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MARY'S SPIRITUAL MATERNITY AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Introduction

In his lecture at the International Marian Congress in Zagreb, August, 1971, Cardinal Suenens remarked that he recently had asked Karl Rahner how he would explain the evident decline in Marian devotion. The response of the German theologian was:

Today too many Christians, no matter what religious affiliation they may have, try to make their Christian faith into an ideology and abstraction and abstracts certainly do not need a mother.¹

The Lutheran Bishop W. Stahlin already came up with the same idea, as was quoted by Eamon Carroll in 1967.² That answer indicates a present danger: to transform Christ into a pure idea and abstraction; and, consequently, the mother of Christ, as a pure idea, doesn't interest us anymore. On the other hand, with Karl Rahner, we also have to say that the Marian piety must rediscover in Mary, a mother. That points out the actual importance of the doctrine of Mary's spiritual Maturity after Vatican II.³

¹ Card. L. Suenens, *Marie et le monde d'aujourd'hui*, in *DC* (Oct., 1971) 878-879.

² W. Stahlin, *Maria, die Mutter des Herrn. Ihr biblisches Bild* (Düsseldorf, 1951); cf. E. R. Carroll, *A Survey of Recent Mariology*, in *MS* 18 (1967) 113; and A. Brandenburg, *Maria in der evangelischen Theologie der Gegenwart* (Paderborn, 1965), 47-48.

³ At the Zagreb Congress, Card. J. Wright explained how the doctrine of Mary's spiritual maternity could be helpful for the unity of the Church: "There is a further understanding concerning the Blessed Mother which East and West should explore together and which provides further strong grounds for our common cult and increased unity. This further understanding pertains to Mary's spiritual maternity... When we speak of the

First of all, what is the consideration given to that doctrine in the conciliar teachings,⁴ particularly in Chapter 8 of the Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*? In this formal point of view, we can underline two conciliar indications: 1) *In the doctrine*: Our relation to Mary is designated by the title, "Mother," in conformity to many traditional documents:

n. 53: Mary is the Mother of the members of Christ (St. Augustine).

n. 54: The Mother of men, most of all, of the faithful.

n. 56: The Mother of the living (St. Epiphanius).

n. 61: Our Mother in the order of grace.

n. 62: The Maternity of Mary in the economy of grace remains without ceasing . . . ; by her maternal love she cares for the brethren of her son . . . ; (we are) supported by (her) maternal help.

n. 63: Mary, Mother and Virgin, is the *type* (figure) of the Church, Mother and Virgin; she cooperates by her maternal love in the birth and training of the brethren of Christ, the faithful.
n. 65: She is an example of the maternal affection that all should have, who are cooperating in the apostolic work of the Church for the regeneration of men.

n. 67: We are moved by a filial love toward our Mother.

n. 69: We invoke the Mother of God and the Mother of men.

2) *For our devotion*: The constitution on the Church refers to the traditional cult of Mary as the Mother of God. To characterize the Church's piety towards Mary the text uses the adjective "filial," it is summarized in No. 67, "the true devotion proceeds . . . from true faith, by which we are led to acknowl-

spiritual maternity of Mary . . . we speak a mystery. These insights, we pray, will be studied together by Orthodox and Catholic theologians so that all who adore Christ and venerate His Mother may be brought closer to one another because of their understanding of something, at least, of what we mean by the marvelous titles that Eastern and Western Christians have not hesitated to give to the Blessed Virgin, all of which derive from the central, supreme fact that she is the Mother of Christ." From *OssR* (Eng. ed., Aug. 19, 1971) 4.

edge by excellence of Mary as the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our Mother and to the imitation of her virtues.”

In the decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Mary is called their model in docility to the Holy Spirit, with the exhortation:

Let priests love and venerate with filial devotion and veneration this Mother of the Eternal High Priest, Queen of Apostles and Protector of their own ministry (n. 18).

The same filial piety is also recommended for the seminarians in the decree on Priestly Training:

They should love and venerate with a filial trust the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as Mother to the disciple by Christ Jesus as he was dying on the cross (n. 18).

Finally, the decree on the Apostolate for the Laity explains how Mary is the perfect example for their life, and invites them to commend their life and apostolate to her maternal care (n. 4).

Beyond these particular indications, we find, in Chapter 8, a distinct explanation of the fundamentals of Mary's spirituality, even though the Council did not intend to propose a complete Marian doctrine (see n. 54).

1) In the general framework of Christ and His Church (Chapter 8's title): the text insists on the revelation of the Marian mystery in the Old and the New Testaments (n. 55-59); it especially describes Mary in her intimate union with her Son and His redemptive work. Thus the doctrine is synthesized in a brief statement about the Divine Plan on Mary, and about its realization in the earthly life of Mary associated with her Son (n. 61); and we come to the following conclusion:

⁴ Texts analyzed by G. Shea, *Mary in the Documents of Vatican II*, in *MS* 17 (1966) 20-26.

"Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace" (n. 61). Thus the predestination of Mary to be "the Venerable Mother of the Divine Redeemer and above all others, in a singular way, the generous associate and humble handmaid of the Lord" (n. 61), the fact that "she conceived, brought forth, and nourished Christ, presented him to the Father in the Temple and was united with him by compassion as he died on the cross," the fact also that this cooperation "absolutely singular, by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity," was given to the work of the Savior, restoring supernatural life to our souls, all that, as a consequence (*quam ab causam*, n. 61), comes down to the result that Mary is our Mother in the order of grace, or in other terms, our Mother in the economy of grace (n. 62).

This maternity remains without ceasing, from the time of the "fiat" until the definite transformation of all the elected. Even "after her Assumption into heaven she did not give up this salvific duty" (n. 62). She continues her mission by her "constant intercession and her maternal charity," for the brethren of her Son (n. 62). This mission of Mary is, therefore, differentiated from the function of her Son, the only Mediator; but on the other hand, she is strictly related to that "mediation" (n. 63): "The unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise (is a source) to a manifold cooperation of the creatures, a cooperation depending on this one source" (n. 62). "This subordinate role of Mary" (n. 61) is professed by the Church without any doubt. Even the Church herself commends to the faithful her own experience: that by the maternal protection of Mary, they may more intimately adhere to the Mediator and the Redeemer "by the maternal help (of Mary)" n. 62).

2) The preceding explanation follows a well known doctrine of Mary's spiritual maternity. Chapter 8 still insists on another doctrinal pattern, the "ecclesial" aspect. "The Mother of God is the type (figure) of the Church in the order of faith, love, and perfect union with Christ" (St. Ambrose). In this n.

63. Mary as virgin and mother is outlined as the model of the Church, which is also truly called mother and virgin. She is its model as the New Eve; a title which belongs to her more than to Eve because "she brought forth, in her faith and obedience, the very Son of the Father into this world . . . the Son whom God placed first born among many brethren," and because she is cooperating "by her maternal love in the birth and training of these latter" (n. 63).

