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MARIAN COREDEMPTION AS AN IMPETUS TO MARIAN DEVOTION

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I. Introduction

Marialis Cultus, the Apostolic Exhortation of the Venerable Pope Paul VI, was addressed to the Catholic Church at a crucial moment in the midst of postconciliar confusion. The optimism of *Gaudium et Spes* and the other conciliar documents was met head on by the turbulence of the sixties and seventies. Within ten years of the closing of the Second Vatican Council on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1965, enormous societal changes were taking place which are perhaps not even now fully assessed by the social sciences. In the course of that period, despite the fresh synthesis of Marian doctrine provided by chapter eight of *Lumen Gentium*, Marian devotion, which had perhaps reached its zenith in the era of the Venerable Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), seemed to have reached its nadir. The problem facing Paul VI in that debilitating milieu was how to revive Marian devotion and how to do so from the perspective of the conciliar teaching on the Blessed Virgin Mary.

While the conciliar teaching had benefited from developments that had taken place in biblical, patristic, liturgical and ecclesiological studies since the First Vatican Council, it had still to convey the Church's magisterial teaching on Our Lady, which had been handed on and enriched under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. On the one hand, the papal magisterium from the time of Blessed Pius IX onward had continued developing the teaching about Mary's active collaboration in the work of the redemption, and Pius XI had publicly used the term "Coredemptrix" to describe this role.¹ On the other hand, there was a distinctive concern on the part of many to promote in the council documents language that could be more easily understood by our separated brethren. Thus, while Fr. Giuseppe Besutti confirms that the word "Coredemptrix" did appear in the original *schema* of the Marian document prepared in advance for the Council,² the *Prænotanda* to the first conciliar draft document or *schema* on Our Lady contained these words:

¹ Arthur Burton Calkins, "Mary Coredemptrix: The Beloved Associate of Christ," in *Mariology: A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, and Consecrated Persons*, ed. Mark I. Miravalle (Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing "Seat of Wisdom Books," 2007) [= Mary Coredemptrix], 378–379.

² Giuseppe Besutti, OSM, *Lo schema mariano al Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: Edizione Marianum-Desclée, 1966), 28–29; cf. also Ermanno M. Toniolo, OSM, *La Beata Vergine Maria nel Concilio Vaticano II* (Rome: Centro di Cultura Mariana, "Madre della Chiesa," 2004), 36.

Certain expressions and words used by Supreme Pontiffs have been omitted, which, in themselves are absolutely true, but which may only be understood with difficulty by separated brethren (in this case Protestants). Among such words may be numbered the following: “Coredemptrix of the human race” [Pius X, Pius XI]; “Repairer of the whole world” [Leo XIII]; “she renounced her motherly rights over her Son for the salvation of mankind” [Benedict XV, Pius XII], “we may well say that she with Christ redeemed mankind” [Benedict XV, etc.].³

This original prohibition was rigorously respected and hence the term “Coredemptrix” was not used in any of the official documents promulgated by the Council and, undeniably, “ecumenical sensitivity” was a prime factor in its avoidance⁴ along with a distaste for the general language of mediation on the part of more “progressive” theologians.⁵ On this basis

³ *Omissæ sunt expressiones et vocabula quædam a Summis Pontificibus adhibita, quæ, licet in se verissima, possent difficiliter intelligi a fratribus separatim (in casu a protestantibus). Inter alia vocabula adnumerari queunt sequentia: Corredemptrix humani generis [S. PIUS X, PIUS XI]; Reparatrix totius orbis [LEO XIII]; materna in Filium iura pro hominum salute abdicavit [BENEDICTUS XV, PIUS XII], merito dici queat Ipsam cum Christo humanum genus redemisse [BENEDICTUS XV], etc. ... Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi, Vol. I, Pt. VI (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), 99 (my trans.); Besutti, 41; Toniolo, 98–99.*

⁴ Besutti, 47. Cf. Thomas Mary Sennott, OSB, “Mary Mediatrix of All Graces, Vatican II and Ecumenism,” *Miles Immaculæ* 24 (1988): 151–167; *Theotokos* 242–245.

⁵ Cf. Ralph M. Wiltgen, SVD, *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber: A History of Vatican II* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books and Publishers, 1985, c1967), 90–95, 153–159.

many argue that the Second Vatican Council took a definitive turn against the word and the concept of Mary's active collaboration in the work of the redemption. I believe that all that we can legitimately conclude from this prohibition is that the word "Coredemptrix" and the other phrases indicated were not to be used in the body of the text. Further, the effectiveness of that strategy remains open to debate.

Let me add here that I use the words "Coredemptrix" or "coredemptive" simply because I cannot find another word more appropriate. One needs to understand that the "co" is not intended to put Mary on the same level as Jesus, for she is totally subordinate and secondary to him, fully dependent on him in bringing about the work of our salvation. At the same time her cooperation in the redemption is totally unique because of who God made her to be. Words such as cooperator, collaborator, co-worker, partner, ally, associate, sharer may be affirmed of all of us. If a better word can be proposed, let it be proposed. In this paper I use these terms because they are convenient and have a respectable history.⁶

II. The Sources Utilized in Chapter Eight of *Lumen Gentium*

The fact remains that, even though the use of the word "Coredemptrix" was avoided, the concept was clearly taught that Mary actively cooperated in the work of the redemption in a way that was subordinate and secondary to that of Jesus

⁶ Cf. Mark I. Miravalle, *"With Jesus": The Story of Mary Co-redemptrix* (Goleta, CA: Queenship Publishing, 2003), 7–15.

and totally dependent upon him. In the very beginning of their treatment of Our Lady in the eighth chapter of *Lumen Gentium* the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council spoke of her as being united to Jesus by a close and indissoluble bond⁷ and went on to illustrate how this union between the Mother and the Son was realized in the work of our salvation.⁸ Hence, they spoke of how she devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under Him and with Him, by the grace of almighty God, serving the mystery of redemption.⁹ They spoke of her as uniting herself with His sacrifice with a maternal heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim, whom she herself had brought forth.¹⁰ They underscored how, in an altogether unique way by her suffering with her Son on the cross, she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls.¹¹

⁷ *Lumen Gentium* [= LG], 53. *arcto et indissolubili vinculo unita.*

⁸ LG, 57. *Matris cum Filio in opere salutari coniunctio.*

⁹ LG, 56. *semetipsam ut Domini ancillam personae et operi Filii sui totaliter devovit, sub Ipso et cum Ipso, omnipotentis Dei gratia, mysterio redemptionis inserviens.*

¹⁰ LG, 58. *sacrificio Eius se materno animo sociavit, victimae de se genitae immolationi amanter consentiens.*

¹¹ LG, 61. *Filioque suo in cruce morienti compatiens, operi Salvatoris singulari prorsus modo cooperata est, oboedientia, fide, spe et flagrante caritate, ad vitam animarum supernaturalem restaurandam.*

It should be further noted that *Lumen Gentium*, 58, refers in a footnote to the Venerable Pius XII's Encyclical Letter *Mystici Corporis* (29 June 1943) in which he states that:

She [Mary] it was who, immune from all sin, personal or inherited, and ever most closely united with her Son, offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father together with the holocaust of her maternal rights and motherly love, like a new Eve, for all the children of Adam contaminated through this unhappy fall.¹²

In explicating the reasons for Mary's Queenship, *Lumen Gentium*, 59, refers in a footnote to texts of Pius XII's Encyclical Letter *Ad Cæli Reginam* (11 October 1954) in which he maintains that:

The Blessed Virgin Mary is to be called Queen not only on account of her divine Motherhood but also because by the will of God she had a great part in the work of our salvation. ...

Mary, in the work of redemption, was by God's will joined with Jesus Christ, the cause of salvation, in much the same way as Eve was joined with Adam, the cause of death. Hence, it can be said that the work of our salvation was brought about by a "restoration" (St. Irenaeus) in which the human race, just as it was doomed to death by a virgin, was saved by a virgin. ...

¹² *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* [= AAS] 35 (1943): 247–248; *Our Lady: Papal Teachings*, trans. Daughters of St. Paul (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1961 [=OL], 383–384. *Ipsa fuit, quæ vel propriæ, vel hereditariæ labis expers, arctissime semper cum Filio suo coniuncta, eundem in Golgotha, una cum maternorum iurium maternique amoris sui holocausto, nova veluti Eva, pro omnibus Adæ filiis.*

From this we conclude that just as Christ, the new Adam, is our King not only because He is the Son of God, but also because He is our Redeemer, so also in a somewhat similar manner the Blessed Virgin is Queen not only as Mother of God, but also because she was associated as the second Eve with the new Adam. ...

