humanity is fittingly represented before Christ by her.²⁰

Köster asserts that his principle safeguards Mary's superiority over all the others who have been redeemed, on the score that she alone, as the personal summit and representative, not only of individuals, but of the human race as such, enters into the order of objective redemption. However, the principle of intelligibility of this matchless rank is precisely her dignity as preredeemed Mother of Christ the Redeemer. Although she pertains to the order of those who have been redeemed by her Son, she incomparably surpasses them by her maternity which inaugurated objective redemption and which, at the climax of objective redemption on Calvary, equipped her to co-operate with the Redeemer in His sacrifice. Therefore, Mary's divine

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 300 f.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 299.

²⁰ See Dillenschneider, *Le principe premier d'une théologie mariale organique* (Paris, 1955) 70.

maternity is the principle aiding us to understand that which Köster proposes as the primary principle of Mariology, and accounts for her role of universal representative of the human race, not only for the reception of the fruits of redemption, but for an active collaboration in the very work of Christ that accomplished our salvation on the Cross.²¹

Accordingly, Köster's theory is no more acceptable than that of Semmelroth. The Mary-Church analogy does not seem capable of yielding the fundamental principle of Mariology. Yet some relationship must exist between the principle and the analogy.

II. THE MARY-CHURCH ANALOGY AS CONSEQUENCE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE

The analogy between Mary and the Church supposes some resemblances and dissimilarities between the two. Among the basic differences is the fact that the Church is a society, an institution designed to celebrate and perpetuate the mysteries of the Passion of Jesus Christ from generation to generation. The Church distributes the supernatural gifts of Christ by the exercise of its hierarchical and sacerdotal offices. Mary does not possess any hierarchical or sacerdotal power, although she contributes mightily to the union of the supreme High Priest with His people. Mary is completely preserved from sin; the Church must, because of the imperfection of its members, unremittingly combat sin within itself. Mary has arrived at the term of glorification, while the Church is on the way; the community must still await in its other members the goal already reached in its most eminent member.

In spite of such differences, Mary and the Church resemble each other in many respects. In fact, there is more than a series of parallels between them; Mary is the proto-

²¹ Cf. C. Vollert, S.J., *The Fundamental Principle of Mariology*, in *Mariology*, ed. J. B. Carol, O.F.M., 2 (Milwaukee, 1957) 78-87.

type, the basic figure of the Church, embodying within herself what is best in the Church, so that from her we can come to a clearer knowledge of the Church. What is written about the Church can be read also in reference to Mary, just as what is written about Mary can in many essential points be understood also in reference to the Church. The mystery of Mary and the mystery of the Church are interwoven in many details.²²

Thus Mary, Mother of Christ, is also the mother of the Church and of Christians; the Church, too, is mother of Christians. The Church is the spouse of Christ; Mary is the Mother of Christ, associated with Him in His redemptive mission in a union that eminently verifies, while it vastly transcends, all that the biblical imagery of spouse suggests. The Church is the new Eve, mother of all the supernaturally living; Mary is also the new Eve, mother of all who live the new life brought by Christ. Mary is the Virgin of virgins, in the most literal and exalted sense; the Church is likewise virginal, in the sense that it has never adulterated the faith but has always been true to Christ's doctrine. Mary is supremely holy and full of grace, with a sanctity which from the instant of her conception and through her entire life kept all sin remote from her, and which progressed every day of her sojourn on earth until it flowered into her glory and resurrection. The Church is likewise holy and full of grace in the measure of its capacity, and confidently awaits the resurrection of its members. Mary had a coredemptive mission in association with the redemptive mission of Christ at its inception and achievement; the Church is likewise associated with this mission by its office of applying the merits and atonement of Calvary successively in space and time.