To understand this double approach to the Marian doctrine, let us keep in mind that Vatican II took place during a time of well known evolution in Marian theology. Many authors analyzed this.⁵ Particularly, Father Montagna noticed in 1945⁶ that the spiritual maternity gradually became, during the last 60 years, the central aspect of Marian doctrine in exposing Mary's function in our Christian life. Slowly, this doctrine became prevalent through the importance given to the Marian mediation, especially between 1920 and 1939, and also to the Marian co-redemption after World War II. Monsignor Philips, analyzing "the present problems of Marian theology" in 1949, wrote: "Mary is Mother of Christ and mystically the mother of Jesus' brothers. These are two aspects of one sole maternity which retains more and more the attention of the present theology."⁷

⁵ See F. J. Kenney, *Mary's Spiritual Maternity according to Modern Writers* (Washington, D.C., 1957); E. Lamirande, *Bibliographie sur la maternité spirituelle de la bienheureuse Vierge Marie*, in *SCEM* (1968) 157-172; W. Sebastian, *Mary's Spiritual Maternity*, in *Mariology* (ed. J. B. Carol), 2 (Milwaukee, 1957) 325-376. For further bibliography: D. Montagna, *Rassegna bibliografica sulla maternità spirituale di Maria, 1947-1964*, in *Mm* 26 (1964) 191-207; G. Simbula, *La maternità spirituale di Maria in alcuni autori francescani dei secoli XIII-XV* (Rome, 1967) 7-13; J. M. Salgado, *La maternité spirituelle de la très-sainte Vierge Marie. Bilan actuel*, in *EphM* 20 (1970) 281-349. The author, in a letter, promises a new article in *Divinitas*.

⁶ D. Montagna, *art. cit.*, 192f.

⁷ G. Philips, *Les problèmes actuels de la théologie mariale*, in *Mm* 11 (1949) 31ff. A Mexican Committee prepared a doctrinal study to promote

Exegetical Work

In his 1970 article, *The Spiritual Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Present Situation*, Fr. Salgado established, for the doctrinal evolution, a suggestive comparison between before the Council and after.⁸ We must retain one of his conclusions about the Marian and Biblical theology. Even at the beginning of the century most of the exegetes considered Mary's spiritual maternity as a traditional and venerable doctrine, but certainly not found in the literal sense of the Holy Scriptures. Even the conciliar texts kept the same reserve (for example, n. 58 in *Lumen Gentium*), although they invited the seminarian to a filial Marian piety, and referred to Christ entrusting His mother to the beloved disciple (Decree on Priestly Training, n. 8). Now, today, eminent biblicists conclude that the Holy Scriptures reveal literally Mary's maternity toward the people of God; particularly the words of Jesus "This is your son, this is your mother (Jn. 19:26), are considered as a direct declaration of this maternity. To tell the truth, that is not a post-conciliar change, for it began in exegesis before the Council, as it is well explained by Father Salgado, and also by Father O. da Spinetoli, in the article published in 1970 on *Post-Conciliar Exegesis and Biblical Mariology*.⁹ For the spiritual maternity of Mary, the work of Father Andrew Feuillet becomes a main reference. Already in 1961, in a short but profound study given to *Maria*, volume 6, *The Virgin Mary in the New Testament*,¹⁰ the renowned professor of the Catholic Institute in Paris synthesized

the dogmatic definition of Mary's Spiritual Maternity: *Comisión Nacional Mejicana pro Definición dogmática de la Maternidad Espiritual de María. Conferencias . . . (1957 y 1960)* (Mexico, 1961).

⁸ J. M. Salgado, *art. cit.*, 300f.

⁹ Orstensio Da Spinetoli, *Bolletino di Mariologia biblica. Egesi et Mariologia biblica postconciliare*, in *EphM* 20 (1970) 205-225. Cf. also R. F. Collins, *Mary in the Fourth Gospel. A Decade of Johannine Studies*, in *LS* 3 (1970) 99-142, where the author analyzes an extensive literature on this exegetical theme; special emphasis is given to the work of André Feuillet.

various recent studies on the position given to Mary, during the apostolic age, in which time the texts of the New Testament were formed. He stated that, "in the Gospel of John when Jesus will open to Mary the perspective of a maternity based on a spiritual order as a continuation, in a certain manner, of her physical maternity, He will bring forth an attitude in harmony with the synoptic data."¹¹ Indeed in Luke's Infancy Gospel, the theme of the *Daughter of Sion* indicates how Mary is "the collectivity of Israel and more specifically the holy remnant of the *Anawim*."¹² Then in John, "Mary, like the Church and before her, realized the prodigious maternity of Sion announced by the prophets. This is, most probably, the general meaning of the Johannine texts concerning Mary."¹³ Later on Father Feuillet, in various other studies, returned to the particular exegesis of Jn. 19:25-27. The title given to his report to the International Congress at Santo Domingo in 1966 was characteristic: *The Pregnant Woman and the Spiritual Maternity of the Virgin Mary according to the Gospel of St. John (16:21; 19:25-27)*.¹⁴ Father Kugelman, in his report on *Mariology in Recent Biblical Literature*, given to our Mariological Society in 1967, singled out this "very original paper of A. Feuillet on the text of Jn. 16:21 and the spiritual maternity of Mary proclaimed by Jesus on Calvary."¹⁵

In a booklet in 1969 orientated to the general reader, and entitled *The Hour of the Mother of Jesus—A Study of Johannine*

¹⁰ André Feuillet, *La Vierge Marie dans le Nouveau Testament*, in *Maria* (ed. by H. du Manoir) 6 (Paris, 1961) 15-69.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 21

¹² *Ibid.*, 66

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ A. Feuillet, *De muliere parturiente et de maternitate spirituali Mariae secundum evangelium sancti Johannis (16, 21; 19, 25-27)* in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura* (Acta Congressus Mariologici-Mariani in Republica Dominicana anno 1965 celebrati), 5 (Rome, 1967) 111-112.

¹⁵ Richard Kugelman, *Mariology and Recent Biblical Literature*, in *MS* 18 (1967) 132.

Theology,¹⁶ in which Feuillet reworked three articles published by *Biblica* in 1966, he explains how his purpose of the general study on the fourth Gospel led him to seek a true Johannine explanation of the text *Jn.* 19:25-27 and of the words of Christ, "This is your son, this is your mother."

The fourth Gospel is a theological work, long meditated, which first of all, has to be explained by itself. This is the fundamental conviction which is at the base of the present study. . . : to explain *Jn.* 19:25-27, the best starting point must be the *Logion* 16:21, for, as the protestant R. H. Lightfoot already noticed before us, both texts are concerned about the Woman, the Maternity, and the Hour.¹⁷

Feuillet is referring to a parable where the Johannine Christ, during His last supper with His disciples (*Jn.* 13 to 17), compares His hour to the hour of the woman in labor:

A woman in childbirth suffers because her time has come; but when she has given birth to the child, she forgets the suffering in her joy that a man has been born into the world. So it is with you, you are sad now, but I shall see you again and your hearts will be full of joy (*Jn.* 16:21-22).

