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The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Second Vatican Council

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I: THE PROPOSED DOCTRINE.

THERE are two opposing tendencies among Marian theologians today. One is sometimes called the "maximist" tendency, because it is accused of praising the Blessed Virgin to excess, even to the derogation of Christ's own honor. The other, the "minimist", is accused of belittling Mary's exalted position merely to please our separated brethren. These two tendencies clashed openly and yet in the end merged harmoniously at the Second Vatican Council. They are not really opposed doctrines, but rather two attitudes that complement each other to form the Church's total homage to Mary.

1. Christotypic and Ecclesiotypic.

The "maximist" tendency is perhaps better called *Christotypic*, because it seeks to compare Mary more directly with Christ and to describe her role in our salvation in terms which mirror the role of Christ Himself. When contrasting Christ the Redeemer with the redeemed Church, Christotypic theologians tend to place Mary on the side of Christ. For them Mary is primarily the Mother of Christ, His handmaid in the work of redemption, the co-redemptrix, the distributor of Christ's graces, the spiritual Mother of all men. Of course, there is no attempt to deny the doctrines proposed by the Ecclesiotypists; but the Christotypic school feels that Mary's greatest honor consists

in her closeness to the Savior, rather than to the saved. If she also provides us an example of faith, hope and acceptance of God's divine designs, it is only because God could designate no better model than His own chosen Mother. Likewise, if Mary is the type of the Church in her virgin motherhood of all men, this role really stems from the fact that she is the Virgin-Mother of Christ who is the firstborn of all redeemed creation. In short, the Christotypic school strives to show how Mary is *above* the Church and united closely with Christ. It favors such Marian titles as "Co-redeemer" and "Mother of the Church."

The *Ecclesiotypic* school, on the other hand, feels that Mary's principal role is that of type of the Church, or model of all the redeemed. She is the first fruit of Christ's redemption and as such serves as our model in our confrontation with Christ. She is also the model of the Church as a community, and in her as an individual person was fulfilled everything that will be fulfilled in the Church as a redeemed community. She is the personification, in history, of the new Israel, of the true people of God. Thus Mary's closeness to Christ is really the highest manifestation of the closeness of the redeemed soul and of the redeemed Church to the Savior. Mary has also been constituted Mother of the Savior, because the Church, and indeed each redeemed soul, bears Christ in her heart at the moment of sanctification. And Mary's consent to the Incarnation, her compassion at the foot of the Cross and her virginal consecration to God throughout her life make her the perfect exemplar of our own faith and love and total dedication to God. Indeed, there is no denial here of the privileges claimed by the Christotypists. Still the Ecclesiotypists believe that Mary's divine Motherhood, her cooperation in the redemption of men, her compassion on Calvary, her assumption into heaven, all should serve to bring her closer to the redeemed community, who must strive to actualize these privileges in their own lives; rather than draw her away from them and closer to Christ as Redeemer. The more we show how Mary is redeemed rather than redeeming, the more faithfully do we define her true role in redemption. For this reason the Ecclesiotypists strive to avoid the titles of Co-redeemer, Mother of the Church,

Mediatrix. These titles, they say, are misleading and serve only to widen the breach between Mary and the redeemed community to which she rightly belongs. And they insist that the Ecclesiotypic emphasis does not detract from Mary's true dignity. For the greatest glory that we can give to Mary is to set her up as the highest expression of creaturehood, not as a poor substitute for infinity.

Although the difference between the two schools is one of emphasis rather than of doctrine, the effect on Marian devotion is palpable. Christotypists contend that we can never praise Mary enough; that the true mark of Catholicism is devotion to Mary; that if we only draw men to Mary's feet, she herself will lead them to Christ. Sentimental excesses and even fringe devotions can be tolerated provided only that souls are led to Mary; for her influence will work like a sacrament to purify these devotions and draw from them a sincere loyalty to her Son.