Jesus Christ alone, God and Man, is King in the strict, full and absolute sense; but Mary shares in His royal dignity in a secondary way, dependent on the sovereignty of her Son. She is Mother of the Christ God and is His associate in the work of redemption, in His conflict with the enemy, and in His complete victory.¹³

Yet again, the footnote attached to the only instance of the use of the word “Mediatatrix” in *Lumen Gentium*, 62, refers to very strong papal pronouncements on Mary’s mediation of all graces. The first comes from Pope Leo

¹³ AAS 46 (1954): 633–635 [OL, 703–706]. *Attamen Beatissima Virgo Maria non tantum ob divinam suam maternitatem Regina est dicenda, sed etiam quia ex Dei voluntate in æternæ salutis nostræ opere eximias habuit partes. ... : si Maria, in spirituali procuranda salute, cum Iesu Christo, ipsius salutis principio, ex Dei placito sociata fuit, et quidem simili quodam modo, quo Heva fuit cum Adam, mortis principio, consociata, ita ut asseverari possit nostræ salutis opus, secundum quandam «recapitulationem» peractum fuisse, in qua genus humanum, sicut per virginem morti adstrictum fuit, ita per virginem salvatur ... inde procul dubio concludere licet, quemadmodum Christus, novus Adam, non tantum quia Dei Filius est, Rex dici debet, sed etiam quia Redemptor est noster, ita quodam analogiæ modo, Beatissimam Virginem esse Reginam non tantummodo quia mater Dei est, verum etiam quod nova veluti Heva cum novo Adam consociata fuit. ... Iamvero plena, propria et absoluta significatione, unus Iesus Christus, Deus et homo, Rex est; attamen Maria quoque, quamvis temperato modo et analogiæ ratione, utpote Christi Dei mater, socia in divini Redemptoris opera, et in eius cum hostibus pugna in eiusque super omnes adepta victoria.*

XIII's Encyclical Letter *Adiutricem Populi* (5 September 1895) in which the Pontiff says

... that she who was so intimately associated with the mystery of human salvation is just as closely associated with the distribution of the graces which from all time will flow from the Redemption. ...

Among her many other titles we find her hailed as “Our Lady,” our “Mediatrice” (St. Bernard, Serm. II in *Adv. Domini*, n.5), the “Reparatrix of the Whole World” (St. Tharasius, *Or. in Præsent. Deip.*), “the Dispenser of all Heavenly Gifts.”¹⁴

What is particularly noteworthy about this reference is that the proscribed title “*Reparatrix totius orbis*” is specifically cited here.¹⁵

The same footnote also refers to Pope St. Pius X's Encyclical Letter *Ad Diem Illum* (2 February 1904):

¹⁴ *Acta Sanctae Sedis* 28 (1895–1896): 130–131 [OL, 169–170]. *omne tempus derivandæ esse pariter administra, permissa ei pæne immensa potestate. ... Hinc rectissime delata ei in omni gente omnique ritu ampla præconia, suffragio crescentia sæculorum: inter multa, ipsam “dominam nostram, mediatricem nostrum,” ipsam “reparatricem totius orbis,” ipsam “donorum Dei” esse “conciliatricem.”* All of the editions, Latin and English, give AAS 15 (1895–1896): 303 as the reference, but this is patently inaccurate because the AAS only began publication in 1908.

¹⁵ On this title, cf. Arthur Burton Calkins, “Maria Reparatrix: Tradition, Magisterium, Liturgy,” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross – III: Maria, Mater Unitatis. Acts of the Third International Symposium on Marian Coredeemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2003), 223–258.

From this communion of will and suffering between Christ and Mary, she merited to become “most worthily the reparatrix of the lost world” [Eadmer, *De Excellentia Virg. Mariæ*, c. 9] and dispensatrix of all the gifts that our Savior purchased for us by his death and by his blood.

It cannot, of course, be denied that the dispensation of these treasures is the particular and supreme right of Jesus Christ, for they are the exclusive fruit of His death, who by his nature is the mediator between God and man. Nevertheless, by this companionship in sorrow and suffering, We have said, which existed between the Mother and the Son, it has been allowed to the August Virgin “to be the most powerful mediatrix and advocate of the whole world in the presence of her Divine Son” [cf. *Ineffabilis Deus*, OL, 64].

The source, then, is Jesus Christ, “from [whose] fullness we have all received” [Jn. 1:16]; “from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied ... makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love” [Eph. 4:16]. But Mary ... is the “aqueduct,” or rather also the neck, by which the head is joined to the body. ...

We are then, it will be seen, very far from declaring the Mother of God a productive power of grace—a power that belongs to God alone. Yet, since Mary carries it over all in holiness and union with Christ and has been associated by Christ in the work of redemption, she merits for us *de congruo* (in a congruous manner) what Christ merits for us *de condigno* {in a condign manner) and she is the supreme minister of the distribution of graces.¹⁶

¹⁶ Heinrich Denzinger and Peter Hünermann, eds., *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, 43rd ed. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 3370. *Ex hac autem Mariam inter et Christum communione dolorum ac voluntatis, promeruit illa ut reparatrix perditī orbis dignissime fieret, atque ideo universorum munerum dispensatrix quæ nobis Iesus nece et sanguine comparavit.*

The last footnote with regard to Mary Mediatrix comes from the radio address of the Venerable Pius XII to Fatima (13 May 1946):

He, the Son of God, gave His heavenly Mother a share in His glory, His majesty, His kingship; because, associated as Mother and Minister to the King of martyrs in the ineffable work of man's Redemption, she is likewise associated with Him forever, with

Equidem non diffitemur horum erogationem munerum private proprioque iure esse Christi; siquidem et illa eius unius morte suntan parta, et Ipse pro potestate mediator Dei atque hominum est. Attamen, pro ea quam diximus dolorum atque ærumnarum Matris cum Filio communion, hoc Virgini august datum est, ut sit "totius terrarium orbis potentissima apud unigenitum Filium suum mediatrix et conciliatri."

Fons igitur Christum est, "et de plenitudine eius nos omnes accepimus" [Io 1:16]; "ex quo totum corpus compactum et connexum per omnem iuncturam subministrationis ... augmentum corporis facit in ædificationem sui in caritate" [Eph 4:16]. Maria vero ... "aquæductus" est aut etiam collum, per quod corpus cum capite iungitur ...

Patet itaque abesse profector plurimum, ut nos Deiparæ supernaturalis gratiæ efficiendæ vim tribuamus, quæ Dei unius est. Ea tamen, quoniam universis sanctitate præstat coniunctioneque cum Christo, atque a Christo ascita in humanæ salutis opus, de congruo, ut aiunt, promeret nobis quæ Christus de condigno promeruit, estque princeps largiendarum gratiarum ministra.

power so to speak infinite, in the distribution of the graces which flow from Redemption.¹⁷

III. The Teaching on Coredemption in *Marialis Cultus*

Now let us examine the teaching about Mary's active cooperation in the work of redemption in *Marialis Cultus*. Appropriately, in laying out what constitutes "the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary," the Venerable Pope Paul VI began his consideration with the highest form of worship, the sacred liturgy. In reflecting on the cycle of feasts in which Our Lady is commemorated, the Pope pointed out two of them (MC, 7) which emphasize Our Lady's co-suffering with Jesus:

Then there is the commemoration of Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15), a fitting occasion for reliving a decisive moment in the history of salvation and for venerating, together with the Son "lifted up on the cross, His suffering Mother."

The feast of February 2, which has been given back its ancient name, the Presentation of the Lord, should also be considered as a joint commemoration of the Son and of the Mother, if we are fully to appreciate its rich content. It is the celebration of a mystery of salvation accomplished by Christ, a mystery with which the Blessed Virgin was intimately associated as the Mother of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, as the one who performs a mission belonging to ancient Israel, and as the model for the new People of God, which

¹⁷ AAS 38 (1946): 266 [OL, 413–414]. *Ele o Filho Deus, reflecte sobre a celeste Mãe a glória, a majestade, o império da sua realza;—porque associada, como Mãe e Ministra, ao Rei dos mártires na obra inefável da humana Redenção, lhe é para sempre associada, com poder quasi imenso, na distribuição das graças que da Redenção derivam.*

is ever being tested in its faith and hope by suffering and persecution (cf. Lk. 2:21-35).¹⁸

Note here that what is rendered in English as “one who performs a mission” is in Latin *exsecutrix muneris*. As no other, Mary is intimately associated to Jesus in the mystery of our salvation and carries out a unique mission in suffering with him.

