

December 29, 1963

Rev. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Editor  
THE MARIAN ERA  
1434 West 51st Street  
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Dear Father Habig,

This is to express appreciation for the excellence and timeliness of the articles in THE MARIAN ERA Volume 4, which I was able to give a careful reading during this Christmas season.

The dialogue or controversy over Mary which has arisen in connection with the Ecumenical Council has placed us necessarily (in our lectures, etc.) in the position of elucidating our conviction and the premise of our Mary's Gardens work that (in the words of Father Balic) "the person and mission of the Mother of God cannot be perfectly understood exclusively from the ecclesiological point of view". It is in the dedication of TME Vol 4 to this proposition that we find it highly edifying. Previously our Mary's Gardens work, in addition to proposing the restoration of a religious sense to the secularized areas of gardening, proposed to further knowledge and veneration of Mary through plant figures and symbols. We considered it a Marian apostolate or movement in this sense, but not in the sense of having to justify or defend personal devotion and dedication to Mary, as we now find ourselves called to do, as a public Marian movement. Hence, for example, our article, "Mary's Gardens", in TME Vol 3 took as its starting point the acceptance of personal Marian devotion and then went on to set forth the history and the benefits of the extension of this devotion into gardening.

Now, however, that we have been called upon to re-think Marian devotion and dedication as such, we have come up with some thoughts which we wish to pass on to you as ~~possible~~ approaches which could possibly merit thorough treatment in article form from a competent mariological scholar in TME Vol 5, if such is not planned or at hand already.

take

In approaching this matter we ~~took~~ as our starting point a statement of the ecclesiological view of Mary, namely the book, "Mary, Archetype of the Church", which we spotted in the book department of a Philadelphia department store on Christmas eve (and read, together with TME Vol 4 on Christmas day).



In reading this book, translated from the original German by Otto Semmelroth, S. J., we were first of all profoundly impressed with how illuminatingly and compellingly the author related to Mary's role as Archetype of the Church her privileges of (in his order) Co-redemption, Mediation, Bridal Motherhood of God, Perpetual Virginity, Immaculate Conception and Glorious Assumption and then drew the conclusion that "true devotion to Christ is Marian in attitude". Surely such a book must serve to draw those who are ecclesiologically or christologically oriented in the narrower senses of these terms to a fuller veneration of Mary.

In fact, ~~the~~ so striking were the unity and clarity with which the author derived these privileges of Mary from what he postulates as "the central Marian idea", namely Mary as Archetype of the Church, that for a moment the reader (or at least this reader) fails to take full cognizance of the implicit depersonalization of Mary which results from the displacement of Mary's Divine Maternity (or Divine Daughterhood-Bridehood-Motherhood) as the central Marian "idea". And it was in reflecting on the impact of this tour de force that I could see the need for an article setting forth Mary's "personhood", or Mary as a person, as a female person as the "central Marian idea", or certainly "a" central Marian idea.

Here we are, defending Mary's universal mediation, spiritual maternity etc., when what our adversaries are really objecting to is the sublime role and mission to which God has elevated her as a person, both in relation to Him (Daughter, Spouse, Mother, Queen), and, therefore, to us (Mediatrice, Co-redemptrice, Mother, Queen, Lady, Ideal, Advocate, Intercessor, Protectrix, Patroness, Refuge, Comforter, Counselor, Help, etc.).

In establishing the central importance of Mary's "personhood", it seems to me there is no lack of support from scripture, tradition, the liturgy, the saints etc.. Perhaps Mary's personhood has seemed so evident to us and so implicit in our practical religious thinking and living that we have failed to stress it sufficiently in the foundations of Mariology, - passing over it, rather, in arguing Mary's "secondary" prerogatives which nevertheless are derived from it.

In the development of the doctrine of Mary's personhood, it seems to me that Ephesus and the dogma of the <sup>Divine</sup> Divine Maternity are definitive. Christ had previously been defined as a <sup>Divine</sup> Person, and what was in question was <sup>His</sup> humanity, received from Mary his Mother. But in defining Christ's humanity as derived from Mary his Mother, it was implicit as a corollary that Mary was defined as a human person in a privileged relationship with God the Son (as Mother) and therefore with God the Father and Holy Ghost (as Daughter and Spouse), and therefore with all mankind, through God's plans of creation and redemption.

The controversial problem, as I see it, is that just as there were those who rebelled at the doctrine of Christ's human nature, so too are there those who rebel at the corollary doctrine of the consequent personal relationship of the <sup>Mother</sup> Mother of Christ, ~~human nature~~ (and ~~therefore of Christ~~ <sup>the</sup> God-Man) to the Divine Persons. "Behold, this child is set . . . for a sign which shall be contradicted: and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed

\*Is not Mary as Archetype of the Church a central ecclesiological idea, not a central Mariological idea?

Temple  
Tabernacle  
Dwelling Place



of Christ's Sacrifice continues in the  
Maid, why not Mary's co-redemption,  
mediation, etc..

3. Just as the Priest is Christ, so too  
are we Mary, on Calvary. Christ is  
in the Priest, we are formed in & conformed to Mary.

his of  
the Mother  
& all

incarnation

Mary as the  
created &  
ruled em-  
pire of  
the feminine  
principle...  
Substantially  
existentially

God as  
Father &  
no Mother

God as person,  
form. personable  
as person

Divine human  
nature hyp-  
ostatically united  
in Christ &  
by Mary.

wordsworth

Spiritual  
analysis with  
feminine &  
motherly in  
work

Or, if they accept the personal relationship of Mary to Christ on earth, they relegate this, as do the ecclesiological Marianists, to an archetypal significance now that Mary is no longer on earth, and rebel against the implications of Mary's continuing personal relationships to the Divine Persons and to the human race, collectively and individually (personally): an implicit denial of the doctrine of the Church Triumphant sector of the Communion of Saints.

I am ~~personally~~ attuned to this question of Mary's personhood because prior to my conversion to the Catholic faith I had studied quite deeply the principal monistic and pantheistic religions of the world, and had been accustomed to think in terms of the masculine and feminine or male and female principles of God and also of "Creation". According to these religions both male and female gods and goddesses, as well as male and female "persons" on earth were considered as so many manifestations of the one God or Principle which ultimately were not distinct from It, and merged into It.

In receiving the grace to embrace Catholic Christianity, a fundamental realization was that the eternal God was a triune God of three Divine Persons and that all people on earth were created by God, distinctly from Him as immortal souls. A further realization was that while both the masculine and feminine principles were necessarily contained in God (as the causes of masculine and feminine on earth), nevertheless the Three Divine Persons were primarily masculine, and ~~that~~ the feminine principle was manifested ~~in~~ most perfectly and "archetypally" in Mary, a created person on earth elevated by privilege and grace into a special feminine relationship with God as Daughter-Spouse-Mother, and ~~to~~ with the rest of the human race in whose hearts was implanted a natural longing for a religious Mother.

Having had the good fortune to come into the Church, and to come in by this route, I ~~personally~~ had no problem in accepting either Christ's Divine-Human nature or Mary's special personal relationship with the Triune God. However, this ~~personal~~ religious history has enabled me to appreciate the importance of Mary's personal relationship to God and to men, as set forth above, and hence my stress of this to you, in terms of the present Marian controversy, for whatever it may be worth.

Interestingly this question came up as a practical matter in the domain of Mary Garden symbolism. Upon entering the Church I at once found myself repulsed by most painted and sculptured images of Mary: finding them insipid, emotional, sentimental etc. - both poor art and belying the sublime person and truth of Mary.. Hence my preference for God-made flower symbols of Mary's purity, beauty and splendor etc.. But soon came the realization that while Christians had found Mary's attributes and her life and mysteries mirrored in flowers, a flower as flower was incapable of symbolizing fully either ~~the~~ the ~~truth~~ truth of her humanity or her maternity. From this I appreciated immediately why artistic images of the Mother and Child became important as soon as the doctrine of the Divine Maternity was defined as dogma at Ephesus, and also why a Mary Garden should have a figure of the Mother of God as a focal point.

In this connection, I have made a most extensive study of Marian doctrine and piety as manifested in the development of religious images from the catacombs to Ephesus and from Ephesus down to the present day. While I have presented this informally on Television, I only have it in the form of notes and slides, but would be glad to pull it together in article form during the coming year if you would be interested in considering such a MS a year from now for TMR Volume 6



I of course have appreciated the rich representation of Marian art illustrating the first four volumes of TME, but note they are primarily illustrations and have not been formally ordered, connected or appraised. One of the biggest ecumenical problems with Protestants is that much contemporary Marian art is objectionable on a two-fold basis: first because they do not accept personal Marian devotion, so closely connected with the use of religious images, and secondly because so much of it is considered by leading artists and art critics as bad art - on purely technical grounds, aside from questions of representation vs. abstract style etc..