The Ecclesiotypists approve of the principle, but severely criticize the practice. True, we must acknowledge our eternal debt to Mary; for it was her *fiat* that marked the beginning of our salvation. But we must avoid even the appearance of presenting Mary as some demi-goddess, as another Redeemer, or another Mediator. For Christ alone is God and Redeemer and Mediator. Mary is not a link *between* Christ and ourselves; rather she is the bridal chamber *in* which Christ meets each individual soul directly. Above all, we must avoid the "French School" image of Mary as tempering God's justice and Christ's anger. This image is indeed a striking illustration of Mary's intervention by her prayers, but it does not promote a true appreciation of the real saving function of Christ Himself. Nor should we present Mary's "sacramental" influence as if we could substitute Mary's holiness for our own commitment to God, as if devotions to Mary could take the place of devotion to Christ. It is only by presenting Mary as redeemed like ourselves, as our model in approaching Christ, as standing in our midst and facing Christ with us, that we can go to Christ through Mary.

Examples of strongly Christotypic tendency are the majority of our manuals on Mariology. The Ecclesiotypic ten-

dency finds its outlet in articles and many popular books (cf. bibliography below). We must note here that this is an artificial division. Since we are dealing with attitudes and tendencies, most theologians adopt something of both sides in varying degrees. Still, the Fathers of the Council did divide themselves into two equal camps on precisely this point: whether or not to integrate the Marian treatise into that on the Church.

2. *Opposition in the Council.*

Even before the Vatican Council began its first session, the Christotypists made their influence felt. The original plan was to conclude the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church with a chapter on the Blessed Virgin. The title of this chapter would be "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of men." In March of 1962 the theological Commission presided by Cardinal Ottaviani voted to enlarge the Marian chapter into a separate treatise. This move set Mary apart from, and clearly above, the Church and pave the way for declaring Mary's role as Co-redeemer. The task of drawing up the new Marian treatise was given to the Pontifical Marian Academy, whose Cardinal Protector was Cardinal Ottaviani himself¹.

November 23, 1962. The Ecclesiotypic reaction quickly manifested itself at the Council. Several Fathers considered the Marian treatise too dogmatic in scope. For it aimed more at defining new dogmas on our Lady, and less at the pastoral and ecumenical spirit which was the Council's original purpose. The view was even privately aired that there should be no treatise on the Blessed Virgin at all; that the original plan of a final chapter within the treatise on the Church should be adopted. Finally, the Fathers asked that the Marian treatise be shelved for later discussion. The board of Presidents granted their wish, against Cardinal Ottaviani's plea for immediate discussion.² The first session ended on December 7, 1962.

¹ Laurentin, "La Vierge Marie au Concile," pp. 32 & 36, note 6.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

When the Marian treatise reappeared for discussion, the title had been changed to "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church," a title favored by Christotypists.³ On the other hand, the plan for integrating the Marian treatise into that on the Church was gaining ground.

On October 24, 1963, the problem was finally laid before the Fathers in the form of a debate between Cardinal Santos of Manila, favoring a separate Marian treatise, and Cardinal Koenig of Vienna, favoring integration into the constitution *De Ecclesia*. Cardinal Santos underlined the special honor that a separate treatise would give to Mary, and the need to determine clearly the Church's doctrine on Mary. He pointed out that an integration would seem to favor one side of the present controversy among Catholics (the Ecclesiotypic side).

Cardinal Koenig insisted that the main theme of the Council is the Church; a chapter on Mary would be a natural crown of such a treatise. A separate Marian treatise would give the impression that the Council is readying itself to define new Marian doctrines, which is far from the truth. Besides, treating Mary apart from the rest of theology often leads to exaggerations, since various terms are given a different meaning when applied to Mary than when they are used in the rest of theology. All this can be avoided if the two treatises are merged into one. Finally, even Pope Paul himself had announced (on October 11, 1962) that he would like to see the Church recognize Mary as part of her own reality, as her Mother, her sister, her daughter, and her type.⁴

The next few days saw a propaganda war launched by some partisans of both sides. Conferences were offered to various groups of bishops. (Fr. Karl Rahner gave as many as five in one day.) Leaflets were sent to the bishops, distributed at the basilica door, even found on the Council seats. Some

³ Bishop Mendez Arceo of Mexico openly denounced the unauthorized insertion of the title, during the third session of the Council. He blamed a Council theologian. Cf. Laurentin, *op. cit.*, pp. 33 & 39. Also *Divine Words News Service* 8-E-1964.