Then the hour of Jesus, mysteriously announced at Cana, is also the hour of the Woman; that explains the title "Woman" given to Mary at Cana at the time of the first sign (*semeion*) with which Jesus began all the Messianic—that is, the salvific—signs. Thus, Calvary is the hour of salvation, the hour of Jesus, at the end of His messianic work, with the seventh sign: the resurrection of the Lord, to which all the other six signs were directed. In this hour the dying Christ spoke to His Mother: "Woman, this is your son." By these words, He revealed

¹⁶ André Feuillet, *L'heure de la Mère de Jésus. Etude de théologie johannique* (Prouilhe-Fangeaux, 1969). See also in *Bbl.* 47 (1966) 169-184; 361-380; 557-573

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

the biblical meaning of the Woman, from *Gen.* 3:15 to *Apoc.* 12. The design of God on the Woman is to restore in her the mother of the living (cf. *Gen.* 3:20).

Finally, in a report delivered to the French Mariological Society in 1968, *The Holy Spirit and the Mother of Christ*, Feuillet studies the texts of Matthew, Mark, and John that reveal the function of the Holy Spirit and the role of Mary in the generation of the true people of God. *Mt.* 1:1, "A book of the genesis of Jesus Christ," is using the Greek term of the Septuagint in *Gen.* 2:4: "that is the book of the genesis (the origins) of heaven and earth;" and in *Gen.* 5:1: "This is the book of the genesis (the origin) of Adam." Consequently, in his account of the *origin* (*genesis*) of Christ, Matthew intended to explain that the virginal conception is the work of the same Divine Spirit, who was already at work at the origins (*genesis*) of the world and mankind. Thus, he understood Christ as a new "First man," the beginning of a new humanity;¹⁸ and we may add: in the reworking of all the creation.

The Matthean account "is directed towards the apparition of a new people of God; it is towards the formation of the Church. Thus, is it presumptuous to affirm that Mary, as the Mother of Jesus, in such a context, is already fundamentally established as the Mother of the new people of God?"¹⁹ Besides, Feuillet thinks that Matthew 1 and 2 originated from Judean Christian circles of Jerusalem. He compares the expression "to be born of the Holy Spirit" (*Mt.* 1:21) with the one we find in the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus (*Jn.* 3:5f), in which it evokes our regeneration "through water and the Spirit" (*Jn.* 3:5): our new birth from the Holy Spirit. That vocabulary refers to John the Baptist, and maybe to a Judean ministry of Christ, linked with the ministry of His Precursor. Now, that brings us back to the Fourth Gospel, and its account of the vocation of the first disciples.

¹⁸ *Idem.*, *L'Esprit Saint et la Mère du Christ*, in *BSFEM* 25 (1968) 41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

Luke brings out another relation: Mary became the mother of the people of God by a consent which she freely gave to the will of God, announced to her by an angel. That indicates an active and personal collaboration with God in the work of salvation. Now, what was the will of Mary? What did she know about the work of God? First of all, we have to say that her free consent already means her full responsibility in our salvation. Furthermore, the angel explicitly spoke about the Messianic Kingdom: "The Lord will give him the throne of his ancestor David . . . and his reign will have no end" (*Lk.* 32-33). Mary accepted a messianic maternity in order to give to God a new people. On the other hand, Luke relates Pentecost (*Acts* 1:8) in terms which refer to the Annunciation: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." This expression brings to mind the words of the angel, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow" (*Lk.* 1:35). Thus the virginal conception of Christ, and the birth of a new people of God; as if Luke had thought, "that the Church had its first origin in the womb itself of the Virgin."²⁰ Here also we must do a comparison with John. For, in his prologue Luke declares his intention to conform himself to "those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word" (*Lk.* 1:2). This reminds us of I *John* 1:1: "something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard and we have seen with our own eyes." Feuillet supposes, as already mentioned, that the Infancy accounts come from circles of John the Baptist and Mary, through John the Evangelist, who knew so well the Precursor and Mary. Coming back to *Jn.* 19:25-27, he criticizes Henry H. Vandenbussche, who sees in Christ's words a will to detach Himself from all His earthly relations in order to be solely dedicated to His Father; he also criticizes A. Dauer, who sees in that episode, "a mere doctrinal construct," where Jesus is made to enhance His beloved disciple. These two opinions

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 53.

do not take into account the connection between Cana and Calvary; and they neglect "the fact that Christ really seems willing to establish reciprocal relations (maternity and filiation) between the Virgin Mary and John."²¹ In a final comparison between the synoptics and the Fourth Gospel, Feuillet summarizes: "Whereas Matthew and Luke direct us back to the creation of the messianic people of God under the action of the Holy Spirit (cf. particularly *Is.* 32:15), the text of *Jn.* 19:25-27 as duly related to *Jn.* 16:27 and *Apoc.* 12:1-2, evokes the messianic maternity of Sion, primarily found in *Is.* 26:17-21 and 66:7-14, the beginning of the new people of God. There is a junction not sought out, which is a sign of truth. The commentators should not hesitate anymore as they did till now, to discover in *Jn.* 19:25-27 that a true maternity in the messianic order is attributed to Mary on the basis of the preparations of this maternity, as found in the Infancy accounts of St. Matthew and St. Luke. Consequently, there is no question of a mere devotional invention in the Catholic Marian cult, as some imagine. Still, we must further add that this spiritual maternity of the Mother of Christ is not merely and simply identical with the spiritual maternity of the Church. The texts, rather, bring to mind the first maternity as preceding and preparing the second. We come to that conclusion because John places the proclamation of Mary's maternity before the death of Christ and makes the Church appear finally established (before that, she was only promised) after Christ's death under the symbols of blood and water which are flowing from the pierced side of Christ. We come to the same conclusion, even more so, with the parallelism already studied in Luke between the account of the Annunciation and the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles."²²

To some all of this up: the exegesis of *Jn.* 19:25-27, in its literal sense, reveals to us Mary's messianic maternity towards

²¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

²² *Ibid.*, 62-63.

all the people of God. But it is important to notice that this exegesis places this short text, not only in the Johannine context, but in the context of the whole Bible.