Father, I apologize for this somewhat disjointed and also badly typed letter. However, I did want to express appreciation for TME Volume 4, and to let you know what is going on in this sector of the Marian movement, even though I am very badly pressed for time due to an overloaded situation in my regular work (packaging machinery) which has continued throughout 1963. On the practical side of Mary's Gardens, we have been developing materials and instructions for indoor, house plant Mary Gardens, although what we hoped to have for 1964 probably won't be fully worked out until, d.v., 1965.

Please accept Ed McTague's and my prayerful best wishes for the continued fruitfulness of your Marian work in 1964.

Sincerely, in Our Lady,

John S. Stokes Jr.

P.S. - I wanted to say especially how instructive I found Father Maly's article, "Recent Biblical Studies and Mariology". The fact that exacting scriptural research shows that the Old Testament introduced the truth that "woman" and "a woman" would play a significant role in the redemption of God's people (and not a "Virgin" etc.) prepares the way doctrinally for Mary's full relationship with the Divine Persons and the human race as woman, as does Christ's reference to her as "woman" at Cana and from the Cross.

XXXX

Can you not give us also, addressed to the present dialogue, an article on Mary ~~XX~~ prefigured by created wisdom as Daughter of the Father: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways . . . I was with Him, forming all things . . . and my delight is to be with the children of men.", showing how Mary, as a person, could have this accomplished in her retroactively - mystically and intuitively - just as in anticipation she had accomplished in her the Immaculate Conception?

Creation  
Redemption

How one senses that we are truly on the verge of the Marian Era!

If Mary was with God forming all these things, why not also be formed spiritually by grace?



Dear Mother Guadalupe,

I send you this letter copy  
by way of showing my very  
real appreciation for your  
thoughtfulness in intro-  
ducing me to Auguste  
Nicolas' book.

February 9, 1964

Rev. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Editor  
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1434 West 51st Street  
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Dear Father Habig,

You will recall that I wrote you during the Christmas season  
in connection with Father Balic's observation in TME Vol 4 that "the  
person and mission of the Mother of God cannot be perfectly understood  
exclusively from the ecclesiological point of view".

I mentioned how impressed I was with the truth of this observation  
after reading Father Semmelroth's book, "Mary, Archetype of the Church",  
- its great brilliance and contribution to Mariology notwithstanding.

In my letter I expressed the hope that the depersonalization of  
Mary which results from an over-exaggerated ecclesiological treatment  
could be countered, and the true order of things restored, by one of  
your contributors to TME Vol 5 in an article stressing the truth and  
importance of the "personhood" of Mary: the importance of Mary as a  
person, as a female person, as the highest personal embodiment of the  
universal feminine principle.

I am happy to report that there has now come into my hands, provi-  
dentially, a book which precisely and fully presents this Mariological  
treatment I have been seeking: "La Vierge Marie Dans le Plan Divin"  
by Auguste Nicolas, Vaton Freres, Paris, 1869. The personality of Mary  
is treated specifically in Book I, Chapter VII, part III, and her  
embodiment of the universal feminine principle in Book III, Chapter VII.  
Significantly, Book III, Chapter IX, "Rapport de Marie Avec le Monde  
Materiel Et Sensible" concludes by pointing out the fitness of nature  
symbols of Mary, which was precisely our Mary's Gardens starting point  
from which we worked our way to the implicit fundamental truths of  
Mary's person and her embodiment of the feminine principle.

I mention this to you after having just skimmed through the book,  
because of its pertinency to my previous letter and, I think, to the  
present Mariological dialogue. A thorough reading will follow, which I  
am sure will yield rich Mariological treasures.

Sincerely, in Our Lady,

cc: M. Guadalupe, M. A. (who was kind  
enough to lend me this book)

John S. Stokes Jr.



February 16, 1964

Fr. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Editor  
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Dear Father Habig:

Thank you for your letter of February 12.

The following, in rough translation as I type, is what I consider to be the key summation from Auguste Nicolas' "La Vierge Marie Dans Le Plan Divin" regarding the personality of Mary, which I consider to be pertinent to the present Mariological dialogue. It is the conclusion, pages 171 - 173, of Book I, Chapter VII, "Ministère De Marie Dans Le Plan Divin". I enclose a Xerox copy of the original French, in case you wish to make a more careful translation.

" . . . And it is not only woman who is honored in this great figure of Mary; it is, as we have demonstrated, human personality, created personality in its most universal aspects.  
has come from

"The honor ~~of~~ having participated, if I may speak thus, in the mystery of the Incarnation between man and woman in such a way that if it is in the God-Man that human nature has been exalted, it is only in the Virgin Mother that human personality, all created personality, has received honor.

"This honor has been borne in fact in Mary to the extent of making her the first, not only among all women, but among all human beings, and further among all creatures heavenly and earthly, being Queen not only of men, but of Angels, of all Dominations, of all who can be named among creatures, not only in the present ~~century~~ but in future ages; having primacy before all except Him who has subjected all to himself . . . .

"To this privilege, God has wished to add still more. He has wished - marvel of honor! - that He himself who has subjected all to Mary, God himself, as infinitely superior to Mary as He is, submitted himself to her in filial subjugation, and paid homage with ~~xxx~~ this divine superiority itself, that his humanity owed to her Maternity.



"It is thus that human Personality is exalted and super-exalted in Mary.

"And it is here that one cannot claim, that one cannot say that in extending the grandeur of Mary so far we go so far as to confuse it with the grandeur of God.

"By an art the most marvellous and the most simple, such that one cannot say enough of it in this divine mystery, the danger of this confusion is rendered impossible to (even) the most enthusiastic praise; for the very clear reason that the subject of this praise is the human personality of Mary. The marvel of her grandeur, the object of all the cult which is rendered to her, is that, being a human person, one of us, she has been raised to such heights. If Mary was of a divine nature, there would no longer be any marvel, there would no longer be glory in that she was the Mother of God. All the words, all the cult of piety of men towards her has its basis in that she is a simple woman. There is therefore no basis for objecting to us or making a controversy over our cult towards Mary. The more we exalt her with our homage, the more we distinguish her from the Divinity with which they accuse us of confusing her; because what we exalt is a creature who has been glorified, and who would cease to be glorified if she ceased to be a creature, the most humble of creatures.

"This argument has been presented several times to our view in the course of this work, because it has several aspects, in each of which it confounds the objection of unintelligent idolotry that heresy addresses to the cult of the Mother of God.

"Let us admire without reservation this marvellous art of the divine Wisdom who, wishing to honor woman with an honor which could not be divine like that which was reserved for the God-Man, yet however wishing to associate her in the divine Plan in a proportion which maintained the natural relation between man and woman, has accomplished this by making the deification in which woman could not participate ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ dependent on this very woman, thus exalting ~~XXXXXX~~ human personality in her even so far as subordinating to her free cooperation the universal destiny of creation, and that of God himself in his work; thus making ~~XX~~ her natural inferiority and, more than that, ~~XX~~ her voluntary humility, the subject, the foundation, the marvel and ~~at~~ the same time the preservation of his Grandeur."

o o o

(I apologize for the literalness of this translation, but time limitations prevent me from polishing it.)

In a previous section the author had pointed out that Christ's is a divine personality (which made His subjection of that personality by clothing it with a human soul and body all the more ineffable), - a necessary distinction before one can appreciate the full significance of Mary's role in the divine plan considered from the viewpoint of her human personality. Thus, as the author points out, this is the distinction which both enables us to appreciate the glories of Mary, but at the same time safeguards against confusing her with God. Marian veneration thus testifies to the wonderful goodness of God in raising human personality to such intimate collaboration with the Divine. Thus understood, the more we praise what God has done to Mary the more we praise God.



The whole present Marian dialogue is as though we had forgotten the teaching of Ephesus. It was precisely because Jesus was a divine person united to a human body and soul that Mary was acknowledged to be the Mother of God . . . the corollary of which is that, again, because Jesus is a divine person, ~~XXXX~~ Mary, of her own free collaboration is the most exalted human person, and thus worthy of the highest human veneration.

The trouble, as I mentioned in my December letter, with carrying on the Marian dialogue on the level of the various consequences of Mary's personal collaboration with God (viz. her Divine Maternity, her Immaculate Conception (an anticipation), her Assumption, her Perpetual Virginity, her Co-Redemption, her Universal Mediation, her Universal Motherhood of Men, etc.), is that ~~this~~ does not clarify the basic "problem" of her personality, which is implicitly the issue in all these other matters, I believe.

One other observation. As the first session of the Council approached all the "Marian minimalists" began rubbing their hands in anticipation of "toning down" devotion to Mary. Then, disappointed by Pope John's solid Marian spirituality, they began rubbing their hands again when Pope Paul made his strong Christological appeal at the opening of the second session and subsequently read all sorts of unwarranted conclusions into the schema vote.

But now, lo and behold, we have Pope Paul's marvellous address made at Nazareth on January 5, in which he taught that devotion to Mary "should raise her high above the world as an example of human perfection in whom the world may securely place its trust. Then we **present** our prayers for what is closest to our hearts, because we wish to honor her goodness and the prayer of her love and intercession."