In *Marialis Cultus*, 20, Paul VI continues to meditate on Mary’s role in the mystery of the Presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple.

Mary is, finally, *the Virgin presenting offerings*. In the episode of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (cf. Lk. 2:22-35), the Church, guided by the Spirit, has detected, over and above the fulfillment of the laws regarding the offering of the firstborn (cf. Ex. 13:11-16) and the purification of the mother (cf. Lv. 12:6-8), a mystery of salvation related to the history of salvation. That is, she has noted the continuity of the fundamental offering that the

¹⁸ AAS 66 (1974): 121–122. *Memoria Virginis Perdolentis (d. xv m. Sept.), qua opportunitas præbetur in mentem vivide revocandi momentum maximum et quasi decretorium historiæ salutis, necnon venerandi compatiens Matrem Filio, cui, in cruce exaltato, astabat.*

Festum quoque diei II mensis Februarii, cui restitutum est nomen In Præsentatione Domini, est attendendum, ut penitus percipiantur uberrimæ, quæ continent, res, memoria nempe coniuncta Filii et Matris; est enim celebratione mysterii salutis, a Christo effecti, cui Virgo intime consociata est ut Mater doloribus obnoxii Servi Iahve, ut exsecutrix muneris, quod veteris Israel proprium erat, et ut exemplar novi Populi dei, qui circa fidem et spem continenter cruciatibus et persecutionibus affligitur (cf. Lc. 2, 21-35).

Incarnate Word made to the Father when He entered the world (cf. Heb. 15:5-7). The Church has seen the universal nature of salvation proclaimed, for Simeon, greeting in the Child the light to enlighten the peoples and the glory of the people Israel (cf. Lk. 2:32), recognized in Him the Messiah, the Savior of all. The Church has understood the prophetic reference to the Passion of Christ: the fact that Simeon's words, which linked in one prophecy the Son as "the sign of contradiction" (Lk. 2:34) and the Mother, whose soul would be pierced by a sword (cf. Lk. 2:35), came true on Calvary. A mystery of salvation, therefore, that in its various aspects orients the episode of the Presentation in the Temple to the salvific event of the cross. But the Church herself, in particular from the Middle Ages onwards, has detected in the heart of the Virgin taking her Son to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (cf. Lk. 2:22) a desire to make an offering, a desire that exceeds the ordinary meaning of the rite. A witness to this intuition is found in the loving prayer of Saint Bernard: "Offer your Son, holy Virgin, and present to the Lord the blessed fruit of your womb. Offer for the reconciliation of us all the holy Victim which is pleasing to God."

This union of the Mother and the Son in the work of redemption reaches its climax on Calvary, where Christ "offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God" (Heb. 9:14) and where Mary stood by the cross (cf. Jn. 19:25), "suffering grievously with her only-begotten Son. There she united herself with a maternal heart to His sacrifice, and lovingly consented to the immolation of this victim which she

herself had brought forth” and also was offering to the eternal Father.¹⁹

¹⁹ AAS 66 (1974): 131–132. *Maria demum est Virgo offerens. Quod quidem in praesentatione Iesu in templo apparet (cf Lc 2, 22–35). In quo eventu Ecclesia, a Spiritu Sancto ducta, praeter perfectionem et absolutionem legum de oblatione primogeniti (cf Ex 13, 11–16) atque matris purificatione (cf Lv 12, 6–8), aliquod mysterium salutis deprehendit, ad historiam ipsius salutis spectans: animadvertit nempe ibi Ecclesia illam primariam oblationem continuari, quam Verbum, caro factum et mundum ingrediens, Deo adhibuit (cf Heb 10, 5–7); et omnium hominum denuntiari salutem, cum Simeon, Puerum Iesum appellans lumen ad revelationem gentium et gloriam Israel (cf Lc 2, 32), Messiam illum agnoscat eundemque Salvatorem omnium; intellexit denique ad Christi Passionem prophetice referri, cum Simeonis verba, uno eodemque oraculo Filium, signum contradictionis (Lc 2, 34), et Matrem, cuius gladius animam pertransiret (cf ibid. 2, 35), inter se necentia, in Calvariae monte ad exitum adducta sint. Quam ob rem, hoc salutis mysterium, variis rationibus ipsius consideratis, id habet proprium, ut per Christi praesentationem in templo ad eventum Crucis salvificum provocet. Ceterum Ecclesia ipsa, maxime a medii aevi saeculis, in Virgine, Filium Ierusalem afferente, ut sisteret Domino (cf Lc 2, 22), voluntatem offerendi, seu ut aiunt, oblativam, intuita est, quae suetum ritus intellectum excederet. Cuius sane rei testimonio est illa S. Bernardi dulcis compellatio: Offer Filium, Virgo Sacrata, et benedictum fructum ventris tui Domino repraesenta. Offer ad nostram omnium reconciliationem hostiam sanctam, Deo placentem.*

Haec autem Matris et Filii coniunctio in opere Redemptionis (summe enituit in Calvariae monte, in quo Christus semetipsum obtulit immaculatum Deo (Heb 9, 14), atque Maria, prope Crucem stans (cf Io 19, 25), vehementer cum Unigenito suo condoluit et sacrificio Eius se materno animo sociavit, victimae de se genitae immolationi amanter consentiens, quam et ipsa aeterno Patri obtulit.

This beautiful text on *the Virgin presenting offerings* is perhaps one of the best-known passages of *Marialis Cultus*. In it Paul VI makes a graceful connection between the offering of Jesus in the Temple and Jesus' self-offering on Calvary. Mary is linked to both scenes, both times offering Jesus to the Father and on Calvary offering herself with him. This is the very heart of coredemptive doctrine: that Mary offers Jesus to the Father and offers herself in union with him. It is this same principle that must be at the very heart of all genuine participation in the sacred liturgy. We also note the explicit references in this passage to *Lumen Gentium*, 57, and to *Mystici Corporis* of Pius XII. Clearly, Paul VI saw himself as a continuator not only of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, but also of the magisterium of his predecessors.

We recall that in his Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* Pius XII referred to Mary as the New Eve, an appellation that takes us all the way back to the Church's earliest apologists and writers, like St. Justin Martyr († c. 165), Tertullian († c. 220) and St. Irenaeus of Lyons († c. 202). They spoke of Mary as the helpmate of Jesus, the New Adam,²⁰ a fundamental datum of the tradition to which the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council returned:

Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see her [Mary] as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as freely cooperating in the work of human salvation through faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenaeus says, she, "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself

²⁰ Cf. Calkins' "Mary Coredemptrix," 349–356.

and for the whole human race.” Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert in their preaching, “The knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by Mary’s obedience; what the virgin Eve bound through her unbelief, the Virgin Mary loosened by her faith.” Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her “the Mother of the living,” and still more often they say: “death through Eve, life through Mary.”²¹

In *Marialis Cultus*, Paul VI twice alludes to Mary as the New Eve. The first time he refers to her as “the Associate of the Redeemer,”²² while the second time he speaks of her as “the New Woman” who “stands at the side of Christ, the New Man, within whose mystery the mystery of man alone finds true light.”²³ Both of these references, though not drawn out, imply the active collaboration of Mary in the work of the redemption, the role of Mary as the representative of the human race cooperating with the work of the God-man,

²¹ LG, 56. *Merito igitur SS. Patres Mariam non mere passive a Deo adhibitam, sed libera fide et oboedientia humanae saluti cooperantem censent. Ipsa enim, ut ait S. Irenaeus, “oboediens et sibi et universo generi humano causa facta est salutis.” Unde non pauci Patres antiqui in prædicatione sua cum eo libenter asserunt: “Hevæ inoboedientiæ nodum solutionem accepisse per oboedientiam Mariæ; quod alligavit virgo Heva per incredulitatem, hoc virginem Mariam solvisse per fidem”; et comparatione cum Heva instituta, Mariam “matrem viventium” appellant, sæpiusque affirmant: “mors per Hevam vita per Mariam.”*

²² AAS 66 (1974): 134. *Socia Redemptoris.*

²³ AAS 66 (1974): 166. *Maria, nova Mulier, proxima Christo adstat, novo Homini, in cuius mysterio tantummodo hominis mysterium clarescit.* The reference here is to *Gaudium et Spes*, 22.

whose Mother and helpmate she was, even if always in a secondary and subordinate way, totally dependent on him.