In this synthetic point of view, the theme of the Daughter of Sion, which had been studied many times in the past few years,²³ is rightly employed for Mary in *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 8, where the Mother of the Messiah is called the Daughter of Sion *par excellence: praecelsa filia Sion* (n. 55). Thus at the Congress of Santo Domingo, Father Cazelles gave a report on *The Maternal Function of Sion and Mary*,²⁴ a title directly answering our inquiry. Father Cazelles compares the texts on the Daughter of Sion with those portraying the "Woman in childbirth," under a double aspect: the birth of a glorious child and the birth of the rest, her offspring, as revealed in *Apoc.* 12:5 and 17.²⁵ Furthermore, the author binds the texts with the life of Israel, following a principle—strictly biblical—that "the whole Scripture is the testimony inspired by the Holy Spirit about the achievements of the saving God at work in his people."²⁶ In this exegesis, we see better how "Eve, Sarah, and Rebecca are Mary's prototypes, for these women were chosen above other women by the Sacred Author to explain to the faithful how the King of Israel, who received, through His unction, the graces and promises of the God of Abraham, received these graces through an active cooperation of His Mother to the Divine Grace."²⁷ The functions entrusted by God to His people are permanent. After they were foretold in figures, they were actualized in Christ, His Church, and His Mother; and we see it clearer today because we consider the "analogy of faith" to be in the context of the whole revelation: Christ, His

²³ See, for the beginning of this study, René Laurentin, *Court traité sur la Vierge Marie* (5th ed., Paris, 1967) 39, note 31.

²⁴ Henri Cazelles, *La fonction maternelle de Sion et de Marie*, in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura*, 6, 165-178. See Richard Kugelman, *art. cit.*, 132.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 165.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 166.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 169, with the given bibliography.

Mother, the Church, Israel, and mankind can no longer be considered as disassociated. This is the meaning of the Plan of Salvation from Adam and Eve till that Parousia, which is expected by the bride with the Spirit (*Apoc.* 22:17); it is realized in the history of salvation from Abraham till the parousia. In this context, "the texts about the Daughter of Sion occur only as an aspect of a larger theme, the Woman in childbirth; a birth of a new people connected with the birth of the heir of David, the glorious Savior."²⁸ The maternity of the Mother of Sion is both glorious and sorrowful; and the texts indicate both Mary and the Church. We arrive at the orientation given by the Council: Mary, Virgin and Mother, is the type (figure) of a Church, a humanity in redemption, also virgin and mother.

The double theme of the glorious and sorrowful maternity appears at first in the prophet Micah. We know his text on Bethlehem: "Out of you (Bethlehem) will be born for me the one who is to rule our Israel; his origin goes back to the distant past, to the days of old. Yahweh is therefore going to abandon them, till the time when she who is to give birth, gives birth" (*Mic.* 5:2-3). It refers to the Messianic and glorious maternity. Let us notice, especially, that the text reveals a Messiah whose origin goes back to the creation of mankind. The Messiah will be a new Adam. The prophecy also points out that the mother of the Messiah will bring him forth for God; consequently, in Bethlehem, Mary's child will be born for the Kingdom of God Himself.

On the other hand, *Mic.* 4:9-10 announces a Messianic and sorrowful maternity of Sion: "Why are you crying aloud? Is there not a King within you? . . . Writhe, cry out, Daughter of Sion, like a woman in labor, for now you have to leave the city and live in the open country." In the time of that prophecy, around 730 BC, after the invasion of Sennacherib and its collapse, Isaiah uses, "Daughter of Sion" as the title for all Jerusalem (*Is.* 37:22). Zephaniah says to Jerusalem, Daughter of

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 170.

Sion: "Shout for joy . . . Yahweh, the king of Israel, is in your midst (literally: in your womb)." (*Zeph.* 3:14-15).

Also Isaiah, the prophet of the return from exile, announces the double aspect of this glorious and sorrowful messianic maternity: "Listen . . . long before being in labor she has given birth. Before being overtaken by birth pains she has delivered a boy" (66:6-7). That indicates the glorious aspect of the messianic maternity; we can refer it to Mary and the birth of Christ. In the following verse, the prophet announces a sorrowful messianic maternity, and this time not the birth of the Messiah but of the people of God: "Whoever heard of such a thing, whoever saw anything like this? Is a country born in one day? Is a nation brought forth all at once, that Sion, only just in labor, should bring forth sons?" In short, the Jewish belief knew a double messianic birth: in a glorious aspect, the birth of the messianic King; and in a sorrowful aspect, the birth of the messianic people. Cazelles thinks that Apocalypse 12 definitely enlightens this theme in its two aspects, contradictory at first glance. For in Apocalypse 12, "as there is only one global descendant, Christ and the rest of the Woman's descendants (*Apoc.* 12:17), so also there is only one Woman; she can only be Mary."²⁹ Therefore, it joins together with the messianic significance of *Jn.* 19:25-27 and of *Lk.* 2:35, the prophecy of Simeon: "A sword will pierce your own soul." Father Benoît, in 1963, explained that *Lk.* 2:35, when referred to the prophecies of Ezekiel about Yahweh's sword ready to punish Israel (*Is.* 14:17; 17:21; 21:9f and 18f), revealed in Mary the sorrowful Daughter of Sion.³⁰ We have to refer the text to *Jn.* 19:25, the presence of Mary at Calvary. Thus it is logical, in conformity with the biblical themes, to see in Mary the mother who personalizes the Woman of Apocalypse 12. She knew the glorious

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 176.

³⁰ P. Benoît, "Et toi-même, un glaive te transperçera l'âme (*Luc.* 2, 35)," in *CBQ* 25 (1963) 251-261; also see Salvator Garofalo, "Tuam ipsius animam pertransibit gladius (*Luc.* 2, 35)," in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura*, 5 (Rome, 1967) 180-181.

messianic maternity in Bethlehem and the sorrowful maternity at Calvary where she became the Mother of the people of God.

Finally, it is the study of the Holy Spirit which will permit us the most adequate understanding of that messianic maternity: "The action of the Spirit hovering over the Judges, the Prophets, the Kings, culminated in Mary, at the end of his action in Israel, in order to perform in Mary a birth both divine and redemptive for mankind."³¹

Cazelles came back to that latter theme in 1969 with a study on *The Holy Spirit and the Incarnation, according to the Development of the Biblical Revelation*,³² especially to ascertain the coming and the action of the Messiah. Therefore, he emphasized the action of the Holy Spirit in Mary: "For Luke, the Spirit is resting not on the Savior in His mother's womb (as Matthew did) but on the Mother herself . . .; the originality of Luke is that the *dynamis Ypsistou* rested not only on the conceived child but also on the conceiving mother. She is protected and sheltered by the active shadow, which wants to save the people through the birth of the King and Savior, who will begin and grow in her . . . the Spirit is acting in the flesh and in the world . . . the Spirit's coming is not an invisible abstraction giving some rights for the other world. It is an action as penetrating as the action of the Spirit of Wisdom (*Wis.* 7:22-23). It gives to men a capacity to perform actions impossible without it (*Ezek.* 36:27), and this makes Mary's maternity not only human but divine: what is coming into existence in her, will be called Son of God."³⁴

Father Salgado, who lectured at Santo Domingo on *Apocalypse 12 in the Light of St. John's Literary Techniques*,³⁵ ex-

³¹ H. Cazelles, *art. cit.* 177.