And, as though amplifying these remarks, he stated in Rome on February 8, "We must first honor the most holy Madonna before we invoke her. Our piety, the faithful pupil of tradition, must preserve its full objective expression of worship and imitation before assuming ~~the~~ subjective expression of praying for things for our comfort and benefit. . . . (In praying to Our Lady, Christians) "celebrate in in her the mysteries of the Lord and venerate her greatness and her privileges, praise her beauty, admire her goodness and study her virtues and example. . . . Modern development of Marian piety must ~~for~~ us follow this furrow which the most ancient and authoritative tradition of the Church offers to the spirituality of the Christian people. Thus by honoring Mary we arrive at the discovery of her superlative action in the economy of salvation and particularly her action of intercession. . . . Thus we arrive at the discovery of a personal relationship between the Madonna and our individual souls, a relationship which each soul can develop with salutary effectiveness and which becomes a tribute of honor and love for Mary, the fount of all sorts of graces for souls".

These February 8 remarks also serve to amplify his observation at Nazareth that we should nourish our Marian devotion "with reflections that will make it genuine, profound and unique, just as the plan of God intends it to be".

How good God is to us in the teaching of our popes!

Opn,



August 6, 1964

Fr. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Editor  
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Dear Father Habig,

Thanks very much for your card from Harbor Springs. I hope all was going well at the Mission there, and that you found time between your duties for some relaxation.

I'm happy you were able to make use of the material by Nicolas I sent you, although I'm embarrassed to say I have been tardy in subscribing to TME Vol V, and in fact have misplaced the announcement. Would you ask your circulation department to send me and invoice me for a copy? Thanks.

*Nicolas*

The Catholic Encyclopedia (1911) points out that he lacked the technical training of the theologian, is dated and has been superseded by the critical studies that followed after him. It also says, however, that "He aimed no doubt at defending religion by means of philosophy, good sense, and arguments from authority; but he also often appeals to the traditions and groping moral sense of mankind at large. The testimonies, however, which he cites, are often apocryphal, and frequently also he interprets them uncritically and ascribes to them a meaning or a scope which they do not possess . . . Otherwise the author addressed himself to the general public and especially to the middle classes which were still penetrated with Voltarian incredulity, and he succeeded in reaching them. His books were very successful in France and some of them even in Germany, where they were translated. Among his works may be mentioned: "Etudes philosophiques sur le Christianisme" (Paris, 1841-45), a philosophical apology for the chief Christian dogmas, which reached a twenty-sixth edition before the death of the author; "La Vierge Marie et le plan divin, nouvelles études philosophiques sur le Christianisme" 44 vols., Paris, 1852, 1853, 1861), in which is explained the role of the Blessed Virgin in the plan of Redemption, and which was translated into German, and reached the eighth edition during the author's lifetime . . .



It could be that there are some apocryphal testimonies and uncritical interpretations in his book on Mary, but they all look to me like the traditional passages from Scripture and the Fathers which are cited in most Marian works, and the doctrines they are cited to support are the orthodox ones. The electrifying thing about him to me, personally, is that precisely at a time when there is a movement in some circles to tone-down etc. Marian doctrine and devotion so we can get along better with Protestants etc., here I find an author who is doing just the opposite. In addition to the standard apologetics, he defends Marian doctrine and devotion by turning precisely to "philosophy, good sense . . . (and) ~~offers~~ to the traditions and groping moral sense of mankind at large". As far as I am concerned, "Marian Minimalists" are a push-over for apologetics addressed to those "penetrated with Voltarian incredulity".

His special genius is in developing Marian doctrine so integrally with that of Christ that he can parry any attack on Mary by demonstrating that such attack discloses some fundamental lack or error of the would-be attacker in respect to Christ.

Another genius is that he is so highly illuminative, at least to me.

And thirdly, he makes a very interesting point about the basic approach of Marian writing - a point which while not as valid as it was 100 years ago nevertheless contains, I think, some merit. This point is in his preface, from which I quote in translation:

"Of all these works (on Mary) so numerous, and many so beautiful, . . . we do not know a single one which does not presuppose already devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the soul of the reader, and which does not have as its object to satisfy it.

"That is to say, there is not a single one for the non-devoted, for the indifferent, for spirits turned against the cult of the Most Holy Virgin. After reading these books one no longer wonders why the human spirit has entered an abyss of unbelief. The subject is always treated in the ancient manner. It remains in the ages of faith. It has remained on the opposite shore, and has not passed to this side of the human spirit . . . .

"What is generally left to be desired by the numerous books which treat with this matter is that they are conceived too exclusively from the viewpoint of a devotion which nourishes itself, assumed to be in the soul of the reader, when it is a question precisely of inspiring it there

"And not only are these books unable to inspire this devotion where it doesn't exist; but they can cool the dispositions which one might have for it: the usual effect of an ardor which is not attuned to those whom it should persuade, and which appears to them intemperate. . . .

"The apologist of the Blessed Virgin should be more historical than ever in the elements of his work, and more modern than up to now in his manner of presentation, - relating them to all other aspects of Christianity. He should show the profound solidarity which unites the cult of Mary to the foundations of religion, and the logical rigor which brings

about economy, as well as the pleasing and forceful spirit which vivifies the application.



"An apology for the Blessed Virgin should not today be a work detached from the basis of Christianity. It should bring with it the demonstration of religion in its entirety. It is a flower which should be shown in full earth. Contrary to the prejudiced who only wish to see in this great subject a repetition of Christianity, this should be a new and luminous manner of manifesting Jesus Christ and glorifying God; of showing, so to speak, the divine truth from its most unprotected aspect.

"This work should have the character of a probing exposition. All the sentiments the cult of the divine maternity is so well constituted to inspire should find their expression there, without question, but according to their reasons; and the flame of sentiment will arise of itself, and following the reunion of all the reasons which should produce it. In sum, the apologist of Mary should not propose the roof of his cult before having raised the walls and ~~had~~ the foundation.

"And for that it should not base itself on the more or less vague notions which are found in souls today . . . but descend down to the primitive soil of tradition and doctrine, and to the rock of the Word of God and the nature of things as they make themselves known to us . . .

"And above all may it not enclose itself within a circle of pious souls and treat of its subject in a cenacle . . . but in full air, under the eyes of all . . . It will have an eye attentive to the so diverse dispositions of all who may read it. So that in edifying pious hearts, in reassuring the uncertain spirit, in cultivating good will, in convincing the honest mind, it will never lose view of the critic, the sceptic, the philosopher, the heretic . . ."

o o o

Then he proceeds to do it, starting with 100 pages about God and the Eternal Word and Creation ~~for 100 pages~~ before even mentioning the Blessed Virgin.

The reason I quoted the above paragraphs at length is that they seem to describe in a fashion the scope of THE MARIAN ERA as I see it.

Our particular interest in this work relates to the author's remarks on the beauty of the Incarnation (a sense imparted by a statue of the Virgin and Child surrounded by a garden) and on the symbolical and redemptive relationship between Jesus and Mary and the sensible world (the basis of Mary Flower symbolism and work). We have a growing number of instances of how Mary Garden beauty, symbolism and work can ~~turn~~ turn toward Mary and Jesus ~~unlike~~ untouched by the written and spoken word in itself. Nicolas has helped us understand this and emphasize this.

For your files or library I enclose a complimentary copy of MARIANA our latest compilation of symbolical flower names.

Sincerely in Our Lady,

John S. Stokes Jr.



# TRUE AND FALSE

By the Editor

When the II Vatican Council, on October 29, 1963, by a close vote decided to discuss the subject of Mary as a chapter in the "schema" on the Church, rather than as a separate "schema," the *Daily American Press* of Rome (Oct. 30, p. 1) told its readers: "COUNCIL VOTES DE-EMPHASIS OF MARY"; and the New York *Herald Tribune* (Oct. 30, p. 1) likewise informed the public: "VATICAN COUNCIL VOTES SMALLER ROLE FOR MARY." These and similar reports in other journals of the secular press were altogether false. The truth was that the vote of the Council Fathers was about a purely procedural question, and had nothing to do "with the dignity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the devotion of the faithful to her" (*Osservatore Romano*, Oct. 30, p. 3). This was made amply clear by the cardinals who presided at the discussions. His Eminence Gregorio Pietro Cardinal Agagianian, Council moderator, declared: "No vote on either side can be construed as constituting and lessening of the dignity of the Blessed Virgin or any diminution of her preeminent role in the Church."

The erroneous reports in the secular press were corrected also by the public statements of many bishops throughout the world. Bishop Timothy Manning, Auxiliary of Los Angeles, for instance, wrote: "There should be no cause for anxiety among our people that the position or prerogatives of our Lady are in any way being minimized." After quoting Cardinal Agagianian and explaining the nature of the vote, he reminded us that Mary is the Mother of God, "the almoner of his mercy, the sanctuary of our sighs, our mother, our life, our sweetness, and our hope"; and he added: "Certainly, any interpretation of the Council's action which would tend to cast a shadow on the luminous love and honor with which we venerate her would be a distortion of Catholic truth" (*The Tidings* of Los Angeles, Nov. 1, 1963).