IV. Proposals in *Marialis Cultus*

Let us now see what the Venerable Paul VI proposes in *Marialis Cultus*, 25, on the basis of what he has already presented.

In the Virgin Mary everything is relative to Christ and dependent upon Him. It was with a view to Christ that God the Father from all eternity chose her to be the all-holy Mother and adorned her with gifts of the Spirit granted to no one else. Certainly genuine Christian piety has never failed to highlight the indissoluble link and essential relationship of the Virgin to the divine Savior. Yet it seems to us particularly in conformity with the spiritual orientation of our time, which is dominated and absorbed by the “question of Christ,” that in the expressions of devotion to the Virgin the Christological aspect should have particular prominence. It likewise seems to us fitting that these expressions of devotion should reflect God’s plan, which laid down “with one single decree the origin of Mary and the Incarnation of the divine Wisdom.” This will without doubt contribute to making piety towards the Mother of Jesus more solid, and to making it an effective instrument for attaining to full “knowledge of the Son of God, until we become the perfect man, fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself” (Eph. 4:13). It will also contribute to increasing the worship due to Christ Himself, since, according to the perennial mind of the Church authoritatively repeated in our own day, “what is given to the handmaid is referred to the Lord; thus what is given to the Mother redounds to the Son;

... and thus what is given as humble tribute to the Queen becomes honor rendered to the King.”²⁴

Clearly, genuine Marian devotion must always take into consideration “the indissoluble link and essential relationship of the Virgin to the divine Savior” [*vinculum indissolubile necessariamque rationem coniunctionis Virginis cum Divino Salvatore*]. In this passage, Paul VI explicitly refers to the foundational statement of Blessed Pius IX in his Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* declaring the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, stating that God’s plan laid down “with one single decree the origin of Mary and the

²⁴ AAS 66 (1974): 135–136. *In Virgine Maria omnia ad Christum referuntur et ex eo pendent: eius nempe causa Deus Pater ab omni aeternitate eam elegit Matrem usquequaque sanctam atque Spiritus exornavit donis nemini alii tributis. Numquam certissime vera omisit christiana pietas extollere vinculum indissolubile necessariamque rationem coniunctionis Virginis cum Divino Salvatore. Nobis tamen videtur potissimum convenire cum proclivitate spirituali huius temporis—quae tota paene occupatur et tenetur “quaestione Christi”—ut in quacumque significatione cultus erga Virginem Mariam peculiare assignetur momentum parti christologicae atque ita res disponatur, ut referatur ad ipsum consilium Dei, quo illius Virginis primordia ... cum divine Sapientiae incarnatione fuerant praestituta. Hoc sine ulla dubitatione adiuvabit, ut pietas erga Matrem Iesu solidior efficiatur atque convertatur in efficax instrumentum, quo perveniatur ad unitatem fidei et agnitionis Filii Dei, in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi (Eph 4,13); item ex altera parte plurimum conferet ad cultum ipsi Christo debitum augendum, quandoquidem, secundum perennem Ecclesiae sensum, cum auctoritate hisce diebus repetitum, refertur ad Dominum quod servitur Ancillae; sic redundat ad Filium, quod impenditur Matri; ... sic transit honor in Regem, qui deferitur in famulatum Reginae.*

Incarnation of the divine Wisdom.”²⁵ From all eternity Mary is united in the divine mind with the Incarnation of the Word. She is the greatest of all creatures, yet always subordinate to her Divine Son. She is never the end of our devotion in herself. As St. Ildephonsus of Toledo puts it “what is given to the Mother redounds to the Son” [*redundat ad Filium, quod impenditur Matri*]. This is a function of Marian mediation.

Since Mary is always linked to her Divine Son and completely relative to him, so genuine Marian devotion must always be relative to him and lead to him. It is always Christocentric.

In its wonderful presentation of God’s plan for man’s salvation, the Bible is replete with the mystery of the Savior, and, from Genesis to the Book of Revelation, also contains clear references to her who was the Mother and associate of the Savior. We would not, however, wish this biblical imprint to be merely a diligent use of texts and symbols skillfully selected from the Sacred Scriptures. More than this is necessary. What is needed is that texts of prayers and chants should draw their inspiration and their wording from the Bible, and above all that devotion to the Virgin should be imbued with the great themes of the Christian message. This will ensure that, as they venerate the Seat of Wisdom, the faithful in their turn will be

²⁵ *Pii IX Pontificis Maximi Acta* I (Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck—u. Verlagsanstalt, 1971), 599 [OL , 34]. *ad illius Virginis primordial transferre, quæ uno eodemque decreto cum Divinæ Sapientiæ incarnatione fuerant præstituta.*

enlightened by the divine word, and be inspired to live their lives in accordance with the precepts of Incarnate Wisdom.²⁶

Again we note the Pope referring to Mary as Mother and Associate of the Savior, who is present with him in the Bible. Veneration of the Seat of Wisdom must inspire us to heed the teachings of Wisdom made flesh.

On the basis of what I have presented I believe that two conclusions can be drawn. First, Marian devotion must always be Christocentric, that is, ultimately referring to Jesus. Second, just as the eighth chapter of *Lumen Gentium* contains very definite references to Marian coredemption, so too does *Marialis Cultus*.

²⁶ AAS 66 (1974): 142. *Sacræ enim Paginæ, cum admirabiliter aperiunt divinum de salute humana consilium, ubique redundant mysterio Salvatoris atque continent a Genesi ad Apocalypsim certissimas significationes de ea, quæ fuit eiusdem Salvatoris Mater et socia. Verumtamen nolimus, ut hic afflatus biblicus solo circumscribatur usu locorum et signorum etiam scienter excerptorum ex Litteris sacris; multo namque plus secum infert. Poscit enim, ut ex Libris sacris vocabula et sententiæ deducantur in ipsas precationis formulas atque textus cantui destinatos; et ante omnia postulat, ut Virginis cultus pervadatur et repleatur maximis illis argumentis nuntii christiani, ut, dum christifideles Sedem Sapientiæ venerantur, ipsi vicissim illuminentur Verbi divini luce atque adducantur, ut secundum praecepta Sapientiæ incarnatae se ipsi gerant.*

V. The Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Marialis Cultus analyzed at some length the Marian Masses in the revised Roman Missal (nos. 1 to 15),²⁷ and it provided some very explicit guidelines for the development of Marian devotion (nos. 29 to 39).²⁸ Further, in *Marialis Cultus*, 56, the Venerable Paul VI reaffirmed the fundamental correlation between the Church's worship and faith, the principle of *lex orandi—lex credendi*:

The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is an intrinsic element of Christian worship. The honor which the Church has always and everywhere shown to the Mother of the Lord, from the blessing with which Elizabeth greeted Mary (cf. Lk. 1:42–45) right up to the expressions of praise and petition used today, is a very strong witness to the Church's norm of prayer and an invitation to become more deeply conscious of her norm of faith. And the converse is likewise true. The Church's norm of faith requires that her norm of prayer should everywhere blossom forth with regard to the Mother of Christ.²⁹

²⁷ AAS 66 (1974): 113–128.

²⁸ AAS 66 (1974): 141–151.