³² *Idem.* *L'Esprit Saint et l'Incarnation d'après le développement de la révélation biblique*, in *BSFEM* 26 (1969) 7-18.

³³ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁵ Jean-Marie Salgado, *Le chapitre XII de l'Apocalypse à la lumière des*

plains in 1970 his own views on *The Spiritual Maternity in Apocalypse 12*.³⁶ Mary's maternity is indicated by the terms, "a male child," "Woman," "her posterity."³⁷ First of all, the expression, "a male child" refers to Christ, because of the immediate context: "Who was to rule all the nations with an iron scepter," a verse from Ps. 2 that the New Testament always applies to Christ Himself; nevertheless, we must keep in mind the whole context, which also refers to Christ's disciples as "the rest of her descendants" (*Apoc.* 12:17). Consequently, "The Woman" in Chapter 12 must be both the Mother of Christ and the Mother of the disciples, a real and not merely a metaphorical person. Only Mary can be both Mother of the Messiah, physically, and mother of his disciples, spiritually. Father Salgado here quotes Father Congar:

In the identity of the mystery of Mary and the Church, there is not only the presence of a design of grace in two of its moments, but the first is decisive for the second, and envelopes it; let us put it in this way: the redemptive Incarnation and therefore the mystery of Mary decide and envelope the Church by their power of grace and their historical reality.³⁸

The vocabulary of the sorrowful childbirth of the Woman in Apocalypse 12 is difficult for the Marian significance; it is not at all metaphorical, using words which indicate the real pains of the Woman in labor. To this difficulty Salgado answers that the Apocalypse belongs to the prophetic and even the apocalyptic language. In these styles, various levels of meaning are overlapping; it is the case of Apocalypse 12, with the physical birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and with the Messianic birth of the people of God in the spiritual pains of Calvary. For the ex-

procédés de composition littéraire de saint Jean, in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura*, 5 (Rome, 1967) 293-360.

³⁶ *Idem.*, *La maternité spirituelle* . . . cf. note 5 above.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 327f.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 329. See Y. M. Congar, *Marie et l'Eglise*, in *RSPT* 38 (1954) 37.

planation of that very difficult Chapter 12, Father Feuillet promises "a new commentary which will be a bit different from the first given in the *Johannine Studies*, but it will keep the same fundamental orientation."³⁹ He sketches it in *The Hour of Jesus' Mother*. He summarizes the different exegetical explanations given for the Woman in Apocalypse 12: "We have seen her, as the Sion of the prophets who gives the Messiah to mankind and as the messianic people; also as the Virgin Mary, who historically had the role, given to Sion by the ancient oracles, and now finally as the double of the Church in its heavenly prototype (see "Jerusalem of above," *Gal.* 4:26); in this latter case, the Apocalypse would reflect a late Jewish conception, explaining that the eschatological realities are pre-existing in the heavenly world (see *I Henoch* 38, 1; *2 Henoch* 55, 2; *4 Esdras* 88, 52)."⁴⁰

But Feuillet believes that Apocalypse 12 can be commented upon by *Jn.* 19:25-27 where

Mary has the role of Sion and like Sion, she is attributed with a Messianic Maternity. In the fourth Gospel, Mary appears "perfectly distinct from the Christian community, which is the fruit of Calvary and the Resurrection, and so symbolized in Mary Magdalen." Therefore, in Apocalypse 12, "the Woman, both glorious and sorrowful, who brings forth the Messiah, cannot be totally confused with the Church, which receives its origin from Christ and cannot give birth to him."⁴¹

In short, "if the Woman in Apocalypse 12:6f is, in a certain manner, the same one as at the beginning of the chapter, . . . nevertheless we must admit that she has become a new being because of the presence of Jesus on earth. Consequently . . . verse 6 introduces us to a new world, the Christian world."⁴²

³⁹ André Feuillet, *L'heure de la Mère de Jésus*, 107.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*, 102-103.

From all these exegetical works we conclude that the role of Mary in our salvation has to be studied today according to the following strictly biblical principles:

1) The biblical authors write with a synthetic insight in the events of salvation; the prophets unite the present and the future. Therefore, the Messianic maternity of Mary has to be studied in the whole biblical context of the texts which are analyzed.

2) These biblical texts have, as another context, all that God did for His people to save it: both Israel and the Apostolic Church. These graces are connected with the life of God's people. Therefore, we see Mary's Messianic maternity revealed in the development of the biblical themes, during the life of Israel, and during the formation of the apostolic writings. These themes are connected with the history of salvation; and as Fr. Le Deaut says, "a healthy Marian theology can be developed when we start with the study of the historical mystery of Redemption."⁴³

3) These biblical principles are to be understood in the frame of *analogia fidei* (analogy of faith). That reflects the Bible's unity: only God reveals Himself and guarantees the unity of our salvation's mystery; all this analogy of faith is based on the redemptive Incarnation, and more precisely, on Christ Himself who became our brother and our head because He was born of the Virgin Mary to save us. Therefore, in Mariology we must no longer study some abstractions, but the person of Mary. It is good to study the privileges and functions of Mary, but it is better to see first the person and life of Mary, and consequently her relations with God, Christ, the Church, and in general with all mankind under the salvific work of the Holy Spirit.

⁴³ R. Le Deaut, *Marie et l'Écriture dans le Chapitre VIII*, in *BSFEM* 22 (1965) 60.

*Toward a Theological Elaboration:
The Holy Spirit and Mary's Spiritual Maternity*

At the Congress in Zagreb, the Methodist Neville Ward said that faith has to transcend our categories of paternity and maternity because finally God is more than father and mother; therefore, he thought that it was useless to call Mary our Mother.⁴⁴ This remark shows how difficult it is to elaborate, theologically, a doctrine on Mary's spiritual maternity. From an ecumenical viewpoint, the title given to the beautiful book of Max Thurian, *Mary the Mother of All Christians*, is misleading; as Reverend Piepkorn remarked at our convention of 1967: "the British edition of the English translation rendered the original title literally: *Mary, the Mother of the Lord, Figure of the Church*. The American edition put out by Herder, however, changed the title to *Mary the Mother of all Christians*, a designation not used once by Thurian himself, and justified in the book itself only by a quotation from Martin Luther."⁴⁵

Nevertheless, Prof. John Macquarrie, in his *Principles of Christian Theology*, declares:

It seems to me that the best clue to the interpretation of (Mary's) place in the New Testament teaching is afforded by the title *Mother of the Church* . . . Mother of the Church is the title which Pope Paul VI proclaimed as appropriate to the Blessed Virgin when he adjourned the Vatican Council in 1964, and I believe that this particular title, more than any other, provides an interpretation of Mary's place on which Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, and Protestants could agree.⁴⁶

On the other hand, after Freud's and Jung's research, it was

⁴⁴ Neville Ward, *Mary and the Prayer of Christians*, a lecture given in Zagreb, Aug. 13, 1971 at the International Marian Congress (Aug. 12-15, 1971). The *Acta* will be published later.