Bishop Charles H. Helmsing of Kansas City, Mo., wrote a special article (published in *Queen of All Hearts*, Jan-Feb., 1964), in which he pointed out the reasons why he voted for the inclusion of the subject of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the "schema" on the Church, which "received 52 per cent of the votes, enough to pass on this particular balloting. Everyone recognizes that the vote was very close. Personally, I voted for including the 'schema' on our Blessed Mother in the 'schema' on the Church. In doing so, I certainly was not motivated by a desire to de-emphasize Mary. . . . My vote, and I am sure, that of the other Fathers (who voted in the same way) came from our desire to present in focus Mary's position in both the history of salvation and the work of salvation which is the task of the Church today. . . . In all truth, which is humility, I confess that certainly I hope to yield to none in the love and honor which we owe

Mary as the Mother of God and our Mother. . . .

"Since our current discussion has been extensively on the people of God, a true and meaningful title of the Church, it is fitting that we do not exclude Mary, who has such a unique place in the Church precisely because she mothered the Son of God, the Savior of the world. . . .

"By basing our thinking about Mary, and above all our devotion to her, on the solid foundations of divine revelation as found in our bibles and in the constant teaching of the early Fathers of the Church, we nourish in the best possible way our piety toward the Mother of God and Our Mother, and we make it possible to converse with or have dialogue with our fellow Christians separated from the Catholic Church.

"As I see it, there is no question of minimizing the place of Mary in order to win over our separated brethren. Here at the Council we have some of the greatest theologians among our separated brethren, most of whom know our Catholic teaching and theology as well as we do. They would be the first to sense any insincerity or whittling down of Catholic doctrine for the sake of reunion of Christendom, and they would despise us for it.

"In placing the treatment on Mary in our treatment of the Church, we hope that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will be enhancing rather than lessening devotion to Mary. . . .

"All our devoted children of Mary need not fear that the ecumenical council will deprive them of their Christian heritage in regard to the honor and love we owe Mary. They must continue to acknowledge their dependence on her as God planned; they must regard her lovingly as their advocate and helper to all their needs; they must, above all, strive to imitate her wonderful galaxy of virtues, and in particular her marvelous faith and her boundless love for God and for her fellowmen."

We have not found a single statement by any Catholic bishop in the world which favors a diminution of devotion to our Lady. But there have been some Catholic writers and speakers, including some priests and even "periti" at the Council, who openly or implicitly advocated a lessening, not only of Marian piety, but also of Marian studies—in other words, a de-emphasis and down-grading of Mary. In doing so, they imagined that they were "up-to-date liberals and progressives" and "spokesmen of the *aggiornamento* of the Church," while they branded anyone who dared to disagree with them as "a voice from the past" and "an ultra-conservative Roman mind" (cf. *The Wanderer*, March 19, 1964, p. 6). At the time that the sessions of the Council's second year were drawing to a close, it was reported that some such Catholic progressive intellectuals in Mexico, who



were at the same time anti-anti-Communists, were formed into an organized group for the express purpose of diminishing the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Excelsior*, Dec. 4, 1963). Calling attention to this group, A. M. Gonzalez of Santa Barbara, Calif., wrote: "For the Latin Americans, the beautiful cult of the Blessed Virgin constitutes a marvelous shield against the evils of Communism; and the intentions of the Leftists, even though these be priests, will collide tragically with the faith and fervid devotion so deeply rooted in the Church in the Americas" (*The Wanderer*, Feb. 27, 1964, p. 5).

However, the *Liga Defensora del Culto a la Madre de Dios* (League for the Defense of the Cult of the Mother of God) which came into being in Mexico was not what its name proclaimed it to be but rather an insidious attack, not only on the bishops of Mexico, but on the very Council itself. Seizing the opportunity offered them by the false reports made concerning the Council's vote on the treatment of Mary, certain enemies of the Church hypocritically posed as defenders of the Mother of God in order to confuse the faithful and wean them from submission to ecclesiastical authority. *Union*, a weekly newspaper of Mexico City (Dec. 10, 1963), unmasked the true nature of the *Liga* and warned the people to have nothing to do with it.

Shortly afterwards the same weekly (Dec. 22, 1963) printed a statement which had been sent from Lourdes by a member of the Mexican hierarchy, Bishop Carlos Quintero of Valles, Mexico: "It has come to our notice that certain reports about the Council have been circulated in Mexico which are not in accord with the truth. The bishops, it has been said, have deprecated the existence of excessive cult that is rendered to the Blessed Virgin, and wish to diminish the honor paid to our Lady. Such reports are due to a false interpretation of what has transpired at the Council, arising not from ill will but from a lack of accurate information. All the bishops have manifested, by word or action, the love they cherish for the Most Holy Virgin, the Mother of God and our Mother. Not a single one seeks to downgrade the grandeur and dignity of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, or to make any kind of a statement that would not redound to her honor.

"The differences of opinion revolve around the best way of making the person of Mary, and her relation to us, known to the modern world, and of bringing the world of today more effectively under the influence of the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church.

"Since it is one of the main objectives of the Council to explain to the world what is meant by the Church, the Council also wants to present Mary as the figure and the type of the Church, as the most complete and perfect model for all the faithful; it wants to present Mary as the Mother of the Church.

"It will be the aim of the Fathers of the Council to formulate, in the terms most suitable for the modern world, the Church's doctrine that Mary was united

most intimately, not only to the Person of her Divine Son, but also to the work of the Redemption which Christ accomplished on earth; and that Mary was thus united to the Person and the work of our Blessed Redeemer in a manner that was not granted and will never be granted to any other created person. The union of Mary with Christ is one, not merely of affection, compassion, and good desires, but also of effective cooperation in the marvelous work of the Redemption."

In Poland, too, "so-called progressive circles" carried on a campaign to minimize devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. But Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski, the Primate of Poland, spoke out clearly and boldly against this campaign and defended the particular veneration given to our Lady by the Polish faithful. He went on to say that the recent session of the II Vatican Council had specifically re-affirmed the deep union that exists between the Mother of God and the living Church. "But this," he continued, "has not been pleasing to some who, remaining outside the work of the Council, have sought to interpret the Church's teaching better than the bishops themselves. There has begun a strange campaign against the veneration given to Mary which is said to be excessive, above all in Poland. But nothing can take away this veneration, which is the very expression of the will of God" (*The Wanderer*, Feb. 27, 1964, p. 1).

One of the Fathers of the Council from England, Abbot Christopher Butler O.S.B. of Downside Abbey, indicated that he voted for the incorporation of the treatment of Mary in the "schema" of the Church because of his desire to promote the spirit of ecumenism. "Our Lady," he declared, "should not be a subject of division between Christians, but a symbol of unity. . . . We should go back to Biblical foundations and other sources we have in common with the separated brethren."

This, however, does not imply that there can be any kind of compromise in regard to the Marian doctrine of the Church. In a special interview, reported by *Union* of Mexico City (Jan. 26, 1964), Augustine Cardinal Bea S.J. of the Secretariat for the Union of Christians had the following to say on devotion to our Lady and the ecumenical movement: "The desire for unity may never impel us to compromise the truth under the pretext of an ill-named charity or of conciliatory irenics; it may not lead us away from any of the true and saving practices which are founded on the deposit of faith. One of these, without a doubt, is Marian piety. To be convinced of this, it suffices to take a look at the world history of the Church, that of the West, and even more so that of the East.

"Given the very close bond which unites the Mother of our Lord with her Son, the Divine Redeemer, and with his work, as set forth in the New Testament and the ancient tradition of the Church, how could it be otherwise?

"Of a truth, what is the essential element of Marian devotion, if not the faithful and resolute imitation of the sincere and courageous love of Christ and sur-



render to Christ, even to the foot of the Cross, which shines forth so brilliantly in the example of the Mother of God as recounted in the New Testament?

"Whoever conforms his life to that of the Mother of our Lord most certainly makes an important contribution to the great enterprise of bringing about the unity of all Christians. He causes his Protestant brethren to perceive in a concrete manner the position and the role of the Mother of God in the life of Christ and consequently in the life of the Church and the life of each Christian.

"In this way he individually helps them to fathom more deeply the life-giving course of the world-wide devotion to our Lady in the Church. The more genuine our devotion to Mary is, the more it is rooted in faith, the more active our individual cult of Mary, and the more perfectly we persevere in fulfilling God's will and serving our neighbor and so fulfil the great commandment of charity and demonstrate our twofold love of God and our neighbor, so much the more will each one of us promote the ecumenical program."

Best of all, we have the reiterated statements of His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, who like his predecessor, Pope John XXIII, hardly leaves an opportunity go by to profess his own devotion to our Lady, or to point out what is true Marian doctrine and genuine Marian piety, or to exhort the faithful to show their love and veneration to the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church and especially to imitate her shining example of Christian virtue and dedication. During the short period that he has governed the Church so far, less than a year, Pope Paul VI has made no less than a dozen pronouncements which foster devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In his very first public address (*Qui fausto die*, June 22, 1963), the Holy Father made this declaration: "We are sustained too by the maternal protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our Mother—to whom We confidently entrust Our pontificate from its very beginning—and by the help of the prayers of the Apostles Peter and Paul and of all the saints" (*Osservatore Romano*, June 23, 1963; *The Pope Speaks*, IX (no. 1), 83).