²⁹ AAS 66 (1974): 162. *Ecclesiae pietas erga Beatam Mariam Virginem pertinet ad naturam ipsum christiani cultus. Honor semper et ubique ab Ecclesia Matri Dei tributus—a salutatione Elisabeth ei benedicens (cf Lc 1, 42–45) usque ad hodiernas laudis supplicationisque significationes praeclare testatur ipsius Ecclesiae legem orandi invitamento esse, ut eius lex credendi in conscientiis firmiter solidetur. E contrario, lex credendi eiusdem postulat, ut eius lex orandi ubique prospere vigeat quoad Christi Matrem.*

I submit, therefore, that the first place to look for the realization of these guidelines is in the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*³⁰ issued according to the Decree *Christi mysterium celebrans* of the Congregation for Divine Worship of 15 August 1986. Fathers Cuthbert Johnson, OSB, and Anthony Ward, SM, describe the latter volume in this way:

The Collection is not strictly a new liturgical book nor a supplement to the Roman Missal, nor is it a wholly original composition. The Masses given in the Collection have, for the most part, been drawn from the Roman Missal or from the Propers of Masses of local churches or Religious Orders and Institutes. It is precisely what its name indicates: a gathering under one cover of several Masses in honour of the Virgin Mary. The material is gathered and sanctioned by authority for use in Marian sanctuaries, in the celebration of Saturday Masses of Our Lady, and other such occasions provided for by law.³¹

While many of the Masses in the *Collection* and virtually all of the Prefaces are of recent composition, they nonetheless conform faithfully to the norm *lex orandi—lex credendi* in

³⁰ *Collectio Missarum de Beata Maria Virgine*, 2 vols. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987) [= *Col*]. The most recent American edition, which has been brought into line with the English translation of the Ordinary of the Mass of 2010, and with some modifications in the translation of the texts themselves, is *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, 2 vols. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012).

³¹ Cuthbert Johnson, OSB, and Anthony Ward, SM, “*Præcelsa Filia Sion: Approaching the Euchological Vocabulary of the Collectio Missarum de Beata Maria Virgine*,” *Notitiæ* 278–279 (vol. 25 [1989], no. 9–10): 633.

expressing the faith of the Church. Thus, Paul VI wrote in his Apostolic Letter *Signum Magnum* of 13 May 1967:

Nor is it to be feared that liturgical reform, if put into practice according to the formula “the law of faith must establish the law of prayer” may be detrimental to the “wholly singular” veneration due to the Virgin Mary for her prerogatives, first among these being the dignity of the Mother of God.³²

I have presented a much more detailed treatment of this matter in another place.³³ Here I can only hope to share some of the most significant parts of that earlier work. The motif of Mary as the New Eve is beautifully developed in the Prefaces of the two Lenten Masses of Mary at the Foot of the Cross [*Beata Maria Virgo iuxta Crucem Domini*]. In the first preface we have this lapidary statement:

³² AAS 59 (1967): 467. *Nec verendum est, ne reformatio liturgica—modo ad eam formulam efficiatur, quae hisce exprimitur verbis: lex credendi legem statuat supplicandi—detrimentum cultui singulari omnino iniungat, qui Mariae Virgini sanctissimae, ob praecipua eius privilegia, debetur, in quibus Matris Dei dignitas eminet.*

³³ “Mary as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate in the Contemporary Roman Liturgy,” in *Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate: Theological Foundations towards a Papal Definition?* ed. Mark Miravalle, STD (Santa Barbara, CA: Queenship Publishing, 1995) [= Theological Foundations 1], 45–118; <http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/calkins/calkins.html>.

At the cross the Blessed Virgin appears as the new Eve, so that, as a woman shared in bringing death, so a woman would share in restoring life.³⁴

In the second preface we have the happy fusion of the theme of *socia* (rendered this time in English as “partner”) with that of the “New Eve”:

In your divine wisdom you planned the redemption of the human race and decreed that the new Eve should stand by the cross of the new Adam: as she became his mother by the power of the Holy Spirit, *so, by a new gift of your love, she was to be a partner in his Passion ...*³⁵

The description of Mary as a “partner in the Passion of the New Adam” seems quite deliberately evocative of the text of Genesis in which the Lord God creates for Adam a “helper fit for him” (2:18, 20).

In the Preface of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Gate of Heaven [*Beata Maria Virgo, Ianua Cæli*] we find a number of beautiful themes very succinctly presented. There is the scriptural association of Eve as crediting the word of the serpent rather than accepting the word of God (Gen. 3:1–6) as Mary did. This, of course, is a leitmotif from the time

³⁴ Col, #11. *Ibi enim beata Virgo nova fulget Eva, ut, sicut mulier contulit ad mortem, ita mulier conferret ad vitam.*

³⁵ Col, #12. *Tu enim, ad humanam sobolem sapienti consilio reformandam novam Evam iuxta crucem novi Adami astare voluisti: ut quæ, divino fecundante Spiritu, facta erat mater, novo tuæ pietatis dono fieret socia passionis.*

of Saints Justin Martyr and Irenaeus. Further, the barring of the gates of Paradise (Gen. 3:24) also elicits the theme of *Reparatrix totius mundi*, because Mary repairs or undoes the work of Eve:

She is the humble Virgin, whose faith opened the gate of eternal life, closed by the disbelief of Eve.³⁶

Again, the Preface of Our Lady of Ransom [*Beata Maria Virgo de Mercede*] addresses the Father thus:

For in your wise and provident plan you joined the Blessed Virgin so closely to your Son in the work of redemption that she was with him as a loving mother in his infancy, stood by his Cross as the faithful companion in his Passion ...³⁷

We have yet another evocative depiction of Mary's intimate union with her Son in his suffering as described in the Preface of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Fairest Love [*Beata Maria Virgo, Mater Pulchræ Dilectionis*]:

Beauty was hers in the Passion of her Son: marked by his Blood, in her meekness she shared the suffering of the Lamb of God, her Son,

³⁶ Col, #46. *Hæc est Virgo humilis, quæ æternæ vitæ ianuam, quam Eva incredula clauserat, nobis reseravit fidelis.*

³⁷ Col, #43. *Qui mirabili providentique consilio, beatam Virginem in opere salutis humanæ Filio tuo tam arcta societate iunxisti, ut in humilitate cunarum ei amantissima mater adesset et iuxta crucem staret fidelis social passionis ...*

silent before his executioners, and won for herself a new title of motherhood.³⁸

Admittedly, this magnificent Latin composition is a challenge to unravel in English. The allusion “silent before his executioners” is not found in the Latin, but what is stated is that, “beautiful in the passion of her Son, purpled by his blood,” Mary is “the meek ewe-lamb suffering with the Lamb most meek” and it evokes the homily of Melito of Sardis, a highly venerated second-century Bishop in Asia Minor, who in an elegant homily spoke of Jesus as the “lamb who was mute, whose throat was slit and who was born of Mary, the pure ewe-lamb.”³⁹ The editors of the first volume of *Testi Mariani del Primo Millennio* comment on this reference to Jesus as the paschal lamb and to Mary the pure ewe-lamb in terms of their mutual immolation.⁴⁰

The next two instances refer to “the Virgin presenting offerings”⁴¹ and take as their obvious point of departure the

³⁸ *Col*, #36. *Pulchra in Filii passione, eius purpurata cruore, mitis agna mitissimo Agno compatiens, novo matris ornata munere.*

³⁹ Domenico Casagrande, ed., *Enchiridion Marianum Biblicum Patristicum* (Rome: “Cor Unum,” 1974), #23.

⁴⁰ Cf. Georges Gharib, Ermanno M. Toniolo, Luigi Gambero, and Gerardo Di Nola, eds., *Testi Mariani del Primo Millennio*, Vol. 1 (Rome: Città Nuova Editrice, 1988), 150–151. According to Brant Pitre, in his book *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper* (NY: Doubleday, 2011), 53, “the usual method of sacrifice was to slit the animal’s throat and drain the blood into a sacred vessel of some sort.”

⁴¹ Cf. *Marialis Cultus*, 20.

scene in the Gospel of Luke in which we are told of Mary and Joseph taking the infant Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem “to present him to the Lord” (Lk. 2:22),⁴² while their point of arrival is quite explicitly the offering of Christ as victim on Calvary. Here is a portion of the Preface of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Presentation of the Lord [*Sancta Maria in Præsentatione Domini*]:

She is the virgin daughter of Zion who, in fulfillment of the Law, presents to you her Son, the glory of your people Israel and the light of all nations. She is the Virgin, the handmaid of your plan of salvation, who presents to you the spotless Lamb, to be sacrificed on the altar of the cross for our salvation.⁴³

It should be noticed here as in many other instances that the English text only approximates the Latin. The Latin verb

⁴² On Mary’s role in presenting Jesus in the temple, cf. André Feuillet, PSS, *Jesus and His Mother: The Role of the Virgin Mary in Salvation History and the Place of Woman in the Church*, trans. Leonard Maluf (Still River, MA: St. Bede’s Publications, 1984), 46, and also his *Le sauveur messianique et sa mère dans les récits de l’enfance de saint Matthieu et de saint Luc* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, “Collezione Teologica” 4, 1990), 72–74; Stefano M. Manelli, FI, *All Generations Shall Call Me Blessed: Biblical Mariology*, trans. Peter Damian Fehlner, FI (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2005), 268–285.