What connection links these resemblances, at every point

²² Cf. M. Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik*, 5, *Mariologie* (Munich, 1955) 271.

of which Mary surpasses the Church, with the fundamental principle of Mariology? This principle is not some synthetic formula or axiom from which all the truths about the Blessed Virgin can be reduced by the rational procedures of human logic, for her sublime graces and offices were imparted to her in accord with God's free choice, which we can know only through revelation. Rather, as theologians have increasingly insisted during the past twenty years, it is a primary revealed truth that serves as a principle of intelligibility shedding light over all the teachings of revelation concerning Our Lady and empowering us to apprehend their profound unity. Viewed thus, the fundamental principle of Mariology is the dogma which Pius XII approves as "the principle, the key, and the center of all the privileges of Mary,"²³ that is, the divine maternity, understood not in some arbitrary, abstract sense, but in its concrete, revealed reality, as her relationship to the divine Word arising from the fact that she conceived and gave birth to Him in His human nature; Mary is the Mother of the Second Person of the Trinity who became incarnate for the redemption of mankind.²⁴

This primary principle clarifies all the great prerogatives, graces, and offices of Mary, including the place she occupies and the functions she exercises in the Church. As the Redeemer's Mother who provided Him with His human nature, she stands closest to the source of grace and receives grace in plenitude from Him. That is why she is "full of grace."²⁵ Her fullness of grace entails her Immaculate Conception and her

²³ Radio message, *Por un designio*, Dec. 31, 1950, in *AAS* 43 (1951) 123. Concerning the teaching of modern Popes on the primary principle of Mariology, along with a theological vindication of their position, see C. Vollert, S.J., *The Fundamental Principle of Mariology*, in *Mariology*, ed. J. B. Carol, O.F.M., 2 (Milwaukee, 1957), 73-87.

²⁴ Cf. P. Mahoney, O.P., *The Unitive Principle of Marian Theology*, in *Thom* 18 (1955) 462.

²⁵ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, 3, q. 27, a. 5; cf. q. 7, aa. 1, 9, 13.

freedom from all sin throughout her life. These magnificent gifts are easily intelligible in the light of the divine maternity. The same is true of her perpetual virginity. With revelation of this fact before us, we can readily understand why God's Mother, made fruitful by the action of the Holy Spirit, should preserve her virginity intact at Christ's birth and ever after.

Our Lady's mediatorial office is likewise intelligible. Her divine maternity draws her near to God, who employs the most perfect beings, the ones closest to Him, as intermediaries between Him and less perfect beings. The mediatorial character of Mary's motherhood is manifested in the ancient theme of the new Eve. Because she is the Savior's Mother, she is associated with Him in most intimate community of life for the propagation of the life of grace. The divine Word, who existed eternally before she was born, personally invited her to be His Mother, and by becoming incarnate in her on reception of her free consent, entered into a union with her which has no counterpart in ordinary motherhood and which recalls, while it immeasurably transcends, the union that exists between spouses. Thus Mary's salvific association with Christ stems from her divine maternity.

She who co-operated with her Son in the redemptive act of sacrifice, further co-operates with Him in heaven for distributing the graces of salvation that were merited on Calvary. As on the Cross, Christ has the main causality in this action; but in association with Him and dependence on Him, the Mother dispenses all supernatural graces to the children of men that they may be transformed into the children of God.

Finally, Mary is the universal Mother. Her motherhood did not end with the birth of Christ, for the temporal generation of the Word is not the term but the beginning. The Virgin's Son is the head to which many members are to be joined. They make up His mystical body, the Church, and form with their head a single mystical person, the Whole Christ. There-

fore she who gave birth to the head necessarily gives birth to the members. At the Incarnation she conceived us spiritually, for her maternal action inaugurated the generation of the mystical Christ. On Calvary she bore us spiritually, for there she co-operated maternally to bring about our rebirth in Christ, by gaining for us, in subordination to Him, the graces of our incorporation into His body. Her mediatorial activity in heaven is likewise maternal, not only by the motherly love animating it, but by its effect, which is the supernatural birth of men century after century and their growth in divine life.

Therefore, the revealed truth that Mary is the Mother of God is, in the ordering of God's wisdom, the basic reason underlying all the perfections which account for her resemblance to the Church, or, more accurately, elevate her to be the supreme exemplar, ideal image, and perfect realization of the Church. Because of her divine maternity she is the one full of grace, the new Eve, the most pure Virgin, the associate of the Redeemer, the Coredemptrix and Mediatrix of all graces, Mother of Christians, and prototype of the Church. The divine maternity is the foundation of Mary's relationship to Christ; consequently it is the foundation of her relationship to the work of Christ, to the Whole Christ, and to the mystical body of Christ which is the Church.