When he was crowned a week later as the 260th successor of St. Peter on the stone veranda of the Vatican Basilica in the presence of more than 300,000, he delivered a homily (*Ea quae*) after the Gospel of the Pontifical Mass, in which he said: "In his infinite wisdom and providence, God will increase the support of his grace in proportion to Our need. Such indeed was the experience of Christ's holy Mother when she sang her Magnificat: 'My soul magnifies the Lord... because he has looked graciously upon the lowliness of his handmaid, because he who is mighty... has wrought for me his wonders.' And so, placing no reliance at all upon Our own strength, We implore God's kindly aid, claiming first of all the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God" (*Osservatore Romano*, July 1-2, 1963; *The Pope Speaks*, IX (no. 1), 6; see also Father Eamon R. Carroll's

article in this volume of *The Marian Era*).

To the Third International Dominican Congress of the Rosary, Pope Paul VI granted a general audience on July 13, 1963; and on this occasion he gave an address in French in which he discussed at some length the Rosary as a popular church devotion and its suitability for pastoral work (*Osservatore Romano*, July 14, 1963).

Before reciting the *Angelus* on August 11, 1963, the Holy Father spoke to the crowd assembled in the plaza of St. Peter's, saying: "We will say together that beautiful prayer, the *Angelus*, in honor of our Lady. The feast of the Assumption is almost upon us. If you were to ask Us for what intentions We are going to recite this short prayer that is meant to be so full of meaning, so efficacious, We would tell you that the Pope has many intentions, as you can well imagine. However, some of them We will point out to you." Then he mentioned these three: (1) the successful resumption of the Ecumenical Council; (2) peace among the social classes and among the nations of the world; (3) the regaining of a genuine, functioning religious sense by the modern world (*Vi ringraziamo tutti* in *Osservatore Romano*, Aug. 12-13, 1963; *The Pope Speaks*, IX (no. 2), 186-187).

At a general audience granted on the vigil of the feast of the Assumption, the Pope spoke about this prerogative of our Lady and exhorted those present to strive for a correct understanding and practice of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He said in part: "Among the graces which We wish for you, and for which you hope from this meeting with the humble Vicar of Christ, may this one be granted: that you understand well and practice well that cult of our Lady... The cult of our Lady fills us with joy and hope; and it teaches us to imitate her virtues, so sublime and yet so human: it bids us to imitate her faith especially, in acceptance of the word of God, which is the commencement of the life of Christ in our souls" (*Diamo a tutti* in *Osservatore Romano*, Aug. 15, 1963; *Marian Studies*, XV, 98; see also article by Father Charles Balic in the present volume).

Returning from his summer residence at Castelgandolfo, Pope Paul VI stopped at the Church of St. Ignatius in Rome on September 12 and offered up holy Mass for 5,000 members of Marian sodalities from 23 different countries who had gathered for a congress. After the Gospel, the Holy Father, using the French language, gave a beautiful homily on devotion to the Blessed Virgin (*Nous sommes heureux*). The following are a few striking excerpts:

"What a joy it is for Us to see so many men and women celebrating the glory of the Mother of God... How great a subject for admiration and reflection it is for Us, then, to know that your generation is polarized around the Blessed Virgin who gave us Christ, and takes, as a basis for its spirituality, devotion to the mysteries and virtues of Jesus and Mary..."

"The doctrine—that is, the basic religious reality—of Marian piety, is it not the most orthodox and the



most fruitful of Catholic spirituality when it places us in contact with the divine thought regarding Mary, chosen to be the Mother of our Savior Jesus Christ?

"This religious wealth of Marian devotion provides an inexhaustible and magnificent source of moral values which can give strength to the men of today and an experience capable of contributing incomparable fulness to their lives. . . .

"Mary is for everyone the source of true beauty, of true grandeur, of true joy, and of true love. But where will you find Mary? Surely not in exaggerations, nor in sentimentalism, nor in the misuse of deductions for the purpose of emphasis and hyperbole, nor in novelty. . . .

"It is in the history of salvation, in the Gospel, that you will find Mary, as well as in the treasures of the liturgy which transmits the great heritage of the Church's thought and prayer. You will also find her in humble family traditions of Christian families, in particular in the Rosary. . . .

"When all is said and done, you will find Mary if you take scrupulous care to place her within the whole of the Christian mystery; for devotion to Mary is not an end in itself, but the main road leading you to Christ, and in him to the glory of God and the love of the Church" (*Osservatore Romano*, Sept. 13, 1963; *The Pope Speaks*, IX (no. 2), 164-167).

On September 29, 1963, the II Vatican Council began its second series of sessions; and in the address (*Salvete Fratres*) which Pope Paul VI gave on this occasion, both at the beginning and at the end, he made mention of the Blessed Virgin Mary. At the beginning: "Assuredly, Christ's Virgin Mother Mary has taken her place in our midst." And at the end: "May the most blessed Virgin Mary assist us who earnestly invoke her strong and motherly protection" (*Osservatore Romano*, Sept. 30 — Oct. 1, 1963; *The Pope Speaks*, IX (no. 2), 125-141).

Not long afterwards, on the feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, October 11, 1963, the anniversary of the opening of the II Vatican Council, more than two thousand cardinals, patriarchs, and bishops, and thousands of the faithful gathered with the Pope in the Basilica of St. Mary Major. One of the cardinals celebrated holy Mass; and to the assembled throng the Holy Father gave an allocution which contained the following fervent prayer:

"O Mary, we pray to you for our Christian brothers still separated from our Catholic family. See how a glorious group of them celebrates your cult with fidelity and love. See how, in other groups, there is such firmness in calling one's self and being Christian. May there now dawn the recollection and veneration of you, most pious one. Call all these sons of yours in the same unity, under your maternal and celestial protection.

"O Mary, watch over all mankind—this modern world in which the divine plan calls us to live and work, a world that turns its back on the sight of Christ. Watch over this world so that it may emerge . . . from

the frightful shadows created by its own actions.

"Your sweet, most human voice, O most beautiful among virgins, O most worthy among mothers, O blessed among women, calls upon this world to turn its glance towards the light which is the light of men—towards you, who are the supporting light of Christ, the only and highest light in the world" (reported by N.C.W. News Service; another part of the allocution is quoted in the article of Father Charles Balic, this volume).

In the address which Pope Paul VI gave at the close of the II Vatican Council's second-year sessions, December 4, 1963, he made a reference to the fact that the subject of Mary had been included in the "schema" on the Church when he expressed the hope that the unique position of the Mother of God in the Church as "the highest after Christ and the closest to us" and as "the Mother of the Church" would receive "a unanimous and most devout acknowledgment" in the next year's sessions (*Osservatore Romano*, Dec. 5, 1963; see article by Father Balic in this volume).

Those who erroneously imagined that the II Vatican Council had cast its vote in favor of a de-emphasis of Mary, and others too, seem to have overlooked an important statement on the Blessed Virgin Mary contained in the only constitution that has been released by the Council to date, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of December 4, 1963. Inasmuch as it has been approved and promulgated by the Pope, it may also be counted as one of his pronouncements. The statement on our Lady, short though it is, is a very meaningful one. Not only does it emphasize the special place that Mary occupies in the liturgy of the ecclesiastical year; but it also points out that the liturgy presents the Blessed Mary to the faithful as "the Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son," as "the most excellent fruit of the Redemption," and as "the faultless image" or model of the Church.

When the Holy Father made his pilgrimage to the Holy Land at the beginning of the new year, his first stop in Galilee was at Nazareth on Sunday, January 5, 1964; and in the French sermon which he gave, after the Gospel of the Mass, in Nazareth's Church of the Annunciation, he devoted a considerable part to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Our first thought at Nazareth," he said, "is of Mary most holy. To her who is full of grace, immaculate, ever-virgin, Mother of Christ—Mother, therefore, of God and our Mother—, assumed into heaven, most blessed Queen, Model of the Church and our Hope, We pay the tribute of our devotion, and We entertain the hope that it may be as true, profound, and unswerving as God wishes it to be.

"We unhesitatingly offer her the humble, filial prayer that she may be always venerated with a special cult which recognizes the great things God has worked in her, and that she may be acclaimed with a personal dedication which externalizes man's most pious,



pure, human, personal, and confident feelings and places before the whole world this example of human perfection.

"We hasten to direct to her our petitions for that which most burdens Our heart, because We wish to honor her goodness, her ability to love and to intercede. We pray that We may foster in our soul a sincere devotion to her. We pray that she may help us to comprehend, desire, and possess in peace purity in soul and body, in word and feeling, in art and love—that purity which the world knows not how further to offend and profane; that purity to which Christ has joined one of his promises, one of his beatitudes, the penetrating vision of God. We pray, then to be admitted by her, our Lady, the mistress of the house, together with her humble spouse, St. Joseph, to intimacy with Christ, her divine and human Son. . . .