⁴⁵ Cf. Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Mary's Place within the People of God, according to Non-Roman Catholics*, in *MS* 18 (1967) 71.

⁴⁶ Quoted by Richard Kugelman, *art. cit.*, 133-134.

necessary to make clear that faith cannot be explained by our psychological needs, sexual or any other; for example, the tendency of the child towards his mother or his father. In Christian history, the study of the civilizations and their cultures show many confusions, but also the continuous reactions of the true Christian piety. Psychoanalysis and anthropology force us to clarify those analogies which apply to calling God "our Father" or Mary "our Mother."

Thus the recent studies on the Holy Spirit and Mary are bringing out some very promising orientations. The French Mariology Society just published its reports of 1970 on this theme; we will find it useful to refer to some of these.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ BSFEM 27 (1970): *Le Spirit-Esprit et Marie. III Perspectives oecuméniques et conclusions doctrinales* (Paris, 1972). The reports quoted in my paper are: pp. 95-104: M. J. Le Guillou, *Le Saint-Esprit, Marie et l'Eglise* (especially pp. 99f); pp. 59-71: P. Evdokimov, *Panagion et Panagia* (esp. pp. 68f.). The conclusion of Fr. Le Guillou is of great ecumenical interest: "The Reformation was a profound rupture in the tradition concerning the Church because it questioned the Church as the spiritual 'milieu' which man needs to position himself and to blossom forth. The Reformation even questioned the image of the Mother. Thus, for many people, the Christian thought has lost the place where it can be expressed, it is its 'home.' To exist, for man, means to remain in a place defined by his spiritual horizons; and to plainly express himself, he needs the reality of the trinitarian mystery presented 'in the Church assembly.' Thus isn't the confusion of modern thought caused, in part, by rejecting the maternity of the Church and the ecclesial 'home?'" (p. 104). Paul Evdokimov, the prominent professor at the Orthodox Institute of Saint-Serge in Paris, died after he returned from the Convention of the French Mariological Society (September, 1970). He could not finish his manuscript of which we only have the notes that he intended for his conclusion: "The Father is wrapped in the silence of the apophysis. It is this hidden Face of the Father that the Son and the Spirit are revealing to the world. The Absolute Subject, the Father, reveals in His Son, the *Meaning* which became *Life* by the Spirit. Thus the Theotokos in her Maternity translates at the human level this trinitarian mystery, as a faithful and authentic image. In this sense—which retains the meaning of a hidden revelation—Mary is the mysterious icon of the Father. The iconographic rules forbid the representation of the Father because He is the Inconceivable, the Unutterable. The Theotokos receives the breath of the Spirit; her Maternity allows us to silently contemplate the Divine Paternity, the Face of the Father" (p. 71). In the last lines of his

The paper of Father Le Guillou invites us to discover in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity the theological foundations of the feminine images that the Bible uses for God, and for our relations with Him. The Latin West tended to eliminate these images. For example, the expression of *Jn.* 1:18 "the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father" is translated in the Jerusalem Bible: "the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart," the feminine image "womb of the Father" is gotten rid of. We must restore these maternal aspects of God; it doesn't at all mean that we introduce in the Trinity the sexuality and its transitory character, as in the pagan mythologies. But Trinitarian theology bases the distinction of the Persons on their relations. Thus, when we say that the Father begets His Son from all eternity, we have to remember that the divine relations are between the three Persons. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally one God, who is Love. Therefore, we must say that the Father conceives His Son, enveloping Him in the Spirit of Love, that is, the Holy Spirit, the Love in Person, who is not only at the term of their divine generation (because He proceeds from the Father and the Son) but also at its origin. Mary and the Church, through their spiritual maternity, are the visible manifestation of the Spirit. Let us keep in mind what is the integration of our personality, as permanent, as memory, and as "situation" (in Heidegger's sense). We are always "located" "in the bosom of . . ." that means: in a vital maternal *milieu*, necessary for the integration of our person. Man can recognize himself as man, only if some love conceives him and accepts him. We have to re-evaluate the maternal role of Mary and the Church, in relation to the role of the Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian Life. In the present crisis of a disintegrating world, the Christian religion gives an answer to the necessity of "to be born again," or "to be integrated again" into the Love who

paper he wrote: "The Holy Spirit doesn't have any room for an incarnation, but he has in Mary the unique and very particular receptacle of His Presence." Also see the summary given in *Mm* 33 (1971) 96-102.

is the Sources of all Love, and consequently in a maternity of love, or a spiritual maternity of Mary and the Church. The term "spiritual" refers to the divine work of the Holy Spirit. He is at the origin of this double maternity. Theologically, the analogy is between Him, Mary, the Church, and human maternity.

In the report of the Orthodox professor, Paul Evdokimov, the *Theotokos* is the visible manifestation of the divine "Philanthropy," God's love for men, because she is the figure of the Holy Spirit in His personal role: Spirit of Love. Therefore, she doesn't express the "eternal feminine" invented by our masculine mentality. But through her we find once again the biblical language which characterizes the Woman as the type of the creature when it is compared to God; because in that relation the creature is essentially receptive of God. The Son of God was first given to the woman, to Mary, *Theotokos*. Christ's resurrection was first witnessed by women who announced it to the apostles. This is, in my opinion, an important foundation for the spiritual maternity of Mary and the Church. We see it in the already quoted text of *Lumen Gentium*:

The Church in her apostolic work . . . justly looks to Mary, who conceived by the Holy Spirit, brought forth Christ, who was born of the Virgin that through the Church he may be born, and may also increase in the hearts of the faithful. The Virgin in her own life lived an example of that maternal love, by which all should be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of men (n. 65).

In his book *The Woman and the Salvation of the World*,⁴⁸ written in 1958, Evdokimov explains that, in the icon of Wisdom, the *Theotokos* "is the archetype of womanhood, and St. John the Baptist the archetype of manhood."⁴⁹ Christ as God-man transcends these differences and attracts all of us into His

⁴⁸ Paul Evdokimov, *La Femme et le salut du monde. Etude d'anthropologie chrétienne sur les charismes de la femme* (Tournai-Paris, 1958).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 229.

eschatological glory where "men and women do not marry" (*Matt.* 22:30). On earth, the complementary of man and woman becomes the sign of the salvific riches. The *Theotokos*, as archetype of womanhood, is manifesting the nature and the vocation of woman. If man "is bound with Christ the Priest" to transform the world and sanctify it, then woman is "bound with the Holy Spirit" to vivify, to protect, and to be the womb of the creature. "*The Theotokos* brings forth *the Holy Child*, gives her flesh, in which the content, the word, the power, the act find their resting place."⁵⁰ How do we express this "bond" between the Holy Spirit, the Blessed Virgin and Womanhood? The Spirit of God hovered over the chaos to make it a cosmos; He came over the Virgin Mary to perform the Incarnation, and He came over the apostles who were in the upper room with Mary, and founded the Church.