⁴ Cf. A.A.S. 55 (1963) 873. The arguments for both sides are outlined in *Documentation Catholique* 60 (1963) 1574-1576.

newspapers took sides, and Ecclesiotypists found themselves accused of favoring heresy.⁵

On the morning of the vote itself (October 29), Cardinal Agagianian, the moderator for the day, reassured the Fathers that there was no question of minimizing the dignity of the Blessed Virgin nor devotion to her; the vote concerned merely a matter of procedure⁶. Still the result was the closest in the Council: 1114 for integration; 1074 against; 5 invalid votes.

With this vote, further discussion on the treatise was suspended, and a sub-committee was formed to revise the text. The sub-committee was composed of Cardinals Santos and Koenig, Msgr. Doumith to represent the Eastern bishops, and Msgr. Theas, bishop of Lourdes. They were to frame the text in such wise that it would evoke no strong opposition from either of the equally--divided sides⁷.

3. *The Revised Text*

The revised formula was presented to the Fathers in September of 1964. The title now read: "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and the Church." The text was well received by all. A few more amendments were proposed, like parting shots in the disagreement. Several Italian bishops asked that the title "Mother of the Church" be restored. Cardinal Wyszynski of Poland even appealed to Pope Paul VI to define the Marian title of "Mother of the Church". On the other hand, Cardinal Leger of Canada expressed qualms about the very mention of the Marian titles "Mediatrice, handmaid of the Lord Redeemer, cooperator in the

⁵ Laurentin, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36. Novak, *The Open Church*, pp. 200-202. Also Xavier RYNNE, *The Second Session*, New York: Farrar, Straus, 1964, pp. 166f. Yves CONGAR, O.P., *Report from Rome II*, London, 1964, p. 81, presents a good apologia for those who voted for integration.

⁶ *Docum. Cath.* 60 (1963) 1585. Both Cardinals Santos and Koenig said as much (*ibid.*, col. 1574). So did Archbishop Roy of Quebec (*Docum. Cath.* 61 (1964) 1244f.)

⁷ Laurentin, *op. cit.*, p. 36f.

Savior's work." He wished them properly explained to avoid misunderstanding and exaggeration⁸.

A few minor changes were made and on October 29 the text was presented once more to the Fathers for a final vote. 1,559 approved it; 521 approved it with reservations; only ten voted against it. When the result was proclaimed, hearty applause showed that Christotypists and Ecclesiotypists were once more united in their homage to the Blessed Virgin.

Here is a summary of the Council's document on Mary:

(a) "*The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church.*" The actual text of the Marian chapter is a compromise and yet a very positive document. It avoids terminology which may irritate either school of Catholic thought, and yet manages to express the truth proposed by both schools. After insisting that the Council has no wish "to decide those questions which the work of theologians has not yet fully clarified," it goes on "to describe with diligence both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body, and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God, who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful" (art. 54).

(b) "*The role of the Blessed Mother in the economy of salvation*" is treated first. Mary is the Mother of the promised Redeemer, the Woman who, in contrast to Eve, "contributed to life" by giving to the world "Him Who is Life itself. . . . Consenting to the divine Word, she became the Mother of Jesus. . . (and) devoted herself totally as a handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son, under Him and with Him serving the mystery of the Redemption. Rightly therefore the Fathers call her. . . the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race, . . . the Mother of the Living." At the Cross, too, she united herself "with a maternal heart to her Son's sacrifice." And at her assumption she was "exalted by the Lord as Queen of the Universe" (art. 55-59). A

⁸ *Docum. Cath.* 61 (1964) 1243-1254. *Council Daybook*, pp. 16-21. Also *Div. Word News Serv.* 6-E-1964 and 8-E-1964.

quick reading shows that the Christotypic tendency is dominant here. Note, however, that Mary's role in the Redemption is always that of faith and love, that of consent and obedience.