⁴³ Col, #7. *Hæc est Virgo Filia Sion, quæ legem adimplens, in templo tibi sistit Filium, gloriam plebis tuæ Israel et lumen omnium gentium. Hæc est Virgo, salvificæ dispensationis ministra, quæ tibi Agnum immaculatum offert, in ara crucis pro nostra immolandum salute.*

*sistit*⁴⁴ is rendered as “presents,” while the Latin verb *offert* is also translated as “presents,” whereas its first meaning is obviously “offers.” Literally, the last line states that Mary is “the Virgin, the minister of the dispensation of salvation, who offers to you the Lamb who is to be immolated on the altar of the cross for our salvation.” In other places, I have critiqued the mistranslation of *ministra*, a concept, which is not at all adequately rendered by the English word “handmaid.”⁴⁵

Our final reference to Mary as “the Virgin offering” comes from the Preface of the second Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Image and Mother of the Church [*Beata Maria Virgo, Imago et Mater Ecclesiae* II]. As in the immediately preceding citation, a definite parallel is intended between the offering in the temple and on the cross.

⁴⁴ On the use of the verb *sistere*, cf. Ignazio M. Calabuig, OSM, and Rosella Barbieri, “Il Prefazio della Messa ‘Sancta Maria in Præsentatione Domini,’” in *Virgo Liber Verbi: Miscellanea di studi in onore di P. Giuseppe Besutti, OSM*, ed. Ignazio M. Calabuig (Rome: Edizioni “Marianum,” 1991), 613.

⁴⁵ “Mary as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate in the Contemporary Roman Liturgy,” in *Theological Foundations* 1:70–91; “Mary ‘Minister of Grace’ in the Magisterium and in the Contemporary Roman Liturgy,” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross—IV: Mater Viventium (Gen. 3:20). Acts of the Fourth International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2004), 29–70.

She is the Virgin who offers, presenting the Firstborn in your temple and sharing in his self-offering beside the tree of everlasting life.⁴⁶

While the idea of Mary sharing in the self-offering of Christ on the tree of the cross is very much in line with the theme of coredemption, what the Latin text says is even in some sense stronger, that is, that Mary consents to his immolation on the cross. Obviously, this final item is a quite deliberate quotation from *Lumen Gentium*, 58, which harkens back to Mary as “the one [who] renounced her motherly rights over her Son for the salvation of mankind,” a phrase used by Pope Benedict XV in his Letter *Inter Sodalicia* (22 May 1918)⁴⁷ and earlier by the Venerable Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical Letter *Mystici Corporis* (29 June 1943).⁴⁸ Let us also recall that this was one of the terms that the *Prænotanda* forbade the Council Fathers to use.⁴⁹

In his great Encyclical Letter on the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, *Haurietis Aquas* (15 May 1956), the Venerable Pius XII had written that:

⁴⁶ Col, #26. *Virgo offerens, tibi in templo Primogenitum sistit et apud lignum vite eius immolationi consentit.*

⁴⁷ AAS 10 (1918): 181–182 [OL, 267]. *materna in Filium jura pro hominum salute abdicavit.*

⁴⁸ AAS 35 (1943): 247 [OL, 383]. *una cum maternorum iurium maternique amoris sui holocausto.*

⁴⁹ *materna in Filium iura pro hominum salute abdicavit.*

By the will of God, the most Blessed Virgin Mary was inseparably joined with Christ in accomplishing the work of man's redemption, so that our salvation flows from the love of Jesus Christ and His sufferings intimately united with the love and sorrows of His Mother.⁵⁰

The concept of our salvation flowing from the sacrifice of Christ “intimately united with the love and sorrows of His Mother” seems to be illustrated by two prayers in the *Collection*. The first is the Prayer after Communion from the first Mass of Mary at the Foot of the Cross [*Beata Maria Virgo iuxta Crucem Domini*, I]:

Grant that the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, poured out upon your Church, may descend in power on all peoples, whom Christ, the High Priest, claims as the reward of the sacrifice he offered on the cross in the presence of his sorrowing mother.⁵¹

Fr. Michael Joncas translates this text literally:

⁵⁰ AAS 48 (1956): 352 [OL, 778]. *Cum enim ex Dei voluntate in humanæ Redemptionis peragendo opere Beatissima Virgo Maria cum Christo fuerit indivulse coniuncta, adeo ut ex Iesu Christi caritate eiusque cruciatibus cum amore doloribusque ipsius Matris intime consociatis sit nostra salus profecta.*

⁵¹ *Col*, #11. *ut Paraclitus Spiritus in Ecclesia tua superabundans, in universas gentes affluenter redundet; quem, sacrificio crucis, compatiente Matre, Christus, summus sacerdos, promeruit.* Lawrence M. Choate, OSM, points out in his study “Mary in the Lent and Easter Seasons: Liturgical References,” *Marian Studies* 42 (1991): 59, that “The translation has made *quem ... Christus ... promeruit* refer to *universas gentes* rather than to *Paraclitus Spiritus*.”

... we pray you, Lord, that the Spirit Paraclete superabounding in your Church may be generously poured out upon all nations [that Spirit] whom, by the sacrifice of the cross, with [his] Mother co-suffering, Christ the High Priest gained.⁵²

My point is that the Latin text speaks of the *sacrificio crucis, compatiente Matre*, that is, “the sacrifice of the cross with the Mother co-suffering” by which Christ the High Priest gained the nations. This is effectively saying that our salvation flows from “the sacrifice of the cross with the Mother co-suffering.” Here, not only did the English translators miss the meaning, but they also obscured the reference to Mary’s co-suffering with Christ the High Priest.

The second prayer which I adduce as supportive of this thesis is the Opening Prayer of the second Mass of Mary at the Foot of the Cross [*Beata Maria Virgo iuxta Crucem Domini*, II]:

Lord our God, you placed at the side of your suffering Son his mother to suffer with him, so that the human race, deceived by the wiles of the devil, might become a new and resplendent creation.⁵³

My point once again is that the Latin text speaks of God’s “associating the co-suffering Mother with his suffering Son” for the repairing of the human race deceived by the wiles of

⁵² Jan Michael Joncas, “Mary in the Mysteries of Christ during Ordinary Time: Liturgical References,” *Marian Studies* 43 (1992): 111.

⁵³ *Col*, #12. *Deus, qui ad humanam substantiam diabolica fraude deceptam mirabiliter reparandam Filio tuo patienti compatientem Matrem sociasti.*

the devil. Without taking away at all from the fact that the sacrifice of Christ is more than sufficient for the salvation of the world, the prayer of the Church (*lex orandi*) as expressed in the *Collectio* states that salvation has effectively come about through the sacrifice of Christ to which is joined the compassion or co-suffering of Mary.

VI. The Papal Magisterium of St. John Paul II

At greater length and more often than all of his predecessors combined, Pope St. John Paul II dealt with the theme of Mary's active collaboration in the work of our redemption.⁵⁴ He used the adjectival form of Coredemptrix in Spanish [*corredentor*], just as he used the Italian term

⁵⁴ Cf. my studies "The Heart of Mary as Coredemptrix in the Magisterium of Pope John Paul II," in *S. Tommaso Teologo: Ricerche in occasione dei due centenari accademici* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana "Studi Tomistici," 59, 1995), 320–335; "Pope John Paul II's Teaching on Marian Coredemption," *Miles Immaculae* 32, fasc. 2 (1996): 474–508; "Pope John Paul II's Teaching on Marian Coredemption," in *Mary Coredemptrix, Mediatrix, Advocate, Theological Foundations II: Papal, Pneumatological, Ecumenical*, ed. Mark Miravalle, STD (Santa Barbara, CA: Queenship Publishing Company, 1997) [= *Foundations* 2], 113–147; "Pope John Paul II's Ordinary Magisterium on Marian Coredemption: Consistent Teaching and More Recent Perspectives," in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross—II: Acts of the Second International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2002) [= *MFC* 2], 1–36, also published in *Divinitas* 45, "Nova Series" (2002): 153–185. I have also published a number of St. John Paul II's texts on Coredemption in *Totus Tuus. Il magistero mariano di Giovanni Paolo II*, a cura di Arthur Burton Calkins (Siena: Edizioni Cantagalli, 2006), 203–245.