"Here in this school people understand the need of having spiritual discipline to become students of the gospel and disciples of Christ. How we wish we could be children again and enrol anew in this humble, sublime school of Nazareth! How we long to review, by Mary's side, our introduction to the true knowledge of life and to the higher wisdom of divine truths!" (*Osservatore Romano*, Jan. 7-8, 1964, in which both the French original and an Italian translation were printed); see also *Our Lady's Digest*, Mar.-Apr., 1964, pp. 281-283, which has an NCW translation; our translation was prepared by Fr. Nathaniel Rondi, O.F.M.).

The latest, and perhaps the most striking, address on devotion to the Blessed Mother given by Pope Paul VI is the sermon he preached after Mass in the major seminary of Rome on its patronal feast of Our Lady of Hope on Saturday, February 8, 1964 (*Vogliamo salutare*, printed in *Osservatore Romano*, Feb. 9, 1964). An English translation of the entire sermon is offered as a separate article elsewhere in this volume. Those who are quick to find hyperboles and exaggerations in writings and addresses about the Blessed Virgin Mary would probably discover them in this address if the Holy Father himself had not given it. The fact is that what he said (and oftentimes what other orthodox writers and preachers, including great saints, say and have said when they allow their heart to speak) about our Lady as "our life, our sweetness, and our hope," must be interpreted in the light of the correct Catholic doctrine firmly held and fully professed by them; and for those who know and profess that doctrine in the same way, there is no thought or question of any exaggeration at all—they know how to understand what is said. For the rest, the ejaculation which the Holy Father mentions, "Mater mea, fiducia mea—My Mother, my Hope!" is an indulged prayer. Pope Benedict XV, in 1917, granted an indulgence of three hundred days to those who say it (or think it). Of course, the Latin word for hope is "spes," and "fiducia" expresses confidence rather than hope; but the approved English translation in this instance makes use of the word "hope," and we all know in

what sense it is to be taken.

Noteworthy is the fact that Pope Paul VI at Nazareth spoke of the Blessed Virgin Mary as "le modele de l'Eglise—the model of the Church," rather than as a type or figure of the Church. Ecclesiotypical Mariologists who speak of Mary only as a type or the Archetype of the Church face the danger of regarding or causing others to regard the Blessed Virgin *merely* as a type, and of losing sight of her as a person, a *living human person*, living with her glorified body and reigning and interceding for us in heaven. "Not a few Marian theologians," wrote Father Balic in his article on "Mary and Ecumenism" (*The Marian Era*, IV, 17), "think that the person and mission of the Mother of God cannot be perfectly understood exclusively from the ecclesiological point of view, and accordingly they place her beside Christ, the head of the Church, and even in a certain hypostatic order." For the article which Father Balic has contributed to the present volume, he properly chose a double title, "Mother of the Church" and "Ideal Image of the Church,"—image (model) being a better term than type (figure); and both titles, both parts of the article present Mary as a person, not an abstraction. In his article on "Mary and the Church," appearing in the present volume, Father Eamon R. Carroll likewise warns the reader: "We must beware of turning the handmaid of the Lord, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother, into an idea, an abstraction, a personification at the expense of her personality." We consider it very significant also that the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of December 4, 1963, reminds us that the liturgy, in the course of the year, holds up the Blessed Virgin Mary, not only as the image (model) of the Church—the term "image" is used rather than "type"—but also as the Mother of God and the associate of Christ, "joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son."

After reading a book on Mary as the type of the Church, a certain convert to the Catholic Faith wrote an interesting letter to the editor, in which he expressed the opinion that the book in question contained an "implicit depersonalization of Mary" inasmuch as it made Mary's role as archetype of the Church the central "idea" of Mariology rather than her "Divine Daughterhood-Motherhood-Bridehood." Reflecting on this matter, he felt that there is a need to set forth Mary's "personhood," or Mary as a person, a female person. He believed that "while we are defending Mary's universal mediation, spiritual maternity, etc., what our adversaries are really objecting to is the sublime role and mission to which God has elevated her as a person, both in relation to himself (Daughter, Mother, Spouse, Queen of heaven), and in relation to us (Mediatress, Co-redemptress, Mother, Queen, Ideal, Advocate, Intercessor, Protectress, Patroness, Refuge, Comforter, Counselor, etc.).

"Prior to my conversion to the Catholic Faith," he continues, "I had studied quite deeply the principal monistic and pantheistic religions of the world; and I had been accustomed to think in terms of the



masculine and feminine, or male and female, principles of God and also of 'creation.' According to these religions, both male and female gods and goddesses, as well as male and female 'persons' on earth, are considered as so many manifestations of the one God or Principle, and ultimately they are regarded not as distinct from It but merged into It.

"In receiving the grace to embrace Catholic Christianity, it was a fundamental realization for me that the eternal God is a triune God of three Divine Persons and that all intelligent beings on earth are truly persons with immortal souls, created by God and distinct from him. I further realized that while both the masculine and feminine principles are necessarily contained in God (as the Cause of masculine and feminine on earth), nevertheless the Three Divine Persons are primarily masculine, and the feminine principle is manifested most perfectly and 'archetypically' in Mary, a created human person, elevated by God-given privilege and grace into a special feminine relationship with God as Daughter-Mother-Spouse and also with the rest of the human race into whose hearts was implanted a natural longing for a heavenly and spiritual mother.

"Having had the good fortune to come into the Church, and to come in by this route, I had no problem in accepting either Christ's divine-human nature or Mary's special personal relationship with the Triune God. This religious history and experience has also enabled me to appreciate the importance of stressing the personal character of Mary's relationship to God and to men."

\* The same correspondent supplied us with an excerpt from a rare French work, *La Vierge Marie dans le plan divin*, written by Auguste Nicolas, and published by Vaton Frères, Paris, 1869—a work which adequately discusses the question in which he was particularly interested. Nicolas treats specifically of the "personhood" or personality of Mary in Book I, Chapter VII.

Previously the author points out that Christ's is a *divine* personality (which made his subjection of that personality by clothing it with a human soul and body all the more ineffable), while Mary's is a *human* personality, and that it is necessary to make this distinction clearly before one can appreciate the full significance of Mary's role in the divine plan. This distinction, he says, enables us to appreciate the glories of Mary at the same time that it guards us against confusing her with God. If we keep it always in mind, our veneration of Mary becomes a recognition of the wonderful goodness of God in raising human personality to such intimate collaboration with the Divine; and the more we extol what God has done to Mary, so much the more do we praise God himself.

Though this work was published almost a hundred years ago, it is amazingly relevant at the present day when some of our Mariologists prefer to speak of our Lady as a type rather than as a person. The conclusion of Chapter VII is a particularly clear and striking



The so-called "Schuttermutter," an old and greatly venerated statue of the Mother of God in the Franciscan Church at Ingolstadt, Bavaria, headquarters of the Great Marian Union of Masses.

exposition: "It is not only woman who is honored in this great figure of Mary; it is, as we have demonstrated, human personality, created personality in its most universal aspects. The honor has been divided, if I may so express myself, in the mystery of the Incarnation, between man and woman in such a way that, if it is in the *God-Man* that human nature has been exalted, it is in the *Virgin-Mother* that human personality, all created personality, has received honor.

"On Mary this honor has actually been conferred to such an extent that it made her the first, not only among women, but among all human beings, and even more, among all creatures heavenly and earthly, since she is the Queen not only of men but also of Angels, of every Principality, of every Power, of every Virtue, of every Domination, of all who can be named among beings, not only in the present age but also in future ages, and, in a word, possesses primacy over all—all except Him who subjected Himself completely to her....

"To this honor God has wished to add still more. He has wished—O marvel of honor!—that He Himself who has subjected all others to Mary, he who is God and is infinitely superior to her, be subject to her with filial subjection, and that, with this very divine superi-





*A chapel of our Lady in the Rhoen Mountains of northern Bavaria, overlooking the double town of Upper and Lower Riedenberg.*

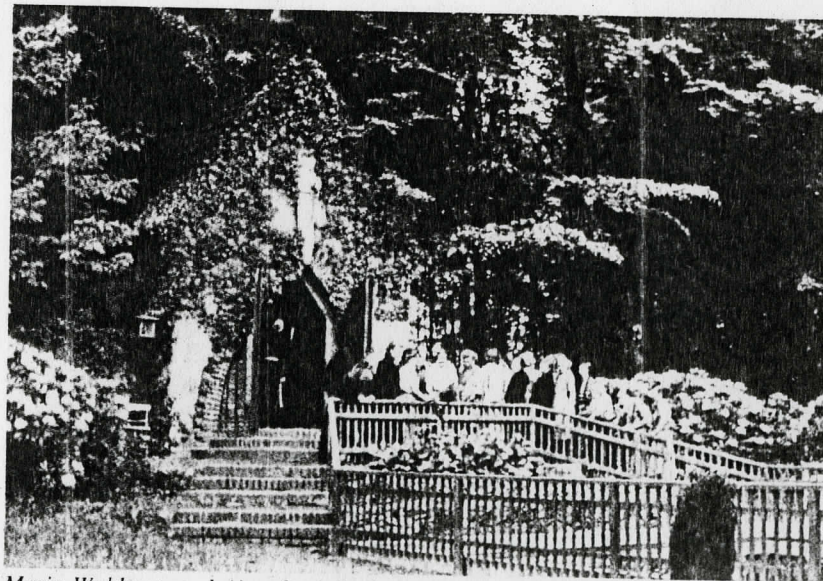
ority of his, he pay her the homage he owed her because of her maternity. In this way human personality is exalted and super-exalted in Mary.