(c) "*On the Blessed Virgin and the Church.*" This part describes Mary's role toward the Church. From the start, and often throughout this section, we are reminded that there is only one Mediator, the man Jesus Christ. Mary indeed exercises a maternal role and a salvific influence on men, but this must not obscure nor diminish the unique mediation of Christ: for it flows from the merits of Christ; it depends entirely on Christ's mediation and draws all its power from it.

Mary's maternal role towards men began with the Annunciation and continues even in heaven. By her consent to be Jesus' Mother she cooperated in a singular way through faith, obedience, hope, and burning charity, in the Savior's work of giving back supernatural life to souls. Wherefore she is our Mother in the order of grace. The Church also calls her Advocate, Mediatrix. (And once more a reminder is given that this must not detract nor can this add to the dignity and efficaciousness of Christ's mediation.) Mary really shares in Christ's mediation, just as priests today share in Christ's priesthood without detracting from it (art. 60-62).

Finally Mary is described as the type of the Church in her divine Motherhood, in her conquering of the serpent, in her motherly love for all men, in her virginal dedication to God, in her heavenly glory. And the Church can do nothing better than to imitate Mary's faith, hope, and virginal love for God and her maternal love for the brethren of Christ (art. 63-65).

(d) "*The cult of the Blessed Virgin in the Church*" should be fostered and should be Christ-centered. An exhortation is then given to theologians to "abstain both from false exaggerations as well as from a too great narrowness of mind in considering the singular dignity of the Mother of God" (art. 67).

The text ends with a short section on "*Mary the sign of the created hope and solace to the wandering people of God.*"

4. *Mary, Mother of the Church.*

Here the Marian text, as well as the Constitution on the Church, ends. But on November 21, 1964, while officially promulgating the Constitution on the Church, Pope Paul also solemnly proclaimed Mary as "Mother of the Church". The announcement was met with bursts of applause, and finally with a standing ovation⁹. But a delayed reaction of the press, and even of some of the Council Fathers, was one of resentment¹⁰. The Council had studiously avoided the title. True, the Constitution spoke of Mary as "Mother of men"; and of the Church as honoring Mary "with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother." But the title "Mother of the Church" was considered too ambiguous and misleading. In fact, Bishop Arceo Mendez had denounced the attempt to smuggle the title into the text. And in answer to Pope Paul's express wish that the Church should recognize Mary as its Mother, the Bishop had declared the wish "not binding on the Fathers, since the Pope had also stated that he did not wish to settle questions pending at the Council".¹¹

The main reason for avoiding the title was that it lacked Scriptural basis.¹² But the Pope set aside this objection because of his concern that the hierarchy too, and hence the whole Church, should look with filial devotion on Mary. The proclamation itself expresses this concern: "We pro-

⁹ A.A.S. 56 (1964) 1015. *Council Daybook*, p. 300.

¹⁰ Cf. *Time* for Nov. 27, 1964, p. 40. Actually Pope John XXIII himself had used the title (cf. e.g. A.A.S. 53 (1961) 505). Fr. Galot defends the Pope's action (cf. bibliog.)

¹¹ *Div. Word News Serv.* 8-E-1964. Pope Paul expressed this wish on October 11, 1963 (cf. A.A.S. 55 (1963) 873) and again on December 4 (cf. A.A.S. 56 (1964) 37).

¹² Laurentin, *op. cit.*, pp. 42, proposes another reason, a doctrinal one: The title "Mother of the Church" was meant to stand for the original double title "Mother of God and Mother of men." Now the two words of the original title bear different meanings: Mary is the physical Mother of God (Jesus) by giving Him human flesh; she is the spiritual Mother of men, by cooperating in their spiritual regeneration. Hence the single title "Mother of the Church" would have an explicitly ambivalent and ambiguous meaning.

claim Mary as the most holy Mother of the Church, that is, of all the people of God, both the faithful and the Pastors".¹³

The same thought had been expressed when the Pope first manifested his wish to see Mary proclaimed Mother of the Church: "O Mary, look down on the most responsible members of the Mystical Body of Christ gathered around you, to acknowledge you and honor you as their mystical Mother".¹⁴ He had repeated it during the General Audience of October 7, 1964:

No one has as great a devotion for the Holy Virgin as the Pope. He is impelled to this first of all by his personal piety, rendered always more alive by the spiritual needs of his apostolic ministry which obliges him to pray constantly to the Mother of Christ, . . . (and) by profound and fruitful theological reasons of his pontifical office, which show the relation which exists between the unique and supreme mission of Mary in the plan of our salvation, and the function proper to the priesthood.¹⁶

Finally, on February 2, 1965, Pope Paul related the title of Mother of the Church to the communitary aspect of our devotion to Mary.