Corredentrice in speaking of Mary on five other occasions.⁵⁵ In effect, he used the word more than twice as many times as his last predecessor to do so, Pius XI.⁵⁶ It may be that he became apprehensive about using the term after discussions with some theologians, but the point is that he continued to teach the doctrine of Mary's active cooperation in the work of the redemption until the end of his life.

In the course of this necessarily brief presentation I will be able to draw upon just a few representative texts that emerge from among thousands of the Pope's homilies, prayers, addresses preceding the recitation of the *Angelus* or the *Regina Caeli*, acts of consecration or entrustment to Our Lady, references in pontifical documents and encyclicals. Of particular note are the seventy Marian catecheses which he gave us in the course of his Wednesday general audience addresses from 6 September 1995 to 19 November 1997. These provide a remarkable summary of his own teaching and a further consolidation of that of his predecessors and that of the Second Vatican Council, which constitutes a privileged point of reference for him. It must be readily admitted that these addresses are not infallible declarations, every word of which must be considered as revealed doctrine

⁵⁵ *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II* [= *Inseg*] III/2 (1980): 1646; *L'Osservatore Romano*, Eng. Ed. (first number = cumulative ed. no.; second number = page) [= *ORE*], 662:20; *Inseg* V/3 (1982): 404; *Inseg* VII/2 (1984): 1151 [*ORE* 860:1]; *Inseg* VIII/1 (1985): 889–890 [*ORE* 880:12]; *Inseg* XIII/1 (1990): 743; *Inseg* XIV/2 (1991): 756 [*ORE* 1211:4]. Cf. my presentation of all but the first of these texts in *Foundations* 2:121–124.

⁵⁶ Cf. *MMC*, 32–34.

and thus settling every conceivable issue which theologians discuss. But, on the other hand, these discourses may be justly regarded as an important exercise of the ordinary magisterium of the Roman Pontiff and thus should be received by the faithful “with religious submission of mind and will.”⁵⁷ The Daughters of St. Paul had published these seventy discourses as a volume, which is sadly now out of print.⁵⁸ One can only hope that it will soon reappear.

Let us begin with an important statement from his Marian catechesis of 9 April 1997:

Down the centuries the Church has reflected on Mary’s cooperation in the work of salvation, deepening the analysis of her association with Christ’s redemptive sacrifice. St. Augustine already gave the Blessed Virgin the title “cooperator” in the Redemption (cf. *De Sancta Virginitate*, 6; *PL* 40, 399), a title, which emphasizes Mary’s joint but subordinate action with Christ the Redeemer.

Reflection has developed along these lines, particularly since the 15th century. Some feared there might be a desire to put Mary on the same level as Christ. Actually, the Church’s teaching makes a clear distinction between the Mother and the Son in the work of salvation, explaining the Blessed Virgin’s subordination, as cooperator, to the one Redeemer.

⁵⁷ *LG*, 25. For a further discussion on how the ordinary magisterium of the Supreme Pontiff may be recognized, cf. Arthur Burton Calkins, *Totus Tuus: John Paul II’s Program of Marian Consecration and Entrustment* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 3rd printing, 1997), 266–269.

⁵⁸ *Theotókos—Woman, Mother, Disciple: A Catechesis on Mary, Mother of God*, with a Foreword by Eamon R. Carroll, OCarM, STD (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2000).

Moreover, when the Apostle Paul says: “For we are God’s fellow workers” (1 Cor 3:9), he maintains the real possibility for man to cooperate with God. The collaboration of believers, which obviously excludes any equality with him, is expressed in the proclamation of the Gospel and in their personal contribution to its taking root in human hearts.

However, applied to Mary, the term “cooperator” acquires a specific meaning. The collaboration of Christians in salvation takes place after the Calvary event, whose fruits they endeavor to spread by prayer and sacrifice. Mary, instead, cooperated during the event itself and in the role of mother; thus her cooperation embraces the whole of Christ’s saving work. She alone was associated in this way with the redemptive sacrifice that merited the salvation of all mankind. In union with Christ and in submission to him, she collaborated in obtaining the grace of salvation for all humanity.

The Blessed Virgin’s role as cooperator has its source in her divine motherhood. By giving birth to the One who was destined to achieve man’s redemption, by nourishing him, presenting him in the temple and suffering with him as he died on the Cross, “in a wholly singular way she cooperated ... in the work of the Saviour” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 61). Although God’s call to cooperate in the work of salvation concerns every human being, the participation of the Savior’s Mother in humanity’s Redemption is a unique and unrepeatable fact.⁵⁹

The above citation is a lengthy one, but it is particularly rich in doctrine and in its precision. It accentuates the historical development of the Church’s insight into Mary’s cooperation in the work of our redemption. It highlights the subordinate nature of Mary’s cooperation while at the same time recognizing that her cooperation is altogether unique

⁵⁹ *Inseg XX/1* (1997): 621–622 [*ORE* 1487:7].

because she “cooperated during the event itself and in the role of mother” and thus “the participation of the Savior’s Mother in humanity’s Redemption is a unique and unrepeatable fact.”

In a notable general audience address given on 4 May 1983, the Holy Father said this:

Dearest brothers and sisters, in the month of May we raise our eyes to Mary, the woman who was associated in a unique way in the work of mankind’s reconciliation with God. According to the Father’s plan, Christ was to accomplish this work through his sacrifice. However, a woman would be associated with him, the Immaculate Virgin who is thus placed before our eyes as the highest model of cooperation in the work of salvation. ...

The “Yes” of the Annunciation constituted not only the acceptance of the offered motherhood, but signified above all Mary’s commitment to service of the mystery of the Redemption. Redemption was the work of her Son; Mary was associated with it on a subordinate level. Nevertheless, her participation was real and demanding. Giving her consent to the angel’s message, Mary agreed to collaborate in the whole work of mankind’s reconciliation with God, just as her Son would accomplish it.⁶⁰

On 22 June 1994, in his general audience address, the Holy Father, reflecting on the text of Genesis 2:4-25, made these comments on Mary as the New Eve, “the first ally of God”:

⁶⁰ *Inseg* VI/1 (1983): 1135–1136 [*ORE* 783:1].

The subsequent Genesis text likewise shows that in the divine plan the cooperation of man and woman must be realized on a higher level, within the perspective of the association of the *new* Adam and the *new* Eve. In fact, in the Protoevangelium (cf. Gen. 3:15), enmity is established between the devil and the woman. The first enemy of the evil one, woman is God's first ally (cf. *Mulieris Dignitatem*, n. 11). In the light of the Gospel, we can recognize the Virgin Mary in this woman. ...

Mary was committed to God's definitive covenant with humanity. She has the task of consenting, in the name of humanity, to the Savior's coming. This role surpasses all claims, even the most recent, of women's rights: Mary intervened in a super-eminent and humanly unthinkable way in the history of humanity, and with her consent, contributed to the transformation of all human destiny.

In addition, Mary co-operated in the development of Jesus' mission, both by giving birth to him, raising him, being close to him in his hidden life; and then, during the years of his public ministry, by discreetly supporting his activities, beginning with Cana when she obtained the first demonstration of the Savior's miraculous power; as the Council says, it was Mary who "brought about by her intercession the beginning of the miracles of Jesus the Messiah" (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 58).