The Spirit is in childbirth through ages; from the body of history, he makes the body of the kingdom. . . . It is the Spirit who *forms* Christ, and brings Him forth in the soul of each of the faithful.⁵¹

The Woman has "a spiritual maternity which brings forth Christ in each human being by the power of the Holy Spirit."⁵²

Evdokimov uses an expression of Gregory Palamas, who called the Holy Spirit, "The Hypostatic Maternity,"⁵³ because the Spirit doesn't add anything to the Salvific Word; He only brings It forth into the world. Father Manteau-Bonamy in his recent book, *The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit*,⁵⁴ asks if the Holy Spirit cannot be called "The Divine Mother of Christ," since Christ is conceived by the Holy Spirit. For he thinks that at the Annunciation there was a visible "mission"

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 211-212.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 216. See Gregory Palamas, in *PG* 150, 1144-5.

⁵⁴ H. M. Manteau-Bonamy, *La Vierge Marie et le Saint-Esprit* (Paris, 1970).

(sending) not only of the Son but of the Holy Spirit. The temporary missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit are manifestations of their divine and eternal relations. As the Father generates His Son in "a conceiving Love" (the Holy Spirit), so also at the Incarnation the Father sends His Son to Mary with that "conceiving Love," which is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Mary receives Christ as a Gift of the Father, in the essential Gift: the Holy Spirit, or "in a climate of Divine Love," "of the Uncreated and Maternal Love."⁵⁵ The spiritual maternity of Mary is expressed in the title "Mother of the Church." During the public life of Christ, Mary "under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit . . . spiritually exercises her divine maternity."⁵⁶

On Calvary she is the New Eve, the true mother of the living, who "takes the fall of Eve upon herself, the sin which prevented the first woman from becoming that mother of the living."⁵⁷ Mary is overtaken "by the Love of the Father, to give Him children coming from the New Adam." By this Love, who is also the Spirit of Christ, "she becomes in the death of her Son, the Mother of the Living, not physically of the human race—as the first Eve should have been—but mystically, mother of all being, both earthly and angelic, who are created in the image of the Eternal Christ, in the Gift of Love."⁵⁸ Evidently, it is not the person of Mary who is our redeemer, but we can call her co-redemptrix, or "the maternal origin of our salvation," in the following sense: "the Father desired that His Son be given to the world by the Woman in the Gift of His Love." The Blessed Virgin "is a very pure figure of that Father's Love, giving life back to the world, by the death of His Son."⁵⁹ Also at Pentecost, the Spirit is given, sent from the Father by the Glorious Christ, for the birth of the Church. Mary "accepts this Spirit, as

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 29, 32, 34.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 123-124.

at the Annunciation, to form the new body of her Son, no longer physically but spiritually."⁶⁰ Now in heaven, she is Mediatrix by her spiritual maternity: "totally engulfed in the Holy Spirit, who is dwelling in her personally, she gives to the second Paraclete a human and visible face. Through her, the Spirit of Love leads us efficiently towards Christ, and gives us Christ as our only Mediator between the Father and us."⁶¹

To pass from the biblical studies to a new theological synthesis, for instance, the one prepared by the studies on the Holy Spirit and Mary, we need a deep knowledge of Tradition and its evolution. Before the Council, various studies were undertaken on Mary's spiritual maternity in the Mariological Societies.⁶² After the Council, the studies on this topic are rare. Special monographs, nevertheless, are needed to better understand how the faith in the messianic maternity of Mary, as revealed in the writings of the New Testament, was gradually expressed in a doctrine of the spiritual maternity, such as we know it today. Father Barré's paper on *The Old Prayers of the West to the Mother of God*,⁶³ brings out an extensive amount of documents, used by Father Roschini and myself in Zagreb, to follow the evolution of the vocabulary on "*Mater misericordiae*," or "*Mater nostra*."⁶⁴ Father Simbula, in 1967, gathered a large number of texts on Mary's spiritual maternity in some Franciscan authors of the 13th-15th centuries.⁶⁵ The vocabulary, formed by

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 127.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 145.

⁶² See especially *EM* 7 (1948); *MS* 3 (1952); *SCEM* (1958); *BSFEM* (1959-61).

⁶³ Henri Barré, *Prières anciennes de l'Occident à la Mère du Sauveur. Des origines à saint Anselme* (Paris, 1963).

⁶⁴ G. M. Roschini, *L'origine e il primo sviluppo del titolo e del culto alla 'Mater Misericordiae' (sec. X-XI)*; and Th. Koehler *Les origines d'un thème dévotionnel: la maternité spirituelle de Marie dans la piété occidentale entre 750-1100. Etude historique et culturelle*. The two letcutres will appear later in the *Acta* of Zagreb (Congressus Mariologicus internationalis, 6-12, VIII, 1971).

⁶⁵ Giuseppe Simbula, *op. cit.*

the previous centuries became generally accepted; however, more and more theological questions arose about the real nature and the basic foundations of Mary's spiritual maternity. As in the past, this doctrine was essentially formulated in homiletic and spiritual works. In the same pastoral field, let us note from a 16th century author, friend and follower of the young Luther, John Von Staupitz,⁶⁶ whose theology was studied in 1968 by D. C. Steinmetz:

Oh Heavenly Father (Christ is praying on the cross), rightly proclaim that the Woman, my mother, is to be a mother of all the Christian Church, or of all those for whom I suffer so painfully; also rightly proclaim that the Woman will be my bride, and also a mother of all my children . . . A woman and no longer a mother, you will no more be my mother, but as my heart tells me, you will be my bride.⁶⁷

As Steinmetz explains:

For the sake of that other "*Braut*" (Bride), the Church, or perhaps one should say, the elect soul, Mary suffers abandonment by her Son. However, these sufferings, like the sufferings of Jesus Christ, are fruitful. As the bride of Christ, she becomes the mother of the Church.⁶⁸

As indicated by Steinmetz:

The term, "bride of Christ," is used by Staupitz as a designation for Mary, the Church, and the individual soul of Christian men.⁶⁹

Besides the monographs, we must note that the studies of tradition are, more and more, attentive to the togetherness of

⁶⁶ D. C. Steinmetz, *Misericordia Dei. The Theology of Johannes von Staupitz in its Late Medieval Setting* (Leiden, 1968) 145-151.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, note 8.

the different aspects or articles of our Creed. As Father Eamon Carroll noticed for Mariology in 1969: "Some of the more important considerations occur within books and essays dealing with other theological topics."⁷⁰ These general or particular studies on the tradition of the Church show us, more and more, the differences between the mentalities, the cultures, and the theological assumptions which characterize the various periods of Christian history, and also the different countries in which Christianity spread and grew. They converge with the new anthropological studies and the recent development of other natural sciences dealing with men. It is also clear that the terminology of the spiritual maternity—in spite of the deviations and superstitions—is first of all inspired by the doctrine. This does not mean that we can naively identify our language with the vocabulary of the past, or transpose into the previous centuries our modern theological problems concerning the Marian doctrine.