Shall we not give to the title of "Mother of the Church" . . . the sense of Mother of Christians, of our spiritual Mother, because she is the natural mother of Christ our Head and our Redeemer? . . . If the devotion (to Mary) is above all attached to the individual aspect of her spiritual motherhood, is it not advisable that we complete this perspective and draw the attention of the faithful to its communitary aspect?¹⁶

II: THE DOCTRINAL EXPLANATION

As we have pointed out, there is really no opposition between the doctrine as proposed by Christotypists and Ecclesiotypists. Both agree that Mary did cooperate in the work of the Redemption, that she is our Mother in the order of grace. On the other hand, both agree that her role is always that of a redeemed person. Just how then are we to understand this reality? One of the best explanations proposed on this point,

¹³ Cf. note 9 above.

¹⁴ A.A.S. 55 (1963) 873.

¹⁵ *Docum. Cath.* 61 (1964) 1450.

¹⁶ A.A.S. 62 (1965) 392. Actually Pope Paul here cites Fr. Galot's "Mère de l'Église", pp. 1180f.

one that respects the tenets of both schools, is that of Fr. Edouard Schillebeeckx, O.P., the theological adviser of the Dutch Bishops at the Council.¹⁷

1. *Objective and subjective aspects of redemption.*

Theologians talk of "objective and subjective redemption" with such variety of meaning, that it is best to define our terms. The two terms must be well understood, if we are to understand the role of Jesus or Mary in our redemption.

In every act of redemption, or justification, or sanctification of a man, we notice two realities. First, there is the gift that God offers and actually bestows on man. As a response, there is the human free consent to this gift.¹⁸ The gift of God to man is *the objective aspect*, and man's response is *the subjective aspect* in each act of sanctification.

2. *Objective redemption.*

However, when theologians speak of "objective redemption" in its strict sense, they refer to the act of Redemption which took place within the humanity of Christ. St. Paul tells us that "God was truly in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5,9). And St. Thomas often affirms that Christ's humanity was "justified" in order to be the source of our sanctification.¹⁹

This is what happened: Christ is not merely God-man. He is God-man representing a fallen humanity. He *is* humanity in a real, though supernatural sense. And "God made him to be sin, so that *in him* we might become the justice of God"

¹⁷ Cf. bibliography. The explanation of Mary's role in our redemption can be found especially on pp. 48-130.

¹⁸ As Augustine says, "God, who created you without your consent, does not justify you without it" (Sermon 169, P.L. 38,923). Even in the baptism of an infant, the godparents give consent in its name. And as the child grows into adulthood, he personally actualizes, according to his ability, this consent to God's objective gift to him at baptism.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. *Summa Th.* III, q. 34, a. 1, ad 3; and a. 3; also q. 48, a. 1.

(2 Cor. 5,21). By the Incarnation, by all human acts, and especially by crucifixion and death, the humanity of Christ was possessed and sanctified by God and thus "redeemed". For in each of them the man Christ accepted the will of the Father. The first redemption then took place in the very humanity of Christ and through this "objective redemption" we too were redeemed in principle. It is by being incorporated to this redeemed humanity of Christ that each of us is personally redeemed.

It is evident that even in the "objective redemption" within Christ there is an objective aspect: the gift of God, the act of God taking possession of Christ's humanity and giving Himself completely to it. There is also a subjective aspect: the consent of the human will of Christ and its total surrender to God's embrace.