"In regard to this assertion, no one can raise any objection, no one can say that, by claiming for Mary such an exalted grandeur, we go beyond the proper bounds and confound it with the very grandeur of God. By an arrangement that is at once marvelous and simple and such that we cannot say enough about it in discussing this divine mystery, the danger of such confusion is rendered impossible even when giving

expression to the most enthusiastic praise; and the very clear-cut reason for that is the fact that the subject of our praise is the *human* personality of Mary. The marvelous character of her grandeur, which is the reason for all the cult that is rendered to her, lies in the fact that she has been raised to such heights despite the fact that she is a human person and one of us. All the words of praise and all the exercises of piety that she receives from men rest upon the basis that she is a mere woman. There is, therefore, no ground for making objections or starting a controversy concerning our cult of Mary. The more we exalt her by the homage we pay her, so much the more do we distinguish her from the Divinity, with which we are accused of identifying her. For, the one whom we exalt is a creature who has been glorified—a creature who would no longer be glorified the instant she ceased to be a creature, yes the most humble of creatures.

"This argument has been presented several times for consideration in this work because it has several aspects; and, in each of these, it refutes the objection of heretics who say that our cult of the Mother of God is unreasonable idolatry.

"Let us unreservedly admire the marvelous disposition of Divine Wisdom, who wished to honor woman but could not confer on her an honor which is divine like that reserved for the God-Man, and who wished to associate her with himself in the divine plan without disturbing the natural relation between man and woman, has accomplished his aim by making the 'deification,' in which woman could not have a share, dependent on this very woman, thus exalting human personality in her to the point of subordinating to her free cooperation the universal destiny of creation and the purpose of the work of God himself; and in this way he has made her natural lowliness, nay more, her voluntary humility the subject, the foundation, the marvel, and at the same time the preservation of his grandeur."



*Maria Waldrast, a shrine of our Lady in the woods at Ohrbeck, near Osnabrueck, Germany.*



J.M.J.

Immaculate Heart  
of Mary  
August 23, 1964

Fr. Marion A. Habig, O.F.M., Editor  
THE MARIAN ERA  
1434 West Fifty-First Street  
Chicago 9, Illinois

Dear Father Habig,

I have received and made a preliminary reading of TME Vol V, and was indeed surprised to see the extensive use you were able to make of the "copy" I passed on to you last winter. I am pleased you found it pertinent for this Volume, but I must say the same notions ~~are~~ set forth most admirably in the articles by Fathers Koser, Balic and Berbuir, as well as in your entire Editorial.

In my previous letters I presumed to coin the term Ecclesiological Mariologists, and I am happy to learn the accepted terminology from Father Balic's article: Ecclesiotypical. (I was pretty close!)

At this point I have difficulty in seeing God, Christ, Mary, the Church and the individual Christian, in anything but profound unity. From this viewpoint, it seems to me that the attempt of Ecclesiotypical Mariologists to make of Mary something less than the older Christotypical Mariology does is a consequence of their underestimation of what the Church is, and what the possibilities of the Redemption are for the individual person in the fullest sense. Whether they drag Mary down personally, or as archetype of the Church, it is fundamentally the same error. And the true approach is to see the great things He That Is Might has done to Mary, and that His mercy is from generation unto generation for the Church and for souls (that fear Him).

people Mary  
How ~~Mary~~ can ~~be~~ regarded as some sort of threat to God's omnipotence when it is that very omnipotence which was able to act in her because of her great humility, I can't see. Perhaps at the bottom of it all is that they are disinclined to emulate Mary's humility, so God's omnipotence can act more fully through them. Maybe they <sup>themselves</sup> are so to speak "threatening" God's omnipotence <sup>by</sup> not being humble . . . This time, a one page letter.

Sincerely in Jesus and Mary,

PS: Thanks especially for the  
complete "Our Mother & Our Home"





Mrs. Bonnie Roberson and  
Her Husband in their Out-  
door Mary Garden.

(Reference to God — Signs of His Presence)

# CATHOLIC ECOLOGY IN THE HOME

Rev. James Giligen

## Radical Secularization A Tragic Mistake

"What's happening to our faith, Father? When I look upon the hundreds of crucifixes, statues of Our Blessed Mother and of the Saints, returned to us by families that would otherwise have destroyed them, my heart is chilled as by an icy wind. There's a taste of death in the air. Parents tell me that they are pressured by their children. Something is radically wrong when catechists in some Catholic schools are allowed to condition innocent children to hold in cynical, militant aversion such time-honored signs of God's presence in the home. Our convent basement now sadly harbors objects of sacred art that were once family centers of piety and devotion." These are the words of a Religious Sister belonging to an Order of Contemplatives.

There is a message here strangely reminiscent of Cardinal Garone's words in *L'Osservatore Romano*: "Today it sometimes happens that entrance into a new or 'renewed' church occasions a slight sinking of the heart. It is as if, on returning home, one were to find a beautiful tapestry, brand new and immaculate, instead of the loved portraits one was

accustomed to see there. It is as if death, dignified, decent and irreproachable, had been substituted for life with its light disarray, lovable and loved . . . The icy climate in which certain persons would establish the piety of the 'pure' is not without danger, because generations can be marked and suffer from it. An uncontrolled scruple, a desire basically sound but unhappily directed and narrow, in reaction against abuse, can harm and ultimately carry error in its train".

## Reference to God Emptying the Human City

"In practice", warns the Holy Father, "a radical secularization emptying the human city of reference to God and the signs of His presence, eliminating all search for God in human projects, suppressing specifically religious institutions, creates a climate in which God is absent. If there is a possible chance for the religious maturation of some elite, it is more in fact a fertile ground for atheism for all those who have a weak faith (and they will always make up the largest number), which has difficulty in surviving in the absence of external support. One would have



to disregard the nature of man and its necessary social expression to be surprised at this". This is especially true of children, continues Pope Paul VI: "You know as well as psychologists do that the child in his earliest years is profoundly and often permanently affected by his environment. A well-balanced and happy family life, the mutual love and devotedness as well as the religious climate of daily life are irreplaceable elements of capital importance for the child. We joyfully congratulate those Christian parents who raise their children with the sense of God . . . Are they not the first and privileged educators of their children? . . . The thought and behavior of man — child and adult — are influenced and often determined by the conditions imposed by the social, cultural and religious environment surrounding him. In some respect, the environment is for man what water is to the fish: the latter live and die in it, and obtain their first indispensable food from it".

### **Cyclones of Mechanism Bells Are Silent**

An editorial in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican Newspaper (September 28, 1972), touches upon the same subject: "Our secularized age knows the pinnacles of sky-scrapers and the mass of agglomerations, the breakneck speed of traffic and the cyclone of mechanisms; but less and less the signs of the presence of God in the temples and in celebrations in these cities where the bells are silent (in order not to disturb the 'silence!') and where the Lord's own houses, in buildings in the outskirts, seem to become increasingly small in dimensions and grey in architecture, prosaically functional in structure, without pomp, without glory, without grandeur.

"In ages that were officially (though according to some formalistically) Christian, the great cathedrals were certainly forms of 'triumphalism' but sublimated by grandeur and immortalized by art. Glorious and dominating, they still speak to men today. Anyone who has approached the harmonious soaring lines, the titanic bulk, the inviolable stones of these verticals towards eternity, has felt a living power of truth and of grace, if only through the language of emotion. We mean that Faith, when it is powerful, asks to manifest itself also in striking and solemn forms, and that love cannot do without human warmth and fervor. Man is not pure spirit."