Above all, Mary co-operated with Christ in his work of redemption, not only preparing Jesus for his mission, but also joining in his sacrifice for the salvation of all (cf. *Mulieris Dignitatem*, nn. 3-5).⁶¹

I have already underscored the fundamental tenet of Marian coredemption, that on Calvary Mary offered Jesus to the Father and offered herself in union with him. Here is how

⁶¹ *Inseg* XVII/1 (1994): 1220-1221 [*ORE* 1347:11].

the Pope explained the matter in an Angelus address of 5 June 1983, the Feast of Corpus Christi:

Born of the Virgin to be a pure, holy and immaculate oblation, Christ offered on the Cross the one perfect Sacrifice which every Mass, in an unbloody manner, renews and makes present. In that one Sacrifice, Mary, the first redeemed, the Mother of the Church, had an active part. She stood near the Crucified, suffering deeply with her Firstborn; with a motherly heart she associated herself with his Sacrifice; with love she consented to his immolation (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 58; *Marialis Cultus*, 20): she offered him and she offered herself to the Father. Every Eucharist is a memorial of that Sacrifice and that Passover that restored life to the world; every Mass puts us in intimate communion with her, the Mother, whose sacrifice “becomes present” just as the Sacrifice of her Son “becomes present” at the words of consecration of the bread and wine pronounced by the priest.⁶²

Perhaps the most brilliant of John Paul II’s insights into the redemption wrought by Christ and the coredemption on the part of Mary occurred in his Apostolic Exhortation *Salvifici Doloris* (11 February 1984). That document constitutes a remarkable meditation on the words of St. Paul, “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I

⁶² *Inseg* VI/1 (1983): 1447 [ORE 788:2]. I have written a number of times on this topic: “Mary’s Presence in the Mass,” *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* 97, no. 10 (July 1997): 8–15; “Mary’s Presence in the Mass according to Pope John Paul II,” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross*, VI: *Marian Coredemption in the Eucharistic Mystery. Acts of the Sixth International Symposium on Marian Coredemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2007), 11–38; and, finally, “Mary’s Presence in the Mass: The Teaching of Pope John Paul II,” *Antiphon: A Journal for Liturgical Renewal*, 10, no. 2 (2006): 132–158.

complete what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body, the Church” (Col. 1:24). In section 24 he stated that:

The sufferings of Christ created the good of the world’s Redemption. This good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add anything to it. But at the same time, in the mystery of the Church as His Body, Christ has in a sense opened His own redemptive suffering to all human suffering. Insofar as man becomes a sharer in Christ’s sufferings—in any part of the world and at any time in history—to that extent *he in his own way completes* the suffering through which Christ accomplished the Redemption of the world.

Does this mean that the Redemption achieved by Christ is not complete? No. It only means that the Redemption, accomplished through satisfactory love, *remains always open to all love* expressed *in human suffering*. In this dimension—the dimension of love—the Redemption, which has already been completely accomplished, is, in a certain sense, constantly being accomplished. Christ achieved the Redemption completely and to the very limit; but at the same time He did not bring it to a close. In this redemptive suffering, through which the Redemption of the world was accomplished, Christ opened Himself from the beginning to every human suffering and constantly does so. Yes, it seems to be part *of the very essence of Christ’s redemptive suffering* that this suffering requires to be unceasingly completed.⁶³

The point about coredemption as a general category and Marian coredemption as the pre-eminent instance of it is brought out beautifully by the Pope himself in *Salvifici Doloris*, 25:

⁶³ *Inseg* VII/1 (1984): 307 [St. Paul Editions, 37–38].

It is especially consoling to note—and also accurate in accordance with the Gospel and history—that at the side of Christ, in the first and most exalted place, there is always His Mother through the exemplary testimony that she bears *by her whole life* to this particular Gospel of suffering. In her, the many and intense sufferings were amassed in such an interconnected way that they were not only a proof of her unshakable faith but also a contribution to the Redemption of all. . . . It was on Calvary that Mary’s suffering, beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view but which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world. Her ascent of Calvary and her standing at the foot of the cross together with the beloved disciple were a special sort of sharing in the redeeming death of her Son.⁶⁴

The two citations from *Salvifici Doloris* already help us to hold in tension the dynamic truths, which underlie redemption and Marian coredemption.⁶⁵ On the one hand, “The sufferings of Christ created the good of the world’s Redemption. This good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add anything to it.” On the other hand, “Mary’s suffering [on Calvary], beside the suffering of Jesus, reached an intensity which can hardly be imagined from a human point of view but which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world.” Thus, the Pope

⁶⁴ *Inseg* VII/1 (1984): 308–309 [St. Paul Editions, 40–41].

⁶⁵ Cf. Arthur Burton Calkins, “The Relation of Coredemption to the Concept of Redemption in the Magisterium,” in *Mary at the Foot of the Cross*, VIII: *Coredemption as Key to a Correct Understanding of Redemption* (New Bedford, MA: Academy of the Immaculate, 2008), 11–55.

strikes that careful balance which is always a hallmark of Catholic truth: he upholds the principle that the sufferings of Christ were all sufficient for the salvation of the world, while maintaining that Mary's suffering "was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the Redemption of the world." This is an axiom that may be discovered in the lives of the saints of every era of the Church's history, from the days of the apostles to our own.

Unfortunately, from the time of the Reformation, Luther and his followers have put so much emphasis on "God alone," "Christ alone," "Scripture alone," "faith alone," and "grace alone" as to undercut effectively any discourse about cooperation in the work of the redemption. Hence, the very mention of coredemption or Marian coredemption is enough to send up mile-high warning signals among our Protestant brothers and sisters as well as among many in our own household of faith. Hence, it is very instructive to find that the same Pope John Paul II, who so consistently spoke of the need for ecumenical collaboration, dialogue, and sensitivity,⁶⁶ has also forged ahead in delineating the role of Mary as Coredemptrix.

VII. Some Conclusions

What are all of these texts aiming at? What is the point of this presentation? Let me draw a few conclusions.

⁶⁶ One has only to examine such documents as the Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* of 10 November 1994, the Apostolic Letter *Orientale Lumen* of 2 May 1995, and the Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint* of 25 May 1995, to find evidence of his vigorous support of these initiatives.

1. In effect, in popular piety “Mary Coredemptrix” is “Our Lady of Sorrows.” Gazing on Mary in her suffering on Calvary has always moved the hearts of the faithful. The image of the *Pietà*, of the Heart of Mary pierced with one or seven swords, speaks to the children of the Church. But it has been my experience that the more the Church’s solemn and official teaching about Mary’s active collaboration in the work of our redemption is presented to the faithful, the more they learn of the teachings of the popes and of the saints about Mary’s sufferings in union with Jesus, the more they are overwhelmed and moved to praise and thank the Lord and His Mother. I have only presented a rough outline, trying to highlight the most important statements of the magisterium and I have concluded with the marvelous teachings of St. John Paul II. I recall a weekend retreat that I gave in St. Louis a few years ago, and the wonder and amazement of the people at some of the texts I have just shared. They asked, “Why have we never heard this before?” It is hard to believe, but I know it is true. If we truly follow the guidelines of *Marialis Cultus*, we will be leading our brethren in a true renewal of popular piety that will have an impact on their lives and on the Church. As we know, Marian devotion is never an end in itself, but it is a very powerful means, and I am convinced that God wants His Mother to be honored by recognizing the unique role she had and has in our salvation—that we must teach it, preach it, celebrate it and proclaim it to the world as heroically as did St. John Paul II. The Council Fathers said it clearly:

Mary, who since her entry into salvation history unites in herself and re-echoes the greatest teachings of the faith as she is proclaimed and

venerated, calls the faithful to her Son and His sacrifice and to the love of the Father.⁶⁷

2. I believe that the *Collection of Marian Masses* is a marvelous resource for our prayer and catechesis and a few of these Masses have been incorporated into the third typical edition of the Roman Missal. Preachers and teachers should make use of them. They follow the guidelines established in *Marialis Cultus* and provide a storehouse of doctrine and devotion.

3. In preparing this presentation, I have also reviewed many statements of Pope Benedict XVI and some of Pope Francis. Clearly—and I say this with all due respect—they continue the Church’s teaching about Mary’s unique cooperation in the work of the redemption, but it does not seem to be their special gift to present it with the dynamism, the poetry, and the power of St. John Paul II. We still have much to learn from him, and I do believe that his Marian magisterium constitutes his single greatest legacy to the Church. Let us spread it.

Author’s Biography

Msgr. Arthur Burton Calkins’ doctoral study, “*Totus Tuus: John Paul II’s Program of Marian Consecration and Entrustment,*” was published and has gone into multiple

⁶⁷ LG, 65. *Maria enim, quae, in historiam salutis intime ingressa, maxima fidei placita in se quodammodo unit et reverberat, dum praedicatur et colitur, ad Filium suum Eiusque sacrificium atque ad amorem Patris credentes advocat.*

printings. His articles on Mariology and spirituality have appeared in both popular and scholarly publications. A partial list of his publications may be found at <http://www.christendom-awake.org/pages/calkins/calkins.html>.