3. Our subjective redemption.

When we are redeemed and sanctified, God likewise offers us His gift. In the concrete, this gift is the objective redemption already accomplished in Christ. "Subjective redemption" simply means that what has been accomplished in Christ is actually realized in us, overflows into our lives. It means our vital union with the redeemed humanity in Christ. Even here there is the objective and the subjective aspect. The objective aspect is the gift of God, i.e., the action of Christ's humanity redeeming us by joining us to Himself. The subjective aspect is our personal consent to this gift of God through Christ.

4. Mary's role in our redemption.

The Second Vatican Council reminds us again and again that Mary belongs to the world of the redeemed. And yet we are told that she cooperated in the work of Christ the Redeemer (and clearly the "objective redemption" is referred to here).

Mary was redeemed in that she was exempted from original sin through the merits of her Son. We note here that the gift of sanctification given to Mary at her conception is,

like ours, the action of Christ's humanity redeeming her. Hence it was an anticipated result of the "objective redemption" to be accomplished in Christ. The same can be said of all graces given to Mary as she progressed in holiness.

Mary's consent at the Annunciation, too, forms part of her "subjective redemption". All graces given to Mary, even her divine motherhood, are granted through the merits of her divine Son, that is, because of the "objective redemption" which was to be accomplished in Jesus and by Him alone.

But at the Annunciation Mary's cooperation with grace takes on an importance which profoundly surpasses our own. This time *the object* of her consent, the grace which she is asked to receive in faith, is not merely the grace of the Redeemer, but the Redeemer Himself; not merely the fruit of objective redemption, but objective redemption itself. The subjective aspect of Mary's consent at the Incarnation is wholly like ours: it is an active acceptance in faith and love; an act not of redeeming, but of being redeemed; an acceptance which really adds nothing to the great gift of God is offering. The only difference between Mary's consent and ours is *the object of the consent*, the grace now being offered, *the objective aspect* of Mary's sanctification at this moment. And because of this one difference Mary is constituted far above her fellow-redeemed, and really cooperates in the objective redemption accomplished in Christ and by Christ.

First, because Mary accepted objective Redemption itself, she received all the graces that Christ has to offer. She became the "universal receiver" of grace. In this way she conditioned objective redemption itself, and thus conditioned all subjective redemption till the end of the world. All grace given by Christ will bear Mary's imprint, will be truly "Marian" grace, because Mary received it first from God. She represented the redeemed Church accepting redemption from the hands of Christ at the very moment of its accomplishment within Christ Himself.

Secondly, by Mary's consent at the Annunciation, a consent which continued even to the Cross, Mary became the Mother of the Redeemer: for it was to be our Redeemer that

Christ took human flesh from the Virgin. Mary becomes the Mother of redeemed humanity, for Christ contains within Himself the whole redeemed humanity in the first stage of its redemption. She becomes the Mother of the Church insofar as the Church is identified with the "people of God", redeemed humanity. Finally, she becomes the Mother of the Redemption, because Christ is the Redemption: the wedding of the divine with the humanity which is to be sanctified in Him.²⁰

Thirdly, Mary is truly the cause of our salvation. Her consent was truly needed. If she had said no, the world's redemption would not have been accomplished according to God's plan. The world's salvation was literally accomplished "through a woman"; we receive salvation "through her hands."

And yet *Mary's consent did not enter into the objective redemption*. Christ still remains the only Mediator and the only Redeemer at the moment of objective redemption.

5. *Christ the only Redeemer.*

To understand this, let us first recall that objective redemption is the sanctification of the humanity of Christ Himself. It took place within Christ and needed only one human response, that of Christ Himself as Man. Only one acceptance (subjective aspect) was "involved" in objective redemption: Christ's own *fiat* to His Father's command. Christ alone was our representative before the Father in this event. This was true on the Cross; it was also true at the moment of Christ's

²⁰ Fr. Bover (*Maria Mediadora universal*, p. 398) tries to explain how Mary's action bears within us a supernatural life like to her own: "There is little difficulty in seeing how the action by which Mary produced the mystical Christ tended of itself to producing living beings morally like to Mary. The life which this action produced was the supernatural life, which Mary herself possessed. The immediate and formal term, so to say, of this action was the incorporation of all men into Christ: initiated at the incarnation and matured, in its ideal or virtual state, at Calvary. By this incorporation of all men into Christ, life eternal and principle of life, Mary's action was ordered to participation in the life itself of Christ. Hence it aimed at producing this life of Christ in men, and under this aspect it was true generation." (Transl. mine.)