### **The Process of Secularization Must Be Reversed**

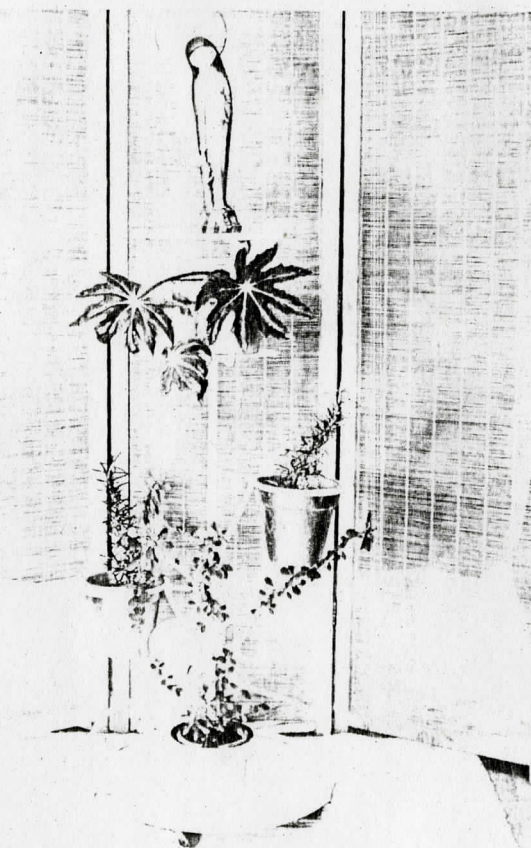
No defeatism must be tolerated on this score. The falling off of faith cannot but be a passing phenomenon; it must not ever be calmly accepted as an "irreversible trend". The face of Christianity was never meant by Christ to be veiled or hidden from the modern world: "The Church does not fall back before the world" (Pope Paul VI). Christians "have no right, no reason, no excuse" for going underground, for confronting the world with lowered banners. We must make an energetic step forward, a return to the days "when the simple, humble piety

of the faithful had not been blighted by the plague of "depersonalized religion", nor grown cold under the icy glare of a "god-is-dead" generation. The Catholic Faith, culture and way of life must once again go about leading a new race of barbarians from the dark ages of modern scientific, materialistic atheism.

What better place to start for the individual than in his own personal life and in his private home? Our faith must show forth with greater intensity in our daily living. Our home life must be Catholic in structure, atmosphere. And externals must be found to uphold and foster our way of life.

### **Christian Home Ecology Mrs. Bonnie Roberson**

Our readers know of Mrs. Bonnie Roberson (Our Lady of the Cape Magazine, March, 1970), a modern poet who writes with delicate feeling in flowers and herbs. She is an established American horticulturist, recognized as an authority in her field, and was honored nationally for her substantial contribution to scientific research (compiled a list of well over 1,200 "Mary Flowers" working in conjunction with Messrs. Edward McTague and John Stokes), as well as for her lectures and many artistic displays of Mary Gardens. Her study of the wealth of religious symbolism historically related to herbs and flowers, her conviction that these associations are witnesses of authentic spiritual values, her decision to "honor God with God's artistry" by







**Our Lady of the Cape:** Natural color — dress light pink — blue robe — gold crown (27½ in. high). Circular Planter (metal, painted white — 27 in. long (overall), 18 in. wide 5 in. deep).

Mary's Mantle (lady's mantle); Lady's Hair (Mother of Thousands) (strawberry geranium); Lady Palm (fan palm); Prayer Plant (*maranta* var. *kerchoviana* and other varieties); Heart of Mary (begonia); Rosary Plant (heart vine).



**Our Lady of Fatima:** One of first statues made in Portugal, given by Sr. M. Lutgard, O.S.B. — Gild Metal Filigree Crown — White Ceramic (14½ in. high) — Planter: white ceramic (18 by 5 by 3¼).

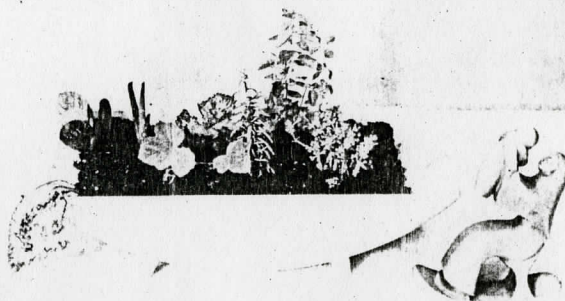
Prayer Plant (*maranta kerchoviana*); Heart of Mary (*begonia fuchoides*, var. *rosea*); Rosary Vine (heart vine). The Prayer plant folds leaves together at night as though in prayer. Rosary Vine, when mature, has "beads" along stem; leaves heartshaped.

teaching gardens to pray to Mary for the greater glory of God, are now public knowledge. Her own private outdoor Mary Garden, her Fragrance Gardens for the blind (one planter, of lava rock, was 94 feet long and three feet wide), and her many indoor, miniature, planter gardens to Mary, designed for the young and elderly, for the blind, the bedridden and shut-ins, were given national coverage.

Here is an outstanding example in a special field, of Catholic ecology in the home. Mrs. Roberson's life has been made "very rich by her love for herbs and flowers" placed in the service of a greater love for God and for Our Lady. Because of her, hundreds have learned to pray with flowers, so to speak, and have enriched their home atmosphere with gardens which have become living prayers to God through Our Blessed Lady.

#### A Return to Home Shrines Reminders of Our Lady's Love

Mrs. Roberson is still happily devoting herself to her personal form of Marian apostolate: "introduce an indoor shrine of Our Lady, combining a symbolic garden with a statue, in every home, especially for the sick, the blind and the aged". She has worked hard to offer designs for many types of indoor gardens. Her present efforts are centered on the "hanging basket", the "patio" garden varieties and the "plaque" themes. She is also experimenting with "Grow-Lights" — "lights that permit the growing of plants under conditions of total darkness or in dim-lighted rooms. They are perfect for bedside Mary Gardens, can serve as a focal point in any room and are lovely as a night-light". This should about cover the field.



**Rocking Chair Madonna:** Designed for the Blind — Boat Shaped Planter (wooden, lined with plastic — 16 by 9 by 2 to 4) — Madonna (woodtone plastic 5½ in. high). Plants chosen for texture and fragrance (touch and scent). Movement of chair attractive to Blind as well as to children.

Our Lady's Plant (Japanese mint); Lady Mary (lemon geranium); Aloe, Symbol of Our Lady (burnt plant); Mother of God's Flower (sweet marjoram); Mary's Nosegay (rosemary); Virgin's Humility (thyme); Our Lady Beautiful (geranium, scented variety).



In answer to one of our recent letters, Mrs. Bonnie Roberson, who is recovering from surgery, writes in substance: "The Mary Garden program is growing each day. Since God has permitted me to live when I was so ill, I feel that my work must be pleasing to Him. I live in a busy, happy world, every spare moment spent for Mary's Gardens. I may never regain my full strength, but I wish to spend my time, as best I can, in helping others honor Our Lady for the greater Glory of God.

"My husband and I feel that the Indoor Mary Garden, designed in relation to a specific theme and statue of Our Lady, will help bring back the home shrines and thus bring to mind, especially to the children, the love of Our Blessed Mother for us all. So many older people are also pleased with knowing about Mary Gardens; the bedfast, the shut-ins all find the idea extremely helpful.

"At present, I am the sole source of Mary Garden data or material (written). I will gladly send a reprint of useful information, free of charge, to anyone sending a large, self-addressed, stamped envelope. God permit that the Mary Garden Program reach as many hearts as possible." (1)

(1) The "Mary Names" used in this article all have an historical origin. The scientific botanical name has been left out for lack of space — can be had from the lists co-compiled by Mrs. Roberson. The Christian names originate from the appearance of the flower, the way it grows, reacts, blooms; from its scent (many sweet scented herbs were called "Sweet Mary"); from its resemblance to articles of clothing; from its healing powers (Lady's Balm); for its season of bloom (snow drop becomes Candlemas flower) because the "snow drop" blooms on or about the Feast of the Presentation.

Mrs. Bonnie Roberson, P.O. Box 1007, Mary's Gardens, Hagerman, IDAHO 83332, U.S.A.



Our Lady of Nuenburg: Natural color features — grey-blue robe — white whimple. Planter: round, blue-grey — blue decor (14 in. circumference, 5 in. deep). Sorrowful Theme: "Stabat Mater Dolorosa".

Christ's Crown (crown of thorns); Christ's Cross or Blood Drops of Christ (*pelargonium peltatum* — variety red marked — ivy geranium variegated); Passion Plant (purple coleus); Tears of Mary (Kenilworth Ivy).



Our Lady of the Broom: Brown Blouses, Blue Skirt (11 in. high) — Planter (18 by 4 by 3½) — Pink Ceramic. This tells story of Our Lady's concern for her Child (cooking, cleaning, duties of a mother) — Herbs used are flavoring plants.

Mary's Mint (spearmint); Our Lady's Little Vine (parsley); Mary's Nosegay (rosemary); Our Lady's Flavoring (pennyroyal); Our Lady's Garlic (chives); Mary's Bedstraw (creeping thyme); Mother of God's flower (sweet marjoram).



Flight into Egypt: Planter, Free Form, Blue Ceramic (12 in. to 18 wide, 31 long, 2½ deep) — Statue of Our Lady (8 in.), St. Joseph (7 in.), Angel (3¼): blue and white clothing, donkey grey, shades. — This planter designed so that it can be used as a floor planter (legs fit indentations in bottom of planter). Mary's Nosegay (rosemary); Lady Palm (fan palm); Heart of Mary (begonia from Mexico); Tears of Baby Jesus, Angels (baby tears).