The traditional titles, "Mary ever-Virgin," "all holy," *Theotokos*, "Mother of Life," "Mother of the Living," "Mediatrice," "Mother of Mercy," "Our Mother," and "Mother of the Church," all of these manifest an evolution: all say that Mary is Mother of Christ and therefore related to us; and the Church sought out these expressions, the titles, and the biblical references, which could express our relations with Mary. The terminology of Mary's messianic maternity developed into doctrine. Today we will know the meaning of our filial relations to Mary by taking into account what the natural sciences concerning man know about maternity. The Marian theology must face the complexity of the analogy between God, Mary and human motherhood.

Conclusion

With the present biblical studies we see more and more that

⁷⁰ Eamon Carroll, *A Survey of Recent Mariology*, in *MS* 20 (1969) 137.

God reveals a salvation where men and women are saved in the complementarity of their nature and their vocation. In the mystery of Jesus' Mother we have the revelation of a salvific design, which gives to the woman her right place in the city of men, which is again being transformed into the City of God. The biblical texts show in the Blessed Virgin, the Daughter of Sion, the Woman as the Mother of God the Savior, and as a New Eve. In *Jn.* 19:26 Christ proclaimed that she was the true mother of the living. But He explained that this kingship is created by faith and obedience to the will of the Father. And so it is formed in us by Christ, given in the Incarnation, and by the Spirit, given to the Church at Pentecost.

In the theology of the Holy Spirit,⁷¹ we can conclude that Mary is our mother through that Spirit of Love. Mary is the archetype of the Church and of the Woman; she manifests the salvific activity of the divine Love as a maternal activity, bringing forth the children of God. That maternity is better called a maternity by the Holy Spirit. It is not a more or less abstract function; it has to be identified with the person and existence of Mary. The *Theotokos* was "molded or kneaded by the Holy Spirit, and formed as a new creature" (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 56), as our mother in all her being, in her earthly life, and in her glorious presence in Heaven. The title *Mother of the Church*,⁷²

⁷¹ H. Mühlen has published the third edition of *Una Mystica Persona* (München, 1968) in which he studies the Church as the mystery of the Holy Spirit living identically in Christ and the Christian. It will be translated into English. The second edition was summarized by Father Eamon Carroll in *A Survey of Recent Mariology*, in *MS* 19 (1968) 90-93. H. Mühlen has a long chapter on *Mary and the Mediation of Christ's Spirit* (461-494; 594-597). He studies, particularly, the title "Mary, Mother of the Faithful." But because he studies the Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of unity, in a personalistic approach, he does not present Mary or the Church, as Mother of the People of God. The study of H. M. Manteau-Bonamy is in another line: the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Love. Therefore we see that many ways are open in theology for Mary's spiritual maternity.

⁷² My 1953 report on *Maria, Mater Ecclesiae*, in *BSFEM* 11 (1953) esp. 156-167, insisted on the fact that God, with the divine Maternity of Mary,

expresses an aspect, more or less fundamental, of this maternity by the Holy Spirit. We may find it in the indications given by St. Luke at the beginning of his Gospel, and further, at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles. He puts in relief the role of the Holy Spirit, and consequently, he unites the Annunciation and Pentecost; he explains the role of Mary at the Annunciation, and notes her presence at Pentecost. When we say that the Mother of God, after her life united with Christ, became the Mother of the Church, as Christ told her at Calvary: "Woman, this is your son," this outlines, first of all, the work of the Holy Spirit, who unites Christ and His members. In this *spiritual* endeavor, the Mother of God opens the road in which every woman has to follow, in order to be, in herself, the manifestation of the God of Love. Finally, it is only when we transcend our human categories on paternity and maternity that we are able to understand what really God reveals about His Love: in this Love, He created these signs (paternity and maternity), that through these, we might find Him, as our origin, our end, and "our divinization." Therefore, we see that this maternity in the Holy Spirit must be explained in the whole context of the history of salvation, in terms of a theology,⁷³ and especially a theology with a Christian

founded also the spiritual maternity of the Church. After Paul VI proclaimed Mary as Mother of the Church in 1964, this title received many comments: for example, Msgr. George W. Shea, *Pope Paul VI and the Mother of the Church* in MS 16 (1965) 21-28; the report *Mary, Mother of the Church*, by Anthony T. Padovano in MS 17 (1966) 27-45, who stressed the theological values of the title. It especially clarifies Mary's function, not only as a type of the Church, but as an "influence in the Church's attempt to be all it should be" (p. 44).

⁷³ In his lecture during the International Congress on the theology of the Second Vatican Council (1966), Father C. Balić spoke on the concept of maternity in its adaptation to the function of Mary in the Church (*De vi ac momento conceptus 'Maternitatis' accommodati muneri B. Mariae Virginis in Ecclesia*, in *Acta Congressus intern. de Theologia Concilii Vaticani II* [Vatican City, 1968] 204-224). He noted that, though the conciliar documents do not use the term "*mater spiritualis*," they clearly contain the idea of the spiritual maternity of Mary. But Father Balić added that it is not easy to explain "how" Mary is our Mother (206). In his attempt to clarify

anthropology. Thus we enter into the important theological problem of today: our symbolic language must be rooted in the analogy of faith, if it is to be a theology at all. This analogy is rooted in the biblical images and themes. Thus, in the Bible, we are not only the people of God, but we are gathered in a spiritual and divine parenthood in Christ; we are the family of the Eternal Father, "from Whom every family, whether spiritual or natural, takes its name" (*Eph.* 3,15). In this analogy we can better understand even our earthly images of paternity or maternity.

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the concept of maternity, he stressed the ecumenical importance of this doctrine (216). We know the Orthodox Father Alexis Kniazev, in his report *Mary's Place in Orthodox Piety* (*BSFEM* 19 [1962] 136ff.), explained: "If the Orthodox theologians were not very interested in Mary's spiritual Maternity, nevertheless they all agree that it was proclaimed in *Jn.* 19, 25-27. . . . We understand that (Mary) became the living personification of this new reality which is the Church seen as the family of God, because, in the person of the beloved disciple, all who believe in her Son were presented (to her) as her children by the dying Christ Himself. Therefore, the hour of Jesus is also the hour of his Mother."

For more bibliography, Father G. M. Besutti will be adding a supplement (1967-1970) to the extensive work he has already done; see the indications given for the first years after the Vatican II Council in his *Bibliografia Mariana—1958-1966* (Rome, 1968) 195-205; 206-212.