Incarnation. Mary's consent was needed at the Incarnation, and she was present on Calvary, simply because God willed that a human person should also accept the reality of the objective redemption at the moment of its accomplishment. But, as the Council emphasizes, Mary's consent does not add to the dignity of Christ's consent. For Mary's consent was no more than an *acceptance* of objective redemption, a consent to Christ's consent. Furthermore, the fact that Mary's consent was needed at the Incarnation in no way detracts from the efficacy of Christ's own consent. For Mary's consent was needed, not so much to accomplish the redemption in Christ Himself (He could have been born of Mary without seeking her consent). It was needed only so that the redemption would also be received by a human person (Mary) subordinately to its acceptance by Christ. Such a consent does not imply deficiency in Christ's own redemptive power; no more than does our own consent, which is also needed in our own subjective redemption. The consent, both Mary's and ours, is required only so that the subject can receive the redemption accomplished by Christ.

There are then two principles to keep in mind: First, Mary did take a direct part in objective redemption. Secondly, her part was a cooperation based on pure receptivity. Following these principles, we can see how Mary belongs to the world of the redeemed in every phase of her cooperation with God; and yet how objective redemption itself comes to us through her hands.

6. *Mary on Calvary and in heaven.*

Mary's role on Calvary was merely the extension and the continuation of her cooperation at the Annunciation. Her consent to Christ's death and to her own painful stance at the foot of the Cross was implied, and perhaps vaguely suspected, in her *fiat* to the Angel Gabriel. She renewed her *fiat* at the foot of the Cross and thus confirmed her role of cooperator in the redemption and spiritual Mother of all men.²¹

²¹ Cf. A.A.S. 35 (1943) 247f.

By her Assumption and glorification Mary has been constituted Queen of the Universe. But her task of Mother is not finished until the last of the redeemed has finally attained the unending life of heaven. She continues to join her prayers with that of her Son for the salvation of all His brethren. This is why she is invoked as "Auxiliatrix, Advocate, Mediatrix." Here again we must remember the Council's admonition that this role of Mary does not detract from nor add to the unique mediation of her Son.²² Mary is not a go-between who stands between us and Christ. Rather, she is the Mother who gives us to Christ, and who brings us to Christ for immediate union with Him and through Him with God. She is the model whom we must imitate in our acceptance, which is directed immediately to Christ.

CONCLUSION

When the Ecclesiotypists insist that we should present Mary as the model of the Church, as an eminent member of the Church, as one of the redeemed, they are underlining *the subjective aspect*, the manner of her cooperation with God's grace. She is always and in every phase the Mother, the receiver, the beneficiary of the bounty of God. She adds nothing to this gift of God. Her cooperation is needed only that she herself might receive willingly.

When the Christotypists, on the other hand, insist that Mary did play a vital role in the objective redemption, that our salvation was wrought through the consent of a woman, that all the graces of Christ come to us through Mary's hands, that Mary herself by her consent to Gabriel's message has been raised above the Church: they are underlining *the objective aspect*, the unique object of her consent at the Incarnation

²² The Council mentions these titles, because they contain a value based on Mary's actual role in our redemption. It does not approve of them unconditionally, because certain restrictions have to be posited if we are not to take them amiss. (Cf. *Constit. on the Church*, #62.)

Translations from the A.A.S. and *Docum. Cathol.* are my own, Citations from the *Constitution on the Church* are from St. Paul Publications edition, Manila.

and at the foot of the Cross. It was the Redeemer Himself, and Redemption itself, that she accepted by her *fiat*. And by accepting precisely this object, she became the Mother of the Redemption and the cause of our salvation. In consenting to be the Mother of the Redeemer, she accepted all the graces of the redemption for the rest of mankind and became herself the model of all human response to God's invitation.

Both views are true, both are faithful to tradition, and they combine to form a balanced view of the Church's Marian doctrine.

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