III. FINALITY OF THE MARY-CHURCH ANALOGY

The relationship thus accounted for seems clear enough, and most Mariologists who have thought about the Blessed Virgin's connection with the Church would come to the same conclusion. Even O. Semmelroth admits that, in the order of execution, Mary's typology with reference to the Church is a consequence of the divine maternity. However, as we observed above, he contends that, in the order of God's intentional finality which dominates all other considerations, the divine maternity is a consequence of Mary's destiny to be the proto-

type of the Church. Accordingly, the primary principle of Mariology, viewed from the high level of God's designs, is no other than Mary's vocation to be the prototype of the Church.

This position receives support from A. Patfoort who, in a critique of C. Dillenschneider's book, *Le principe premier d'une théologie mariale organique*, believes that it is possible to integrate the opinions seeking the unity of Mariology in an ecclesiological perspective (according to which Mary is prototype or representative of the Church) and to recognize the primacy assigned to this view without sacrificing the cardinal prerogative of the divine maternity.²⁶ If we start from Mary's quality as prototype or representative of the Church and acknowledge that in the finality of God's providence this quality is supreme, we can clarify the totality of the mystery of Mary. At the same time, the eminent dignity of the divine maternity is not compromised, for it, too, in its own sphere, is supreme and retains its primacy. In fact, a real, organic unity reigns among all the basic principles that have been proposed for Mariology; but we must note that they are situated at various depths or are assigned to different registers. In the concrete order, God's decree places the divine maternity itself at the service of sinners, and in this line of finality the ecclesiological role is primary. A simple distinction well accounts for all the data. "Mother of God" is the ultimate principle in the order of formal causality, whereas "Prototype of the Church" is the ultimate principle in the order of finality.²⁷

Proposals of this sort suffer from the defect that they fall short of true ultimates in the domain of finality. Reduced to essential terms, they state that the Mother of God exists for the ultimate purpose of being the prototype of the Church.

²⁶ A. Patfoort, O.P., "*Le principe premier de la mariologie?*", in *RSPT* 41 (1957) 450.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 452.

Such a contention cannot be justified, either within the limited sphere of Mariology regarded as a branch of theology, or in the universal sphere of the hierarchy of ends. As the Blessed Trinity is the origin and end of all divine activity *ad extra*, and as the God-man Jesus Christ is the origin and end of the redemptive economy, so "Mother of God" is, under the incarnate Word, the source and end of all the truths of Mariology. All of Mary's privileges, prerogatives, and offices have their finality in her divine motherhood.²⁸ That is true also of her quality as prototype of the Church, which joins all her other perfections in converging on the divine maternity; for the perfection of her maternity, involving and elevating all her other perfections, is the end which the Church aspires to attain.

A clarification of Mary's own finality is furnished by the doctrine that the Mother of God pertains to the hypostatic order. Order is a union of elements internally dependent among themselves and finalized by a common end. The universe of creatures is divided into three great orders, according to their relationship with God.²⁹ The order of nature comprises creatures regarded as effects of God, made to His image and gathered together in a harmonious world the better to resemble Him. The order of grace consists of spiritual creatures who are united by God by supernatural knowledge and charity. At the summit is the hypostatic order, in which a created nature is taken into personal union with God; it is the order of the Incarnate Word and draws to itself the orders of nature and of grace.

God's election of Mary to be the Mother of His Son is the basis for the doctrine, common among theologians as a definitive acquisition of modern Mariology, that the Blessed Virgin

²⁸ For an able exposition of the divine maternity as the end of Mariology, see P. Mahoney, O.P., *The Unitive Principle of Marian Theology*, in *Thom* 18 (1955) 463-478.

²⁹ Cf. M. J. Nicolas, O.P., *Essai de synthèse mariale*, in *Maria. Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, ed. H. du Manoir, S.J., 1 (Paris, 1949) 707-741.

belongs intrinsically to the hypostatic order, whose elements are finalized by the hypostatic union, God's greatest communication to created nature. From all eternity she is joined to the Incarnate Word in one and the same decree of predestination.³⁰ She is not substantially united to a divine Person; yet the hypostatic union between Christ's human nature and the Person of the Word was accomplished through her and in her. The Son of God is her Son; she has a relationship of real affinity with the Second Person of the Trinity.³¹ Accordingly, her divine motherhood elevates her to the hypostatic order, along with the human nature of the Word, above the entire universe of nature and the world of grace.

Since the order of nature is wholly orientated to the order of grace, and the order of grace is wholly orientated to the hypostatic order, these two orders must have their summit and find their end in those who occupy the hypostatic order, that is, in Jesus Christ and His Mother. The hypostatic order is indeed for the redemption of the human race, in the sense that all men are its beneficiaries; but it is also the end of redemption. Therefore the Blessed Virgin, who belongs to this order, has a redemptive causality; but she also shares in redemptive finality. In a very true sense the universe, and particularly the Church of the redeemed, which is ordained to Christ, is likewise ordained to Mary.³²

Because of her supernatural perfections which her divine maternity modifies and sublimates, Mary is set up by God as the totally successful example of what the reception of the Incarnate Word can be in the human race. Her unreserved compliance with the divine initiative, her integration into all

³⁰ Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, in AAS (1950) 768, repeats the teaching of Pius IX in the Bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*, that the Mother of God and Jesus Christ are connected *uno eodemque decreto praedestinationis*. Cf. ADSC 6, 836.

³¹ St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, 3, q. 27, a. 4.

³² Cf. J. M. Cascante, *Replanteo e inicios de solución al problema de las relaciones entre María y la Iglesia*, in EM 18 (1957) 277.

the phases of the redemption, her Assumption, and her very motherhood are signs, directed to us in our sluggish acceptance of God, of what the Incarnation proposes and achieves. She prefigures and sums up the response of mankind to the supernatural enrichment offered to us by the God-man. She is, we may say, the very incarnation of the reception of divinity which radiates from the hypostatic union.

Hence she is the perfect model of the children of God, the ideal of redeemed mankind. Redemption has been completely triumphant in her alone, for she alone of all the redeemed allowed herself to be utterly taken over by God, so that His grace never encountered any reluctance or resistance on her part, and the blood of the Savior could exert all its power in her soul and body. She is the masterpiece of the Redeemer, the fullest realization of God's own idea of a perfect human being.

Rightly, then, Mary is honored as the archetype of the Church. She is the ideal personification of the Church, the embodiment of the supernatural perfection to which the Church aspires, the resplendent image in which the Church can clearly see what Christ requires of it and what He desires it to be. In her the Church can discern its own objectives: to be immaculate and sinless, like Mary; to be holy, like Mary; to be virginal, like Mary, with undivided loyalty to Christ; to co-operate on its level with the work of Christ, as Mary did on an essentially higher level; to be a perfect mother in bearing and rearing other Christs, as Mary bore and fostered Jesus Christ. Mary received God perfectly in every sense, to the point of literally conceiving Him by maternal generation. Her flawless reception of God shows forth the aim of all the striving of the Church, which is the reception of Christ and therefore of God.

In the eternal divine plan, Mary is undoubtedly for the Church. She collaborated with Christ in the objective redemption and still collaborates with Him for the salvation of man-

kind. But the Church is not the ultimate goal of Mary's maternity or activity, any more than it is the ultimate goal of the hypostatic union or of Christ's activity. The Savior and His Mother work for the incorporation of the human race into Christ, that in Christ the men who have been redeemed may at last attain God, their final end.

Thus by God's appointment, the universe, disrupted by the sins of Adam and Eve and all their progeny, is recapitulated in the God-man and His Mother, Redeemer and Coredemp-tress, that mankind assembled in the Church, mystical body of Christ, may return, through the new Eve and the new Adam in ascending order, to the primordial source and ultimate end of all divine communications to creatures, God Himself.

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